

Enhancing Students' Proficiency in Writing Evaluative Statement Through H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach

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ABSTRACT

Writing evaluative statements plays a vital role in developing students' communication abilities, particularly their capacity to express reasoned judgments about texts. This study aimed to enhance the proficiency of Grade 11 students in writing evaluative statements through the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach. A quasi-experimental two-group design was employed involving 67 Grade 11 students selected through purposive sampling, with 35 students in the control group and 32 in the experimental group. The students' writing proficiency was assessed using a 40-point analytical rubric before and after the intervention. The H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach was subjected to expert validation by three language education experts and obtained an overall validation rating of 98.67%, interpreted as Excellent. Inter-rater agreement among the validators was examined using the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC). Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean, as well as an independent-samples t-test and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), were used to analyze the data. Results showed that both groups began at the Fair level in the pre-test. In the post-test, the control group improved to the Good level ($M = 25.26$), while the experimental group reached the Very Good level ($M = 35.31$). The independent-samples t-test revealed a significant difference between the groups, $t(65) = -12.78$, $p < .0001$. ANCOVA further showed a significant effect of group on post-test performance after controlling for pre-test scores, $F(1,64) = 183.62$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .742$. Moreover, all 32 students (100%) in the experimental group showed improvement from pre-test to post-test. Learners reported that the approach enhanced clarity, organization, expression, and critical thinking, although some found providing textual evidence and completing the process time-consuming. The findings indicate that the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach is a promising structured writing guide for enhancing students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements.

Keywords: H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach, Evaluative Writing, Writing Proficiency, Intervention, Secondary Education

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Context And Rationale

Writing is one of the academic skills that students must develop. These skills include the ability to organize ideas logically, construct grammatically correct sentences, and present well-reasoned arguments—particularly when writing evaluative statements. Deficiencies in these areas limit students' ability to communicate effectively in academic contexts, affecting their performance across subjects and lowering their confidence in written expression.

Study findings indicate that students find difficulty in developing organized evaluative statements. Pratami's (2019) study analysis on senior high school's writing skills results show that level of senior high school students' argumentation lies at 29.17%. Hikmah et al. (2019) study also found that students have errors in writing academic papers such as organization, mechanics, and grammar, and recommended improving students' writing skills. The same study mentioned that the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NEAP) reported 27% of students in grades 4-12 are proficient in their writing (Busch, 2022).

And despite the efforts of The Department of Education (DepEd) specifically the Matatag K to 10 of the K to 12 programs to improve students' writing skills, many students still experience difficulties in academic writing. Senior High School students at Ilocos Norte National High School, for instance, show difficulty in writing an evaluative statement which is one of the competencies they need to complete in their Reading and Writing Skills subject. Results in the item analysis for the third quarter of the school year 2023-2024 show that formulating evaluative statements about a text read is a least mastered competency. First, students demonstrate apathy when inferring from an argument, show boredom during reading comprehension tasks, and experience discomfort in organizing effective evaluative statements. Common issues include disorganized content, incoherent arguments, grammatical errors, flawed sentence construction, and mechanical mistakes. As a result of these difficulties, students consistently receive low grades in this particular competency.

Recognizing the persistent challenges faced by students in writing evaluative statements, there is really a need to fill the gap and advance an in-depth understanding of students' academic writing difficulties. (Roxas, 2020) To address these challenges, the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach was crafted by the researcher as a structured approach to guide students in writing evaluative statements. H.E.A.R.T.S. stands for: **H**ook the audience, **E**xpose the background or explain the significance of the topic, **A**uthor's claim stated in the article read, **R**ebuttal for counterclaim/Restate the claim for assertion, **T**extual evidence and **S**ummary of your stand. It is an approach originally created by the researcher for students to use exclusively for writing an evaluative statement. The approach consists of step-by step guide for students in formulating an evaluative statement; what to write in the

introduction, body and conclusion. The approach when carefully followed will help the students write an evaluative statement with proper organization, develop arguments that assert or counter claim and provide evidence to support their paper. With the rubric alongside it, it will also help them develop grammatically structured, error-free writing.

This study aims to enhance the writing proficiency of the Grade 11 students in writing evaluative statements using H.E.A.R.T.S. approach.

Action Research Questions

This study aimed to enhance the proficiency skills of Grade 11 Students in writing evaluative statements through the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following specific questions:

1. What is the level of students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements in the control and experimental groups before and after implementing the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach?
2. Is there a significant difference in the level of students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements between the control and experimental groups before and after implementing the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach?
3. What is the percentage of students who showed improvement in writing evaluative statements after implementing H.E.A.R.T.S. approach?
4. What are the significant experiences of the learners in using the intervention?

Innovation, Intervention and Strategy

In support to the Department of Education's initiatives in developing the writing skills of every Filipino, this research used H.E.A.R.T.S. approach as an innovation that aimed to enhance Grade 11 students' proficiency in writing evaluative statement.

H.E.A.R.T.S. is an approach designed by the proponent to guide grade 11 students who are struggling to write effective evaluative statements. This strategy helps students organize their thoughts and construct clear, well-supported evaluative arguments, whether presenting an assertion or counterclaim. While various scaffolding techniques like Point, Evidence, Explain and Link (PEEL); Topic, Explain, eXample, Analysis and Summary (TEXAS); and Point, Evidence, Technique, Analysis and Link (PETAL) are common patterns to help students organize various kinds of essays, the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach was specifically tailored as a guide for writing evaluative statements. It encourages students to not only summarize but also engage with the text critically, considering both the author's claim and counterclaims, and supporting their statements with textual evidence.

H.E.A.R.T.S. approach is a writing guide presented in a table where the first column shows the meaning of the acronym. It stands for Hook the reader, Expose the background or explain the significance of the topic, Author's claim stated in the article, Rebuttal for counterclaim/Restate the claim for assertion, Textual Evidence and Summary of the stand. The second column, on the other hand, shows the specific instructions for the students to follow in writing each section of the H.E.A.R.T.S. to complete the evaluative statement. The table of writing guide goes with directions and questions that guide students in writing organized evaluative statements from introduction to conclusion. The writing guide for each section of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach is as follows: (1) Hook the reader – capture the reader's attention through a thought-provoking question, striking statement, famous quote, song lyric, surprising statistic, or relatable anecdote; (2) Expose the background – explain the significance of the topic, its relevance, and impact on the reader; (3) Author's claim – state the article's title,

source, and main argument with supporting evidence; (4) Rebuttal/Restatement – present your own stand by agreeing or disagreeing with the author’s claim and providing reasons; (5) Textual evidence – supply valid and credible proof that supports your assertion or counterclaim; and (6) Summary – restate your stand briefly, persuading or encouraging the reader to accept your viewpoint.

This intervention was implemented for a limited period, specifically within the scope of the topic on formulating evaluative statement during the first part of the Fourth Quarter, Second Semester of the Grade 11 students. The discussion on the approach was given to the experimental group after the evaluation of the pretest. The session on the intervention was conducted for two days before they will write their evaluative statement for the post-test. The intervention was completed within two weeks from pretest, discussion of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach until the post-test results evaluation. However, the intervention was not introduced to the control group, and the lesson was explained using the traditional method. The enhancement of the proficiency level of the students in writing the evaluative statement through H.E.A.R.T.S. approach was measured by comparing the pre-test and post-test result across the experimental and control groups.

There were possible limitations of the intervention like time constraints, classroom variability, and other external factors. The intervention was conducted within a short time frame during the last quarter, as the last quarter topic was condensed due to the change in the number of days of the school year, which may limit the depth of practice and reinforcement of the skills. Since the study used quasi-experimental design, the experimental and control groups are not randomly assigned, which were introduced based on the specific classes’ previous learning result or individual differences in students’ abilities. The intervention may be influenced by external factors such as prior knowledge, motivation, and engagement with the content, which may vary across both groups.

An analytical rubric was used to assess the output for learners’ pretest and posttest. It consists of Title, Introduction and Engagement, Background and Context, Understanding and Interpretation, Evaluation and Reasoning, Use of Evidence, Conclusion and Synthesis, and Mechanics and Conventions. It has also five level scales such as excellent(5), proficient (4), satisfactory (3), developing (2), and needs improvement(1).

Action Research Methods

This chapter describes the participants and/or other sources of data and information, data gathering procedure, and data analysis plan.

Participants and/or Other Sources of Data and Information

Quasi-experimental refers to studies that aim to evaluate causal relationships without the use of random assignment, where participants are naturally occurring or pre-existing groups such as experimental and control groups. (Shadish et.al, 2002)

This research utilized a quasi-experimental design to assess the effectiveness of H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in enhancing students’ proficiency in writing an evaluative statement. This study used a quasi-experimental research design because the participants were not randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. Instead, the groups were pre-existing, based on their enrollment in specific STEM classes: with the experimental group (Grade 11 STEM De Ocampo), who received the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach intervention and the control group (Grade 11 STEM Belardo), who did not receive it. This design allows for a comparison of the effectiveness of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in enhancing students’ proficiency in writing evaluative statements. The approach had undergone validation with experts like English Supervisor and Master Teachers to ensure its validity before it was implemented to the students.

The research participants in this study were the Grade 11 students from Ilocos Norte National High School during the School Year 2024-2025. The total population of Grade 11 students is 67 and they are all taking up the core subjects Reading and Writing Skills (RAWS).

For the purposes of this research, two groups were involved: the experimental group, which consists of students from Grade 11 STEM De Ocampo, and the control group, which consists of students from Grade 11 STEM Belardo. Both groups were enrolled in the RAWS subject, and were under the supervision of the researcher, making the implementation of the intervention (H.E.A.R.T.S. approach) seamless. Both groups were under the STEM strand, which ensures that they had a similar academic background and followed the same curriculum track, minimizing academic disparity. The groups were selected and matched based on their nearly identical item analysis results from first quarter to the third quarter. The groups were compared to assess the impact of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach on students' critical thinking and their ability to write evaluative statements.

To determine the effectiveness of the intervention, a pretest was given both to the control and experimental group. They were given an article to read and annotate, then, they made their evaluative statement without introducing the topic on evaluative statement yet. The results of the pre-test or their output was assessed with a rubric.

During the implementation, in the control group, the teacher introduced the topic of evaluative statements through the traditional discussion. The H.E.A.R.T.S. approach was not mentioned to the control group during this phase. In contrast, in the experimental group, the teacher first guided students through the annotation process of the article, then, provided a detailed explanation of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach for constructing an evaluative statement. This included an in-depth discussion of each section of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach, explaining the content and structure that students were expected to include. An analytical rubric was also provided to guide their writing, complementing the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach as a scaffolding tool.

For the post test, learners were given another article to read and annotate. Students were instructed on what to include in their evaluative statements, and analytical rubric was given beforehand to serve as a scoring guide.

The outputs from both groups were collected and evaluated using the same rubric, enabling a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in improving students' ability to construct evaluative statements. Mean was used to determine the average scores of Grades 11 learners, whereas a independent t-test was used to determine the significant difference in the students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements before and after using the intervention, the HEARTS approach. The percentage was also used to determine the improvement of their proficiency level in writing evaluative statements.

Data Gathering Method

During the pre-implementation, the researcher sought permission from the schools division superintendent and from the school principal to conduct the study.

The researcher requested the validation of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach to the experts in the field. The H.E.A.R.T.S. approach was validated by the three experts in the field of language such as the English program supervisor and master teachers. The evaluators used an adapted validation tool to review the content of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach on its language clarity, content relevance, organization and presentation, suitability, adequateness of purpose, attainment of purpose, respondents' friendliness, engagement, feasibility and practicality, impact on writing skills and objectivity.

The H.E.A.R.T.S. intervention was developed by the researcher to enhance students' writing skills, particularly in writing evaluative statements. It was assessed by comparing the final outputs of the experimental group

(Grade 11 STEM De Ocampo) and the control group (Grade 11 STEM Belardo) after they had applied different approaches to writing an evaluative statement.

During the implementation, Experimental Group (using H.E.A.R.T.S. approach): The experimental group annotated the provided article, identified the main idea, topic sentence, author's claim, and supported textual evidence. Following this, the teacher introduced the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in detail, explaining each component of the framework: H – Hook the reader, E – Expose the background or explain the importance of the topic, A – Author's claim stated in the article, R – Rebuttal for counterclaim / Restate the claim for assertion, T – Tangible proofs or textual evidence, and S – Summary of your stand.

Guide questions were provided for each section to help students understand how to structure their evaluative statements. The teacher also presented an example of a well-constructed evaluative statement using the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach, allowing students to follow the model. After students had completed each section of the H.E.A.R.T.S. structure, they finalized their evaluative statements in paragraph form.

Control Group: The control group followed the same initial process of annotating the article by identifying the main idea, topic sentence, author's claim, and textual evidence. However, instead of the H.E.A.R.T.S. strategy, students were given general instructions on writing an evaluative statement. They were asked to write their evaluative statements based on these general guidelines, without the detailed scaffold of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach.

In the post-implementation, once both groups had completed their evaluative statements, the outputs were assessed using the same rubric to assess their pretest. Students were instructed on what to include in their evaluative statements, and analytical rubric was given beforehand to serve as a scoring guide. The same analytical rubric was used to evaluate the written outputs of both groups in the pre-test and post-test. The rubric assessed general evaluative-writing proficiency through eight criteria: Title, Introduction and Engagement, Background and Context, Understanding and Interpretation, Evaluation and Reasoning, Use of Evidence, Conclusion and Synthesis, and Mechanics and Conventions. These criteria were applied consistently to both groups and were intended to assess the quality of students' evaluative writing. To maintain consistency in assessment, the rubric criteria and performance levels were applied to the written outputs of both the experimental and control groups.

Inter-rater reliability was established by having the students' written outputs independently evaluated by the teacher-researcher and a student rater from the same class. The student rater was a classmate and was not the author of the output being evaluated. Both raters used the same 40-point analytic rubric to assess the pre-test and post-test outputs. The Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) was computed to determine the agreement between the teacher and student-rater scores. The ICC was 0.889 for the pre-test ratings, indicating good inter-rater agreement, and 0.943 for the post-test ratings, indicating excellent inter-rater agreement. These results support the consistency of the scoring procedure. The teacher's ratings were used as the official scores for the statistical analysis (See attached Appendix C).

This study adhered to ethical research standards to ensure the protection and rights of all participants. The following ethical principles were observed throughout the research: 1. The participants were informed about the purpose, objectives, procedures and potential benefits of the study where a written consent form will be provided to ensure voluntary participation; 2. Learners-participants identities was kept confidential, and all responses will be handled with strict privacy; 3. The study ensured that no participant experienced emotional, psychological or physical harm during the process; and 4. Data that were collected, analyzed and presented accurately without any fabrication or manipulation.

Validation of the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach

Prior to its implementation, the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach was subjected to expert validation to establish its clarity, relevance, suitability, organization, feasibility, and appropriateness for guiding students in writing evaluative statements. Three language education experts evaluated the approach using an adapted Instrument Validation Sheet consisting of 20 performance elements rated on a five-point scale: 5–Excellent, 4–Very Good, 3–Good, 2–Fair, and 1–Needs Improvement.

The validation criteria covered clarity of language, content relevance, critical-thinking effectiveness, organization and presentation, suitability, adequacy of purpose, attainment of purpose, respondents' friendliness, respondents' engagement, feasibility and practicality, impact on writing skills, and objectivity. The three evaluators were Regina Genelin T. Nagtalon, Education Program Supervisor for English of the Department of Education; Vrennie Joy C. Pedro, Assistant Principal II of Ilocos Norte National High School; and Veronica F. Guerrero, Master Teacher I of Ilocos Norte National High School. The completed validation sheets are included in Appendix D.

The expert evaluators gave ratings of 98%, 98%, and 100%, respectively, resulting in an overall validation rating of 98.67%, interpreted as Excellent. The results indicate that the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach received highly favorable expert evaluations in terms of its clarity, content relevance, critical-thinking focus, organization, suitability, feasibility, and intended instructional purpose. The validators' comments and recommendations were considered in finalizing the approach before its implementation with the experimental group.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND REFLECTION

This section presents the findings of the study. The data gathered were analyzed and interpreted.

Discussion of Results

This section presents the findings of the study. The results were organized based on the arrangement of research questions posed in the first chapter. The discussion was framed by the research questions posed in this study. In addition, other insights garnered in the study are discussed.

Research Question 1. What is the level of students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements in the control and experimental groups before and after implementing the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach?

Table 1

Groups	N	PRE-TEST			POST-TEST			Mean Gain
		Mean	Weighted Mean (Mean/40)x5=	Level of Writing Skills	Mean	Weighted Mean (Mean/40)x5=	Level of Writing Skills	
Group 1 Belardo	35	19.34	2.42	Fair (F)	25.26	3.16	Good (G)	5.92
Group 2 De Ocampo	32	19.25	2.41	Fair(F)	35.31	4.41	Very Good (VG)	16.06

Student's Proficiency Level of Writing Evaluative Statement in Pre-Test and Post-Test

Table 1 presents the proficiency level of writing evaluative statement of the two groups of Grade 11 learner-participants based on their pre-tests and post-tests results. Belardo (control group) consists of 35 learner-participants while De Ocampo (experimental group) consists of 32 learner-participants. The mean was computed after getting the sum score of each group over the number of students.

The total raw score of Belardo is 677 divided by 35 students and we got the mean of 19.34. Whereas the total raw score of De Ocampo is 616 divided by 32 students, and we got the mean of 19.25.

The weighted mean, however, was computed with the total raw score over the highest possible score in the rubric is 40 (rubric has 8 indicators and 5 rating scales each) multiplied by the rating scales.

$$\text{Mean Score} = \frac{\text{Sum of all scores}}{\text{Number of scores}}$$

Interpretation of results followed the Likert scale used by Shaw and Hennessey (2015) in evaluating writing proficiency through teacher feedback and peer review:

$$\text{Weighted Mean} = \frac{\text{Total Raw Score}}{\text{Highest Possible Score}} \times \text{Rating Scale}$$

Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
4.51 – 5.00	Excellent (E)
3.51 – 4.50	Very Good (VG)
2.51 – 3.50	Good (G)
1.51 – 2.50	Fair (F)
1.00 – 1.50	Needs Improvement (NI)

In the pre-test, Belardo had a mean score of 19.34 and a weighted mean of 2.42, corresponding to a Fair Level of writing proficiency. Similarly, De Ocampo recorded a mean score of 19.25 and a weighted mean of 2.41, also at the Fair Level.

In the post-test, Belardo's performance improved to a mean score of 25.26 and a weighted mean of 3.16 (Good). De Ocampo showed greater improvement, with a mean score of 35.31 and a weighted mean of 4.41 (Very Good).

Overall, both groups started at the Fair level in the pre-test. After instruction, Belardo progressed to Good Level through traditional discussion, while De Ocampo advanced to Very Good Level with the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. Both groups improved, but the experimental group demonstrated a stronger positive impact on students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements.

Research Question 2. Is there a significant difference in the level of students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements between the control and experimental groups before and after implementing the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach?

Table 2 Student's Level of Proficiency in Writing Evaluative Statement in Pre-Test and Post-Test

Groups	Pre-test				Post-test			
	Pretest Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Pretest Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Control Belardo (n=35)	19.34	3.2			25.26	3.19		
Experimental De Ocampo (n=32)	19.25	3.5			35.31	3.24		
Comparison			0.11	0.91			-12.78	<0.0001
Interpretation			No significant difference				Highly significant difference	

Table 2 shows the result of computation of the significant difference between the level of proficiency of the two groups in writing evaluative statement in pre-test and post-test. Independent t-test was used to determine if there is a significant difference between both groups in their pre-test and post-test. This was used since the independent variables are control (Belardo) and experimental (De Ocampo) groups.

The following shows how the pre-test and post-test were computed with the given formula:

Pre-test Computation

Given:

Control (Belardo): $\bar{X}_1 = 19.34$; $S_1 = 3.20$; $n_1 = 35$

Experimental (De Ocampo): $\bar{X}_2 = 19.25$; $S_2 = 3.50$; $n_2 = 32$

1. Standard Error (SE) formula for two independent sample

$$\begin{aligned}
 SE &= \sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{n_2}} \\
 &= \sqrt{\frac{3.2^2}{35} + \frac{3.5^2}{32}} \\
 &= \sqrt{0.2938 + 0.3928} \\
 &= \sqrt{0.6866} \approx 0.828
 \end{aligned}$$

2. Compute the t-value

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{SE} \\
 t &= \frac{19.34 - 19.25}{\sqrt{\frac{3.2^2}{35} + \frac{3.5^2}{32}}} = \frac{0.09}{0.822} \approx 0.11
 \end{aligned}$$

A. Post-Test Computation

Given:

Control (Belardo): $\bar{X}_1 = 25.26$; $S_1 = 3.19$; $n_1 = 35$

Experimental (De Ocampo): $\bar{X}_{22} = 35.31$; $S_2 = 3.24$; $n_2 = 32$

1. Compute the SE

$$= 0.787 = \sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{n_2}}$$

2. Get the t-value

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{SE} = \frac{25.26 - 35.31}{0.787} = \frac{-10.05}{0.787} \approx -12.78$$

The t-distribution was used to determine the probability (p-value), and a two-tailed test was employed to examine whether there was a significant difference between the two groups in their pre-test and post-test scores. Results show that there was no significant difference in the pre-test scores between the control group ($M = 19.34$, $SD = 3.2$) and the experimental group ($M = 19.25$, $SD = 3.5$), indicating that both groups started at a comparable level of proficiency in writing evaluative statements ($t(65) = 0.11$, $p = 0.91$). However, the post-test results reveal a substantial increase in the scores of the experimental group ($M = 35.31$, $SD = 3.24$) compared to the control group ($M = 25.26$, $SD = 3.19$). The t-test value of $t(65) = -12.78$, $p < 0.0001$, indicates a highly significant difference, confirming that the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach was effective in enhancing students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements.

ANCOVA - Post-test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	η^2	$\eta^2 p$
Overall model	1778.0	2	888.98	95.67	< .001		
Group	1698.4	1	1698.37	183.62	< .001	0.717	0.742
Pre-test	79.6	1	79.59	8.61	0.005	0.034	0.119
Residuals	592.0	64	9.25				

The ANCOVA results based on Jamovi statistical tool show that there was a statistically significant difference in the post-test performance of the control and experimental groups after controlling for their pre-test scores. The experimental group (De Ocampo) obtained a higher adjusted post-test mean of 35.3 (95% CI [34.3, 36.4]) compared with the control group (Belardo), which had an adjusted mean of 25.2 (95% CI [24.2, 26.3]). The effect of group was statistically significant, $F(1, 64) = 183.62$, $p < .001$, with a partial η^2 of .742. The pre-test score was also a significant covariate, $F(1, 64) = 8.61$, $p = .005$. Thus, even after accounting for students' initial performance, the two groups differed significantly in their post-test writing performance.

Research Question 3. What is the percentage of students who showed improvement in writing evaluative statements after implementing H.E.A.R.T.S. approach?

Table 3 De Ocampo (experimental group) Students' Score on the Pre-test and Post-test

STUDENT NUMBER	PRETEST	POSTTEST
1	14	31

2	23	38
3	18	36
4	16	25
5	16	31
6	17	33
7	23	32
8	15	36
9	15	30
10	15	35
11	26	37
12	16	39
13	25	36
14	22	35
15	20	35
16	25	37
17	18	36
18	11	38
19	14	39
20	17	31
21	27	39
22	25	39
23	20	36
24	22	39
25	26	38
26	21	37
27	19	33
28	21	37
29	18	37
30	14	34
31	21	37
32	16	34
Total	19.25	35.31

Table 3 shows the pre-test and post-test list of scores of students in writing evaluative statements using the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. By examining the data, majority of the students (all) in the experimental group have a higher post-test score compared to the pre-test score. This means that 32 students out of 32 had improved in the level of proficiency in writing an evaluative statement. Therefore, 100% of students in the experimental group showed improvement in their proficiency in writing evaluative statements after implementing the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach.

Research Question 4. What are the significant experiences of learners in using the intervention?

Following the intervention, qualitative feedback was gathered from selected learners in the experimental group to document their experiences in using the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. Learners were selected based on their participation in the intervention and willingness to provide feedback on their perception, impressions, reactions and reflections in the implementation of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. Their responses were collected through short written reflections. The responses were reviewed, coded according to recurring ideas, and grouped into themes describing learners' experiences with the intervention.

Theme 1. Clarity and Structure in Writing

Many students emphasized how the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach provided a clear, step-by-step guide that made writing evaluative statements easier and more organized. It served as a memorable framework, helping them transition smoothly from one idea to the next.

"It gives me a clear way to organize my thoughts... starting with a hook to catch the reader's attention."

"I can still recall what each letter stands for... transitioning to the next sentence smoother."

Theme 2. Improvement in Expression and Communication

Students felt that the approach helped them express their ideas more clearly, organize thoughts effectively, and enhance the overall impact of their writing. This led to greater confidence in their ability to articulate opinions in a structured way.

"Using this method, I can arrange my ideas better and make my point easier to understand."

"It guides me on how to express my thoughts clearly and support them with good examples."

Theme 3. Critical Thinking and Perspective-Taking

Several learners highlighted that H.E.A.R.T.S. approach encouraged them to think critically, consider counterclaims, and present balanced arguments, which made their writing more thoughtful and persuasive.

"I understand other perspectives through counterclaims and rebuttals."

"It reminds me to think about both sides and make my point clearly and respectfully."

Theme 4. User-Friendliness and Accessibility

Students appreciated the simplicity and ease of use of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. Its accessibility made it less intimidating and more appealing for a wider range of learners.

"It's a simple and effective guide that helps keep your writing clear and persuasive."

“The questions were clear and easy to follow.”

Theme 5. Areas for Improvement

While most feedback was positive, some students noted challenges – particularly with the textual evidence part and the time-consuming nature of the process. This highlights the need for slight adjustments or additional support in these areas.

“I had a hard time when I reached the textual evidence part.”

“It can be a bit too detailed or time-consuming... especially under time pressure.”

Theme 6. Perceived Effectiveness and Applicability

Overall, learners viewed the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach as a useful, effective and applicable method not just in this task, but in general contexts.

“The H.E.A.R.T.S. approach is an effective tool for students.”

“It can help the readers to comprehend the evaluation more clearly.”

Based on the findings of this study, the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach has significantly improved students’ proficiency in writing evaluative statements as reflected by some previous research. The findings are consistent with the broader literature indicating that structured writing scaffolds can support students in organizing ideas, developing arguments, and using evidence in academic writing. The present study extends this line of inquiry by examining a structured guide specifically developed for evaluative statement writing.

Summary

This research was studied to enhance students’ proficiency in writing evaluative statements through H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. Two groups were observed using a quasi-experimental design. The groups were: the control group (Belardo with 35 students) who received traditional writing instruction and the experimental group (De Ocampo with 32 students) who were taught with the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. They both completed a pre-test and a post-test, with scores assessed using a 40-point analytic rubric for evaluative statement writing.

The results showed improvement in both groups, with a greater increase observed in the experimental group. The control group’s mean score increased from 19.34 to 25.26, while the experimental group’s mean score increased from 19.25 to 35.31. An independent-samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in post-test performance between the two groups, $t(65) = -12.78$, $p < .0001$. Furthermore, ANCOVA showed that the difference in post-test performance remained statistically significant after controlling for pre-test scores, $F(1, 64) = 183.62$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .742$.

All 32 students in the experimental group obtained higher post-test scores than their corresponding pre-test scores, indicating that 100% of the students demonstrated improvement in their observed writing proficiency. Qualitative feedback further revealed that learners found the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach helpful in organizing their ideas, expressing their viewpoints clearly, and developing critical perspectives. They particularly appreciated its structured and user-friendly format, although some learners reported difficulty in providing textual evidence and found the process time-consuming.

Overall, the findings indicate that the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach was associated with improved proficiency in writing evaluative statements. The approach provided students with a structured guide that supported the

organization and clarity of their ideas, the development of reasoned positions, and the use of evidence in evaluative writing. Given the quasi-experimental design and pre-existing groups, the findings provide evidence of an association between the H.E.A.R.T.S. intervention and improved writing performance.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study indicate that the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach was associated with improved proficiency in writing evaluative statements among the Grade 11 students who received the intervention. Both the control and experimental groups demonstrated improvement from pre-test to post-test; however, the experimental group showed a substantially greater increase in mean performance, from 19.25 to 35.31, compared with the control group's increase from 19.34 to 25.26.

The independent-samples t-test showed a statistically significant difference in post-test performance between the two groups, $t(65) = -12.78$, $p < .0001$. This finding was further supported by the ANCOVA result, which showed a significant effect of group on post-test performance after controlling for pre-test scores, $F(1, 64) = 183.62$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .742$.

The qualitative findings further indicate that learners perceived the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach as a useful and accessible guide for evaluative writing. Learners reported that the approach helped them organize their ideas, express their viewpoints more clearly, and consider different perspectives when developing their arguments. They also appreciated its structured and easy-to-follow format.

However, some learners experienced difficulty in selecting and providing appropriate textual evidence and found the process somewhat time-consuming, particularly when completing the H.E.A.R.T.S. guide before converting their ideas into paragraph form. Moreover, all 32 students (100%) in the experimental group demonstrated higher post-test scores than their corresponding pre-test scores, indicating improvement in their observed writing proficiency following the intervention.

In conclusion, the study provides evidence that the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach can serve as a structured instructional guide for developing students' evaluative writing proficiency, particularly in organizing ideas, presenting reasoned positions, considering counterclaims, and supporting arguments with textual evidence. The implementation of the approach in the classroom can benefit both teaching and learning and can be adapted for remedial and enrichment activities. It can be an effective tool for teachers to guide students in writing their evaluative statements and can be used as an easy step-by-step guide for student writers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Integrate the H.E.A.R.T.S. Approach into Writing Instruction

Teachers are encouraged to adopt the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in teaching evaluative statements writing tasks. The structured format can help guide students through the process of organizing their ideas and in presenting their arguments with clarity and coherence.

2. Provide Enhanced Scaffolding for Textual Evidence Development

Since some students expressed difficulty with the content of textual evidence, teachers should consider providing additional examples, guiding questions, and mini lessons focusing on how to select and integrate appropriate and credible textual evidence.

3. Train Teachers on the Implementation of the Strategy

Professional development or in-service training should be offered to familiarize teachers in the step-by-step process of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach. The teachers must equip teacher practical knowledge to ensure consistent and effective application of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in their classes.

4. Adapt the Strategy for Time-Constrained Settings

To address student concerns about time management, the teacher may have the students write immediately ideas in paragraph form (in the final draft) their evaluative statements following the guide specified in H.E.A.R.T.S. approach by instructing them which parts written in different paragraphs and use signal words to show coherence in their writing.

5. Encourage Reflective Writing Practices

Teachers can have the learners reflect and evaluate their written output and experience after using the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach to reinforce learning and to help them internalize the steps involved in writing evaluative statements.

6. Further Research and Development

It is recommended that future studies must explore the long-term impact of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach across different year levels and subjects and its adaptability to other types of academic writing, as well as its long-term impact on their future careers of the learners.

7. Use in Remedial and Enrichment Programs

Given its effectiveness, the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach can also be used in remedial instruction for struggling writers or as an enrichment tool for more advanced students who want to further refine their evaluative statement writing skills.

The result of this findings corroborate with Allagui's (2024) findings that the importance of scaffolding strategies targeting self-efficacy to improve confidence in source-based argument writing and hence writing performance.

Action Plan

The implementation of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach is in response to the need for enhancing students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements. Based on the findings of the study, the strategy proved to be highly effective in enhancing students' writing with organization, clarity and critical thinking in writing an evaluative statement task. This action plan outlines the integration of H.E.A.R.T.S. approach into classroom instruction. It provides a sequence of activities for training teachers, supporting learners, and evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention. By following this plan, schools can enhance students' proficiency in writing evaluative statements and foster a more engaging writing evaluative statement and better learning environment.

Objective	Strategies/Activities	Time Frame	Persons Involved	Resources Needed
1. To orient teachers on the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach	Conduct orientation and in-service training sessions on the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach	June	School Heads, Department Heads, Teachers, English Coordinators	Training materials, PPT slides, sample outputs

2. To integrate H.E.A.R.T.S. approach into the writing evaluative instruction	Embed H.E.A.R.T.S. approach in lessons plans and writing evaluative statement activity	Week 1 of Quarter 4	English Teachers and English School Heads	Lesson plans, writing rubric, worksheets
3. To assist students in mastering each component of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach	Teach each letter of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach step-by-step	Week 2 Day 1	English Teachers, students	Visual aids, student handouts, sample essays
4. To improve students' skills in providing textual evidence	Conduct focused mini-lessons and workshops on citing and integrating textual evidence	Week 2 Day 2	Teachers	Sample texts, citation guide, practice worksheets
5. To evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy through assessment	Administer a pre-test and post-test; evaluate progress using the standardized rubric	Week 2 Day 3	Teachers, assessment team	Assessment rubric, results recording sheets
6. To encourage reflection and self-assessment among students	Implement students' journals and reflection logs on the use of the H.E.A.R.T.S. approach	Week 2 Day 4	Teachers and students	Journals, reflection
7. To monitor and evaluate the overall implementation of the intervention	Class observations and feedback sessions	Week 3 Day 5	School heads, English heads, Master Teachers and Teachers	Observation tools, feedback forms
8. To sustain and expand the program based on success	Develop best practices, document success stories, and propose inclusion in curriculum	End of the Quarter	School leaders, teachers, curriculum developers	Documentation tools, video recordings, success stories

Dissemination And Advocacy Plans

The results of this study will be disseminated through a language teaching conference to all Senior High School Language Teachers of the Division of Laoag City and/or through LAC sessions for the language teachers of Ilocos Norte National High School. It will also be presented at research forums and conferences. A copy of the study's findings will be provided to the Learning Resource Management and Development System (LRMDS) of the Division of Laoag City to serve as a basis for future studies aimed at enhancing students' proficiency writing evaluative statement through the H.E.A.R.T.S. framework.

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APPENDIX A

HEARTS	WRITING GUIDE
H ook the reader	Grab your reader's attention using one of these methods: a thought-provoking question, a famous quote, an amazing statement, a memorable song lyric, a surprising statistic, or a relatable anecdote.
E xpose the background/Explain the significance of the topic	What is the topic all about? Why is it important to the reader? What benefit can they get from reading the article? What are the advantages they can get from reading it? What is the impact of the topic on the reader?
A uthor's claim stated in the article	What's the title and source of the article? What is the context of the article? What is the writer's argument, position or point of view? Is his stand directly or indirectly stated? What are the evidences used to support his claim?
R ebuttal for counterclaim/ Restate the claim for assertion	What is your stand on the topic? Do you agree or disagree on the author's claim? If making assertion or you agree to the claim given, restate your claim and provide your reasons. If you refute, what made the article false? What makes you approve to the author's point? Write 3 assertions or counterclaims to the given topic.
T extual Evidence	If you are writing a rebuttal or disproof, provide evidences that will prove your stand. If you are writing an assertion or agree to the author's claim, mention the textual evidences given by the author and provide additional supporting details. Are your evidences valid and credible? If so, provide your sources.
S ummary of your stand	Repeat your stand in a short statement. You may challenge, persuade, or encourage your audience to believe your stand.

Legend: - introduction

-body

-conclusion

APPENDIX B

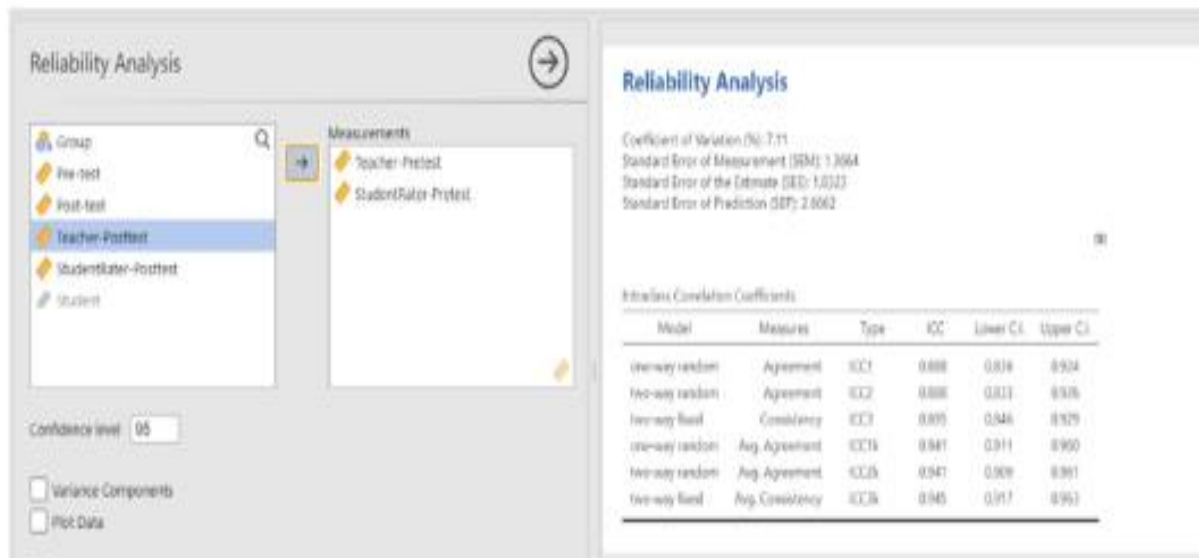
CRITERIA	5 EXCELLENT	4 PROFICIENT	3 SATISFACTORY	2 DEVELOPING	1 NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Title	Clear, engaging, and reflective of the topic and argument. Captures the reader's attention and provides insight into the content.	Clear title that reflects the topic and argument, though may lack a bit of creativity or engagement.	Basic title that reflects the topic but lacks specificity or creativity.	Weak or unclear title that does not fully reflect the topic or argument.	No title or the title is irrelevant to the content.
Introduction and Engagement	Captivating opening that immediately grabs attention and introduces the topic effectively.	Engaging hook that introduces the topic well.	Basic introduction that relates to the topic but lacks impact.	Weak or unclear opening that does not engage the reader.	No clear hook; the introduction is missing or unrelated.
Background and Context	Thoroughly explains why the topic is important, addressing its relevance and broader implications. Demonstrates strong insight into the topic's significance.	Clearly explains the importance of the topic, though may lack full exploration of broader implications.	Provides a general explanation of why the topic is important but doesn't fully explore its significance.	Minimal explanation of the topic's importance, focusing only on surface-level ideas.	Fails to explain why the topic is important, or explanation is irrelevant or missing.
Understanding and Interpretation	Clearly identifies the author's claim or argument and explains it thoroughly, demonstrating full understanding of the text.	Identifies the author's claim clearly but may lack some depth in explanation.	Identifies the author's claim, but the explanation lacks clarity or depth.	The author's claim is unclear or only partially identified.	The claim of the author is not identified or is completely misinterpreted.
Evaluation and Reasoning	Provides a thorough evaluation of the author's claim, offering critical insight, agreement, or disagreement with strong reasoning.	Evaluates the author's claim with some critical thought, providing a clear response with valid reasoning.	Attempts an evaluation of the author's claim but lacks depth or sufficient reasoning.	Provides minimal evaluation of the author's claim, with weak or unclear reasoning.	No evaluation or critique of the author's claim provided.
Use of Evidence	Strong, well-integrated textual evidence that clearly supports the claim.	Relevant textual evidence, though some parts may be underdeveloped.	Includes evidence, but it may not be strongly connected to the claim.	Limited or weak textual evidence that does not fully support the claim.	No textual evidence provided.
Conclusion and Synthesis	Concludes effectively by reinforcing the claim and key ideas in a powerful way.	Provides a solid summary that restates key points.	Basic summary that restates the claim but lacks impact.	Weak or unclear summary that does not reinforce the argument.	No summary or conclusion present.
Mechanics and Conventions	Writing is free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. Demonstrates strong command of language conventions.	There are 1-2 errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or sentence structure that do not impede understanding.	There are 3-5 errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation that occasionally hinder readability.	There are 6-10 errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation that make writing difficult to follow.	Numerous errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or sentence structure, severely affecting readability.

APPENDIX C

Belardo						
Belardo	Pre-Test			Post Test		
	Teacher Rate	Student Rate	Result	Teacher Rate	Student Rate	Result
1	10	11	11	24	29	27
2	12	16	14	28	22	25
3	14	14	14	23	28	26
4	13	16	15	23	30	27
5	15	16	16	26	24	25
6	17	18	18	20	21	22
7	16	19	18	27	28	28
8	16	19	18	29	27	28
9	19	19	19	25	23	24
10	19	21	20	26	22	24
11	20	20	20	20	20	20
12	20	21	21	23	23	23
13	19	22	21	26	22	24
14	21	22	22	25	23	24
15	22	22	22	26	26	24
16	22	21	22	28	28	28
17	23	23	23	27	26	27
18	21	24	23	23	21	22
19	22	23	23	29	27	28
20	23	25	24	24	25	25
21	24	23	24	35	35	35
22	23	25	24	28	28	28
23	25	23	24	27	27	27
24	26	24	25	27	30	29
25	24	25	25	28	26	27
26	10	12	11	21	19	20
27	12	12	12	28	26	27
28	15	13	14	20	20	20
29	18	18	18	22	23	23
30	19	17	18	24	24	24
31	18	19	19	24	24	24
32	18	20	19	26	27	26
33	19	20	20	19	21	20
34	21	19	20	31	29	30
35	20	20	20	24	22	23

De Ocampo						
Student Number	Pre-Test			Post Test		
	Teacher Rate	Student Rate	Result	Teacher Rate	Student Rate	Result
1	14	14	14	31	31	31
2	23	23	23	38	38	38
3	18	18	18	36	35	36
4	15	17	16	26	24	25
5	15	17	16	31	31	31
6	16	17	17	32	33	33
7	24	22	23	33	31	32
8	15	14	15	35	36	36
9	16	16	15	30	30	30
10	15	15	15	35	35	35
11	25	26	26	37	37	37
12	16	16	16	39	39	39
13	26	24	25	35	36	36
14	23	21	22	35	35	35
15	20	20	20	36	34	35
16	25	25	25	37	37	37
17	18	28	18	36	36	36
18	11	11	11	37	38	38
19	15	13	14	38	39	39
20	17	17	17	30	32	31
21	28	27	27	38	39	39
22	24	25	25	39	39	39
23	19	21	20	36	36	36
24	22	22	22	38	39	39
25	25	27	26	38	38	38
26	21	21	21	38	36	37
27	20	18	19	32	33	33
28	20	21	21	37	37	37
29	16	19	18	37	37	37
30	15	13	14	34	34	34
31	21	21	21	37	37	37
32	15	16	16	33	35	34

Appendix D



INSTRUMENT VALIDATION SHEET
HEARTS Approach for Writing an Evaluative Statement
 (https://www.spedavzo.edu.ph/home/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FORM-I-INSTRUMENT-
 VALIDATION-SHEET-Graduate-School-Undergraduate-and-Senior-High.pdf, n.d.)

DATE: 02/19/2026

Name of Evaluator	VERONICA F. GUERRERO
Highest Educational Attainment	EdD
Institutional Affiliation	JNHS
Position	MASTER TEACHER II

Instructions: This tool asks for your evaluation of the effectiveness and validity of the HEARTS framework in guiding the writing of a clear and well-supported evaluative statement as used in the research titled "Improving the Critical Thinking of Students in Writing Evaluative Statement (ES) Through HEARTS". You are requested to give your honest assessment using the criteria stated below. Please check (✓) only one from the selection.

Point Equivalent:

5-Excellent	4-Very Good	3-Good	2-Fair	1- Needs Improvement		
Performance Elements		Performance Ratings				
		5	4	3	2	1
Clarity of Language	1. The vocabulary level, language, structure, and conceptual level of the instruction suits the level of respondents.	✓				
	2. Each section is written in a clear and understandable manner and can be independently applied by students with minimal guidance	✓				
Content Relevance	3. The framework helps students include engaging and attention-grabbing opening (hook) to capture the reader's interest.	✓				
	4. It encourages students to explain why the topic is important or relevant to the reader.	✓				
	5. It helps students clearly state the author's claim or their argument (position) on the topic being evaluated.	✓				
	6. It guides students to address opposing viewpoints (rebuttal) or restate their original claim (assertion).	✓				
	7. It provides clear guidance in incorporating textual evidence to support the author's claim or argument.	✓				

INSTRUMENT VALIDATION SHEET
HEARTS Approach for Writing an Evaluative Statement
 (https://www.spedavzo.edu.ph/home/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FORM-I-INSTRUMENT-
 VALIDATION-SHEET-Graduate-School-Undergraduate-and-Senior-High.pdf, n.d.)

DATE: 02-19-2026

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Highest Educational Attainment	EdD
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Point Equivalent:

5-Excellent	4-Very Good	3-Good	2-Fair	1- Needs Improvement		
Performance Elements		Performance Ratings				
		5	4	3	2	1
Clarity of Language	1. The vocabulary level, language, structure, and conceptual level of the instruction suits the level of respondents.	✓				
	2. Each section is written in a clear and understandable manner and can be independently applied by students with minimal guidance.	✓				
Content Relevance	3. The framework helps students include engaging and attention-grabbing opening (hook) to capture the reader's interest.	✓				
	4. It encourages students to explain why the topic is important or relevant to the reader.	✓				
	5. It helps students clearly state the author's claim or their argument (position) on the topic being evaluated.	✓				
	6. It guides students to address opposing viewpoints (rebuttal) or restate their original claim (assertion).	✓				
	7. It provides clear guidance in incorporating textual evidence to support the author's claim or argument.	✓				