

USING THE PROCESS APPROACH AND SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE ENGLISH WRITING ABILITY OF SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS AT SAKON NAKHON RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to study and compare the English writing ability of the second-year students before and after studying English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique, and to investigate students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique of the second-year students. The sample consisted of 36 second-year students of the Bachelor of Arts Program in English under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University. They were selected using cluster random sampling. The research was experimental research with a one-group pretest-posttest design. Research instruments included 12 lesson plans, an English writing ability test, and an attitude questionnaire. The experiment lasted 12 weeks, 3 hours a week, 36 hours in total. The mean, percentage, standard deviation, one-sample t-test, and t-test for dependent samples were used for data analysis. The results were 1) The students' pretest and posttest mean scores on English writing ability were 16.86 or 52.60 percent, and 25.28 or 78.99 percent respectively.

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The students' posttest mean score on English writing ability was significantly higher than that of the pretest at the .01 level, and the mean score on the posttest was higher than the set criteria of 70 percent. 2) The students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was at a good level.

Keywords: English writing, Writing ability, Process approach, Scaffolding technique, Attitude towards teaching English writing

Introduction

English is accepted as a global language and every country around the world uses it as a working language instead of using their languages to communicate with people from other countries. English is also recognized as an international language worldwide. Sharifian (2009) mentions that English is now considered an international or a global language and is used as an official language in many countries. In addition, the United Nations announced that there are six official languages of the UN which are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. Kirkpatrick (2012) mentions that in the Southeast Asian region, this is especially true as every government member of ASEAN, having adopted English as a lingua franca, has increased efforts to improve English language teaching.

Thailand has been actively working to enhance English proficiency among its population. Therefore, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation announced on 26 April 2016 the relevant lifting of English standards in higher educational institutions. Therefore, most universities agreed that undergraduate students are supposed to gain at least B1 according to the CEFR criteria or equivalent, for English major students, they are expected higher. Despite many policies or strategies from the Ministry, English proficiency

of Thai students is still under the set standard, and writing is still left behind other skills and is less attractive to Thai students.

According to the four main skills in English; listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the writing ability of Thai students is one of the biggest concerns. lamla-Ong (2014) states that the English writing of Thai students is at the highest level of concern which agrees with Pawapatcharaudom (2007) who mentions that writing is the most serious problem for Thai undergraduate students. She also states the main issues of writing problems which were; writing with limited time; academic paper writing; the usage of grammatical rules in writing; and the development of content structures.

Many English instructors worldwide use different instructional methods and techniques to resolve students' English writing problems. Tompkins (2004) claims that the process approach concludes with three main stages, the pre-writing stage, the writing stage, and the post-writing stage, in which emphasis on writing instruction has shifted from the end product to the process involved in creating the product. In addition, the scaffolding technique, emphasized by Van de Pol et al. (2010), enhances English writing skills through feeding back, hints, instructing, explaining, modeling, and questioning. This approach aligns with Kongcharoen's (2017) study on improving English writing among second-year students at Udon Thani Rajabhat University, where posttest scores exceeded 70%, indicating positive student attitudes towards this method.

With the efforts of the process approach and scaffolding technique in teaching English writing as mentioned above, the researcher is interested in investigating students' writing ability using the process approach and scaffolding technique with the second-year students at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University because of their poor performance in writing with the previous semester and investigating students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique.

Purposes of the Study:

1. to study and compare the English writing ability of the second-year students before and after studying English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique, and
2. to investigate students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique of the second-year students.

Method

1. Research Setting

This study was experimental research with one group pretest-posttest design. It used the quantitative research method by Campbell and Stanley (1963).

A diagram of the design is shown below.

$T_1 \times T_2$

Symbols used in Experimental Design

T_1 means Pretest

T_2 means Posttest

\times means Teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique

2. Research Instruments

2.1 An English writing ability test: The test was a writing test of writing composition with 1 subjective question, 1 hour with 200-250 words. The determination was examined from the score of the English writing ability test based on the specific writing assignment criteria from rubrics for writing by Fry et al. (2000) with 8 aspects: topic sentence, organization, paragraph, sentences, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

2.2 Lesson plans for teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique: There were 12 lesson plans for 12 weeks and 3 hours of each lesson plan.

2.3 The attitude questionnaire towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique consisted of 20 items in 5 levels which will be based on Likert's rating scales by Likert (1982).

3. Research Population and Sample

The population of this study was a group of 450 students of B.A. in English and B.A. in English for Business Communication of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University.

The sample of this study were 36 second-year students from the B.A. in English; section 2 of the Faculty of Humanity and Social Sciences, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University, in the first semester of the academic year 2023 at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University using quasi-experimental.

4. Data Collection

4.1 Conduct the pretest using an English writing ability test before the instruction with one writing item with at least 200-250 words in 1 hour.

4.2 Conduct the teaching program of 12 lesson plans for 12 weeks.

4.3 Conduct the posttest using the same English writing ability test as the pretest; one writing item with at least 200-250 words in 1 hour.

4.4 Distribute the attitude questionnaire to examine the attitude after learning English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique.

The collected data from the pretest and posttest and attitude data were statistically analyzed and interpreted.

5. Data Analysis

The following steps were implemented to analyze the data:

5.1 The researcher analyzed data to examine English writing ability using mean (\bar{x}), percentage (%), and standard deviation (S.D.).

5.2 The researcher analyzed data to compare the English writing ability of the second-year university students from the pretest and the posttest scores.

5.3 The researcher analyzed data to investigate the attitude toward teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique using mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (S.D.) to interpret the meaning of the criteria's average as follows: (Best, 1981):

Average score		Levels of opinion
1.00 – 1.80	means	Strongly disagree
1.81 – 2.60	means	Disagree
2.61 – 3.40	means	Not sure
3.41 – 4.20	means	Agree
4.21 – 5.00	means	Strongly agree

Results of the Study

1. Results of the Study and Comparison of English Writing Ability Before and After

The scores of the students' English writing ability at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University before and after studying English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1 The Results of Students’ English Writing Ability Before and After Studying English Writing Using the Process Approach and Scaffolding Technique

Number	Pretest (32 scores)		Posttest (32 scores)	
	Score	Percent	Score	Percent
1	18	56.25	30	93.75
2	15	46.88	23	71.88
3	14	43.75	27	84.38
4	20	62.50	27	84.38
5	18	56.25	25	78.13
6	19	59.38	26	81.25
7	14	43.75	27	84.38
8	17	53.13	30	93.75
9	15	46.88	28	87.50
10	14	43.75	22	68.75
11	11	34.38	21	65.63
12	12	37.50	23	71.88
13	14	43.75	25	78.13
14	17	53.13	24	75.00
15	18	56.25	28	87.50
16	13	40.63	23	71.88
17	21	65.63	23	71.88
18	13	40.63	23	71.88
19	14	43.75	24	75.00
20	19	59.38	24	75.00
21	16	50.00	26	81.25
22	17	53.13	26	81.25
23	15	46.88	26	81.25
24	13	40.63	27	84.38
25	16	50.00	23	71.88
26	15	46.88	28	87.50
27	22	68.75	21	65.63

Table 1 The Results of Students' English Writing Ability Before and After Studying English Writing Using the Process Approach and Scaffolding Technique

Number	Pretest (32 scores)		Posttest (32 scores)	
	Score	Percent	Score	Percent
28	14	43.75	24	75.00
29	22	68.75	25	78.13
30	24	75.00	25	78.13
31	16	50.00	23	71.88
32	18	56.25	24	75.00
33	23	71.88	26	81.25
34	25	78.13	28	87.50
35	16	50.00	28	87.50
36	19	59.38	27	84.38
\bar{X}	16.86	52.60	25.28	78.99
S.D.	3.47	-	2.34	-

As shown in Table 1, the students' pretest mean score on English writing ability average was 16.86 or 52.60 percent and the students' posttest mean score on English writing ability was 25.28 or 78.99 percent respectively.

It can be seen that some students had gained great improvement between the pretest and posttest. The researcher analyzed and compared the mean score of English writing ability before and after using the process approach and scaffolding technique of 36 second-year students at Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University using an English writing ability test. The scores of the posttest were analyzed using one-sample t-test to find the mean standard deviation percent and comparison of the students' English writing and set criteria of 70 percent and the pretest and posttest were compared using t-test for dependent samples. The results are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2 Mean, Standard Deviation, Percentage, and a Comparison of the Students' English Writing Ability After Studying English Writing Using the Process Approach and Scaffolding Technique and the Set Criterion of 70 Percent

Test	n	\bar{X}	S.D.	70 Percent	t
Posttest	36	25.28	2.34	22.4	7.39**

** p-value \leq .01

As shown in Table 2, the students' posttest mean score on English writing ability was 25.28. The results explained that the students' English writing ability after studying English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was significantly different at the .01 level. The posttest score was significantly higher than the set criterion of 70 percent or 22.40.

Table 3 Comparison of Students' Scores on English Writing Ability Before and After Studying English Writing Using the Process Approach and Scaffolding Technique

Test	n	\bar{X}	S.D.	Percent	t
Pretest	36	16.86	3.47	52.60	13.32**
Posttest	36	25.28	2.34	78.99	

** p-value \leq .01

As shown in Table 3, the students' pretest mean score was 16.86 and that of the posttest mean score was 25.28. The mean score on the posttest was higher than that of the pretest significantly different at .01.

2. Results of an Investigation of Students' Attitude towards Teaching English Writing Using the Process Approach and Scaffolding Technique

The researcher investigated students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique using a students' attitude questionnaire, consisting of 20 items. The attitude questionnaire used a five-point Likert's rating scale, ranging from positive to negative, using strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questionnaire was administered after completing the teaching program. The result of an investigation of students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 An Investigation of Students' Attitude towards Teaching English Writing Using the Process Approach and Scaffolding Technique

Attitude Test	n	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation
Students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique	36	4.16	0.89	Good

From Table 4, it can be seen that the mean score representing the students' attitude towards teaching English using the process approach and scaffolding technique was 4.16. This indicates that the students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was at a good level.

Conclusion and Discussions

1. Conclusion

1.1 The students' pretest and posttest mean scores on English writing ability were 16.86 or 52.60 percent, and 25.28 or 78.99 percent respectively. The students' posttest mean score on English writing ability was significantly

higher than that of the pretest and the mean score on the posttest was higher than the set criteria of 70 percent. Teaching English writing with the process approach and scaffolding technique enhanced students' ability to formulate topic sentences, develop supporting ideas, and improve grammar and vocabulary. Writing multiple drafts, both individually and collaboratively, boosted their confidence in composing final drafts and understanding composition writing.

1.2 The students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was at a good level. It revealed students' positive reception of the method, emphasizing its suitability for learning writing and vocabulary use. Visual aids and group collaboration were valued for organizing ideas swiftly, enhancing enjoyment in learning. Structured teaching of sentence and topic development before practice significantly improved students' writing accuracy and comprehension of English composition components.

2. Discussions

2.1 The students' English writing ability after studying English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was significantly improved with a mean score greater than 70 percent. The study aligned with Kongcharoen (2017), examining the impact of the process approach and scaffolding on English writing among 24 second-year Social Studies students at Udon Thani Rajabhat University. Results indicated significant improvement, with pretest and posttest scores increasing from 12.96 (40.49%) to 24.62 (76.95%) respectively. Posttest scores exceeded a 70% criteria, reflecting a positive student attitude towards this instructional method. The finding supports the first research hypothesis of the study.

2.2 It was found that teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique could improve second-year students'

English writing ability. Their pretest and posttest scores were 16.86 or 52.60 percent and 25.28 or 78.99 percent, respectively. According to Tompkins (2004) and Van de Pol et al. (2010), students learned to construct topic sentences and support them with ideas through peer and teacher feedback. They wrote multiple drafts, exchanged knowledge, and used handouts to improve sentence structure and vocabulary. Presenting work in class and receiving immediate feedback increased their confidence in composition writing. Individual feedback via Line app further encouraged students to publish and share their final works confidently. This finding supports the second hypothesis.

2.3 The result of an investigation of the second-year students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was at a good level. The study also echoes Kongcharoen's (2017) findings on the attitudes toward the process approach and scaffolding techniques among second-year Social Studies students at Udon Thani Rajabhat University in 2017 which was at a good level.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations from this study

From the study, teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique, the students had a good English writing ability and a good attitude towards teaching English writing. To support activities in teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique, the researcher has suggestions as follows:

1.1 From the research results, it was found that the students' posttest score on English writing ability after studying English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was higher than prior. This was caused by the process approach and scaffolding technique which could facilitate and provide students who had lower ability in English writing to learn

from the students who had a higher ability in a group while writing several drafts. The feedback process given by the teacher also helped improve students' work. Therefore, the process approach and scaffolding technique should be promoted in teaching English writing by English teachers.

1.2 From the research results, it was found that the students' attitude towards teaching English writing using the process approach and scaffolding technique was at a good level. This was caused by the students having a chance to learn how to generate ideas to support topic sentences, evaluate themselves, and improve their works through several drafts. These encouraged them to write more in English and feel more confident to write. Furthermore, the students like to have their works posted in the Facebook group because they have a great opportunity to learn from the feedback and their friends' work at any time. Therefore, the process approach and scaffolding technique should be promoted in teaching English writing by English teachers.

2. Recommendations for further study

The researcher has some suggestions as follows:

2.1 To investigate English writing ability using the process approach and scaffolding technique of non-English major students and integrate with other subjects.

2.2 To use the process approach and scaffolding technique to develop other language skills such as listening, speaking, or reading.

2.3 To identify other variables that impact student language learning English such as self-learning or classroom atmosphere.

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