Self-regulated strategy development: A technique in improving the English writing performance of senior high school online learners in Bulihan Integrated National High School

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Abstract

Many students consider writing difficult and frustrating because they are not aware of the strategies used by skilled writers. This study investigated the effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) an adapted technique (Case, Harris Graham, 1992) in writing performance of senior high school online learners in Bulihan Integrated National High School. SRSD were used to develop the writing skills of students. This technique is applied in their English class for two months. Each text in the pretest and posttest was rated using a rubric in the Test of Written Language (TOWL, Third Edition) that contained the three components: contextual conventions, contextual language, and text construction. The paired sample t-test was used to analyze the difference between the performances of Grade 12 learners before and after applying SRSD program in writing. Results indicated that using SRSD technique was effective. Thus, it is recommended that SRSD be used to improve the writing performance of learners. problems were encountered during the implementation; the online learning setting, including challenges with technology, materials and tasks, time management, learning environment, and motivation. Regardless of these issues, students were able to exert their actions in managing the problems by implementing several approaches, including improving collaboration and time management. Implications and recommendations can be emphasized. First, the transition from face-to-face learning to online learning should be aligned with the amount of support provided by lecturers and the Department of Education to equip the students to become self-regulated learners. In this regard, other platforms may be used if there are technical problems in synchronous learning, chat groups and google classrooms may also be utilized. SRSD technique may also be used in asynchronous and modular learning modality.

Keywords: self-regulated strategy development, English writing performance, online learners, skilled writers, writing strategy

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1. Introduction

In response to the Coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic, many educational institutions around the globe have been asked to implement online learning activities to minimize the spread of the virus. UNESCO notes that the pandemic has disrupted the learning activities of more than 290.5 million students around the world because of school closures (Yulistiana, 2020). As part of continuity learning plan of Department of Education Philippines, different learning modalities are introduced. Alternative Delivery Mode (ADM) such as online learning aims to provide quality education through a home-based environment. As such Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) technique, may offer advantages in improving writing skills of senior high school students.

SRSD instruction boosted students' knowledge about writing as well. The peer support component augmented SRSD instruction by increasing students' knowledge of planning and enhancing generalization to informative and narrative writing. In contrast, self-efficacy for writing was not influenced by either SRSD condition (with or without peer support) (Graham et al., 2005)

Another model of the self-regulation process developed by Pintrich (2000) outlines four phases that lead students to self-regulation processes: (1) planning and activation, (2) monitoring, (3) control, (4) reaction and reflection. Pintrich (2000) argues that these phases do not represent hierarchical and linear phases, which means that individuals can perform them in a simultaneous or dynamic manner. In other words, the model of SRL proposed by Pintrich (2000) has a different emphasis from that of Zimmerman (2002) as it reflects dynamicity over the linearity and cyclicity of the SRL process. Nevertheless, Pintrich's (2000) model shares some similarities with Zimmerman's (2002) model as the four phases are overlapped by four different components: (1) cognition, (2) motivation, (3) behavior, and (4) context. Summarizing these two models, Zhu et al. (2020) established an SRL model that addresses the online learning context, particularly regarding Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). They argue that there are three major regulation strategies that students undertake to regulate their online learning activities, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Self-regulated Learning Strategies Developed

Zhu et al. (2020)
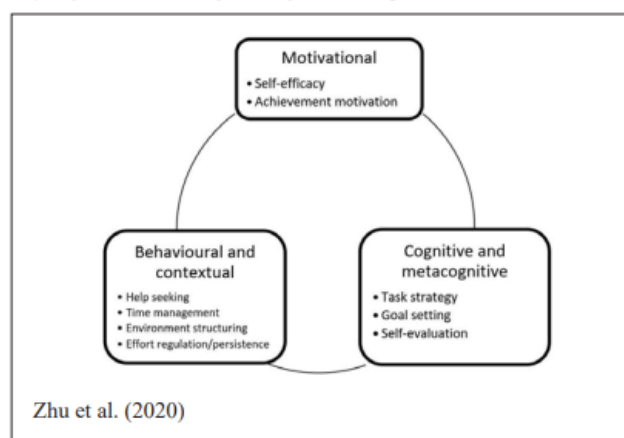
Writing is an extremely powerful tool because it facilitates communication across distance and time, it

makes possible to gather and preserve information, it allows knowledge about a topic to be refined and extended, it provides a flexible medium for artistic, political, spiritual, and self-expression. (Applebee, 1984; Diamond, 1999; Durst& Newell, 1989; Graham &Harris, 2000.)

Writing is an integral part of today's work (National Commission on Writing, 2006). More than 90% of white-collar and 80% of blue-collar workers' jobs involve writing. (National Commission on Writing, 2005). High-level literacy skills are required for most jobs that pay a living wage today, with this likely to increase over the near future (Berman, 2009). Our knowledge economy demands high levels of literacy and strong communication skills for all workers (The Conference Board, 2006). Jobs today require, on average, a higher level of literacy skill than entry-level jobs did just 10 or 20 years ago, and this trend is accelerating (Business Roundtable, 2009).

More and more, experts tell us that many of the skills students need for success in college and the skills they need for success in the workplace are the same. (The Conference Board, 2006). Writing is one of these critical skills. K-12 students and adults who struggle with writing, including those with learning disabilities (LD), face challenges drawing on its power to support their learning and development. Lack of competence in writing puts students at risk for school failure, and the consequences extend beyond the school years (Graham & Perin, 2007).

While it is true that most of the time, students communicate through speaking, but writing has its equal importance. Without proper practice of writing, students will struggle to organize their thoughts and put them in written form. In K to 12 curricula, Senior High School students (SHS) are required to present academic writings such as technical report, book and article critique, research report, project proposal, reaction paper and position paper as part of their corpus analysis.

In consonance to the DepEd Memo No.39, s.2016, The Department of Education adopts the enclosed Basic Education Research Agenda which provides guidance to DepEd and its stakeholders in the conduct of education research and in the utilization of research results for planning, policy, and program development. In relation to that, (Cruz, 2013), supposed that starting 2018, no student will be admitted to college without having satisfied the College Readiness Standards (CRS). The CRS specifies, for example, that incoming freshmen should already be able to "write a research paper in English of at least 1,000 words, with proper documentation of all sources showing critical thinking about a contemporary issue. However, an article by the think tank Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) on April 20, 2020 states that SHS students' difficulty in English writing was particularly evident in research projects. According to Kristel Brillantes, consultant at PIDS, students were submitting projects for compliance only, preventing them from applying their learning from the SHS curricula.

Another research conducted by Mendoza, school year 2019-2020 in Bucal National High School, *Grammar Difficulties of SHS Learners: Input for Writing Interventions,* result calls for an appropriate writing intervention that would enhance the learner's grammatical competence in terms of verb tenses. Hence, emphasizing the rules on subject verb agreement. Furthermore, Abuton et al. (2020) revealed in their research, *Teachers' Self-Assessment and Students' Performance on the forms of Written Feedback*, that teachers gave local and global feedback simultaneously in which most of the corrections fell on local feedback. Both teachers and students preferred the combination of both feedbacks to be reflected in their paper. However, students perceived that global feedback was more difficult to revise than local feedback. Teachers and students believed that giving feedback improved the students' writing.

With these concerns in writing performance, the researcher recommends to English Language teachers to use Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) instruction to help the learners improve their writing performances. It is a model which supports learners as they compose text (Case, Harris Graham, 1992), by helping them develop relevant cognitive and self-regulation skills.

This study will focus on how SRSD model with its six instructional stages enhances the writing performance

of selected SHS online learners in Bulihan Integrated National High School. This study aims to introduce the concept of Self-Regulating Strategy Development (SRSD) instruction in writing and determine its effectiveness in selected online Senior High School learners. Specifically, it answers the following questions:

> What is the writing performance of G12 learners in the 1st quarter?

> What is the writing performance of students in utilizing SRSD technique?

> Is there a significant improvement in the writing performance of G12 learners after the program?

2. Methods

Participants/and or other data sources of information - This study was introduced and applied to Grade 12 senior high school online learners who are currently enrolled in Bulihan Integrated National High School. The researcher used purposive sampling in choosing the participants, 50 HUMSS online learners were chosen. The respondents were consisted of 50 senior high school online learners with diverse writing competencies.

Data gathering methods - This study utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The pretest was given to determine the baseline writing performance of the students in line with TOWL subtests. The study particularly used Subtest 6 (contextual conventions), Subtest 7 (contextual language), and Subtest8 (text construction). Using TOWL rubric, points earned for satisfying requirements relative to (1) contextual conventions, i.e., spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and other elements in writing; (2) contextual language i.e., quality of the grammar, vocabulary, and sentence construction; and (3) story construction, i.e., plot, prose, interest to the reader, development of characters, and other compositional aspects. A post-test was conducted after 2 months to determine the effects or improvements of SRSD instruction on the writing performance of the student. Parental consent and necessary permissions were collected and guaranteed the confidentiality of the students-respondents. The rubrics, lessons plan and questionnaires of SRSD are critically validated by English Teachers.

Data Analysis Plan - Text created in pretest and post-test were rated using a scoring rubric in The Test Written Language (TOWL, Third Edition) that contained: contextual conventions, contextual language, and story construction. The scores are added. Paired sample t-tests were used in the study to validate the significant difference between the writing performances of selected Grade 12 online learners before and after the program. The scale used in the study is adapted from the National Achievement Test scale of mastery developed by the Department of Education (DepEd) National Education Testing Research Center (NETRC). As described by Dr. Aurora Fernandez of the NETRC, the standard is based on a normalized distribution wherein top 16 percent are considered high; the middle 68 percent as average; and the extreme end 16percent of the same continuum is considered as low performance.

Specifically, the standard is as follows:

Range	Interpretation
96%-100%	Proficient (P)
86%-95%	Closely Approximating Proficient (CAP)
66%-85%	Moving Toward Proficiency (MTP)
35%-65%	Average Proficiency (AP)
16%-34%	Low Proficiency (LP)
5%-15%	Very Low Proficiency
0%-4%	Absolutely No Proficiency (ANP)

3. Results and Discussion

Each text in the pretest and the posttest was rated using a scoring rubric in TOWL. The scores were added.

The paired sample t-test was used in the study to validate that there was a significant difference between the performances of Grade12 learners before and after the program. Table 1 shows the descriptive summary of the scores of the respondents as well as the corresponding t-test computation based on the pretest and post test conducted.

Groups	Means	Variance	MPS	T-RATIO	CRIT.VALUE	PROB. VALUE
POST TEST	59.73	20.81	83.13	28.3075	2.6883	0.0000
PRETEST	44.76	25.91	61.11			

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 1 shows that the mean of the respondents during the pretest is 44.76, which when converted to mean percentage score (MPS) is 61.11 that can be categorized as "Average Proficiency", indicates that prior to the application of the research, the respondents have average proficiency in their writing performances. The variance of 35.91 indicates that the scores of the respondents is far apart or scattered. The post test scores of the respondents yielded a mean of 59.73 which is equivalent to an MPS of 83.13. This MPS is under the category of "Moving Toward Proficiency", which means that the respondents have moved one category higher than their initial category of proficiency.

To find out whether the improvement was significant, the data were subjected to t-test for dependent or correlated means. The test yielded a t-ratio of 28.3075 against a critical value of 2.6883 or a probability value of 0.000 against the level of significance of 0.05, which implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. Results show that there was a significant improvement on the writing performance of the students after they are subjected to SRSD program. This result lends to support to Graham & Harris (2000) assertion that SRSD is a comprehensive, flexible technique that helps students learn to manage the writing process.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the senior high school learners find the SRSD technique effective as reflected in their ability to write academic texts in the English for Academic and Professional Purposes subject. Nonetheless, problems were encountered during the implementation; the online learning setting, including challenges with technology, materials and tasks, time management, learning environment, and motivation. Regardless with these issues, students were able to exert their actions in managing the problems by implementing several approaches, including improving collaboration and time management. From the current research, some implications and recommendations can be emphasized. First, the transition from face-to-face learning to online learning should be aligned with the amount of support provided by lecturers and Department of Education to equip the students to become self-regulated learners. In this regard, other platforms may be used if there are technical problems in synchronous learning, chat groups and google classrooms may also be utilized. SRSD technique may also be used in asynchronous and modular learning modality. The findings of the study will be shared to Senior High School teachers during Learning Action Cell (LAC)sessions for possible adaptation of the strategy. Furthermore, researcher may present the study to a research conference or publish to reliable journal. In times when classes need to be suspended due to unexpected circumstances, English teachers could use the SRSD technique for the continuity of learning especially in writing compositions, Teachers are highly encouraged to promote effective writing strategy like SRSD so that learners can communicate their ideas efficiently and effectively.

5. APPENDICES

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Appendix A

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Adapted Lesson Plan in Writing Using SRSD Strategy

Objective: Write a story using SRSD Instruction

Topic: How to Write a Story Using SRSD Instruction for Online Learners

Material: Power point presentations, laptop, or mobile devices

Activities:

Stage 1: Develop Background Knowledge

The teacher began SRSD instruction by having the students discuss what they already knew about writing a story. The elements of the story will be explicitly highlighted and explained. The students then located and discussed examples using books they had previously read and stories they had written. This is an especially important aspect of developing background knowledge because these concepts serve as prompts for generating content during stage two of the strategy.

Stage 2: Discuss It

Following the initial lesson, the teacher held individual conferences to talk about each student's approach to writing and to introduce the new strategy they would be learning. Then, the teacher will introduce the concept of progress monitoring with self-assessment, by explaining the students would be monitoring whether the strategy helped them write better stories. Each student will select at one previously written story from their portfolios and determined how many of the required elements were included. The teacher will demonstrate how to graph this information using the story she had written, and then made sure each student will be able to correctly locate and graph their own data. This self-regulation procedure not only helps students monitor the completeness of their stories, but also visually reinforces the benefits of using the strategy. The teacher should emphasize that to successfully learn the strategy and improving their writing skill is dependent on their effort and active collaboration.

Stage 3: Model It

On the third stage, the teacher should share her own opinion about the topic and used the "think aloud" technique to model how to use the strategy to develop this idea into a story. Students will participate in this activity by helping her identify goals (i.e., "Write a great story that includes all the elements and entertain the readers"), make a plan that includes notes reflecting each element, consider (and then accept or reject) possible ideas to support the premise and write the first draft on large chapter. Working together, the students accepted or rejected possible ideas to support the teacher's premise. To emphasize the importance of allowing a story to evolve and to improve new ideas, the teacher should purposefully have had students help her make several changes in her initial plan as she wrote. Once the first draft is completed, the teacher should model how to make sure all the elements are included and had the students collaboratively improve and elaborate on each of her ideas.

Stage Four: Memorize It

In the next mini lesson, the teacher should explain that using the strategy would be easier if each student memorizes the elements of the story and their personalized self-statements. These include the following: "What do I need to do first?" (Problem definition);" First, I need to think of my topic" (Planning); "Let my mind be free and take my time; good ideas will come to me" (Brainstorming); "Does this idea make sense?" (Self-evaluation);

"What a great ending" (Self-reinforcement); and "I can do this!" (Coping). Teacher should provide extra practice and opportunities for students.

Stage Five: Support It

As students continue practicing, the teacher should encourage the students to set a goal before writing each story. Then, monitor students' progress by counting and graphing the elements they included in ther final draft. Students reviewed each other's paper and provided feedback. As students became comfortable with the strategy, the teacher may provide less intrusive, individualized assistance,

Stage Six: Independent Performance

Students should be able to write independently, and constructive feedback should be made by the teacher.

Each story will be scored using the writing rubric, The Test Written Language, (TOWL, Third Edition).

Scores will be interpreted using the scale adapted from the National Achievement Test scale of mastery developed by the Department of Education (DepEd) National Education Testing Research Center (NETRC).

Appendix B

Behavior Observation Checklist

Student's Name: _____ Week: _____

English Teacher Observer: _____ Signature: _____

Please tally the behaviors this learner exhibits in the class. Make a tally mark to indicate the number of times you observed the behavior. You may indicate comments at the back of this form.

BEHAVIOR	DAY1	DAY2	DAY3	DAY4	DAY5
External Behaviors					
Physical Aggression					
Verbal Threats					
Property Destruction					
Non-Compliance					
High level of Disengagement					
Disruptive Behavior					
Internal Behavior					
Depression					
Anxiety					
Social Difficulties (withdrawal)					
Class phobia					

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