



Students' Writing Needs: Basis for Developing Instructional Material in Writing for Grade 10

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Abstract. This timely research aimed to fill the gap of producing a material based on the learners. Using descriptive statistical tools the study identified the participants' writing ability level in terms of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization; developed an instructional material based on the students' writing composition needs; and evaluated the newly developed instructional material. Results show that students' writing ability level in terms of punctuation, spelling and capitalization belonged to emerging and failing level. The research proceeded to develop a material based on learners' needs and preferences in learning. The study recommended that for students to develop their writing ability, teachers make materials which are according to their preferred way of learning and their learning pace to cater to the needs of the students.

Keywords: writing needs, instructional material

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The study aimed to develop a writing instructional material for Grade 10 students. Specifically sought to identify the writing ability level of the students in terms of; punctuation, spelling and capitalization. Also, to develop an instructional material based on the students' writing composition needs.

This study provides the best avenue for the researcher to develop an instructional material that caters to the needs of students in writing. The study would greatly help the teachers in facing the demand of the new mode of learning of the new normal. For this, research would be helpful to language teachers especially in addressing the problems of the students writing proficiency. Through the aid of instructional materials on writing, teachers were given concrete data on the learning development of the students. The teacher-made test in determining the writing proficiency of the students will help the teachers to innovate strategies to provide for the learning needs of students. Thus, teachers will deliver modified tasks to those who are struggling students.

Furthermore, the study aims to help the teachers in managing well their students despite the face of the new normal education.

The data from the needs analysis would serve as an eye-opener for the curriculum designers to design an instructional material that is personalized and contextualized learning material that would best supplement students in developing writing proficiency. Consequently, it would raise awareness to curriculum designers and developers to conduct study more on the factors affecting the writing skill of the students, and by that, they would provide more writing activities to students.

Given the scenario, incorporating the product of this study in the teaching and learning process of the students in writing would open a door for parents to closely monitor the progress of their children academically. Through this, parents would be well-aware of the learning pace of their children and could perhaps assist and motivate their children to gradually develop their writing skills. Learning would surely be fruitful with the close coordination of the teacher, the student, and the parents.

Above all, this study benefits the students. Their writing needs are primarily addressed in the study. They were given ample activities according to their learning preference that best work for them. The study would enable the students to develop a sense of responsibility for their learning. This would also help the students keep track of their learning development. Also, the product of the study would let the students work on their own, according to their pace of learning, and according to their preferred time.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study used a descriptive assessment research design and is quantitative in nature. The writing proficiency of students is described quantitatively. This design helped the study to realize its aim which is to address the needs of the students in writing composition and will come up with instructional material for writing.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Halapitan National High School, Purok-2, Halapitan, San Fernando, Bukidnon.

2.3 Participants of the Study

Two (2) sections from the Grade 10 Curriculum answered a teacher-made test in a form of essay writing to determine their writing level of proficiency and also the need to develop a writing instructional material for Grade 10. They were purposely chosen as they were the main recipients of the learning material. Also, two (2) sections from the Grade 11 Curriculum to answer the questionnaire as basis in crafting the IM. They

were chosen as they have first-hand experience on the English 10 existing learning material.

2.4 Research Instruments

There were two research instruments maximized in the study to gather the needed data.

First, a teacher-made test was maximized to determine the participants' writing level of proficiency. The number of errors in terms of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization were tallied and evaluated based on the corresponding writing level of the rubric adapted from Susy Martinez-White, Program Director, Palm Beach State College for a reliable result. Students were given five points for exemplary with zero to two committed mistakes, four points for competent with three to four committed mistakes, three points for emerging with five to six committed mistakes, and two points for failing with seven or more committed mistakes.

Second, was the questionnaire adapted from the BSNP for the assessment on the existing learning material and the developed instructional material. This instrument includes a 4-likert scale of each category: content, presentation, language, and layout. It was carefully crafted on determining students' writing problem, preferred ways to learn, learning organization, preferred writing activities, preferred length of written output, and teacher's role. The data gathered on this part of the questionnaire provides the researcher the gist of students' wants and needs in developing their writing skills.

Table 1. The 4-likert scale with its qualitative description

Rating	Qualitative Description
1	Poor
2	Fair
3	Good

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

A written letter of permission was addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent of Division of Bukidnon prior to the conduct of the study. A consent letter was prepared for the participants, and stated in the letter that all the data collected will be kept confidential, and in no case will they be identified, as they were not required to provide any personal information.

When the approval of consent was given, the researcher conducted the test and were assured that whatever the result, these will not affect the participants' grades.

A teacher-made test in a form of a composition writing was administered first in the study to determine participants' writing ability. The participants were only limited to 100 words in answering the given question. Further, participants' essays written in all capital letters were rejected. The researcher tallied and counted the errors commit-

ted by the students in terms of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, and used the adopted rubrics to determine their writing proficiency.

2.6 Statistical Treatment of Data

In describing the data from the needs analysis result, the descriptive statistics like frequency values, percentages, means, and standard deviation of the writing proficiency. The researchers tapped a seasoned researcher to run the data using Microsoft Excel.

3 Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

3.1 Writing Ability Level

The gathered data was done through a teacher-made test wherein the participants were asked about their unforgettable experiences during the pandemic in 100 words. There were only 43 participants tallied as some of the written outputs of the students were rejected because of the following reasons: 1. each did not reach the desired number of words and 2. words written in all capital letters.

Table 2. The writing ability level of the students in terms of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization

Category	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Punctuation	Exemplary	0	0
	Competent	13	30.23
	Emerging	20	46.51
	Failing	10	23.26
Spelling	Exemplary	12	27.9
	Competent	5	11.62
	Emerging	13	30.23
	Failing	13	30.23
Capitalization	Exemplary	7	16.28
	Competent	4	9.30
	Emerging	16	37.21
	Failing	16	37.21

In terms of punctuation, 46.51% of the respondents belong to the emerging level which means that they frequently committed errors in the use of common punctuation marks like period, commas, semi-colons, colons, question mark, apostrophe, and hyphen in a sentence. This connotes that there is a demand for almost half of the students to further develop their knowledge in the use of punctuation. On the other hand, 30.23% and 23.26% of the participants are under the competent level and failing level respectively. This means that these students have lack of knowledge on the basic

principles of punctuation. Moreover, none of the said participants have been fully aware of the technicalities of the punctuation as no one reach the exemplary level.

Most of the students are not well aware of the rules for using punctuation marks correctly. They are confused with the use of the basic punctuation marks such as period, comma, and apostrophe as evident in their written outputs, perhaps due to their insufficient knowledge about these topics. It can be easily diagnosed in a single glance that they have the difficulty in the use of punctuation marks as some of them committed the same mistakes all over again. The misuse of punctuation may lead to confusion for the readers, and worse may mean differently compared to the intended meaning.

Student A

In front of me is ma'am Pilapil house and Im panic that's why I pretend that she is my auntie. the pulis is asking me if what Im doing there and I answered that I just sweep the floor in front of our house

Student B

My most unforgettable experience during the pandemic is bonding with my family, and my previous friends, we laugh and that's my heart good, all can say if your home is boring but not me because stay home is so funny and you feel happy with you're family and i can experience that, during the pandemic the whole world is danger but seeing you're family you become a strong and fight your love of life.

Student C

My most unforgettable experience during this pandemic, is to stay in your house, wearing Mask if u go in outside and u cannot go far because of pandemic and u must clean every day and clean also ur house and ur places so the virus gone and u cannot see ur friends, also ur parents if they far away and u stay home watching tv, cellphones so if u explore u may explore youre house and if small its easy to explore and also the other people are wearing mask and others not and if ur grocery keep distance and also wash hands and use alchohol or zhonerox if ur driving you must wear healmets with mask and if your in outside and going inside in your house always wash your hands and use alchohol.

Student A's problem is on the use of apostrophe. Apostrophe is used to show that possessiveness, which means something belongs to someone or something (University of Sunderland Library Services). In like manner, Student B and C illustrate the overuse of comma. A comma is used on separating words for description, and phrases from other sentences (University of Sunderland Library Services).

When this punctuation is not used correctly, this result to the misleading of the intended meaning on the text and long complicated narration. The participant kept on using unnecessary "and" instead of having a simple sentence that ends with a period. Also, the use of a comma in the first line is misused as it should not be placed there. Upon reading closely to the sentence above, it marked confusion to the readers as to how the writer will end the long sentence. The idea kept on adding up with no signs of ending it. Here, it can be easily noted that the student has insufficient knowledge in the proper use of punctuation as he has difficulty even in simply putting an end mark on a sentence.

The insufficient knowledge of the punctuation use remains one of the reasons that cause writing problems as validated by the study by Awad (2012) on the Most Common Punctuation Errors made by the English and the TEFL Majors. It was highlighted in the study that students have difficulty following the rules that lie behind punctuation marks. Others use a comma instead of a period in place of a full-stop sentence. In the same way, the study of Catabay (2016) on error analysis of students' writing found that common students have insufficient knowledge of the proper use of punctuation marks, specifically in a comma as it is commonly neglected by the students. Based on the collected data, students' written output commonly manifested ignorance in the way of using periods, commas, and apostrophes. Hence, their written output reflects that they do not clearly understand the basic principles of punctuation according to the claims of Awad (2012) and Catabay (2016).

In the spelling category, results reveal that there is 30.23% belong to the emerging and failing category. This would support the study of Alfonso (2016) on the common errors committed by freshman education students in their written English compositions and their relationship to some selected variables. Accordingly, common for students to commit misspelled words, and also in the study of Orbe (2017) on sentence-level Errors in Written English Essays found that misspelled words belonged to the top 5 common errors.

Problems in spelling are usually on students' inability to identify the correct utterances of words, misspelled words due to letter omission, addition, transposition, and substitution, and also the ignorance application of rules in English spelling. These were the claims of Benyo (2014) in his study on English Spelling Problems among Students at the University of Dongola, Sudan.

Student D

to our self and so that we cannot spread the virus in our Place and if really we need to go out in our home we need to ware our personal protective equipment (P.P.E) like for example pace mask pace shield and alcohol to sanitize our hands or body and dont forget the one meter distancing or social destancing

Student E

For me my unforgettable experience during the pandemic is, I gain facts in this Pandemic and is I go to my friends house even if Pandemic, and that time timming that Police men are Patrolling, and blame my self that I forget to Bring mass, Im so scared that time. I dont know what I need to do; I choose to run away, but police patrol car is fastest that me, they saw me and ask me, why im not wearing my mask. In front of me is ma'am Pilapil house Im panic that time so that I pretend ma'am pilapil is my auntie. that's why police patrol pass me by And Forgive me for what I've done that is my unforgettable experience during the pandemic time.

Student F

the government will implemented that the protocol will implied to the every LGU's to stay at home was hands, wear face mask, alcohol for that till now i will not experiencing all my want's my experience is to follow the rolls or protocol of government.

The use of “u” instead of “you” reflects the student’s poor spelling ability. Notably in the study of Benyo (2014), problems in spelling connote to omitting letters in spelling-out words. The same findings were indicated in the study of Subhi (2015) on Investigating Study of an English Spelling Errors that omission and insertion errors were the most frequent and consistent in committing misspelled words among students.

Misspelled words like that of Student D & F reflect that the student have a grasp of the word sound. Noticeably that Student D spelled out “pace” twice instead of “face”. Student F has the same case who spelled out “worsh” instead of worse, “rolls” instead of rules, “protocoal” instead of protocol, and “government” instead of the govern-

ment. These students might have spelled it using their manner of sounding the word. In this case, it could be linked that these students might be fossilized with their first language considering that English was their second language.

Another area that was observed as problematic was capitalization. Some students did not know the common rules underlining capitalization like the proper use of capitalization for proper nouns. Also, students capitalized letters in the middle of the word while some participants wrote the entire text in all caps.

Student G

My most inForgettable experience during this pandemic is being or or tiredness at my Home, when i can't go out and have fun unless i'm at our Home ang dowing nothing but eat, clean and rest and I can't Forget when the Halloween days and I can't go to our province and visit my Fallen Grandmother.

Student H

For me oNe oF the most uNForgettable experieNce is that me aNd my FrieNds is playiNg basketball duriNg the paNdemic. we Never listeN to the televisioN aNd radio about covid 19 we Never prevenT social distaNcing aNd usiNg Facemask so the authorized persoN iN the baraNgay is keep oN remiNDiNG us that we Need to iNject the word stay at home For yourself. All people play BASKETBALL is goiNg to suFFer coNsequeNce me aNd my FrieNds is Feel Nervous aNd scarred oF what to do. this experieNce learN me a lot because it's help me to Follow the rules aNd avoid playiNg outside for my saFety I believe iN a sayiNg that liFe is more importaNt thaN moNeY

Student I

Every time i hear the sound of the Ambulance, i feel worried what if theres a positive inside. I always pray to god that there's nothing bad happening to my family and everything will be alright.

Certainly, the examples above show that Students G, H, and I never followed the rules on capitalization. The pronoun "I" in the sample paragraph by Student G and Student I was written in a small letter that should be capitalized.

Notably, in the study of Challay and Jones (2019) on the errors in the use of capitalization in Junior High School, it was discussed that 10 out of 50 student partici-

pants did not capitalize the pronoun "I", which was later interpreted as they were challenged in using capital letters for proper nouns. In the basic writing rule in English, the first person "I" must be capitalized all the time as it is a pronoun.

It is also important to point out that there were students who failed to capitalize the first letter of the sentence and the first letter of a proper noun as observed from the outputs of Student E and Student F. The inappropriate capitalization by Student G of the words "unForgettable", the first-person pronoun "I", and capitalization of the first letter of words "Home", "Forget", "Halloween", "Fallen Grandmother" even in the middle of a sentence. This shows that Student G hardly follows the basic rule in English capitalization. Also, Student H has written the words "FrieNds", "playiNg", "experieNce", "distaNcing" and capitalizing all letters "n" found in the written output this could mean that participants may find it artsy having it that way as they were used to have it in text messages or chats, or it could also be that they were not corrected the way they have written the letters and have assumed that they were doing the right thing.

It is interesting to note that the word "basketball" was written in all capital letters by Student H. This could mean that the student might have capitalized the entire word for highlight and emphasis.

Similarly, there was an investigation on frequent capitalization of errors of sophomore and senior students by Salamin, Farrah, Zahida, and Zarufound (2017). They found out that the most frequent error committed by students is capitalization. There was also a study on error analysis conducted by Manzolim and Gumpal (2015) of Isabela State University's rural campus written compositions concluded that in the category of mechanical errors, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling were the most frequently committed errors. Among the three above-mentioned mechanical errors, the inappropriate use of punctuation marks ranks first, followed by misspelled words, and the least was incorrect capitalization of words.

The writing ability level of students was based on the results of their writing activity. Their errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling were tallied and have corresponding scores based on the adapted writing rubrics from Susy Martinez-White, Program Director, Palm Beach State College. True to the three-mentioned categories, student respondents who committed zero to two mistakes were under exemplary level, three to four mistakes were under competent level, five to six mistakes were on the emerging level, and seven and above mistakes were on the failing level.

Generally, the findings show that level of the writing proficiency of students in this study was close to the emerging and failing level. This may be due to their inadequate knowledge of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization respectively. Thus, given the data, there is a need to develop instructional material that purposely aims to develop students' proficiency levels in terms of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

3.2 Developed Instructional Material in Writing for Grade 10

The gathered data from the needs analysis was the basis for the development of instructional material in writing for grade 10. Certain aspects were highlighted in the developed material. These include the nature of the material, content, presentation,

language, and layout. Unlike the existing learning material in grade 10, the developed instructional material was more on addressing the writing needs of the students, especially in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Also, examples that are found in the material were localized so that it would be easy for the students to comprehend and relate to the subject matter. Highlighting the use of localized material was supported stipulated in DepEd Order 51, series of 2014 on the guidelines on the conduct of activities and use of materials involving aspects of indigenous peoples' culture as to the expression of the Philippine culture's practices, celebration, food, literature, and the like. Similarly, it was made sure that the developed instructional material caters to the preferred ways of learning among students, their preferred learning organization, and so with their preferred writing activities. Too lengthy reading materials were omitted as the results have shown that they preferred short but timely reading activities.

The main goal of the developed instructional material is to have it student-centered, wherein focus on the learning experience of the students. The study by Mohammad, H. et al. (2012) on the impact of student-centered learning on academic achievement and social skills concluded that there is a high chance for students to familiarize the content of a particular subject matter that would lead them to be logically advanced and look for solutions on problems at hand.

As to its content, relevant to students' daily life were injected. Also, recent and important trends were included. The material also followed the target competencies from the curriculum guide of the Department of Education. In the aspect of the presentation, the activities included in the developed instructional material were well-organized with the scoring rubrics attached to each activity. Balanced tasks from the simple to complex activities for independent learning. Various writing tasks were stipulated to enable students to think creatively. Further, the developed instructional material made it sure not demand students to have activities done with the help of multimedia or even have it in multimedia presentation.

Simple English terminologies were used for students to easily grasp the information according to their language level. It also underwent reliable grammar checker to ensure its efficiency. This was anchored on Krashen's input hypothesis in language acquisition. Finally, the layout, font styles, and font size were according to the guidelines for making instructional material from the Department of Education and the color scheme used was eye-friendly. As highlighted from a memorandum of the Department of Education on general specifications for grade 10 module writing in its structure and sequence that visuals and graphic organizers shall be available to facilitate a better the understanding of the lesson, the size of the letters shall be appropriate to the target learners, and hence would create a presentation that shall be engaging and interesting.

The developed material consists of six lessons that focuses only on quarter two of English 10. Lesson one is on the feature of argumentative essay; lesson two is on formulating claims, facts, policy, and value; lesson three is on the patterns and techniques of developing an argumentative claim; lesson four is on making of basic bibliography; lesson five is on the in-text and parenthetical citation, and lesson six is on the writing of an argumentative essay. Embedded in these mentioned six lessons

were activities that highlight the need to improve students' spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Since the nature of instructional material is individualized learning, students are to check their outputs with the attached answer keys on the bottom part of the module. If they hardly grasp the lesson from the material, they have an ample time to review if they have not understood, or can either proceed if they have understood the lesson. To some students who can easily grasp the lesson and with the desired scores they got from the assessment, they are to proceed to the next lesson. This is in connection with the concept of self-paced learning wherein students are to learn according to their own pace and have full control of their own learning (Highland, 2015). In the journal of Bautista (2015), it is stipulated that self-paced learning is a kind of instruction based on students' ability to respond to the given instructional material and it directs to the pursuit of lifelong learning as it supports the traditional learning which has positively affected education. Thus, individualized learning leads to academic achievement for students.

Table 3. Alignment of writing needs, contents, lessons, and activities

Writing Needs	Contents	Lessons	Activities
Lesson 1: Basic Parts of an Argumentative Essay	EN10WC-IIa13.1: Identify parts and features of argumentative essays	a. identify the basic parts of an Argumentative Essay b. determine writer's claims in an Argumentative Essay	1. Encircling words that should be capitalized and underlining words that should not be capitalized in the provided text. 2. Provide 3 claims from the
Lesson 2: Formulate Claims of Fact, Policy, and Value	EN10WC-IIb13.2: Formulate Claims of Fact, Policy, and Value	a. determine how to formulate questions of fact, policy, and value; and b. formulate claims of fact, policy, and value.	1. Writing activity using a graphic organizer on people's beliefs, culture, tradition, and orientation and how they vary from one another. 2. Identifying fact, policy, and value from the

Writing Needs	Contents	Lessons	Activities
Lesson 3: Patterns and Techniques of Developing an Argumentative Claim	EN10WC-IIc13.3: Use patterns and techniques of developing an argumentative claim	a. determine the basic components of an argument; and b. use the basic patterns and components in developing an argumentative claim.	1. Spelling out correctly the scrambled words below using the definition beside it as your reference. 2. Reading activity and identifying the three basic components of an
Lesson 4: Making Basic Bibliography	EN10SS-II d1.6.3: Acknowledge citations by preparing a bibliography EN10SS-IIe1.6.4: Use writing conventions to indicate	a. determine the basic parts in citing a source; b. differentiate APA format from MLA format in citing a source; and c. cite sources using APA format	1. Identifying the parts of a bibliography. 2. Determining which type of standard format example in the APA was used. 3. Constructing standard bibliographic information using APA
Lesson 5: In-Text and Parenthetical Citation	EN10SS-IIg1.6.5: Use in-text citations	a. differentiate in-text citation from parenthetical citation; and b. use in-text citation.	1. Determining the basic parts of a citation. 2. Determining what type of citation was used. 3. Identifying the mechanical errors in the provid-
Lesson 6: Writing an Argumentative Essay	EN10WC-IIh-13: Compose an Argumentative essay	a. identify the four basic techniques in argumentation; and b. compose an argumentative essay	1. Filling-in the missing letters of the word to form a word that is being defined beside it. 2. Determining what technique was used in the sentence.

4 Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

Considering the foregoing results, the researcher concluded that the writing proficiency level of the grade 10 students of Halapitan National High School generally ranged from emerging and failing. Students were noted to have more difficulty in capitalization and spelling due to their inadequate knowledge of the basic principle and rules of the above-mentioned topics. Thus, the poor results of the writing level of students and the interview with grade 10 teachers validated the claim of this study that there is a need to develop instructional material in writing for grade 10.

An instructional material in writing was developed according to the students' writing needs and learning preferences. The said material was student-centered as it caters to and focuses on the entire experience of the students to address their needs. It does not deviate from the standard in making an instructional material of the Department of Education as it followed the guidelines on making one. The developed material was also anchored on the learning competencies in writing from the curriculum guide of the department to align with the content standards. It is focused on the functionality of the developed instructional material and the total learning experience of the students.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are drawn:

In the desire to excel academically, students are expected to develop their writing proficiency. It is important to develop students' writing ability according to their preferred way of learning and their learning pace. To cater to the needs of the students in these trying times, one of the most effective tools is to create an instructional material purposely to attend to students' writing needs.

The use of the developed learning material in writing by students might have a significant difference in the writing proficiency of the students but is best to have it implemented in class to have a concrete claim to its efficiency. Having it implemented to advance, moderate, and slow learners will provide the researcher with a solid basis for improving the material more that would fit various types of students. Students' feedback matters the most as they were the recipients of the developed instructional material.

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