

The Development of Paragraph Writing through a Process Writing Approach for First-Year English Education Students at Rajabhat University in Bangkok

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Abstract

This classroom-based research employed a quasi-experimental design, in which the researcher, acting as the instructor, conducted the study within her own course to improve teaching practices and enhance students' learning outcomes. The study aimed to investigate the students' academic achievement in paragraph writing after being taught through the process writing approach, comparing the results with the set criterion of 70 percent. The sampling consisted of 32 first-year English education students, selected through cluster sampling, with class groups used as sampling units. Descriptive statistics—mean, frequency count, and percentage—were applied to analyze and present the data.

The findings revealed that 90 percent of the students achieved paragraph writing scores above 80 percent after being taught through the process writing approach. The results suggest that this instructional method effectively enhances students' writing achievement and supports their ability to express ideas clearly through structured and coherent writing.

Keywords: Paragraph writing, Teaching writing, Rajabhat University

1. Introduction

English has become a global language widely used in entertainment media, publications, newspapers, and various forms of communication (Rao, 2019). The ability to communicate in English is considered one of the essential 21st-century skills, serving as a vital tool for learning, career development, and participation in today's globalized society (Phurichaya Phueakphrom & Rudeerut Chusanachoti, 2020). English proficiency plays an important role in education, information access, professional communication, and in fostering intercultural understanding and global citizenship (Ministry of Education, 2008, p.220).

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, formerly known as Suan Sunandha Teachers' College, was upgraded to a teachers' college in 1975 and later became a "Rajabhat University" in 2004. Since its establishment, the Faculty of Education has continuously offered English as a core subject within the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in English Program, revised in 2019, which aims to "produce professional teachers for sustainable social development." The

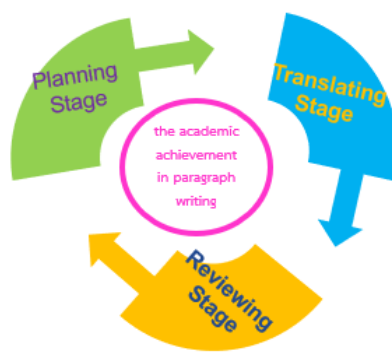
program emphasizes Active Learning in accordance with the nature and learning objectives of each course.

Among the four fundamental English language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—writing is often regarded as the most difficult skill to master (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p.303). For learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), writing does not develop naturally; it requires explicit instruction and continuous practice (Nunan, 1999, p.271). Writing demands linguistic competence, grammatical accuracy, sentence structure, logical organization, and the ability to express ideas coherently and concisely (Prayong Klunrit, 2013, p.174). In this sense, writing is a complex process of transferring thoughts into words, serving as a crucial means of communication in both academic and professional contexts.

Paragraph writing forms the foundation of English writing. A paragraph can be defined as a group of related sentences—typically 6 to 15 sentences or around 100 to 200 words—that work together to express a single main idea (Nilubon Wongchampa, 2022; McMahan & Day, 1980, p.5; Kalchayanant, 2016, p.1). In this study, the focus was on narrative paragraphs, in which students described events, places, or characters based on assigned reading materials. A well-structured paragraph consists of three key components: (1) a topic sentence presenting the main idea and controlling idea, (2) supporting sentences that develop and explain the topic logically, and (3) a concluding sentence that restates the main idea or summarizes the content coherently (Wali & Madani, 2020, p.44–50; Boardman, 2008, p.5–28).

The process writing approach emphasizes the development of writing skills as a process rather than a final product (Taylor, 1984, pp.1–15). Learners are encouraged to generate and refine ideas, review their drafts, and focus on clarity and coherence in communication. The writing process is dynamic and flexible, not restricted by rigid rules or predetermined formats (Hairston, 1982, p.85). According to White and Arndt (1991, p.43) and Flower & Hayes (1981), the process writing approach includes three key stages—planning, translating, and reviewing—which guide learners through idea development, drafting, and revision.

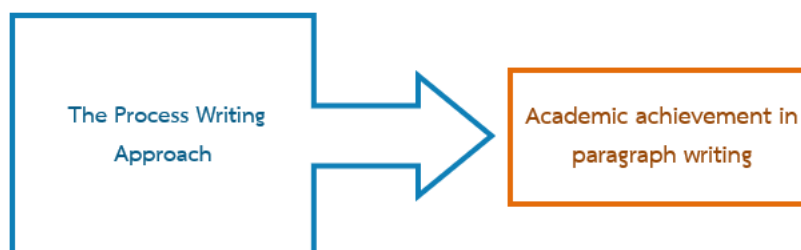
This study applies the Process Writing Approach to enhance the paragraph writing ability of English education students, aiming to promote independent and reflective writers capable of expressing their ideas effectively in English. The approach can be illustrated as shown in the below picture. Plailek, T. (2021).



Picture: Teaching phases in the Process Writing Approach (organized based on White and Arndt, 1991 and Flower & Hayes (1981)

Research Conceptual Framework

Based on the review of literature related to paragraph writing, the process writing approach, and the assessment of paragraph writing, the researcher proposes the conceptual framework of this study as follows.



2. Objective

The objective of this study was to examine the academic achievement in paragraph writing of first-year English education students at Rajabhat University after being taught through the process writing approach. The results were compared with the set criterion of 70 percent. The study was conducted in the course English Structure for Teachers of English (EEI1302) during the first semester of the 2025 academic year.

3. Methodology

1. Research design

This study employed a quasi-experimental design using the single-group post-test only design, in which one experimental group was observed after the implementation of the process writing approach. The research design is represented as follows:

Table: A quasi-experimental design using the single-group post-test only

E	T	O ₂ (E)
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The symbols used in the experimental scheme are:

E = Experimental group

T = Treatment (Process Writing Approach)

O₂ = Post-test observation

This design allowed the researcher to determine the students' paragraph writing achievement after the instruction.

2. Participants

The population consisted of 60 first-year English education students, divided into two classes of 28 and 32 students, respectively. The sample group comprised 32 students selected through cluster sampling, with intact classes used as the sampling units. One class was randomly chosen to participate in this study, as both classes shared similar characteristics (e.g., the same major, academic year, and comparable levels of academic achievement).

3. Research instruments

3.1 Four lesson plans were developed to improve students' paragraph writing ability through the process writing approach. Each plan followed three main stages:

(a) Planning Stage – Students generated ideas, determined the topic, outlined main and supporting points, and reviewed essential grammar and vocabulary. Sample paragraphs were provided as models.

(b) Translating Stage – Students wrote draft paragraphs based on their plans or modified examples to match their writing style and proficiency.

(c) Reviewing Stage – Students reviewed and revised their drafts for clarity and coherence through peer or group discussions and teacher feedback.

3.2 Writing Assessment Rubric - Students' paragraph writing performance was evaluated using an analytical scoring rubric with four components: (1) Topic Sentence, (2) Supporting Sentences, (3) Concluding Sentence, and (4) Organization. Each component was rated on a five-point scale (1–5 points), totaling 20 points, as adapted from Heaton (1990) and Reid (1993).

(a) Topic sentence - States the main idea of the paragraph and consists of a topic and a controlling idea. The sentence must be grammatically complete, containing both a subject and a predicate, and must use appropriate verb tenses correctly.

(b) Supporting sentence - Represent the main content of the paragraph, showing logical connection and continuity with the topic sentence. They include both major and minor supporting ideas, and each sentence should be grammatically complete, with correct use of subjects, predicates, and tenses.

(c) Concluding Sentence – A single sentence that restates the topic sentence using different words with similar meaning, or summarizes the supporting details in a way that aligns with the main idea. The sentence must be grammatically complete, containing both a subject and a predicate, and must employ correct verb tenses.

(d) Organization – Refers to the logical arrangement of ideas within the paragraph. The content should be coherent, well-organized, and clearly convey the intended meaning to the reader.

4. Data collection and analysis

The research procedures were conducted as follows:

4.1 The researcher informed the sampling study's objectives, and obtained consent from the participants.

4.2 The process writing approach was implemented for four consecutive weeks in a month, with classes held three hours per week.

4.3 After instruction, a post-test on paragraph writing was administered to evaluate the students' achievement.

4.4 Data were analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics, including mean, frequency count and percentage, to interpret the students' performance outcomes.

4. Results

The findings of this study revealed that the majority of students achieved high levels of paragraph writing performance after being taught through the process writing approach.

A total of 90.6 percent of the students (29 out of 32) obtained scores above 80 percent, which was higher than the set criterion. Only 9.4 percent (3 students) scored between 70–79 percent, while no students scored below the passing mark. The figures are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Score ranges and percentages of paragraph writing achievement,
including the number and percentage of students in each range.

Score Range (25 points)	Percentage (%)	Number of Students (32 students)	Percentage of Students (%)
20 - 25	100%	29	90.6
15 - 20	80%	3	9.4
10 – 15	60%	0	0
6 – 10	40%	0	0
0 – 5	20%	0	0

From the table, it can be seen that the score ranges of 15–20 points (80%) and 20–25 points (100%) represent students' paragraph writing achievement after being taught through the process writing approach. A total of 29 students (90.6%) scored within the higher range (20–25 points), which is above the criterion level of 80 percent set for this study. Overall, the students demonstrated remarkable progress in writing competence, especially in their understanding of paragraph structure, grammatical accuracy, and logical flow of ideas.

The results indicate that the process writing approach was highly effective in enhancing students' ability to produce coherent and well-organized paragraphs. The improvement was evident in all four assessed aspects—topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence, and organization. Students were able to generate ideas, plan their writing, and revise their drafts systematically through the structured stages of the process writing approach.

5. Conclusion And Future Work

This classroom-based quasi-experimental research was conducted by the researcher in her own teaching context to improve instructional practices and enhance students' learning outcomes. The study produced the following conclusions:

1. The process writing approach significantly improved students' paragraph writing performance. - After the intervention, 90.6 percent of students achieved scores above 80 percent, exceeding the expected criterion. The results confirmed that the process writing approach encourages active engagement in the stages of idea generation, drafting, revising, and editing, leading to better organization and language accuracy.

2. A total of 29 students (90.6%) scored within the score ranges of 20–25 points (100%), and only 3 of them scored within the score ranges of 15–20 points (80%). This is clearly seen that students showed consistent improvement across the three writing stages. The structured process—planning, translating, and reviewing—enabled learners to become more reflective writers. They learned to identify errors, clarify ideas, and use peer feedback constructively to improve their writing work.

3. The findings of this study can be further developed in the following directions:

- (a) Integrate the process writing approach with digital learning tools such as Google Docs, Padlet, or AI-based writing platforms to promote collaborative writing and real-time feedback.

- (b) Conduct comparative studies between experimental and control groups to strengthen the validity and reliability of results.

d) Investigate students' attitudes and satisfaction toward the process writing approach through qualitative methods, providing deeper insights into affective and behavioral factors influencing writing development.

In summary, the process writing approach proved to be an effective instructional method for developing paragraph writing skills among English education students. It helps future teachers of English cultivate critical thinking, self-reflection, and systematic writing strategies - key qualities of professional English educators.

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