COMPOSITION WRITING ERRORS OF GRADE IV PUPILS OF DADIANGAS WEST CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: BASIS FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAM

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Abstract: **This study was conducted to find out the composition writing errors of grade 4 pupils of Dadiangas West Central Elementary School enrolled during the school year 2017 - 2018 as basis in proposing an intervention program. This study used a descriptive survey design. Complete enumeration was used since it utilized the entire population. A writing proficiency rubric was constructed. Frequency counts and weighted mean were used as the statistical tools to interpret the gathered data. Findings of the study revealed that the respondents' most common error was committed when writing the content followed by errors on organization, grammars, and writing mechanics. Thus, a Writing Enhancement Program is proposed to eliminate the errors of the pupils in writing composition as supported by its theoretical framework, Process Genre Approach (Badger and White, 2009) that recognized the effective teaching methodology for writing needs to integrate the insights from product, process, and genre approaches.**

Keywords: **Composition writing error, proposed writing proficiency, enhancement program, grammar, writing mechanics, organization, content error, Philippines.**

1. INTRODUCTION

As one of the four macro skills, writing is a productive and communicative language skill that requires mental effort to produce sentences and paragraphs. Nevertheless, we teach writing to assist learners in practicing and using the writing skills at school, higher education, and future work. It is also a necessary method to express learners' needs, feelings, and thoughts. Therefore, writing is one of the four macro skills that require four steps in teaching it: prewriting, writing, revision, and editing (Calkins, 1983).

Writing is a transformational process of learners' concepts into language. Therefore, teachers teach writing as a means of self-expression and creation through comprehensible and conventional clear marks. Thus, it is a successful way to enhance students' thinking in discovering themselves and the world (Adelstein and Pival, 1984).

English language learners always make errors and mistakes in their learning process. As James (1998) mentioned, "People are susceptible not only to commit language errors themselves but also in their judgments of those mistakes committed by others." David Den also highlighted, "It is common among the learner to be "mistaken." Thus, it is unavoidable that learners make errors in the procedure of second language learning, and they are struggling on the great need to be efficient in four macro skills of second language learning, namely: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Distinctively, they usually make errors when they write essays in English.

As emphasized by Robinson (1998), error-making is a natural phenomenon in learning of all kinds. However, learners execute the same errors even when such errors have been pointed out repeatedly to them is what has been interrogated by native English speakers. It is a complex process that requires meticulous application of grammar and mechanics.

Error analysis has become a fascinating task for teachers teaching writing. It helps them identify their teaching methodologies and their learners' capability in writing and leads them in selecting the topics and strategies that best suit learners' capacity. Furthermore, teachers find teaching writing laborious as it requires a lot of carefulness and effort. Thus, patience is needed for the teachers to enhance the ability of learners to write. Moreover, teachers suffer the weight of correcting their learners' composition because learners seem to be writing without using the correct grammar, appropriate guidelines, and mechanisms in writing instructed to them. By classifying and describing the learners' errors in linguistic terms, the researcher can build a language picture, causing the learners' learning problems.

Hence, to furnish information about the kind and frequency of errors made in composition writing and whether these errors were general or confined to pupils, the researcher conducted a study on the written output of Grade IV pupils in Dadiangas West Central Elementary School during the academic year 2017– 2018.

Purpose of the study

This research aimed to determine the common writing composition errors of Grade IV pupils of Dadiangas West Central Elementary School during the academic year 2017-2018.

Research Questions

The researcher sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the most common error occurred in writing composition among Grade IV pupils?

2. What intervention program can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Theoretical Lens

The study anchored on the Process Genre Approach theoretical model for teaching writing skills by Badger and White (2009), which recognizes that effective teaching methodology for writing needs to integrate the insights from the product, process, and genre approaches.

According to Badger and White (2009), the evolution of writing in a process genre (integrated) approach, classroom learning takes place when teachers draw out students' potential and provide appropriate input to them. It also noted that the development varies between different groups of students because they are at various stages of their writing development. For example, students who are known for producing a particular genre, and are proficient in it, may require little or no input. Some may be aware of how the potential audience recognizes the written essay, while another group may lack an understanding of what language is suitable to a specific audience.

Badger and White (2009) further identified three possible sources of input in a process genre approach to teaching writing skills: teachers, learners, and samples of the target genre. Teachers provide information in terms of instruction on language use and content, for instance, by asking students to think about why they are writing a particular essay or story. An alternative to this can be a demonstration by the teacher.

Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study would be helpful to the following: *Principal*. This study would be beneficial to teachers to get the clearness in the use of the methodology. It improves the quality of teaching the English language, specifically in written work at schools. Assurance that their learners were competitive enough in dealing with such written skills in various fields and it strengthens the mission and vision of the school itself in achieving quality education; *Teachers*. This study would give them salient information necessary to adjust their teaching to their learners' writing potentials and capabilities. In doing so, the teachers can increase their teaching effectiveness in writing composition. *Parents*. This study would help them assess the writing ability of their children, particularly in grammar, writing mechanics, organization, and content errors.

Respondents. The researcher expected them to learn by improving their writing skills to correctly implement correct grammar, vocabulary, and English language words. They are also likely to have better speaking fluency and have great willingness to answer teacher question orally, and they would have a chance to practice English without stressing and they like English and learn it with enjoyment;

2. METHOD

In this study, the design included the quantitative descriptive research approaches, research environment, research instruments, data gathering procedures, and data analysis. Specifically, it employed the descriptive survey design. The design is also called a one-shot survey because the data were collected once. According to David (2009a), a researcher must use this design when the study objective is to describe a situation/ condition of a population as it exists or to determine /describe the characteristics of a population/ respondents.

The researcher identified the significant effect on composition writing errors of Grade IV pupils.

According to McCombes (2019), Descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon. It can answer what, when, where, and how questions, but not why. A descriptive research design can use a wide variety of research methods to investigate one or more variables. Unlike in experimental research, the researcher does not control or manipulate any of the variables but only observes and measures them.

This researcher conducted this study at Dadiangas West Central Elementary School for SY 2017 - 2018, Brgy. Dad. West, General Santos City. It is a public elementary school located at Magsaysay Avenue, General Santos City in the municipality of General Santos City, in the province of South Cotabato, and the Region XII – Socsksargen and established on January 01, 1949, 69 years ago. This school has a total of 4 200 enrollees from preschool to grade 6 with 116 teachers. It aims for academic excellence. That is why the principal is doing his best to solicit funds for constructing another building to attain the 45 pupils' is to 1 teacher ratio. The respondents were the total population of Grade IV section Peacock (Cluster C) pupils with 21 girls and 34 boys in Dadiangas West Central Elementary School for 2017 – 2018.

In this study, the researcher used the total enumeration since it utilized the entire population. However, according to David (2009b), it was used when all the people were being studied. Therefore, the study included all grade IV pupils (Cluster C) enrolled during the Academic Year 2017 – 2018.

The researcher constructed a test questionnaire to gather the necessary data for the study. Moreover, she completed a writing composition rubric to determine the chronic errors of the learners in writing, which was analyzed in the four components – grammar, writing mechanics, organization, and content error as criteria duly validated by at least three (3) experts in their chosen field of specialization.

The study used a writing composition rubric subjected to the validation of the experts in the field. Expert validators were chosen based on their expertise about the topic and the research methodology of the study. The questionnaire was validated using the following criteria: 1) clarity of direction and indicators; 2) presentation and organization of indicators; 3) suitability of indicators 4) adequacy of indicators per category; 5) attainment of the purpose; 6) impartiality of the researcher: 7) appropriateness of scale and evaluation rating system. As a result, the instrument got an overall weighted mean of 4.43, described as very good, thus, valid, and appropriate to use.

The researcher observed the following procedures in gathering the data:

Firstly, the researcher sent a letter to the school principal asking for permission to conduct the study. After the principal approved the study, the researcher identified her respondents. During the meeting, they were enlightened about the research and the time and place to distribute the questionnaire. Lastly, during the writing activity, she gave each respondent a piece of paper that contained the question or the topic as their basis in writing a composition. She gave them an hour to write their essay. Their output was collected and subjected to analysis using the rubric.

To determine the composition writing errors of the pupils, a weighted mean was used. To come to a definite interpretation of each scale, the researcher allocated the following hypothetical mean range to the scale:

Scale		Range	Description
5	-	4.50-5.00	Very Highly Proficient
4	-	3.50-4.49	Highly Proficient
3	-	2.50-3.49	Moderately Proficient
2	-	1.50-2.49	Low Proficient
1	-	1.00-1.49	Very Low Proficient

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Composition Writing Error

Table 1 presents the mean distribution of the composition writing errors of Cluster C Grade 4 Pupils of Dadiangas West Central Elementary School. The table reveals that the most common mistake in writing composition using the English Language of the respondents falls under content errors as determined by its mean of 2.05, which indicates that pupils are less proficient and that they do not tell a sound synthesis of ideas and shows 3-4 errors in connecting topic and unique ideas.

According to Somchai and Siriluck (2013), these errors could be due to the inadequacy of syntactic and lexical competence. Similarly, Weigle (2002) suggested that the restriction of limited L2 knowledge may hinder L2 writing due to the necessity to focus on language rather than on content. Finally, Muhsin (2016) proposed that different types of learners' errors can relate to omission, overinclusion, misselection, misordering of ideas, blends, addition, and misinformation.

Furthermore, the pupils also showed errors along with the other writing proficiency components. In terms of grammar, the pupils are less proficient, with a mean of 2.45. It means that the pupils can write but with 7-9 errors in using proper tenses of verbs, 7-9 mistakes in s-v agreement 7-9 improper prepositions and word choice. Moreover, in terms of writing mechanics, the pupils are also less proficient, as reflected by its mean of 2.20. The pupil can write with 7-8 incorrect capitalization, 7-8 incorrect punctuation, and 7-8 incorrect spelling. Finally, in terms of organization, the result shows that the pupils are also less proficient, with a mean of 2.27. The learner's writing does not offer a degree of attention to logic to the reasoning of points and with 4-5 irrelevant ideas and stirs thought regarding the topic.

According to Obeidat, H. A. (2014), the study was similar to that of Mukattash, L. (2013) in examining the semantic and syntactic errors in the written composition of Arab EFL learners. Students in both studies made interlingual errors in determiners usage and preposition, retaining presumptive pronouns in relative clauses, missing subjects and copula, word order, and verb and preposition idioms. Students also found interlingual mistakes in proverbs and sayings, prefabricated expressions, and forms of address. He also found proof of linguistic interference. Intralingual errors found in wh-questions and relative pronoun, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary, copula, word choice, and tense usage. The author affirms that some errors such as copula and third-person singular -s deletion confirm universal grammar.

Moreover, Mitchell and Myles (2004) claim that errors, if studied, could disclose a developing system of the learners' L2 language. This system is open to changes and dynamic and resetting of parameters. Start (2001: 19) supported this view in his study, which also expanded that the teachers need to view learners' errors positively and should not regard them as the learners' failure to grasp the structures and rules but view the errors as a learning process. He subscribes to the view that errors are inevitable and expected features of learning. He also pointed that errors are a necessary condition of education. Therefore, teachers should identify the errors made by their students and classify them into class as, at times, some grammars tend to overlap each other. Confusing students on which one is the correct one. By pointing out and teaching them as a whole class, students need to smoothly enhance the teaching and learning progress.

Table 1: Mean Distribution of the Composition Writing Error of Grade 4 Pupils of Dadiangas West Elementary School

Components	Mean	Description
Content Error	2.05	Less proficient
Writing Mechanics	2.20	Less proficient
Organization	2.27	Less proficient
Grammar	2.45	Less proficient
	2.25	Less proficient

Proposed Intervention Program

I. Title: WRITING COMPOSITION PROFICIENCY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

II. Proponent: APRIL ANN F. DIZON

III. Program Description: The program is known as "WRITING COMPOSITION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM" and will improve pupils' skills in writing composition.

IV. Rationale

The Writing Proficiency Enhancement Program will help enhance the capabilities of the learners in writing in English. It will address the identified weaknesses of the students in grammar, such as their difficulty in using proper tenses of verbs, errors in subject-verb agreement, improper use of prepositions and words. In terms of writing mechanics, this program will help them deal with their problems in capitalization and wrong spelling. In terms of organization, this program will help them deal with their issues in organizing irrelevant and unclear ideas regarding the chosen topic. Finally, this program will help them synthesize their ideas with in-depth analysis, original thought, and support for the subject in terms of content errors.

V. Program's General Objective

1. Enhance the ability of the pupils to write composition essays that shows adherence to grammar, writing mechanics, organization, and content.

Findings	Strategies	Specific Objectives	Expected Outcome	Budget	Person Involved
a. Difficulty in using proper tenses of verbs, errors in subject—verb agreement, improper use of prepositions and words.	Lecture on the proper usage of tenses of verbs, errors in subject-verb agreement, improper usage of prepositions and words.	Increase their ability and knowledge in using proper tenses of verbs, subject-verb agreement, and proper use of prepositions and words.	75% of the pupils increased their ability and knowledge in using proper tenses of verbs, subject-verb agreement, and proper use of prepositions and words.	P 5,000	English subject teacher Pupils
b. Difficulty in dealing with their problems in capitalization and wrong spelling	Lecture in dealing with their problems in capitalization and wrong spelling.	Increase their ability in dealing with their problems in capitalization and wrong spelling.	75% of the pupils increase their ability in dealing with their problems in capitalization and wrong spelling.		
c. Difficulty in dealing with their problems in organizing unclear and irrelevant ideas regarding the chosen topic	Lecture in dealing with their problems in organizing unclear and irrelevant ideas regarding the chosen topic	Increase in dealing with their problems in organizing clear and relevant ideas regarding the chosen topic	75% of the pupils increase in dealing with their problems in organizing clear and relevant ideas regarding the chosen topic		
d. Difficulty in synthesizing their ideas with in – depth analysis, original thought and support for topic.	Lecture in synthesizing their ideas with in – depth analysis, original thought and support for topic.	Increase their ability in synthesizing their ideas with in – depth analysis, original thought and support for topic.	75% of the pupils increase their ability in synthesizing their ideas with in – depth analysis, original thought and support for topic.		

VI. Description of Strategies

1. Lecture and workshop on Basic English Grammar. This strategy aims to teach students the proper usage of tenses of verbs, errors in subject-verb agreement, improper use of prepositions and words.

2. Online Remediation. This strategy aims to teach the pupils basic grammar rules, prepositions capitalization, spelling, how to organize ideas, and writing. It will also include series of activities such as drills and games. An online platform will also be utilized considering the current emergency health that the country is facing,

3. Utilization of Modules. A module on the various writing components will be utilized. We used these modules during home visitations or online classes with the guidance of the subject teacher.

4. Vocabulary Enrichment. Enriching the learners' vocabulary in the English Language is also one of the best ways that will permit them to express their thoughts and feelings through writing. In addition, this activity allows them to learn many words as their tool in producing a composition.

5. Writing Workshops. This strategy aims to teach the pupils of the writing process. This strategy will teach them how to generate ideas, organize their ideas, and teach them techniques for expressing their thoughts effectively. These processes are prewriting, during writing, post writing.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the results of this study, the researcher is drawn to the following conclusions:

1. The respondents were less proficient in writing composition, but their most common error was writing its content during composition writing.

2. Therefore, as part of the study's intervention program, the Writing Proficiency Enhancement Program through lecture, workshop, online remediation, writing activities, home visitation would be implemented to improve the composition writing skills of the respondents that focuses on the four components – grammar, writing mechanics, organization and content error, as part of the study's intervention program.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings of the present study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The learners, especially those who were less proficient in their writing composition skills, must participate in the writing composition proficiency activities or programs to address their problems.

2. Teachers may give essays to pupils to evaluate their mastery of the lessons instead of the usual multiple-choice test to encourage them to express their ideas in writing and help improve their ability in English composition writing.

3. English teachers may employ different teaching methods and differentiated instructions to have meaningful, functional, and relevant learning experiences to help them.

4. The English teachers can adopt the proposed enhancement program to help slow learners enhance their writing composition skills, particularly on the four components – grammar, writing mechanics, organization, and content error.

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