
The Effect of Process Approach in Writing via Edmodo on the Academic Writing Performance of Grade 8 Students

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ABSTRACT

This study tested the effects of process approach in writing via Edmodo on the academic writing performance of Grade 8 students. It was conducted at Bukidnon State University – Secondary School Laboratory during the school year 2018-2019. A one group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design was utilized in the study. The expository writing was given emphasis in the lesson which was implemented following the five stages, namely, pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. This quasi-experimental study revealed a significant difference in the scores of the students in the pretest and posttest. This means that the writing performance of the students significantly increased when process approach in writing is introduced using Edmodo. It revealed further the positive and negative experiences of the learners in using Edmodo. Their positive experiences include Edmodo as an interactive, collaborative, and innovative platform that could improve their writing performance while their negative experience is in the weak internet connection. On-line platform is a good avenue to be used by writing teachers in teaching writing, provided that internet connection is strong. Therefore, a sustainable IT infrastructure is recommended to be prioritized.

KEYWORDS: *process writing approach, Edmodo, academic performance*

INTRODUCTION

Writing has been one of the essential skills in teaching English and one of the five core language skills that learners of the second language need to master. It is a skill which a learner shall master because it is one of the tools that promotes higher order thinking. One of the ways to which teachers can sustain students' interest in writing is the use of process approach in the teaching of writing. Process writing is an approach to writing where learners are given the opportunity to focus on the process by which they produce their output (Onozawa, 2010). This approach in writing is seen as predominantly having to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as knowledge about grammar and text structure (Badger and White, 1999). With today's 21st-century cohort of learners, the need to merge this process approach with other techniques is timely and relevant. This is due to the fast-changing technological generation that contributed so much to the way the teaching of writing has evolved today. As an add on to the process approach, writing teachers in a 21st- century language class can make use of information communication technology (ICT) to sustain the students' interest in writing. One of the common ICT platforms which are student and teacher friendly is the Edmodo. The Edmodo is a website designed for educational purposes. Edmodo is

recommended as a valuable tool for specific kinds of writing tasks to allow students to interact and this sort of personal interaction encourages discussion and feedback from fellow students as well as from the teachers (Charoenwet and Christensen, 2016). For instructions to be meaningful in today's generation, teachers have to incorporate approaches to improve the teaching-learning process. Teachers have to pay particular attention to teaching various subjects in the advent of the reforms under the K to 12 Program and the growing importance of honing well-rounded learners who are expected to be able to compete in the current as well as future economies (DepEd Order 39, s.2016).

In the case of the Grade 8 students of the BuKSU – Secondary School Laboratory for the school year, it was observed that they need enrichment in the teaching of writing and innovation of strategies to motivate them to write especially that writing is not usually inviting among them. With this, there is an implication that writing teachers have to innovate strategies in the teaching of writing. Likewise, this writing process helps the students to be guided in the duration of completing and finalizing their output. Aside from that, it is also reasonable to use modern technology which is a good avenue for writing which is in the form of Edmodo. This context prompted the researcher to conduct a study on the effects of the process approach via Edmodo on the academic writing performance of Grade 8 students of Bukidnon State University – Secondary School Laboratory. This study further investigated the writing experiences of Grade 8 students in the use of Edmodo.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

On Academic Writing

According to Oshima and Houge (2007), academic writing is one kind of writing that the students used in college and high school classes. This kind of writing is ordered, structured and organized and it involves writing process, elements of writing and accuracy in writing. It is not easy to write academically, and it takes time and effort (Bailey, 2011). Mastery of this standard system is an important prerequisite for culture and education participation and the maintenance of one's rights and duties.

On Process Approach in Writing

As its name itself, process approach, it concentrates on the process someone goes through when writing including generating ideas, deciding which ideas are relevant to the message and then using the language available to transfer that message in a process that evolves as it develops. Peer correction and group evaluation are encouraged in this activity. This process takes an additional investment of teacher's time since every student is likely to have his/her unique mix of problems and therefore each piece of writing must be replied separately for it leads to an improvement (White & Arndt, 1991). In reality, the writing process is more challenging since it goes through the various stages of drafting, reviewing, re-drafting and writing. As Harmer (2007) presents in his process, he claims that it is better to see writing as a kind of process 'wheel'. Writers move both around the circumference of the wheel and across the spokes. And even when they have written what they think is the final version of their work,

they may still, at the last moment, go back and re-plan or re-visit stages writers had thought they had completed.

On Edmodo

Edmodo is a social learning platform and private micro-blogging for teachers and students. It was initially founded in 2008 by O'Hara and Borg. Members of the platform can share an idea, files, events, and assignments in a virtual setting (Jarc, 2010). According to Hourdequin (2014), Edmodo is a free online learning management system that provides a private virtual space for students and teachers to share and discuss the text, images, audio, and video. Edmodo communities are formed by teachers for specific groups of students –usually classes. By using Edmodo as the extension of the face-to-face interaction, it is expected that students can improve their English proficiency in a provided length of time (Dewi, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a one-group pre- and post-tests quasi-experimental research design in determining the effectiveness of the process approach via Edmodo in developing the learner's writing skills. In this design, the researcher subjected only one group of participants to the process approach in writing through Edmodo; hence, there is no control group in this study. The researcher conducted the study at Bukidnon State University – Secondary School Laboratory located in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon. The participants of this study were the students from one section of Grade 8 of Buksu – SSL of the school year 2018 – 2019. The class composed of 58 students who were all taken to participate in the study. These students are diverse in the sense that they have different learning styles and capabilities but with common interests, the use of technology.

Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this study were the researcher-made expository writing prompt, rubric and guide questions for the journal entries. These three instruments underwent experts' validation and a series of revisions before the researcher finalized and administered it to the participants. The first instrument used in this study is the writing prompt that served as the pre and post-tests for the students.

Frame 1 is the writing prompt used in the pre and post-test of the participants.

Much has been written about the positive and negative effects of social media on young people. Think about a social medium (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, Twitter, etc.) and write a 4-paragraph essay explaining how this affects your studies.

Frame 1. The Writing Prompt

The rubric is also another instrument utilized in this study. This rubric served as the raters' guide in marking the essays of the students before and after the implementation of the writing lessons using Edmodo. The distribution of scores ranges from 1 up to 4, where the researcher

labelled 1 as Novice Writer, 2 as Intermediate Writer, 3 as Advanced Writer, and 4 as Expert Writer.

Criteria		4 (Expert Writer)	3 (Advanced Writer)	2 (Intermediate Writer)	1 (Novice Writer)	Total
Organization	Clarity	The topic is very clearly introduced.	The topic is clearly introduced.	The topic is quite clearly introduced.	The topic is unclearly introduced.	
	Logic	The topic is introduced in a very logical manner.	The topic is introduced in a logical manner.	The topic is introduced in a quite logical manner.	The topic is introduced in illogical manner.	
	Organization	The ideas presented from introduction to conclusion are very organized.	The ideas presented from introduction to conclusion are organized.	The ideas presented from introduction to conclusion are inadequately organized.	The ideas presented from introduction to conclusion are disorganized.	
Development of Ideas	Reliability	The topic is developed with reliable facts all throughout.	The topic is developed with some reliable facts.	The topic is developed with few reliable facts.	The topic is developed with no reliable facts.	
	Clarity of Supporting Ideas	Ideas related to the topic are presented very clearly.	Ideas related to the topic are presented clearly.	Ideas related to the topic are presented fairly clear.	Ideas related to the topic are presented unclearly.	
	Consistency	The presented facts support the topic very consistently.	The presented facts support the topic consistently.	The presented facts support the topic less consistent.	The presented facts support the topic inconsistently.	
Use of Language / Conventions and Grammar	Appropriateness of Diction	The writer's word choice is very appropriate to the topic.	The writer's word choice is appropriate to the topic.	The writer's word choice is somehow appropriate to the topic.	The writer's word choice is inappropriate to the topic.	
	Grammatical Accuracy	The essay observes grammatical accuracy all throughout.	The essay displays few grammatical errors.	The essay displays many grammatical errors.	The essay is full of grammatical errors.	
	Accuracy of Spelling, Capitalization and Punctuation	The essay is generally free from errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation all throughout.	The essay displays few errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation.	The essay displays many errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation.	The essay displays a pattern of errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation.	
Total						

Figure 1. Expository Writing Rubric

The third instrument used in this study is the set of questions for the journal entries.

There are three guide questions prepared for them to determine their experiences in the use of the Edmodo platform in writing an expository essay. The participants were asked to answer the questions after the implementation of the process approach in writing through the use of Edmodo. Their attitude, positive and negative experiences towards the use of the Edmodo platform in writing activities were the focus in the guide questions.

Scoring Procedure

The researcher and the inter-raters scored the writing outputs of the students according to the writing rubric. In every sub-criterion the highest possible score they could get is four (4), and the perfect score is 36. Table 1 shows the scoring scheme for the study.

Table 1. The Scoring Scheme of the Study

Score	Range	Qualitative Description	Qualitative Statement
4	3.26-4.00	Expert Writer	The writer can introduce very clearly the topic in a very logical manner with reliable facts that are very organized from introduction to conclusion and are generally free from errors in mechanical aspects and the word choice is very appropriate to the topic.
3	2.51-3.25	Advanced Writer	The writer can introduce clearly the topic in a logical manner with some reliable facts organized from introduction to conclusion. The essay displays few errors in mechanical aspects and word choice is appropriate to the topic.
2	1.76-2.50	Intermediate Writer	The writer can introduce quite clearly the topic in a quite logical manner with few reliable facts inadequately organized from introduction to conclusion. The essay displays many errors in mechanical aspects and word choice is somehow appropriate to the topic.
1	1.00-1.75	Novice Writer	The writer can't introduce clearly the topic in an illogical manner with no reliable facts from introduction to conclusion. The essay displays a pattern of errors in mechanical aspects and word choice is inappropriate to the topic.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher followed all the protocol by asking the approval of the university officials for this purpose. The researcher asked the approval of the University President down to the SSL Principal for the conduct of the study. The approval of the IT Officer was also sought since

the implementation of the lesson was conducted at the college computer laboratory because of the limitations of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) of the SSL. The pre-test was administered to the students. The pre-test required the students to write an expository essay following the writing prompt in one and a half hours. After the submission of the students' outputs, the researcher printed them and gave the papers to the inter-raters.

For this study, the researcher adopted Hyland's (2003) five-stage writing process which is the following; pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The pre-writing stage signaled the start of the writing process approach. In this stage, the topic was introduced and parts of an essay were also discussed like the introduction, body, and conclusion. The purpose of writing, the audience, and the text structure were also discussed. Then, they were asked to brainstorm and organize their ideas, and made an outline or concept map. After organizing their ideas, the next activity was drafting. In here, they were reminded to emphasize on the content, not on the mechanical aspects like such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling. After this part was revising. This part promoted the collaboration of students-teacher and students-students. The teacher commented the students' works and the students also commented on their classmates' works. Not only commenting, but also there were suggestions and they were able to share each other's work. The teacher here gave feedback to students' output. The students then change the substance of their paper because the content was the main concern. After revising was editing. In this stage, the students proofread their work. They paid attention to mechanics such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling. This also involved careful checking of the text to ensure that there is no error in spelling, word order, word choice, and punctuation. Their peers could also help them in editing. The last phase was publishing which is the final stage of the writing process. In this stage, the writing outputs that were revised and edited may be published. In this case, it could be their classroom newspaper.

After the process, the researcher measured the students' writing performance in the form of a post-test. The same writing prompt in the pre-test was utilized and their outputs were rated by the inter-raters using the same rubric of that of the pre-test.

Treatment of Data

The data obtained in the study were interpreted statistically and qualitatively. In assessing the writing performance of Grade 8 students before and after exposing them to the process approach of writing through the Edmodo, mean and standard deviation were computed. In determining the significant difference in the students' writing performance before and after exposing them to the process approach using Edmodo, paired t-test was employed. In getting their experiences in the use of the Edmodo platform, a journal activity was done.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Writing Performance of Grade 8 Students Before and After their Exposure to the Process Approach to Writing Via Edmodo

The writing performance of the learners in this study was based on the mean they obtained from the pretest and posttest administered to them. Their performance was based on the overall mean. Table 2 shows the writing performance of the learners before and after the process approach of writing through Edmodo. The results show that the learners started from being *intermediate writers* to *advanced writers* as can be seen in the overall mean in the table.

Table 2. The Writing Performance of Grade 8 Students Before and After their Exposure to the Process Approach to Writing Via Edmodo

Criteria	Pre-test		Qualitative Description	Post-test		Qualitative Description
	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	
1. Organization						
1.1. Clarity	2.53	.45	Advanced Writer	2.89	.46	Advanced Writer
1.2. Logic	2.51	.49	Advanced Writer	2.93	.47	Advanced Writer
1.3. Coherence	2.53	.45	Advanced Writer	2.98	.51	Advanced Writer
2. Development of Ideas						
2.1. Reliability	2.50	.49	Intermediate Writer	2.98	.46	Advanced Writer
2.2. Clarity of Supporting Ideas	2.48	.47	Intermediate Writer	2.95	.49	Advanced Writer
2.3. Consistency	2.48	.50	Intermediate Writer	2.92	.45	Advanced Writer
3. Use of Language/Conventions and Grammar						
3.1. Appropriateness of Diction	2.46	.41	Intermediate Writer	2.86	.41	Advanced Writer
3.2. Grammatical Accuracy	2.45	.41	Intermediate Writer	2.81	.38	Advanced Writer
3.3. Accuracy of Spelling, Capitalization and Punctuation	2.46	.41	Intermediate Writer	2.89	.38	Advanced Writer
OVERALL 2.49		.45	Intermediate Writer	2.91	.45	Advanced Writer

Under the criterion on the *organization*, the learners were classified as *advanced writers* as determined through their pretest and remained as *advanced writers* in the posttest. This indicates that even before the exposure to the process approach in writing via Edmodo, the learners can already organize their ideas on a certain topic when they are asked to write. This finding can be attributed to the fact that in the secondary laboratory school, the high school students are exposed to formal writing. As espoused by Oshima and Houge (2007), academic writing like that of an expository essay is a kind of writing that requires the careful organization of ideas.

Moreover, when referring to the development of ideas, the writing performance of Grade 8 students in the pretest is classified as an *intermediate writer*, after the exposure to the process approach to writing via Edmodo, their writing performance in posttest went one step higher which classified them as an *advanced writer*. In the pretest, the students' write-up generally

presents only very few reliable facts about the topic and these were only somewhat clear and inconsistent. After being exposed to the process approach in writing via Edmodo, the students have improved in terms of developing their ideas. Nunan (1991) asserts that the phases that the students undergo in the process approach to writing, from brainstorming, writing, reflecting, editing, and the like will bring the students closer to the perfection of their written output. He added by saying that when students write, the writing process certifies the fact that no text can be perfect during the first attempt. This explains the improvement of the students' output in terms of the development of their ideas. After a series of input and feedback from the teachers, the students were able to learn how to develop their ideas as evident in the improvement of their essay in the post-test.

Furthermore, the writing performance of the participants under the *use of language/conventions and grammar* also improved from *intermediate* to *advanced*. From their work in pretest that displays many errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, it developed to an output where the writer's word choice becomes appropriate to the topic and their essays now display few errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

The change in the writing performance of the students before and after their exposure to the process approach in writing via Edmodo can imply that Edmodo is a good strategy in teaching writing. The relatively low score received by the students in the pretest may be attributed to the fact that when the students write the essay, there was no input or feedback in whatsoever form from the teacher. Hence, the students didn't know their performance after writing the output.

Difference in the Students' Scores Before and After their Exposure to the Process Approach to Writing Via Edmodo

In order to test the significant difference of the scores of the students before and after their exposure to process approach in writing via the Edmodo platform, the data were subjected to a paired t-test. The data in Table 3 show that there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of the learners as shown by the computed p-value which is less than 0.05 which is the set level of significance. Thus, the mean scores of the pretest and posttest being observed have a significant difference. Based on the findings, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the writing performance of the students after exposing them to the process approach using the Edmodo platform is rejected.

Table 3. Difference in the Students' Scores Before and After their Exposure to the Process Approach to Writing Via Edmodo

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Pre-test	58	2.49	.45	6.80	0.000
Post-test	58	2.91	.45		

The data show that there is .42 increase in the students' scores from pretest to posttest. It also shows that their dispersion of scores in both tests are just the same as observed in its standard deviation. The result implies that using the process approach in writing via the Edmodo

platform improves students' scores in writing. This means that the process writing approach via the Edmodo platform is effective.

Relatively, the significant difference in the mean scores of the two tests can be described as follows; the writing skills' development includes dealing with the writing process which involves various stages wherein content is emphasized not the use of language and grammar. Hence, it made the students aware of the different processes of writing and it helped to overcome their anxieties and difficulties because of the help of the classmates and teacher is available. In this approach, the students realize their potential, develop writing skills and discover new information.

With the different stages utilized in the approach, the learners were expected to increase their performance since peer correction and group evaluation are encouraged in this activity. As advocated by White and Arndt (1991), this approach has been adopted to address the traditional approach. This process takes an additional investment of the teacher's time since every student is likely to have his/her unique mix of problems and therefore each piece of writing must be replied separately for it leads to improvement.

The Writing Experiences of the Students in Using Edmodo

The students' experiences in using Edmodo as a platform where they could write their essays were taken from their journal entries which were grouped according to the similarities of their experiences and were assigned different themes. The positive experiences of the learners in using Edmodo can be categorized under the theme *Edmodo as interactive, collaborative, and innovative teaching platform*. While the negative experience can be categorized to one theme and that is the *weak internet connection*.

In relation to positive experiences, the students have interaction in the virtual space because they experience giving comments to their classmates' outputs which gave their classmates an idea on how to edit their write up. It is clear that Edmodo allowed them to interact with their classmates since they were all given the chance to post their essays in Edmodo and others are given the opportunity to express their ideas in the platform. Edmodo application is a private micro-blogging and social learning platform for teachers and students (Hourdequin, 2014). This explains why the platform is *interactive*. In the same virtual space, students exchange ideas especially on the topic that they are writing about. Another positive experience that the students have in using Edmodo is their *opportunity to collaborate* in the virtual space. Collaboration among them was manifested when the students experience giving each other advice for the improvement of their output. Their collaboration is in the form of giving their feedback and accepting them to improve their outputs. Also, they found Edmodo as an *innovative teaching strategy*. They claimed that it is better than the traditional way of teaching writing. According to the students, Edmodo is more fun and interesting as compared to just using paper and pencil. They also found it to be unique. Indeed, Edmodo is interesting, fun, and unique.

By using Edmodo as the extension of the face-to-face interaction, it is expected that students can improve their English proficiency in a provided length of time, since it will increase the contact hours among students and teachers and facilitate peer feedback among students, which may create a productive learning environment for them (Dewi, 2014).

Meanwhile, the negative experiences of the students in using Edmodo can only be grouped under one theme and that is *weak internet connection*. The students share the same dilemma as most of them expressed that the slow connection made some of them disappointed and gave them a hard time in completing the process of posting and submission to the virtual classroom. The students' bad feelings with the slow internet connection are acceptable because some features of Edmodo include time lock where the students' output are given a certain period of time to be submitted (Hourdequin, 2014) and when the time lapses, their outputs will no longer be accepted. The slow connection will prevent the students to submit their output on time. Moreover, the weak connection also prevents the students and the teacher as well in interacting in the virtual space. If the internet connection is slow, the students and the teacher cannot give their input and feedback on time, and there is a tendency that they will be able to post it late. This defeats the interactive feature of Edmodo.

CONCLUSION

Generally, the use of process approach in writing via Edmodo increase students' scores in pretest and posttest which indicates the efficacy of the process approach in writing via Edmodo. Also, Edmodo platform provides an avenue for collaboration, innovation, and interaction among the students; hence, online platform is preferred by writing teachers and students. But with a weak internet connection, online writing can only be made efficient and effective with the provision of IT infrastructure.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is highly recommended that writing laboratory equipped with multimedia resources intended for writing undertakings in the high school shall be provided to enhance students' writing competence which will eventually improve the writing academic performance of the learners, a capacity building on innovative strategies in teaching writing may be conducted to capacitate writing teachers in the field of teaching writing, smaller class size of a writing class to promote concentrated feedbacking and individualized teaching and learning process and writing teachers have to innovate online writing strategies and utilize the computer-assisted platform to enrich learners' capacity in writing and to improve their writing competence, provided that internet connection is strong; therefore, a sustainable IT infrastructure is also highly recommended.

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