



COMPOSITION WRITING SKILLS OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study determines the composition writing skills of senior high school students. The respondents consist of 88 Grade 11 Humanities and Social Science (HUMSS) students representing the Aurora Senior High School. Descriptive correlation design, Pearson r, t test and tabular value were used to analyze the data. The result of the study revealed that self-interest, peers, parents, school administration and teachers' support, as well as social media are factors that help in improving the writing performance of the students. It was observed that the students are remarkably weak in grammar, paragraph structure and voice but they are good in observing the structure (introduction, body, conclusion, mechanics, word choice) of a written composition. Concomitant to this study, it was found out that not all students having above fair grade in English 11 are good writers. The researchers recommend that the support of teachers, school administration, peers and parents, students' interest and use of social media should be given consideration for the continuous development of the learners in composition writing. Teachers should give appropriate attention to teaching of grammar, paragraph structure and voice of students' written composition. The use of gadgets relative to the academic-related activities of the students should be properly monitored and supervised.

KEYWORDS: grammar, composition, macro skills, academic performance, English language

INTRODUCTION

It is believed that writing is the soul of all academic endeavors. This competency is applied in medicine, law, engineering, agriculture, business and other area of disciplines. With this phenomenon, it is highly encouraged that students be equipped with knowledge and expertise which will prepare them academically when they enter college.

Writing is a process that cannot be perfected in a single sitting. The improvement of students in relation to this matter is everybody's concern because the development of skills



in composition writing is indispensable, therefore, the people around them have essential role to fulfill in shaping students' mental and social ability.

Writing requires mastery of the grammar rules of the target language combined with elements of good style. The learner's ability to elaborate his ideas is shown on how he organized his thoughts through composition writing. Glazier and Paige (2003) said that learning to write well is important, and one of the most significant things that you will do in your education. Continuous practice in writing will soon equip the learner to be a good writer.

Nabiryo (2011) added that mentors need to motivate learners in reading a lot as tool in the formulation of their written piece. Moreover, there are factors that influence English writing such as learning approach and strategy, the number of vocabulary, the integrity of sentence, the coherence of discourse and the transfer of native language. These factors interact to influence the development of students' English writing ability (Wang and Zhang, 2017).

Composition writing encourages students to express their ideas using the second language. Students have already the necessary tool before writing but they also have to develop a positive perspective when writing. By doing so, it is a must to students that in order to be fluent in a second language, they must learn to master each of the macro skills that would eventually lead to effective communication.

Teaching composition writing enables language teachers to exhaust efforts for the continuous discovery of educational strategies to address the declining ability of the students in writing using English as second language. Apparently, language teachers have also identified external factors that would help learners in improving their writing performance. Although these factors might be present positively to the learners, it was observed that the writing competence of the students in Aurora Senior High School needs improvement in areas such as grammar, content, and mechanics. As observed in a writing class, students struggle in writing using English as a second language. This paved the researchers to determine the composition writing skills of senior high school students and



answer the following questions: 1) What are the factors affecting the composition writing skills of the students? 2) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the students of Aurora Senior High School in composition writing? 3) What is the performance of the students in composition writing? 4) What is the academic performance of the students in English 11 (Reading and Writing)? 5) Are those students who are rated above fair in English 11 good writers? 6) Is there a significant relationship between the students' academic performance in English 11 and their ability in composition writing?

METHODOLOGY

The researchers opted to use a descriptive correlational design. To gather the necessary data, the researchers made use of a survey questionnaire. This instrument was validated by means of series consultation with the experts in English subject, online confirmation and floating of samples to students. A rubric was used to evaluate the written compositions of the students. To avoid any bias in the checking and interpretation of the students' written outputs, three English teachers served as inter-rater in the evaluation of three different composition outputs. These were checked accordingly using the teacher-made rubrics. The students' written outputs were focused on the following topics: environmental protection, students of the 21st century, and about high school life. To complete the necessary data, the researcher obtained a copy of the students' final grades in English 11 from the school registrar.

In answering the research questions, weighted mean was used to measure the general response of the survey samples in connection with the factors affecting the ability of the respondents in composition writing, determine the strengths and weaknesses as well as the performance of the students in writing activity, and gauge the academic performance of the students in English 11. In addition, Pearson Product- Moment Correlation was used to analyze the degree of relationship between the independent and dependent variables whether significant or not. To determine if there is a significant relationship between the two variables, the computed r is compared to the critical value of r and converted to a t test using the formula.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors Affecting the Students' Writing Ability in English

This study considered the following factors that may affect the students' ability in composition writing such as: self-interest, parents, teachers, peers, school administration and social media.

Table 1

Interest of the Students in Composition Writing

Self-interest	Mean	Interpretation
I like an English writing activity.	3.20	Often
I wish to be a good writer.	3.91	More Often
I can write a complex and compound complex sentence.	3.69	Often
I can use appropriate vocabulary and word forms to	3.08	Often
I can use variety of sentence structures in writing.	2.9	Often
I can use appropriate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.	3.23	Often
I can effectively brainstorm to gather ideas before writing.	3.36	Often
I use a dictionary to check correct spelling before writing English.	3.00	Often
I use a grammar book to check things that I am not sure about before I write	3.90	More Often
I encourage myself to use English in writing.	3.07	Often
	Mean = 3.33	Often

With regard to self-interest of the respondents, most of the corresponding statements fall under "Often". Items that indicate "I wish to be a good writer", and "I use a grammar book to check things that I am not sure about before I write" fall under "More Often". In general, the mean 3.33 implies that students are frequently self-motivated to engage in composition writing.



Table 2

Composition Writing of Students as Influenced by their Parents

Parents	Mean	Interpretation
My parent/s or guardian influences me to write using English language.	1.97	Seldom
My parent/s or guardian exposes me in English writing activity.	2.41	Seldom
My parent/s or guardian understands the time I spend for writing activity.	2.83	Often
My parent/s or guardian provides materials to improve my writing ability.	2.84	Often
My parent/s or guardian gave feedback about my composition writing.	3.38	Often
My parent/s or guardian inspires me to write using English language.	2.85	Often
My parent/s or guardian uses English language in our family conversation.	2.07	Often
My parent/s or guardian checks my English grammar.	2.73	Often
My parent/s or guardian tells me the importance of having knowledge in writing through English language.	2.93	Often
My parent/s or guardian helps me to memorize English vocabularies.	2.73	Often
	Mean = 2.67	Often

This table illustrates that most of the items are rated “Often” except for items stated as “My parent/s or guardian influences me to write using English language”, and “My parent/s or guardian exposes me in English writing activity”. The weighted mean under parents’ support is 2.69 which means “Often”. Therefore, the result implies that there is a presence of parents’ support relative to composition writing of the students

Table 3

Influence of Teacher to the Writing Ability of the Learners

Teacher	Mean	Interpretation
My teacher engages me in English writing activity.	3.2	Often
My teacher does his best to teach writing lessons in English.	4.06	More Often
My teacher encourages me to improve my writing skill.	3.98	More Often
My teacher helps me to organize my topic in composition writing.	3.43	More Often
My teacher gives feedback about my composition writing.	4.25	Always
My teacher helps me to gain self-confidence in writing English.	3.69	More Often
My teacher uses English language in conversation.	3.88	More Often
My teacher checks my grammar.	3.84	More Often
My teacher tells me the importance of having knowledge in writing through English language.	3.53	Often
My teacher helps me to memorize English vocabularies.	3.24	Often
	Mean = 3.71	Often



As a result of the computation, the mean of teachers' influence is 3.71 which is described as "More Often". It implies that teachers play a role in influencing the writing ability of the students.

Table 4

Support of Peers in Composition Writing

Peers	Mean	Interpretation
My peer uses English language during our conversation.	2.77	Often
My peer establishes my self-confidence in writing English.	2.82	Often
My peer encourages me to improve my writing skill.	3.3	Often
My peer helps me to organize my topic in writing.	3	Often
My peer gives feedback about my composition writing in English.	3.07	Often
My peer shares his/her references in composition writing.	3.2	Often
My peer tells me the importance of having knowledge in writing. glish.	3.18	Often
My peer checks my English grammar.	2.91	Often
My peer helps me to engage in writing through English language.	2.83	Often
My peer helps me to memorize English vocabularies.	2.67	Often
	Mean = 2.98	Often

Table 4 shows that the mean of peers' support is 2.98 with an equivalent interpretation of "Often". This implies that there is a positive support of peers in terms of composition activity.

Table 5

Support of the School Administration to the Writing Skill of Learners

School Administration	Mean	Interpretation
The school administration provides writing laboratory.	2.77	Often
The school administration allocates fund for writing development.	2.94	Often
The school administration assigns teacher who has mastery to teach English writing activity.	3.66	More Often
The school administration uses English as medium of communication.	3.38	Often
The school administration provides materials to improve my writing skill in English language.	2.91	Often
The school administration provides Internet connection for the students to access writing lessons.	3.57	More Often
The school administration provides school plan for writing English development.	3.08	Often
The school administration promotes literary competition using English language.	3.16	Often
The school administration motivates students to write using English language.	3.34	Often
The school administration conducted training/seminar/workshop in composition writing for students.	2.95	Often
	Mean = 3.18	Often



The table indicates that most of the statements describe the involvement of school administrators in showing support to students' endeavor as "often" and it is more often observed that "the school administration provides Internet connection for the students to access writing lessons". It implies that school administrators are aware and supportive in providing opportunities to hone the writing skills of the learners.

Table 6

Influence of Social Media in Students' Composition Writing

Social Media	Mean	Interpretation
I chat my friends to gather ideas for my writing activity using English.	3.01	Often
I read articles through Internet to develop my writing ability in English.	3.31	Often
I text my friend using English language.	2.92	Often
I gather information from websites related to writing literary pieces using English language	3.43	Often
I use computer/cellphone to search for the correct word or vocabulary for my composition writing.	4.09	More Often
I share my ideas through online comments.	2.72	Often
I play word puzzle using cellphone.	2.85	Often
I check my English grammar through cellphone application.	2.6	Often
I solicit idea through online to make my literary output better.	3.34	Often
I plan my writing outline based on the examples from the Internet.	3.31	Often
	Mean =3.16	Often

As illustrated in Table 6, the average mean of social media influence is 3.16 which is equivalent to "Often". The result shows that students who often interact with their peers using social media gain more insights as a way of equipping themselves to become mentally ready in their writing activities.

Table 7

Summary of the Factors Affecting the Composition Writing Skill of Aurora Senior High School Students

FACTORS	Mean	Interpretation
Self-interest	3.33	Often
Parents	2.67	Often
Teachers	3.71	More Often
Peers	2.98	Often
School Administration	3.18	Often
Social Media	3.16	Often
	Mean = 3.16	Often



Table 7 shows that “Teachers’ Support” obtained a total weighted mean of 3.16. The data reveal that there is an “often” active involvement of the following factors in the composition writing activity of the students.

Table 8

Students’ Performance in Composition Writing, and their Strengths and Weaknesses

Criteria	Mean	Interpretation
Introduction	3.42	Very Satisfactory
Body	3.08	Good
Conclusion	2.80	Good
Mechanics	2.72	Good
Word choice	2.55	Good
Grammar Structure	2.39	Fair
Paragraph Structure	2.22	Fair
Voice	2.30	Fair
Total Mean	2.69	Good

Table 8 presents the result of the composition writing of the Grade 11 (HUMSS) of Aurora Senior High School-Aurora, Isabela. It reveals that the rating of the students based on statistical analysis has a total mean of 2.69 which is equivalent to “Good”. It implies that the performance of the students in terms of composition writing is within the average level. On the other hand, the strengths of the respondents in terms of composition writing are observing proper introduction, body, conclusion, mechanics, and word choice. However, it appears that their weaknesses in writing include grammar, paragraph structure and voice.

Table 9

Students’ Academic Performance in English 11

Students’ Grade	Frequency (f)	Percentage	Description
100 – 96	0	0	Outstanding
95 – 91	15	17.05	Very Satisfactory
90 – 86	24	27.27	Good
85 – 81	44	50.00	Fair
80 – 75	5	5.68	Poor
	N=88	100 %	
		Mean = 86.01	Good



This table reveals that the mean of students' grades in English 11 is 86.01 with an equivalent description as "Good". The total mean implies that the Grade 11 students perform well in their language class.

Table 10

Students with Above Fair Grades in English 11 and their Performance in Composition Writing

Students' no.	English 11 (Final Grade)	11 Equivalent Interpretation	Composition (Mean Grade)	Writing Equivalent Interpretation
1	95	Excellent	3.24	Good
2	93	Excellent	3.53	Excellent
3	92	Excellent	3.03	Good
4	92	Excellent	3.21	Good
5	92	Excellent	3.33	Good
6	92	Excellent	2.39	Fair
7	92	Excellent	3.53	Excellent
8	91	Excellent	2.65	Good
9	91	Excellent	2.46	Fair
10	91	Excellent	2.50	Fair
11	91	Excellent	2.64	Good
12	91	Excellent	2.33	Fair
13	91	Excellent	3.32	Good
14	91	Excellent	3.39	Good
15	91	Excellent	2.54	Fair
16	90	Good	2.35	Fair
17	90	Good	2.93	Good
18	90	Good	3.49	Excellent
19	89	Good	3.36	Good
20	89	Good	3.04	Good
21	89	Good	2.60	Fair
22	89	Good	2.68	Good
23	89	Good	3.24	Good
24	89	Good	2.46	Fair
25	89	Good	3.31	Good
26	89	Good	3.10	Good
27	89	Good	3.08	Good
28	88	Good	2.44	Fair
29	88	Good	2.89	Good
30	88	Good	2.54	Fair
31	88	Good	3.33	Good
32	88	Good	2.46	Fair
Students' no.	English 11 (Final Grade)	11 Equivalent Interpretation	Composition Writing (Mean Grade)	Writing Equivalent Interpretation
33	88	Good	2.08	Fair



34	87	Good	2.68	Good
35	87	Good	2.83	Good
36	87	Good	2.71	Good
37	86	Good	2.79	Good
38	86	Good	2.25	Fair
39	86	Good	3.38	Good

Table 10 illustrates the performance of the students in English 11 and their ability in composition writing activity. Based on the result, out of 39 respondents whose final grade in English 11 is "Above Fair", 13 students are rated "Fair" in composition writing activity. The result implies that not all students whose final grade is above fair in English 11 are good writers.

Table 11

Relationship Between Students' Academic Performance and their Composition Writing

Variables	r-value	Remarks	Df	Alpha	t-value	Tabular T	Decision
Academic Performance Composition Writing	0.22	Low/slight correlation	86	0.05	2.09	1.99	Reject the null hypothesis

As illustrated in Table 11, the computed correlation coefficient (r) is 0.22. This means that there is a low or slight correlation between the students' academic performance and their composition writing ability. Moreover, after converting the coefficient (r) to t -value, the value 2.09 is greater than the tabular value 1.99. This implies that the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between the students' academic performance and their composition writing ability is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between the academic performance and the composition writing of the students of Aurora Senior High school.

Based on the foregoing data of the study, the factors influencing the composition writing of the students of Aurora Senior High School –Aurora, Isabela, as interpreted,



(Teacher's Support) obtained the highest interpretation which is "More Often", however most of the interpretations fall under "Often" and implies that the following factors: Student's Interest, Parent's Support, Teachers' Support, Peer's Support, School administration Support and Social Media Influence do not affect the composition writing ability of the students of Aurora Senior High School.

On the other hand, the result of the composition writing of the Grade 11 Students is interpreted as "Good". The result implies that the performance of the students in terms of composition writing is within the average level. It also appears that the strengths of the respondents in terms of composition writing are found in writing proper introduction, body, conclusion, mechanics, and word choice; however, their weaknesses in writing include grammar, paragraph structure and voice.

The mean of the students' grades in English 11 is 86.01 and this implies that the performance of the students in the said subject is "Good" based on the statistical analysis and its corresponding equivalent.

The researchers found out that:

1. The composition writing ability of the senior high school students cannot be affected by factors such as self-interest, parents, teachers, peers, school administration, and social media;
2. The strengths of the respondents in terms of composition writing are found in writing a proper introduction, body, conclusion, mechanics, and word choice; their weaknesses in writing include grammar, paragraph structure and voice;
3. The students are good in composition writing;
4. There is a significant relationship between the students' academic performance and their ability in composition writing;
5. Not all students who were rated above fair in English 11 are good writers.



CONCLUSIONS

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

1. There is a positive impact of the identified factors in developing the writing skills of the students;
2. Students are good in writing their essays using the English language; and,
3. Students who excel in their academic performance also perform well in their composition writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of the study, it is recommended that:

1. The support of teachers, school administration, peers and parents, students' interest and use of social media should be given consideration for the continuous development of the learners in composition writing;
2. Teachers and other concerned persons should give appropriate attention to grammar, paragraph structure and voice in students' written composition;
3. The use of gadgets relative to the academic-related activities of the students should be properly monitored and supervised; and
4. There is a need to future researchers to conduct further investigation and include other possible factors that improve students' writing composition for the benefit and welfare of the learners.

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