

Cooperative-Collaborative Learning in Enhancing Creative Writing Performance

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ABSTRACT

Writing is among the communication skills covered in both Filipino and English language teaching that every learner should develop at any level of education in the Philippines. However, teaching creative writing skills continues to be a very challenging task for teachers. It is a challenge, therefore, for teachers to motivate students to write. More so, it is a challenge for students to write

creatively. Using the action research design, this study aimed to test and examine the effectiveness of cooperative-collaborative learning using the specific strategy, Team Pair Solo, in enhancing their creative writing skills. Triangulation is also used in this study to examine, verify, and cross-check the data at different angles such as observation, analysis of the pre and post writing composition, and from the interviews of the students. The finding shows positive effects of cooperative-collaborative learning in enhancing creative writing performance among the students. It is recommended that cooperative-collaborative learning strategy (Team Pair Solo) should be used in teaching to enhance the creative writing skills of students. It is further recommended that other cooperative-collaborative learning strategies be studied for the same purpose.

Keywords — Cooperative-Collaborative Learning, creative writing, action research design, learning styles, strategies and outcome, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the important parts of communication skills that every student should develop at any level of education. Nowadays, writing has a huge part in every student's life, starting with the simplest content to the most complex writing pieces. They are asked to craft different types of essays, research papers and other kinds of creative writing tasks. It is a skill that students will need for the future that is why it is vital to develop. Unfortunately, majority of the students still fail to improve their writing skills even after finishing schools (Anderson, 2017).

In the Philippines, students are expected to cultivate their writing skills, both in Filipino and English language. However, developing writing skills is also a problem for teachers and students in the country. According to Villafuerte and Bernales (2008), writing a composition continues to be a problem at any level of education in the Philippines. Teachers have problems in motivating students to write a composition and more so to students on how to write it. Consequently, to address the matter, many scholars promote the use of cooperative-collaborative learning strategy in teaching because of its effectiveness in enhancing students' performance. Cooperative-collaborative learning is defined as a teaching method where the students work together as a team in the assigned task while the teacher acts as a facilitator. D.W. Johnson, R.T. Johnson, and Smith (2006) believe that cooperative learning can improve student's performance compared to the conventional method of teaching.

The study is undertaken to test the effectiveness of cooperative-collaborative learning strategy in enhancing creative writing skills. Furthermore, the study validates the importance of cooperative-collaborative in enhancing students' performance in creative writing among the Grade 12 students of Leyte National High School- Senior High, Tacloban City, Philippines.

FRAMEWORK

Lev Vygotsky (1980) believes that students are capable of performing at higher intellectual levels when asked to work in collaborative situations than when asked to work individually. He also added that when a student is at a particular task, and provided with appropriate assistance (scaffolding), it will give the students enough boost to achieve the task. Once the student masters the task, the scaffolding can then be removed and then the students will be able to complete the task again on their own.

The study is composed of three phases: The pre-writing assessment, cooperative-collaborative learning (Team Pair Solo) and the post writing assessment phase. The researcher administered a pre-writing to students involved in the study to determine the level of writing skills of each student in the Filipino language. The result of this served as the baseline of heterogeneous grouping. The cooperative-collaborative learning (Team Pair Solo) strategy was then administered as an intervention. Finally, the post-writing assessment was conducted to determine the progress of the students in their written output.



Figure 1. Research Paradigm

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of cooperative-collaborative learning in creative writing composition among students of section 12-MAKABANSA of Leyte National High School- Senior High School, Tacloban City, S.Y. 2017-2018. The study also sought to: 1) Determine the level of writing skills of the students before and after teaching the composition using the cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy based on 1.1 Focus and Detail; 1.2 Organizations; 1.3 Writer's Voice; 1.4 Choosing Appropriate Words; 1.5 Structures, Grammars, Punctuation, and Spelling; 2) Test the effectiveness of cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy in enhancing the students writing skills based on the grade of their composition before and after teaching the composition; and, 3) Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the cooperative-collaborative strategy (Team Pair Solo) learning based on the attitude and perspectives of the students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is an Action Research which consist of process of planning, conducting, observation and reflection as proposed by Fraenkel and Wallen (1993). This study also used Triangulation to examine data at different angles such as observation of participants, review of compositions and interview of the participants.

Participants of the Study

Together with the researchers, forty-two (42) students of Grade 12-MAKABANSA of Leyte National High School-Senior High School, Tacloban City of S.Y 2017-2018 were involved in this study. For Focus Group Discussion (FGD), ten (10) students were selected using random sampling.

Instrumentation

The proposed writing marking guide (Rubrics) of Santos, Jocson and Perez (2016) using five criteria as follows: 1.) focus and detail, 2.) organization, 3.) voice of the writer, 4.) choice of appropriate words, and 5.) structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling was used in reviewing and marking the composition of the students. Each criterion is given 10 points as the highest score, 6 points

in succession, followed by 3 points and the lowest points is 1. The score each student gets in their composition was given the corresponding grade based on the latest DepEd Department Order (D.O. # 8 s. 2015). The grades obtained by each student are grouped into the following description; 1.) Outstanding (90-100), 2.) Very Satisfactory (85-89), 3.) Satisfactory (80-84), 4.) Fairly Satisfactory (75-79) at. 5.) Did Not Meet Expectation (Below 75), it is still in compliance with the Order of Order as 8 series 2015.

The content and activities of the lesson plan done by the researcher were consulted by the Head Teacher of the General Academic Strand and two teachers teaching Filipino for evaluation. The practice of writing the persuasive texts used by the researcher is reflected in the Curriculum Guide of the subject Pagbasa at Pagsusuri ng Iba't Ibang Teksto Tungo sa Pananaliksik.

The review focused on the writing compositions written by the students before and after teaching the composition using the cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) strategy of learning. A self-made questionnaire was used for Focus Group Discussion.

Data Collection

Students were tested on a writing composition cycle composed of pre-writing assessment and post-writing assessment using the cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) strategy of learning. The result of the pre-writing assessment was the basis of the grouping of students to form the heterogeneous grouping. The focus group discussion was then conducted to test and validate the results of the students' compositions. Five students were selected for focus group discussion using random sampling.

Data Analysis

Frequency count and percentages were used in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The level of writing skills of students before and after teaching the composition using the cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy

Table 1. Level of Writing Skills Before Teaching the Creative Composition Using Cooperative- Collaborative (Team Pair Solo)

Criteria	Total Score	Mean	Grade	Description
Focus and Detail	159	37.90	69%	Did Not Meet Expectation
Organization	91	21.70	65%	Did Not Meet Expectation
Writers Voice	134	31.90	67%	Did Not Meet Expectation
Choosing Appropriate Words	127	30.20	67%	Did Not Meet Expectation
Structure, Grammars, Punctuations, and Spelling	131	31.20	67%	Did Not Meet Expectation

Table 1 shows the results of the writing skill level analysis before teaching the composition using cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategies. The table shows that all the criteria are in the description of "Did Not Meet Expectation." The result shows the poor writing performance of the students in the individual writing output. The individual task has a low effect on students' writing performance. The result is supported by the findings of the study by Storch (2005) stating that students who had worked in pairs had produced better texts than texts written by individuals in terms of complexity, accuracy and fluency. Johnson *et al.* (2006) performed a meta-analysis of 168 studies comparing cooperative learning to competitive learning and individualistic learning among college students. They found that cooperative learning produced greater academic achievement than both competitive learning and individualistic learning across the studies.

Table 2. Level of Writing Skills after Teaching the Creative Composition Using Cooperative- Collaborative (Team Pair Solo)

Criteria	Total Score	Mean	Grade	Description
Focus and Detail	313	74.50	84%	Satisfactory
Organization	283	67.40	79%	Fairly Satisfactory
Writers Voice	339	80.70	87%	Very Satisfactory
Choosing Appropriate Words	338	80.50	87%	Very Satisfactory
Structures, Grammars, Punctuation, and Spelling	265	63.10	76%	Fairly Satisfactory

Table 2 shows the result of the writing skill level analysis on the students' writing composition after teaching the composition using the cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy. The table shows that Focus and Details are in the Satisfactory description. The Writer's Voice and Choosing the Appropriate Words are in the Very Satisfactory description. While the critical organizations and structures, grammars, punctuation, and spelling are in the Fairly Satisfactory description. The result shows a significant increase in the students' performance after the integration of the cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy. This result is in agreement with the findings of the study of Gokhale (1995) that students who participated in collaborative learning had performed significantly better than students who studied individually. The result is also supported by a study conducted by Kagan and High (2002) which showed that students performed better in writing when cooperative learning was incorporated in the classroom. In the study of Keshavarz, Shahrokhi, and Negad (2014), the implementation of cooperative learning in writing has been proven to produce positive effects in students' learning in writing.

Table 3. Effectiveness of Cooperative-Collaborative (Team Pair Solo) in Enhancing the Students Writing Skills based on the Grade of their Composition Before and After Teaching the Composition

Description	Grading Scale	Number of Students		Percentage	
		Before	After	Before	After
Outstanding	90-100	0	10	23.81%	23.81%
Very Satisfactory	85-89	0	10	23.81%	23.81%
Satisfactory	80-84	2	15	35.71%	35.71%
Fairly Satisfactory	75-79	7	7	16.67%	16.67%
Did Not Meet Expectation	Below 75	33	0	0	0%
TOTAL		42	42	100%	100%

Table 3 shows that most of the students involved in the study before teaching the composition or the pre-writing are included in the "Did Not Meet Expectation" description with 33 and 78.57% of the total. The Fairly Satisfactory description comprises a total of seven (7) students and a percentage of 16.67% satisfactory description with two (2) counts and a percentage of 4.76%. No students got a score that is included in the Outstanding and Very Satisfactory

description. This table also shows the significant increase in the grades of students after teaching the composition or the post-writing using that strategy. After teaching the composition using Team Pair Solo, none of the students have earned or been included in the “Did Not Meet Expectation” description. The result shows that students performed significantly better after the integration of cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy. This result affirms with the learning theory of Vygotsky (1980) that students have the capability of performing at higher intellectual levels when asked to work in collaborative situations than when asked to work individually. The result is also supported in the study of Siddique and Singh (2016) that cooperative learning strategy is effective in enhancing students’ essay writing skills.

Strengths and weaknesses of the cooperative-collaborative strategy (Team Pair Solo) learning based on the attitude and perspective of the students

In the focus group discussion (FGD), the first question; 1.) Has the strategy/activity helped you in enhancing your writing skills? All students answered “Yes” as a positive response to a group activity. In the second question; 2.) How did the strategy/activity help you with your writing skills? Almost everyone involved said that they have added and given a new idea of their knowledge of the subject through collaborative sharing of knowledge. The third question; 3.) Are there problems you face in writing your creative composition using cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) strategy? Participants have two responses. Four (4) said nothing because all the members cooperated well. Six (6) answered there is because of different ideas but at the end they find ways to find a solution and in the end agrees on the topic. The result conforms to the idea of Bruner (1985) that cooperative learning methods improve problem-solving strategies because the students are confronted with different views and opinion of the given situation. The peer support system makes it possible for the learner to internalize both external knowledge and critical thinking skills. Harmer (2001) also believes that writing in groups is effective. Students found the activity motivating in terms of the writing itself.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, the cooperative-collaborative strategy has been effective in enhancing the writing skills of the students in developing a creative composition that conforms to the responses of the students in the

FGD. Students had an increase of grades in their composition after teaching the composition using cooperative-collaborative (Team Pair Solo) learning strategy.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The findings of the study may be best translated to teachers to incorporate cooperative-collaborative learning (Team Pair Solo) strategy in teaching especially in enhancing creative writing skills. Furthermore, other cooperative-collaborative learning strategies may be used in enhancing creative writing skills. This study will also contribute to the existing body of literature in affirming the effectiveness of using of cooperative-collaborative learning strategy in enhancing students' performance. This study may also be presented as a topic during LEAP session or INSET training of teachers.

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