

Writing Skills of Senior High School Students: A Basis for Intervention Program

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study delved into the writing skills of Senior High School students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, laying the groundwork for an intervention program. The primary objective involved a comprehensive assessment of writing skills, drawing comparisons between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students across key indicators: attitudes towards writing, generating, revising, feedback, and awareness and control of the writing process. Utilizing a descriptive design and employing random sampling with 274 respondents, the study used mean and t-test analysis. The overall results revealed a high manifestation of writing skills among students, with attitudes towards writing and generating reaching a moderately high level. Additionally, the study identified high levels in the indicators of feedback, revising, and awareness and control. Significantly, a comparison between the two grade levels uncovered a notable difference, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Grade 11 exhibited a lower mean score than Grade 12, highlighting the necessity for intervention programs for both groups to further enhance their writing skills. Based on these findings, it is recommended that tailored intervention programs be implemented for Grade 11 and Grade 12 students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School to address specific areas of improvement and foster continuous enhancement of their writing skills.

Keywords: GAS, Writing Skills, Intervention Program, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian students encountered challenges in honing their writing skills, including limited practice opportunities, anxiety, disinterest, motivation issues, time constraints for assessments, and potentially ineffective teaching methods (Toba & Noor, 2019). According to a study conducted in University of Malaysia, these difficulties might result in lower exam scores and hinder academic performance, particularly in achieving paragraph coherence (Moses & Mohamad, 2019). Similarly, middle school students in India faced obstacles such as language comprehension, appropriate language usage, and issues like anxiety, laziness, and low productivity while striving to master writing skills (Jefferson et al., 2020).

In the Philippines, particularly in Metro Manila, senior high school students faced various challenges in academic writing, including limited knowledge on relevant topics, unfamiliarity with proper citation practices, grammar errors, a restricted vocabulary, and inappropriate use of development patterns (Urbano et al., 2021). Hikamah (2019) highlighted the vital role of writing in communication skills, noting that proficient writing allowed clear communication and a broader audience reach compared to face-to-face conversation. Building upon this, the study of Cabigao (2021) emphasized that individuals needed necessary competencies in writing to produce an acceptable output, as the basis of writing served as a crucial foundation for effective written communication among learners.

In Region IX, elementary students in Zamboanga Peninsula faced challenges in writing skills, primarily due to vocabulary limitations, spelling, grammar, and sentence construction issues (Saavedra & Barredo, 2020). Morales (2021) found out that grade seven students at Badas Elementary School in Mati, Davao Oriental, showed potential in writing but needed guidance in areas like subject-verb agreement, organization, punctuation, capitalization, indentation, and sentence structure. Similar concerns about writing skills were observed in the senior high students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School as students had difficulty

in expressing their thoughts in writing and they often committed mistakes in sentence structure. Hence, the researchers sought to comprehensively evaluate the writing skills of senior high students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, acknowledging the critical role these skills played in their academic and career development.

While various studies explored the impact of writing skills on student performance and achievement, there was a dearth of research specifically examining the levels of writing skills among senior high school students, particularly in the context of Mawab, Davao de Oro. This research represented a pioneering effort in this area. By assessing the different components of writing skills, the researchers gained insights into why some senior high school students excelled in writing while others struggled, despite sharing the same educational environment. This understanding served as a foundation for designing targeted intervention programs to enhance the writing skills of these students. The researchers were driven by the need to identify the essential factors that contributed to students' writing abilities and to establish a basis for effective intervention programs in Mawab, Davao de Oro.

Research Objectives

The study aimed to determine the writing skills of senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School as a basis for an intervention program. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of writing skills of senior high school student in terms of:
 - 1.1 attitudes towards writing;
 - 1.2 generating;
 - 1.3 revising;
 - 1.4 feedback;
 - 1.5 awareness and control of the writing process?
2. Is there a significant difference in writing skills of senior high school students when group by grade level:
 - 2.1 Grade 11; and
 - 2.2 Grade 12?
3. On the basis of the results, what intervention scheme can be crafted?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to investigate a particular phenomenon. This method was used to observe as it occurred in nature, described the current status of the situation as it existed in the object of the study, and explored the causes of a particular phenomenon. It precisely and methodically characterized a population, circumstance, or phenomenon. It could respond to inquiries about what, where, when, and how, but not why. In descriptive research, it involved collecting data to determine whether the degree of a phenomenon existed between one quantifiable variable (McCombes, 2019).

Population and Sample

The subjects of the study were the 274 senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School enrolled in the school year 2023-2024. The respondents could withdraw at any time if they felt threatened by the conduct of the study. Furthermore, a simple random sampling technique was used in the selection of the respondents, where everyone was chosen by chance, and each senior high school student had an equal opportunity to be included in the sample.

Statistical Tool

The following statistical tools were utilized for the data analysis and interpretation.

Mean. This statistical tool was employed to gauge the level of writing skill of senior high school students.

T-test. This statistical tool was used to determine the significant difference between the level of writing skills of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students.

RESULTS

Level of Writing Skills

Table 1 presented the level of writing skills among senior high school students of Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, revealing an overall mean of 3.40, characterized as high with a standard deviation of

0.76. The elevated level can be attributed to the commendable ratings provided by respondents across all indicators. This suggested that respondents held manifest attitudes toward writing, exhibited proficiency in generating, displayed adeptness in revising, valued feedback, and demonstrated awareness and control in the writing process.

Furthermore, the aforementioned overall mean score resulted from computed mean scores, ranked from highest to lowest as follows: 3.52, indicating a high for feedback with a standard deviation of 0.80; 3.41, signifying a high for awareness and control of writing process, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.79; 3.41, reflecting a high for revising, with a standard deviation of 0.76; 3.39, indicating a moderate for generating, with a standard deviation of 0.74; and 3.27, representing a moderate for attitudes toward writing, with a standard deviation of 0.72.

Table1. Level of Writing Skills

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Attitudes towards writing	3.27	0.72	Moderate
Generating	3.39	0.74	Moderate
Revising	3.41	0.77	High
Feedback	3.52	0.80	High

Significant Difference between the Writing Skills of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students

The findings indicated that the levels of writing skills between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students exhibited a significant difference. This determination was based on a p-value of <0.001, which did not exceed the significance threshold of $p < 0.05$. Consequently, the decision to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that there was no significant difference in the writing skills between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, was justified. This implies that there was a significant difference in the writing skills between the two levels.

Table 2. Significant Difference between the Writing Skills of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students

	Grade Level	N	Mean	SD
Writing Skills	Grade 11	124	2.83	0.35
	Grade 12	149	3.89	0.43

$P < 0.05$ $T = -21.768$ $df = 271$ $p\text{-value} < 0.001$

DISCUSSIONS

Level of Writing Skills

The respondents' level of writing skills among senior high school students was high. This meant that the writing skills of senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School were oftentimes manifested. This further implied that senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School oftentimes manifested positive writing skills, enabling them to freely express their thoughts about attitude towards writing, which significantly influenced students' motivation and progress; generating, aiding students in expressing thoughts clearly and precisely; revising, ensuring coherent and impactful ideas presentation; feedback, offering valuable guidance for continual improvement; and awareness and control of the writing process, empowering students to enhance through effective strategies and consistent practice, as indicated by Belanoff and Elbow (1989).

Moreover, this result is in relation to the proposition of Smith (2018) which stated that writing skills encompassed the ability to communicate thoughts and ideas coherently, demonstrating mastery over grammar, vocabulary, and organization. Furthermore, writing skills referred to the aptitude for conveying information or narratives through written text, requiring proficiency in language mechanics and the art of storytelling According to Brown (2018). This conforms to the statement of Muhammadolimovna (2023) which stated that academic writing was a multifaceted process that encompassed the development of various written documents, such as thesis, abstracts, and articles.

Significant Difference between the Writing Skills of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students

The conducted study highlighted the difference between the writing skills of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, aligning with a comprehensive theoretical framework. The students had shown noticeable improvements in writing as they moved from Grade 11 to Grade 12. The study affirms the theory of the Expressivist Process Theory of Writing (Klein & Boals, 2001). This observation aligns with the concept of emphasizing the lack of awareness among Grade 11 students regarding the importance of refining their writing skills, as highlighted in the Awareness Proposition by Al-Saadi and Samuel (2013).

The study underscored the need for interventions due to insufficient emphasis on writing in education, leading to frequent errors in assignments. The effectiveness of the process approach, guided by the Expressivity Process Theory of Writing, was explored as a means to address these challenges. Additionally, the observed lower proficiency in Grade 11 writing skills emphasized the necessity for developmental improvement, aligning with the focus on developmental improvement by Sturm et al. (2012). The study delved into the reasons behind students' struggles, drawing support from a comprehensive understanding of the writing process, in line with the Comprehensive Writing Process by Jebril (2014).

Furthermore, the research recommended tailored teaching strategies, curriculum adjustments, and targeted interventions, considering shared challenges and presenting a nuanced and context-specific approach to writing skill development for both Grade 11 and Grade 12 students. This aligned with the synthesized framework that guided interventions, as outlined in the theoretical foundation. The study maintained a neutral stance, advocating for a constructive approach to intervention while acknowledging lower writing skills in Grade 11.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study significantly contributed to drawing conclusions about the writing skills of senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School. The assessment indicated a high level of proficiency in writing skills, particularly in the aspects of feedback, awareness and control of the writing process, and revising. These components exhibited a high level of competence among the students. However, a more nuanced picture emerged when examining the attitude towards writing and generating, which were found to be at a moderate level. This suggested that there was room for improvement in fostering a more positive attitude towards writing and enhancing the ability to generate ideas effectively.

Contrary to the theoretical assumption positing no significant difference between the grade 11 and grade 12 senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, the study concluded otherwise. The findings presented evidence that challenged this assumption, emphasizing the need to consider and address potential variations in writing skills between these two grade levels. This insight underscored the importance of tailored interventions to address specific challenges and elevate the writing skills of both grade 11 and grade 12 senior high school students in the school, ensuring that students not only met academic requirements but also developed critical skills essential for success in both their educational journey and future careers.

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