

Guided Discovery Approach to Enhance the Writing Skills of the Tertiary Level Learners Using Experiential Narratives

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Abstract

This article describes a study that enhances the learners' narrative written efficacy by adopting a guided discovery approach and an experiential narrative perspective. In addition, to strengthen the analysis, Kolb's experiential theory is used to understand more about experiential narrative. A specific task is framed, and instructions are given to the students to attain the required accuracy level in writing. Based on the job, a pre-test and post-test were conducted and evaluated with the help of a rubric to prove the performance level of the entry-level tertiary learners. This study also touches upon various aspects of writing like a unity of a passage, coherence, appropriate choice words, critical thinking, and logical cohesion. Overall, this paper aims to enhance the written communication of entry-level tertiary-level learners. It is suggested that English language teachers use this approach to engage the class and activate the learner's ability to think and generate ideas for a writing task.

Keywords: experiential narrative, coherence, logical cohesion, experiential theory, tertiary level learners

Introduction

Writing is a crucial skill to succeed in professional and social life. Giving appropriate training is necessary for the learners to enhance and master the skill. In the present scenario, writing skill has become the need of the hour for students pursuing professional courses who have to appear for so many job-related interviews. Writing is one of the essential criteria. Later in their career, they need to apply writing skills for communicative purposes in the workplace to send emails and other professional communication. Mastering this skill is a continuous process, and learners can achieve progress by constantly practicing it. Thinking, feeling, and interacting are deeply associated with language because they are the prime ways of learning and acquiring it (Sabbachat, 59). Skills are generally to be practiced rather than

learned; similarly, writing in the English language is also a skill that needs to be practiced by the learners rather than merely learning in the classroom as a concept. Every individual should learn writing skills, which are crucial in daily activities and professional life. So, it is essential to have enough expertise in all the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which require special attention. Since writing is a productive skill, it needs many preliminary and pragmatic tasks to understand and use in a natural context. So new methods are to be tried to enhance the written proficiency of the tertiary level learners. However, this study has attempted to improve writing skills using the experiential narrative perspective method at the tertiary level.

Literature Review

Narrative writing is based on the sequence of events that happened over time. The compelling narration gives a precise series of events and appropriate elaboration. This type of fictional writing facilitates the learners to enhance their narrative writing ability. Saeed Adam stated that a narrative essay is essential in education, culture, and social life (2). Moreover, it plays a significant role in getting good command over language by developing imaginative thinking and literary understanding. Concerning Hyland, it is understood that when students are given tasks like story writing, they generate ideas from their imagination (24). Experiential narrative can be considered by incorporating Kolb's experiential theory to acquire knowledge through the transformation of experience.

Kolb&Kolb opines that Experiential Learning theory talks about the rotational process of grasping experience and transforming experience. Holding experience can be observed through Concrete Experience and Abstract Conceptualization while transforming experience can be observed through Reflective Experience and Active Experimentation (44). The cycle of experiential learning is a recursive process that touches all the bases in terms of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting as it is responsive to the learning environment. Also, narrative writing is developed on a person's experience, so the experiential narrative is more adequate for this study.

Guided Discovery Approach

The guided discovery method, called the inductive method, provides more width to the learners than the teacher in the learning environment. In this method teacher as a facilitator helps promote self-constructivism in developing the content, which is reflected in the views of (Casad&Jawaharlal25.886.3). Guided discovery offers the best method for promoting constructivist learning (Mayer, 17). Constructivism is defined as a learning experience that is applied in many popular instructional strategies like inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, simulation-based learning, experiential learning, service learning, and scenario-based learning. In addition, the guided discovery method helps the learners be more independent, create imagination, incorporate learners' self-experience in narratives and expand critical thinking.

Enhancing learners' communicative competency is the prime objective of any language teacher, which leads the teacher to use the guided discovery method through the experiential narrative to acquire desired language proficiency. This method aims to give the students exposure to the knowledge required to produce the target language and enhance the ability to use the language in real-life situations for effective communication.

Objectives of the Study

- To enhance the writing skill using experiential narratives
- To develop the written proficiency of the tertiary level learners
- To get exposure towards creativity and learner engagement while writing.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to I-year students of an engineering institution. Writing tasks, questions and discussions are based on this level.

Research Questions

- Is the proposed experiential narrative method beneficial for promoting learners' writing ability at the tertiary level?
- How far will it engage learners in writing at the tertiary level?

Task

A story with a beginning and concluding part with two climaxes was given to the students. Learners using their creativity should develop the middle part of the story based on the given introduction and conclusion.

Reason for this activity

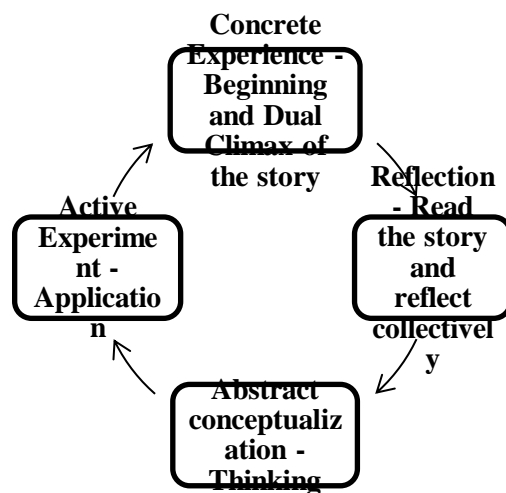
Since the introduction and climax of the story are given to the students so that students can manage the content and quickly complete the task without any boredom, this idea would stimulate the learners to construct the story more enthusiastically. Also, learners can associate their previous experience with relevance to the present story theme, making this activity learner-centric, and learner engagement is ensured throughout the activity.

Procedure

Students are asked to read the beginning and dual climaxes of the story to understand the outline and analyze their previous individual experiences to create an appropriate middle part for completing the activity. Students can start with the same beginning; the next central role is, to begin with, their imagination, and finally, students are supposed to select any of the climaxes that are suitable for the story and fix them. This activity would lead the learners to comprehend the crux of the story, use appropriate contextual words, creative thinking, logical thinking, coherence, cohesion, and know more about transition words in language development.

Methodology

Fig:1 – Incorporation of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model in Narrative Writing



The above experiential learning model describes the vital four steps involved in learning by incorporating narrative writing to enhance the written communication of the learners. Based on the given story writing activity, substantial experience is taken from the beginning and climax part of the story, which is already assigned to the students. The second step of the action is to pair up the students to read and reflect upon the novel by discussing with each other to gain extensive experience about the story. In the third part, the students use their previous experience to think and imagine to create a new body part of the given story critically. Based on the nuances of abstract conceptualization, students develop their own stories individually. In the final step

active experiment, students apply their entire experience in writing the middle part of the story with the general concepts and knowledge in structuring and matching up with the provided beginning and any of the climaxes for their accounts.

The experiential learning model, in association with the guided discovery method, is executed among students. This method provides more space for learners to construct ideas productively to fulfill narrative writing needs. The teacher's role is to guide the students with the story format and facilitate, evaluate and give feedback at the final stage. Recommended discovery method is more appropriate for the selected activity because guidance is given in terms

of providing content, less possibility of deviating from the unity of the passage, giving space to the learners to use pertinent contextual words by recalling the previous experience, intensifying critical thinking while writing the story, making learners comprehend logical cohesion and coherence of the passage. From these guided perceptions, learners 'communicative efficiency in narrative writing skills would undoubtedly see a radical transformation.

Tools Used in this Study

- A pre-test, and post-test were conducted for a group of 25 students to differentiate the frequency rate of the student's performance in writing.
- A rubric sheet is used in this study to evaluate the student's levels of using content, coherence, cohesion, contextual words, and transitions.

Results

An appropriate rubric for narrative writing was selected and used in this study to attain an accurate proficiency level in writing. Rubrics are one of the best ways for the teachers to identify the learners' stories. Jönsson and Panadero say that rubrics are an instrument to assist in identifying and evaluating qualitative differences in student performance (1). In this study, S. Parenzin's(2012) Common Core State Standards Writing Rubric for Narrative Writing rubric is used to accomplish the values of this study. The selected rubric is divided into the Establishment of Narrative Focus and Organization and Development of Language and Elaboration of Evidence. Based on the given parameters in the rubric sheet, the researcher can identify various frequency levels of the learners in narrative writing. With the help of rubrics, learners' levels were checked in terms of content, coherence, cohesion, contextual words, and transition words.

Fig.2. Frequency level in Narrative Writing – Pre-Test

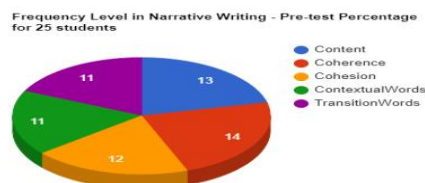
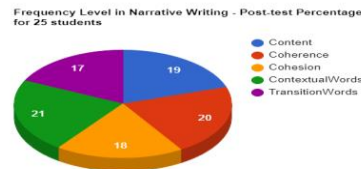


Fig.3. Frequency level in Narrative Writing – Post-Test

A pre-test was conducted for the students to check the levels of their ability in writing skills before adopting the methodology. In the pre-test, a topic was given to the students to write a story in free writing style, and no guided instructions were given. Figure 1 describes the result of the pre-test that was held for 25 students. From those 13, students could match the content appropriately with the story. In terms of coherence and cohesion, 14 and 12 students met the criteria, respectively, in writing. Contextual and Transition words usage by the students were at the same level as 11, respectively. In the pre-test, learners could not perform better because they did not get appropriate contextual words, and their coherence and cohesion were not up to the level shown in the picture.

Figure 2 shows the result of the post-test conducted for the same set of students to check the difference in variables by adapting the tested methods of teaching language. The result is better when experiential learning is applied through guided discovery in the language learning process. In terms of contextual words, the researcher's method in this study would help them meet the adequate level. That is seen from the pre-test and post-test results because the score in the first test was 11, but in the post-test, the group rose to 21. Moreover, the level of transition words is also raised from 11 to 17 in the post-test.

Discussion

The researcher has ultimately found out that the above-discussed methodology facilitates the learners to perform better in writing when they are provided with good content in the beginning and climax. There are several benefits when the content is given to the students because that paves a way not to deviate from the unity of a passage, which leads the learners to make sentences coherently since the beginning of the story is already provided; this method stimulates the mental cognition to get contextual words quickly based on the given level, it enhances the critical thinking, logical connection, and cohesion between sentences, in addition, that provides learning space to the learners to know the language nuances that is revealed from the chart results.

Conclusion

The proposed method facilitated the student to attain the required level of proficiency in writing. The technique used for this study helped the learners produce language effectively by utilizing the previous experience with the present story, which made the activity more

enjoyable. So, the learning became more practical, and students were engaged all over the study to get the required results. Through proper guidance, learners met the needed criteria seen from the results and discussion. Learners' levels were tested with different variables to show the escalation in the writing skills, which also worked well to make the method successful. Learners could employ contextual words, transition words, critical thinking, logical cohesion, and coherence of a passage. So, the graded discovery method through an experiential narrative perspective assisted the learners in enhancing their productivity in writing in an accurate context.

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