



บทความวิจัย (ก.ค. - ธ.ค. 57)

ประสิทธิภาพของการสอนเน้นกลยุทธ์การสังเกตต่อการพัฒนาคุณภาพ การเขียนอนุচ্ছেทของนิสิตไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษ ในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาประสิทธิภาพของการสอนเน้นการสังเกต ต่อการพัฒนารูปแบบของบทความ การจัดเอกภาพของบทความ ความเหมาะสมในการใช้ภาษา ตลอดจนความซับซ้อนของโครงสร้างประโยค ในงานเขียนระดับอนุচ্ছেท ของผู้เรียนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ กลุ่มตัวอย่างเป็นนิสิตชั้นปีที่ 3 จำนวน 32 คน วิชาเอกประชาสัมพันธ์และภาษาญี่ปุ่น ณ มหาวิทยาลัยพะเยา หลังจากการทดสอบก่อนเรียนแล้ว นิสิตได้รับการอบรมเน้นการสังเกตงานเขียนต้นแบบ 3 ประเภท (การเล่าเรื่อง การเปรียบเทียบความเหมือนและความต่าง และการแสดงความคิดเห็น) ผ่าน 3 ขั้นตอนได้แก่ ก่อนการสังเกต ระหว่างการสังเกต และหลังการสังเกต เป็นเวลาทั้งสิ้น 6 สัปดาห์ หลังจากนั้นนิสิตทำแบบทดสอบหลังเรียน ผลจากการศึกษาพบว่าการสอนเน้นการสังเกตมีผลดีต่อคุณภาพงานเขียนของนิสิตในด้าน รูปแบบของบทความ การจัดเอกภาพของบทความ และความเหมาะสมทางภาษา ตลอดจนความซับซ้อนของระดับประโยค และนิสิตสังเกต รูปแบบของบทความ การจัดเอกภาพของบทความ มากกว่าความเหมาะสมในการใช้ภาษา ในงานเขียนต้นแบบ นอกจากนี้ผลของการทดลองพบว่า นิสิตมีแนวโน้มที่จะมีการเขียนเรียบเรียงงานเขียนใหม่ ใน ด้านรูปแบบของบทความ การจัดเอกภาพของบทความ และความเหมาะสมในการใช้ภาษา ตลอดจนความซับซ้อนของระดับประโยค หลังจากที่นิสิตได้สังเกตและตระหนักว่า โครงสร้างต่างๆเหล่านั้น แตกต่างจากงานเขียนต้นแบบ

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NOTICING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION ON DEVELOPING THAI EFL STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH WRITING QUALITY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Noticing Strategy Instruction (NSI) on developing the rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, linguistic appropriateness, and text complexity of Thai EFL students' paragraph writing. The participants in this study were 32 third-year students majoring in Communication Arts and Japanese at University of Phayao. After administering a pre-test, the students were trained to analyze three types of model paragraphs (narrative, comparison and contrast, and opinion) through the three stages of the NSI: pre-noticing stage, while-noticing stage, and post-noticing stage for 6 weeks. Then the posttest was administered at the end of the experiment. The results of the study revealed that the NSI positively affected the rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, grammatical appropriateness, and text complexity of Thai EFL students' paragraph writing quality. The results also indicated that the students noticed the rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern more often than the linguistic appropriateness. Then there was a tendency for the students to rewrite the rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, linguistic appropriateness, and text complexity of their original first draft after they noticed and realized the gap or the difference between their original first draft and the provided model paragraph.

Keywords: noticing, paragraph writing, writing quality

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INTRODUCTION

Writing in English is more and more important nowadays because it is an essential tool for communication worldwide. Writing is not only used as a communicative tool but also a means of learning, organizing knowledge and translating thoughts for other people (Chen, 2002). In fact, EFL writing is a complex cognitive process required a conscious effort and a constant practicing to cope with both the knowledge of second language (L2) and writing skills (Ferris, 2012; Chen, 2006). Writing, furthermore, is problematic for EFL writing students to involve many factors: linguistic features, rhetorical pattern, and lexical deficiency (Chinnawong, 2002; Langan, 2005 ; Mahta Khaksari & Rizapasha Moghimizadeh, 2011).

According to the previous studies, it has been agreed that the ability to write well requires systematic training and practicing through the logical stages of the writing process: planning and prewriting, writing the first draft, revising, and rewriting (Myles, 2002; Harmer, 2004). Moreover, Myles (2002) points out that the writing process is effective when the students receive sufficient and effective feedback with regard to their problems and errors in writing. To ensure the effectiveness of process approach, Badger and White (2000) suggest a process genre approach, a combination of process approach with genre approach, in terms of promoting the students' awareness of both the writing skills and the specific rhetorical pattern according to each type of paragraph. The results of the study revealed that the process genre approach assists the students to improve their writing skills. Therefore, the effective teaching method for developing students' writing ability should focus on the practice of the process-genre based approach and sufficient writing feedback provision.

There have also been arguments about providing feedback. Truscott (1996) claims that providing feedback is ineffective and it could be skipped in EFL writing class. On the other hand, Ferris (2004) argues convincingly that providing feedback has a big positive effect on students' writing improvement. Moreover, providing feedback is an important task in teaching writing with responding to students' works both grammatical accuracy and structure of their writing (Harmer, 2004). Hyland (2003) claims that providing feedback gives the students' opportunities to learn from their own mistakes according to the teachers' responses. As a result, providing feedback has become one of the important tools to encourage students to revise their written works. Accordingly, the role of corrective feedback in second language acquisition (SLA) has been widely discussed.

Among those studies, SLA research study has drawn much attention to the effects of "noticing hypothesis" that addresses the need of promoting EFL writing quality. Harmer (2004) claims that "the first thing we need to do, when training students to revise their own work, is to enable students to notice their own mistake" (p.177). It is believed that L2 communication without receiving any focus-on-form instruction is a language learning failure (Rutherford & Sharwood-Smith, 1985). Hence, the focusing on form or the conscious learning is an extremely important-starting point for language learning, and it is the key for converting input to intake (Schmidt, 1990). The intake process can assist the students to build up internal understanding of the L2 and to be stored in the students' long-term memory (Yule, 2006; Rast, 2008). Because of the complex nature of L2 writing as discussed earlier, the students require this process in order to produce a good quality of their compositions (Qi & Lapkin, 2001; Hanaoka, 2007; Saeidi & Sahebkhair, 2011).

A number of studies in the field of ESL/EFL writing have investigated types of feedback and the important role they play on students' writing ability. Many studies have placed much emphasis upon noticing through the model paragraph because it has been viewed as the effective feedback that helps learners to improve their writing ability (Bagheri & Zare, 2009; Abbuhi, 2011; Saedi & Sahebkhair, 2011; Russell, 2014). Many researchers in ESL/EFL writing argue that ESL/EFL learners should be encouraged to use a model paragraph for enhancing writing skills since the learners can see the relationship between reading and writing leading to the improvement in writing (Hyland, 2003). Those researchers also claim that the model paragraph or well-constructed written text by a native speaker of English can be beneficial if integrated into the context of writing process. The noticing through the model written text will become a powerful and an effective tool that helps writers to be exposed to different types of reading materials since it is difficult to acquire L2 writing by writing alone (Bagheri & Zare, 2009).

Based on the knowledge of noticing as one of the feedbacks that revealed the positive effect on the students' writing ability, and there is little information available concerning noticing strategies used by Thai EFL and their

effects on Thai students particularly at the tertiary level. As a writing instructor and researcher with some teaching experience, the researcher observes that Thai students committed their grammatical errors and had problems in rhetorical pattern, linguistic problems, and organization in writing different types of paragraphs. As far as the noticing strategies are concerned, the present study therefore attempted to investigate the effect of noticing strategy instruction on developing Thai EFL students' writing quality. More specifically the model paragraphs are designed to allow students to compare their first drafts of paragraph writing to the provide paragraph model in the revising stage of the writing process.

AIMS

The aims of the study were as follows:

1. To investigate effects of Noticing Strategy Instruction (NSI) on students' writing quality in terms of overall writing quality (rhetorical pattern and organizational pattern), and the linguistic features.
2. To investigate aspects of writing that EFL students notice in revising from the first draft to the second draft.
3. To examine how the NSI help to facilitate students during their revising stage.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study attempted to answer the following questions.

1. Is the NSI effective in developing Thai EFL students' writing quality in terms of rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, linguistic appropriateness, and sentence complexity?
2. What aspects of language do EFL students notice as they compare their first drafts with a provided model paragraph of each type of paragraph writing?
3. How does the NSI facilitate students in revising from the first drafts to the second drafts among each type of paragraph writing?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following figure illustrates paragraph writing instruction with providing feedback through three stages of the NSI. It is designed based on the theory of noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990) and process genre approach (Badger & White, 2000).

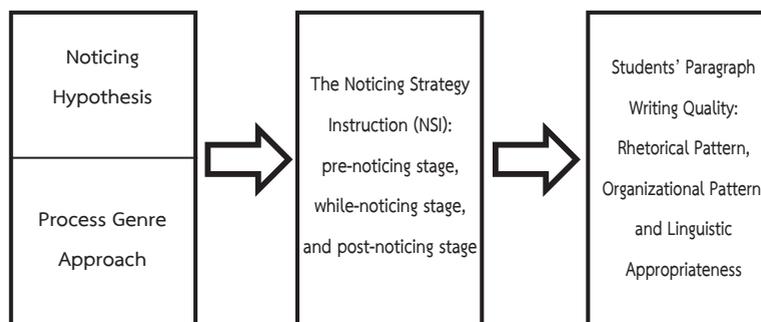


Figure 1. A Conceptual Framework in the Present Study

METHODS

Participants of the study were 32 undergraduate students enrolled in the Paragraph Writing course. They were 3rd year students who were majoring in Communication Arts and Japanese.

The present study was an experimental study with One Single Group Pretest-Posttest design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In the experiment, the students were taught to write different genres of paragraph: narration, comparison and contrast, and opinion through the NSI for 6 weeks and 3 periods a week. The students were required to write an expository paragraph as a pretest with at least 200 words about a given topic in the first week of experiment. Then they were taught to write a mentioned three types of paragraph, and they were asked to write first drafts with a minimum length of 200 words about given topics. Next, they were trained through the three stages of the NSI (Barnawi, 2010). In pre-noticing stage, the first stage was intended

to explain the objective of the noticing task. In while-noticing stage, it aimed to stimulate the participants to analyze two main aspects of the model paragraph: overall quality (rhetorical and organizational pattern) and linguistic features (linguistic appropriateness and the sentence complexity). In post-noticing stage, it aimed to motivate the students to compare their original first draft and the provided model paragraph. Then the teacher asked the students to correct mistakes in both holistic quality and linguistic features of their original first draft in response to what they noticed as a gap or a difference between the qualities of the provided model paragraph and their original first draft. Finally, the students revised their first draft to second draft. At the end of the course, the students were asked to write the other expository paragraph as a posttest. Figure 2 also presents the NSI stages.

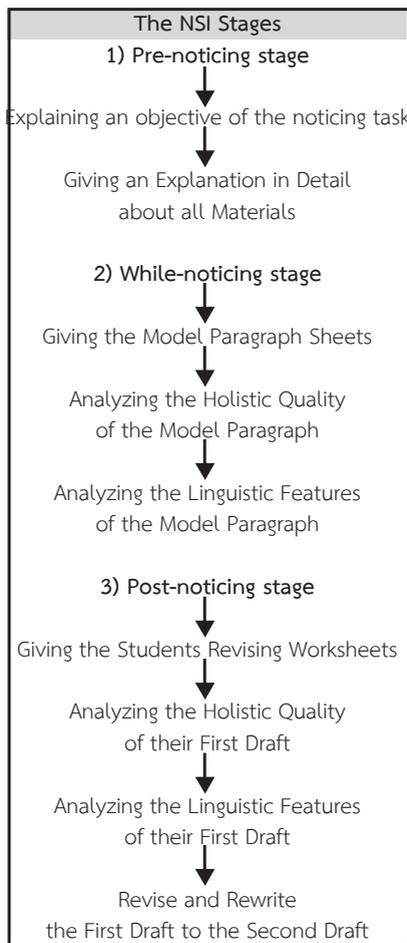


Figure 2. The Three Stages of the Noticing Strategy Instruction.

The data were obtained from the scores of the pretest and posttest, the expository paragraphs written by 32 participants. The participants were assigned to write in response to the given topics: (1) 'How Can you Make the World a Better Place?' and (2) 'How to Improve Your English Grade?' as the pretest and posttest respectively. Furthermore, the participants were assigned to write the first drafts of three types of paragraph (a narrative, a comparison and contrast, and an opinion paragraphs). The participants were required to write on the given topics: (1) 'An Unforgettable Day', 'Living on Campus VS. Living off Campus', and 'Is Online Social Networking Good or Bad for Students?' for a narrative, a comparison and contrast, and an opinion paragraph respectively. The students then revised their first drafts of all three types and the researcher collected both the students' first and second drafts.

In data analysis procedures, the data was obtained from the pretest, posttest, and scores of the first drafts, second drafts of three types of paragraph writing. They were calculated for mean scores and standard deviations and compared using the paired t-test. Finally, what students took note, underlined, or commented

on the noticing log during the noticing task were interpreted the data and discussed descriptively with plausible explanations in according with the elements of paragraph writing: rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, linguistic features.

RESULTS& DISCUSSION

Research question 1: Is the NSI effective in developing Thai EFL students' writing quality in terms of rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, linguistic appropriateness, and sentence complexity?

The finding from the comparison of the students' pretest and posttest mean scores revealed that there was a significant difference between the overall mean scores at the .01 level ($p < .01$) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Comparison of the Overall Mean Scores on Pretest and Posttest

Paragraph Writing Quality	n	M	S.D.	Inter-rater Reliability	t	p-value
Pre-test	32	5.65	0.9534	.86	-	.000**
Post-test	32	9.22	1.1018	.74	17.858	

* Significant at the .01 level ($p < .01$)

The mean scores of the posttest ($M = 9.22$) was substantially higher than that of the pretest scores ($M = 5.65$). The inter-rater reliability of the pretest and posttest scores was at .86 and the posttest score was at .74 showing the high level of inter-rater reliabilities.

Then the comparison of mean scores from the first drafts and second drafts of narrative, comparison and contrast and opinion paragraphs written by the students demonstrated the significant differences in the mean scores of the students' first drafts and second drafts of all three types at the .01 level ($p < .01$).

Table 2 A Comparison of the Overall Mean Scores on the 1st Drafts and the 2nd Drafts

Type of Paragraph Writing	n	1st Draft		Inter-rater Reliability	2nd Draft		Inter-rater Reliability	t	p-value
		M	S.D.		M	S.D.			
Narrative	3	6.1	1.04	.85	7.5	1.11	.92	-	0.00*
	2	0	5		7	7		9.239	*
Comparison & Contrast	3	5.9	1.02	.89	7.1	0.84	.92	-	0.00*
	2	7	6		9	3		9.481	*
Opinion	3	6.8	0.71	.92	8.0	0.99	.98	-	0.00*
	2	9	2		6	1		9.093	*

** Significant at the .01 level ($p < .01$)

The mean scores of the second drafts of narrative, comparison and contrast and opinion paragraphs ($M = 7.57, 7.19, \text{ and } 8.06$ respectively) were higher than those of the first drafts ($M = 6.10, 5.97 \text{ and } 6.89$ respectively).

Furthermore, the researcher further analyzed the students' pretest and posttest scores to examine whether they improved their writing quality of their paragraphs in terms of rhetorical pattern and organizational pattern as well as the linguistic features, specifically linguistic appropriateness using the scoring rubric adapted from TEEP attributes writing scale (Weigle, 2002, p. 108). The scores of individual students' papers were then calculated for the means and standard deviations

and compared by using paired t-test to determine the significant differences in those three elements of paragraph writing. The results revealed the statistical differences in the mean scores of the pretest and the posttest in all three elements: rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, and linguistic appropriateness. Table 3 illustrates the students' improvement in their paragraph writing from the pretest to the posttest.

Table 3 The Improvement in the Writing Quality of Paragraph Writing from the Pretest and Posttest

The Elements of Paragraph Writing	n	Pretest		Posttest t		t	p-value
		M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
The rhetorical pattern	32	1.94	0.435	3.41	0.499	-	
		1.75	0.568	2.91	0.530	13.371	0.00*
The organizational pattern	32					-7.400	0.00**
The linguistic appropriateness	32	2.19	0.5923	3.03	0.822	-6599	0.00*

* Significant at the .01 level ($p < .01$)

As shown in Table 3, there was a significant difference among the mean scores of the rhetorical pattern, the organization pattern, and the linguistic appropriateness at the .01 level ($t = -13.371, -7.400, -6599$ respectively, $p < .01$).

Next, the complexity in the paragraph was measured by calculating the number of words, sentences, simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences per total number of T-units (Polio, Fleek & Lader, 1998). The paired sample t-test was employed to examine the sentence complexity improvement accordingly.

Table 4 The Sentence Complexity in the Pretest and Posttest

The Paragraph Complexity	n	Pretest		Posttest t		t	p-value
		M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
Number of Words	32	165.69	16.70	208.56	4.77	13.479	0.00*
Simple Sentences	32	5.00	1.44	5.91	2.19	-4.587	0.00**
Compound Sentences	32	1.03	1.36	0.97	1.31	0.161	0.87
Complex Sentences	32					-	
Total Number of Sentences	32	4.94	1.50	6.81	2.28	14.945	0.00*
		10.97	1.82	13.69	2.25	-8.718	0.00*

**Significant at the .01 level ($p < .01$)

From Table 4, it was found that there was a significant difference among four mean

values of paragraph complexity: number of words, sentences, simple sentences, complex sentences at .01 level ($t=-13.479, -4.587, -14.945, -8.718$ respectively, $p<.01$). However, there was no significant difference between the pretest and posttest in the compound sentences.

The Effectiveness of the NSI on the Students' Paragraph Writing Quality

According to the findings, the results showed the positive effects in the overall students' writing quality after they were trained through the three stages of Noticing Strategy Instruction functioned as a writing feedback during the revising process.

Similar to the results of overall paragraph writing quality, the positive effects of the NSI on two main aspects of paragraph writing: holistic quality and linguistic features in the pretest and posttest were found. In regard to the results of the holistic quality improvement, there was a significant increase of mean scores between the pretest and posttest or the expository paragraph and between the first draft and second draft of all three types of writing tasks: narrative paragraph, comparison and contrast paragraph, and opinion paragraph. The findings also showed that on the posttest and the second draft scores, the linguistic appropriateness and sentence complexity (linguistic features) improved after the students were trained through the NSI over the six-week period. This indicated that the NSI functioned as a feedback was found to be beneficial for various aspects of writing (Sa-ngiamwibool's, 2007; Lotfie, 2007; Ketabi, Reza& Soleimani, 2008; Saeidi and Sahebkhair, 2011).

The positive results mentioned above section are found when the NSI assisted the students to notice their own writing and helped them to be prepared to review the grammatical mistakes and the overall quality of the paragraph (rhetorical and organizational pattern) based on the particular type of paragraph (expository, narrative, comparison and contrast, and opinion paragraph). During the revising process, the teacher, first of all, explained the importance of the revising stage in the writing process and specified the opportunities for developing their writing quality through the provided model paragraph. Then, the students were motivated to revise their original first draft by comparing with the model paragraph. The students were alerted to look at the overall quality of the model paragraph, and they were motivated to look at the grammar used in each type of the paragraph. The last process of the NSI was that the students revised their original paragraph. Eventually, the noticing strategy instruction seemed to have positive effects on the students' writing quality depending on what they noticed (Schmidt, 2010).

Research question 2: What aspects of language do EFL students notice as they compare their first drafts with a provided model paragraph of each type of paragraph writing?

The researcher categorized what the students underlined, highlighted on model paragraph sheets, and then counted the frequency of aspects students noticed in each category as shown in the following figure.

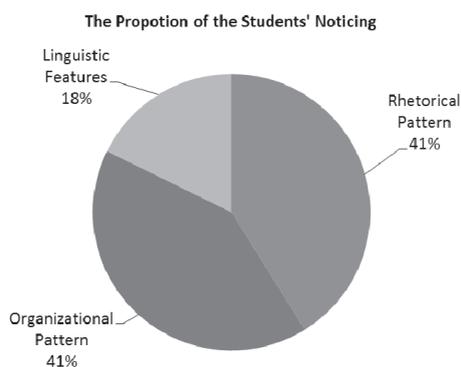


Figure 3. Aspects of Language in Paragraph Writing Noticed by EFL students

Figure 3 illustrates that the largest proportion of the students' focusing on all three types of paragraphs: narrative, comparison and contrast and opinion was the overall quality (rhetorical pattern and organization at 41%). Followed by linguistics features (18%)

The results revealed that there was a tendency of Thai EFL students to notice language aspects while

comparing their own compositions with the model paragraphs. Furthermore, the frequency of noticing and the students' responding through the Noticing Strategy Instruction (NSI) stages indicated that the NSI was a useful resource for second language (L2) writing class in terms of motivating the students' noticing in various aspects: rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, and the linguistic features.

Aspects of Paragraph Writing Noticed by the EFL students

According to the descriptive statistics of students' noticing, it was shown that the model paragraphs helped them to notice the rhetorical pattern and the organizational more frequently than the linguistic features among three types of paragraph. It can be concluded that the students were aware of the good quality of overall paragraph writing by using their existing knowledge of the paragraph writing structure to identify the topic sentence, the supporting sentences, the concluding sentence, and the logical arrangement of the whole sentences together after comparing with the model paragraphs. Whereas the linguistic features category noticed by the students were varied. In the first two types of paragraph: the narrative paragraph, and the comparison and contrast paragraph, the students were able to identify the sentence structure more frequently than the last type of paragraph (opinion paragraph). Furthermore, in the narrative paragraph, the students can point out the structure of the sentences, prepositional words and phrases more frequently than another category of linguistic features. The students were more aware of using the contrastive transitional signals and transitional word than another category in the comparison and contrast paragraph and the opinion paragraph. On the other hand, the frequency of students noticing on the word choice was less than the mentioned category among three types of paragraph.

The findings observed in this study mirror those of the previous studies that have examined the effect of using the model text written by native speakers to draw the students' attention (Saeidi & Sahebkhair, 2011; Bagheri & Zare, 2009). According to Saeidi and Sahebkhair (2011), it found that the student noticed the linguistics features or grammatical used in the writing more frequently than its content and discourse. Bagheri and Zare (2009) also indicated that the students focused on the lexical resources and form more frequently than discourse of the text. In accordance with the present results, previous studies have demonstrated that the model text seemed effective in promoting the students' noticing in various aspects.

Research question 3: How does the NSI facilitate students in revising from the first drafts to the second drafts among each type of paragraph writing?

The results from the analysis of students paragraph model worksheets and revising sheets of three types of paragraphs; narrative, comparison and contrast, and opinion demonstrated that the noticing strategies helped the students to notice or to focus on three categories: rhetorical pattern, organizational pattern, and linguistic features of narrative paragraph before revising their original first drafts. They reported the aspects of noticing in each type of paragraph such as the rhetorical pattern of the narrative paragraph and they could make some changes to make their paragraph better. The students also noticed verb tense on the provided model paragraph, so they used correct verb tenses in their second drafts. Furthermore, some of them recognized and corrected the errors in verb forms on their original first draft. Furthermore, they realized that the NSI raised their awareness on the use of adverbial clauses in their paragraphs. The word choice aspects were also noticed by the students, and some of them changed the word choice to suit the context.

In brief, the results revealed that after the students noticed aspects of the paragraph through the model paragraph with the same topic as their first drafts, the students found the gaps or the differences between their compositions and the model paragraph. They corrected some mistakes and revised their original first draft to the second draft accordingly.

One of the students, for example, revised his topic sentence in the comparison and contrast paragraph to make it more precise as shown in the following excerpts.

Original first draft.

"They have an opportunity to choose between living on campus and living off campus. Both living on campus and living off campus have advantages and disadvantages." The second draft.

"There are many different advantages and disadvantages between living on campus and living off campus."

As illustrated, the student noticed the gap between the provided model paragraph and the original first draft in term of stating the topic sentence clearly, hence, the student rearranged the topic sentence to make it clearer than the original one.

How Noticing Strategy Instruction Facilitates the EFL Students

The holistic quality was the first aspect of the students' writing improvement. The results revealed that the students utilized 60% to notice the holistic quality of the provided model paragraph demonstrated by underlining the topic sentence, circling the supporting sentences, and underlining the concluding sentence respectively. The students demonstrated their being aware of the rhetorical pattern by revising their organization paragraph. Their second drafts showed the positive improvement accordingly.

The results were supported by the conclusion of some previous studies that valued the noticing hypothesis. They stated that the rhetorical and organization pattern improved after the students were trained through the noticing process (Lotfie, 2007; Ketabi, Reza & Soleimani, 2008; Barnawi, 2010).

Besides, with regard to some previous research findings that found the noticing hypothesis could promote the students' written accuracy and complexity (Sa-ngiamwibool's, 2007; Lotfie, 2007; Saeidi & Sahebkhair, 2011). The findings found in this study also supported these results. According to the analyzing results, it was found that the students noticed the accuracy and complexity at 40%. They underlined or circled the grammatical structure that they recognized which including the sentence structures, subject-verb agreements, verb forms, verb tenses, plural forms, connecting words, transition words, or transition signals. Then, the students revised their first draft after getting the feedback.

The plausible explanation was that when the students read the provided model paragraph, they had to utilize their acquired grammatical knowledge to underline the grammatical structure and to analyze the gaps between the provided model paragraph and their original first draft. Respectively, the second draft scores were higher than the first draft scores for all three types of paragraph. The overall quality in the posttest scores also showed the improvement after the students were trained by getting the NSI. It could be concluded that the noticing positively affected the students' writing accuracy and complexity accordingly.

In conclusion, the study suggests that the merging theory and practice of noticing hypothesis was a crucial role in the EFL writing class. Schmidt (1990) pointed out that consciousness of input at the level of noticing help to promote L2 development of students. Brook and Torlakovi (2002) claimed that 'teaching should include opportunities for learners to focus on form and consciously notice features of the L2 they are learning' (p.872). Hence, the use of noticing can promote the students' writing quality in various aspects that should have a role in the EFL writing class accordingly.

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