

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF PROCESS
APPROACH TO TEACHING WRITING IN MYANMAR LANGUAGE
AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL**

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Abstract

In the middle and high schools in Myanmar, the role of essay writing has been changed from lessons to be practiced to lessons to be memorized because of the teaching practices which focus on the completed essay and neglects how students write essays. So, a systematic approach to teaching writing is needed in Myanmar Language teaching to promote the students' writing skill. This study is concerned with the adaptation and adoption of process approach in teaching writing. To investigate the effect of using process approach to teaching writing, an experiment was conducted. The participants were (394) Grade Nine students from four selected schools in Yangon Region. In this study, one of the quasi-experimental designs, non-equivalent control group design, was used. At the beginning of the study, a pretest was administered to know whether there were significant differences in writing skill between the experimental and control groups. And then, the experimental groups were taught writing through the proposed process approach by using the learning materials developed by the researcher. The control groups were taught through teacher-led instruction. The treatment period was from August, 2016 to November, 2016. At the end of the treatment period, both the control and experimental groups were compared by a posttest. According to the statistical data obtained from the posttest, it was found that there were significant differences between the groups who were instructed through the proposed process approach and the groups who were instructed through teacher-led instruction in each school on the scores of writing achievement. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the proposed process approach model and learning materials positively contributed to the improvement of students' writing skill. It is believed that this study can solve the problems teachers and students are facing in teaching and learning essay writing.

Keywords: process approach, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and sharing

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Introduction

In Myanmar education, according to the Education Sector Study (ESS) (1993), rote learning is still the method preferred by teachers and students. Classroom practices also do not allow for analytical, creative thinking or free discussion. Mg Khin Min (2013) also points out that writing essay is not in its right place, training ground for students' writing skill because many students read others' readily written essays by heart. This issue is not a new one. It was also discussed in the meeting held by Basic Education Curriculum Syllabus and Textbook Committee, and Myanmar Language Commission in November, 1975. In this meeting, senior and junior assistant teachers who teach Myanmar stated that students read essays by heart for exam and some teachers also asked students to do so. As a result, students found it difficult to write even a page of essay themselves. They also said that the idea of teaching essay writing varied from school to school depending on teachers. They viewed that all these issues of teaching and learning essay writing in schools were because of the lack of guide book which explain how to write essay and how to teach essay. Zawgyi also recognized this requirement (Than Htut, 2003). Unfortunately, these problems still remain unsolved completely till now. At present, teachers are teaching essay writing in the same way and students are learning essay writing in the same way as before.

It is obvious that for teachers, to give students only topics to practice essay is not enough to produce a good product. Even giving outlines to write about a subject is not enough to promote students' writing skill. The ability of writing calls for more than cutting and copying from others' readily written essays and rearranging these pieces of writing. They can study other's essays to learn their style of writing. They must be able to write their thought and ideas in their own words effectively and efficiently.

The reason is that in teaching writing, product is considered to be the end. The process how to write or produce a good product is ignored. As a result, many students find it difficult to write an essay themselves. The role of the teacher is to show students how to catch fish for their whole life time and to refuse giving fish to students for a meal.

Now in Myanmar language teaching, a systematic approach to teaching writing is needed to promote students' writing skill and to help

teachers to overcome their difficulties in teaching writing. Whether it is written in Myanmar language or in English language, the nature of writing is the same. So this study is concerned with the adaptation and adoption of process approach in teaching writing.

Objectives of the Research

The major objectives of the study can be briefly described as follows:

1. To develop learning materials based on process approach to teaching writing and the art of writing.
2. To develop a model for teaching writing through process approach
3. To investigate the impact of learning materials and the model on students' writing skill.

Research Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant difference in the improvement of overall writing skill between students who are taught through the process approach proposed by the researcher and those who are taught through product approach, teacher-led instruction.

H2: There is a significant difference in the improvement of basic writing skill between students who are taught through the process approach proposed by the researcher and those who are taught through product approach, teacher-led instruction.

H3: There is a significant difference in the improvement of paragraph writing skill between students who are taught through the process approach proposed by the researcher and those who are taught through product approach, teacher-led instruction.

H4: There is a significant difference in the improvement of essay writing skill between students who are taught through the process approach proposed by the researcher and those who are taught through product approach, teacher-led instruction.

Definition of the Key Term**Process Approach**

According to Hoskisson and Tompkins (1987), in process approach, the emphasis in writing instruction is on the process involved in creating a product. The teacher's role has shifted from merely evaluating the end product to working with students throughout the writing process.

Scope of the Study

The following points indicate the scope of the study.

1. This study is geographically restricted to Yangon Region.
2. Participants in this study are all Grade Nine students from the selected schools in (2016-2017) Academic Year.
3. This study is limited to only six chapters of learning materials out of sixteen developed by the researcher. These six chapters are (1) Paragraph and process, (9) Narration, (10) Description, (12) Cause and effect, (13) Definition, and (16) Expanding paragraph into essay.

The seven chapters from (2) to (9) which are about the stages of writing process are excluded because there is time limit for teaching them and it is considered that they can be covered in teaching the selected chapters through the proposed process approach. The rest three chapters of writing strategies are also excluded because of the time limit. On the other hand, these writing strategies are not familiar to teachers and students. Therefore, the familiar ones mentioned above are selected.

Significance of the Study

The contribution of this study would be a new approach to teaching writing called process approach that is expected to help students perform better in Myanmar language essay writing. Moreover, this study would provide teachers with learning materials for teaching writing. This study will demonstrate that the process approach to teaching writing and the learning materials really work. That could be a ground-breaking approach to teaching writing in Myanmar language that will change the way the teachers teach

essay writing which hinders students' creative power, thinking skill and writing ability. So, this study would be beneficial to both the middle and high schools Myanmar language teachers and students as this study would provide necessary information on how to teach writing effectively and how to write effectively through process approach.

Review of Related Literature

Process Approach to Teaching Writing

John Dewey (n. d., cited in Farris, 1993) extolled the values of allowing children to be active participants in their learning. Dewey referred to this as 'learning by doing'. Dewey's premise still holds true today. By emphasizing the learning process, teachers can serve as facilitators in the classroom as children enthusiastically engage in relevant language arts activities in which they are interested. This philosophy of Dewey also influences the pedagogy for language skills since many educators prefer process approach to product approach in teaching writing skill.

Elder (1990) states that writing is a process. It takes time and effort. Each writing project always takes more time and more effort than it is thought before starting to write it. Students should give each writing project their best effort and as much time as they can, and then feel good about it. People learn to write by writing. With practice and guidance, students will become better and better writers. Berlin considers writing as an art, a creative act in which the process – the discovery of the true self – is as important as the product – the self discovered and expressed (Farris, 1993).

From this process perspective, writing is a complex, recursive, and creative process or set of behaviors that is very similar in its broad outlines for first and second language writers. Learning to write entails developing an efficient and effective composing process. The process approach treats all writing as a creative act which requires time and positive feedback to be done well.

Nation (2009) states that the main idea behind a process approach is that it is not enough to look only at what the learners have produced. In order to improve their production, it is useful to understand how it was produced. In

essence, process approach to teaching writing focuses on the writing process rather than the final product.

Stages of Process Writing

According to Hoskisson and Tompkins (1987), the writing process is a series of stages or activities that writers move through as they compose. The activities of writing generally fall into five stages: (a) prewriting, (b) drafting, (c) revising, (d) editing, and (e) sharing. In practice, the writing process is not a linear series of neatly packaged categories. Rather, the process is cyclical, involving cycles that recur throughout the stages.

Stage 1: Prewriting

Prewriting is the getting-ready-to-write stage. Prewriting is as crucial to writers as a warm-up is to athletes (Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987). It takes most of the time spent on writing process. It provides the background for writing. At this stage, students choose topics, consider the purpose and audience, decide their role in writing, and take into account the form of writing. It is this stage that the students gather the ideas or find something to write about. It is notable that good product of writing depends on good process.

The teacher must allow students to participate in decisions about purpose, audience, topic, and form, and provide a variety of idea-gathering activities such as brainstorming, free writing, talking, note-taking, clustering and reading.

Stage 2: Drafting

In the process approach to writing, students write and refine their compositions through a series of drafts. During this stage, students focus on getting their ideas down on paper, with little concern about spelling, punctuation, and other mechanical errors. As students move through successive drafts, they delete sections of text, add others, and rearrange them. The role of the teacher is to provide support, encouragement, and feedback for ideas and problems but not to emphasize correct spelling and neatness (Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987). It is the fastest part of the process, and the

most frightening, for it is a commitment. When the students complete a draft, they know how much, and how little, they know. And the writing of this first draft- rough, searching, and unfinished- may take as little as one percent of the writer's time (Murray, 1972).

Stage 3: Revising

An important part of the writing process is looking back over what has been written. This is done to check what ideas have already been included in the writing, to keep the coherence and flow of the writing, to stimulate further ideas, and to look for errors. Poor writers do not review, or review only to look for errors. One way of encouraging learners to review their writing is to provide them with checklists containing points to look for in their writing. In peer feedback, learners read their incomplete work to each other to get comments and suggestions on how to improve and continue it. The learners can work in groups and read each other's compositions. They make suggestions for revising before the teacher marks the compositions.

Stage 4: Editing

Editing involves going back over the writing and making changes to its organization, style, grammatical and lexical correctness, and appropriateness. Like all the other parts of the writing process, editing does not occur in a fixed place in the process. Writers can be periodically reviewing what they write, editing it, and then proceeding with the writing. Thus, editing is not restricted to occurring after all the writing has been completed. Learners can be encouraged to edit through the feedback that they get from their classmates, teacher and other readers. Such feedback that focuses only on grammatical errors will not help with editing of content. Teachers need to look at their feedback to make sure it is covering the range of possibilities (Nation, 2009).

Stage 5: Sharing

Students read their writing to classmates, or share it with larger audiences through hardcover books that are placed in the class or school library, class anthologies, letters, newspapers, plays, or puppet shows. In each

of these cases, students are communicating with a genuine audience. Again and again researchers report that although teachers are the most common audience for student writing, they are one of the worst audiences because they often read with a red pen in their hands (Lundsteen, 1976, cited in Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987). As students share their writing with genuine audiences, they develop a greater appreciation of audience and its role in the writing process (Hubbard, 1985, cited in Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987).

Review of Related Studies

A number of research studies related to the implementation of the process approach in teaching writing have been conducted in different parts of the world.

In 1992, the National Assessment of Educational Performance (NAEP), the largest nationally representative and containing assessment of American students in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography and U.S history, concluded that students who were more often exposed to the writing process: planning, defining the audience and purpose, using outside resources, and composing more than one draft _ scored higher than those students who used the techniques less often. Based on the research of the NEAP, it was concluded that higher than average writing scores were a result of writing techniques defined as the writing process (Greenwald et al., 1999).

In Hong Kong, Belinda Ho (2006) investigated how effective process writing is in helping about (200) students at the upper primary school level and the lower primary school level to improve their writing skills and their attitudes towards writing. It was found that the program brought about positive results across all classes in both the upper and lower levels. According to Belinda Ho's study, process writing seems to be a feasible solution to heightening the writing abilities and confidence of students.

Vanderpyl (2012) experimented with the process approach as writing instruction in two greatly varying contexts: the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The participants were students from American Center English language classes, and North Star *Reading and Writing* (2008) and *Speaking and Listening* (2008) textbooks were used as

learning materials. It was found that the process approach is effective in improving students' writing skill.

Therefore, it would be worthwhile to adopt process approach for teaching Myanmar essay writing in Myanmar schools and examine its effectiveness in the improvement of students' writing skill.

The Proposed Learning Materials and Teaching Writing Model

Based on the art of writing and writing process, learning materials and proposed teaching writing model were developed by the researcher.

Learning Materials

There are sixteen chapters altogether written by the researcher as learning materials. They are as follow.

1. Paragraph and Process
2. Purpose and Audience
3. Finding a Topic
4. Writing a Topic Sentence
5. Discovering Details
6. Organizing
7. Revising
8. Editing
9. Narration
10. Description
11. Example
12. Cause and Effect
13. Definition
14. Comparison and Contrast
15. Classification
16. Writing an Essay by Expanding a Paragraph

Teaching Writing Model

A proposed model for teaching writing is developed based on the five general stages of writing process suggested by Hoskisson and Tompkins (1987): prewriting, drafting, reviewing, editing and sharing. In this model, there are six main stages. These are presentation, prewriting, writing, revising, editing and sharing. The activities in each step can be seen in the following figure.

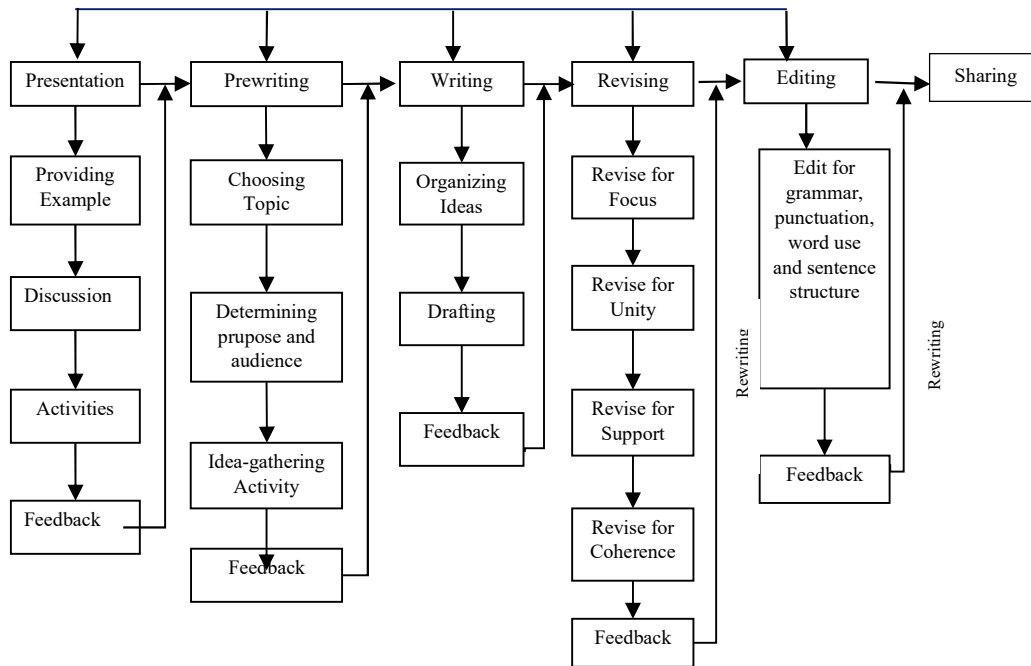


Figure 1: Proposed Model for Teaching Writing

Research Method

To investigate the effectiveness of the developed learning materials and model, a quantitative study, an experiment, was conducted. A qualitative study, a questionnaire survey, was also conducted to find out students' attitudes towards the new teaching approach.

Quantitative Research Method

Population and Sample Size

The research was carried out in Yangon City Development Area (YCDC) including thirty-three townships. These townships are divided into four strata: Inner City, Inner-Suburb, Outer-Suburb and Satellite. One township from each stratum was selected at random. And then, one high school from each township was chosen by using simple random sampling method. For experimenting the new teaching writing approach and conducting a questionnaire survey, (91) students from B.E.H.S (2), Lanmadaw, (89) students from B.E.H.S (3), Sanchaung, (87) students from B.E.H.S (6), Insein and (125) students from B.E.H.S (6), Hlaingthayar were selected.

Research Design

The research design applied in the quantitative study is the nonequivalent control group design which is one of the quasi-experimental designs.

Instruments

Since this study is aimed at investigating the impact of process approach to teaching writing in Myanmar language at the high school level, the researcher constructed a pretest and a posttest, and the marking schemes for them. The pretest and posttest are the same in form, but different in content. The posttest is slightly more difficult than the pretest. Both tests consist of seven items: the first five items to measure the basic writing skill, item (6) to examine paragraph writing skill and the last one to check essay writing skill. The total score of each test is (50) and the time allowed for both test is (1:30) hours. According to the pilot study, the internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of the pretest was (.686) and (.715) was for the posttest.

Learning Materials

There is no prescribed textbook specialized in teaching writing. So, learning materials have been developed based on process approach to teaching writing and the arts of writing. Among the sixteen chapters written, only six

chapters were chosen for teaching experiment because of the time limit. The first chapter was paragraph and process. The next four chapters were strategies for writing paragraphs: narration, description, cause and effect, and definition. The sixth chapter was writing essay by expanding a paragraph.

It is assumed that these six chapters can cover all the writing skills at the high school level. This is because among the six chapters, the first one is aimed at understanding the process approach to writing, the next four chapters includes the most familiar writing strategies in high schools and the last deals with the essay writing. To teach writing by using these learning materials, a teaching writing model was developed and lesson plans for the six chapters chosen to be taught were written based on the developed model.

These learning materials and activities were examined carefully by five expert teachers in both methodology and academic fields in February, 2016. They made valuable suggestions and recommendations from their different points of view for the improvement of the learning materials and activities. Their critical comments and suggestions regarding style, format, appropriateness and wording were very helpful. At their valuable suggestions, necessary modifications in learning materials were made. Some words are replaced by more understandable words.

Key Variables

The independent variables in this study were the different approaches to teaching writing. Therefore, the independent variable for experimental groups was instruction, using process approach and for control group was instruction, without using it. The dependent variable was student's score on the posttest.

Procedure

Firstly, in order to evaluate the feasibility and reliability of the instruments for full-scale study, pilot experiment was conducted at Practising High School (TTC), Yangon University of Education from 20th June to 8th August 2016. The time taken for teaching including testing before and after was (22) periods which last (45) minutes each. The study was carried out according to quasi-experimental design. The number of participants were (55)

for experimental group and (46) for control group. In pilot study, three chapters out of six chapters selected for experimental study were taught. In the light of experiences of pilot study, necessary changes in testing and planning for experimental study were made. Before pilot study it was predicted to take (4) periods for teaching a chapter, but in reality, it took (6) periods for a chapter. So, time allocation was changed. Pilot teaching also gave better ideas of sharing, the final stage of process approach, to motivate students' interest in learning. Pilot teaching was very helpful for the better preparation of handouts and teaching aids for experimental study. In the light of pilot study, necessary changes were also made in lesson plans.

Conducting full-scale experimental study was started in all four selected schools in August, 2016. At the beginning of the study, all participants in both groups were administered a pretest to check the equivalence of the two groups. It took (1:30) hours, (2) periods. Then the experimental groups were treated with the developed process approach to writing while the control groups were taught through product approach, teacher-led instruction. The two experiment groups in B.E.H.S (2), Lanmadaw and B.E.H.S (3), Sanchaung were taught by the researcher. And the rest in B.E.H.S (6), Insein and B.E.H.S (6), Hlaingthayar were given treatment by other two Myanmar language teachers from these schools. They both have a B.Ed. in Myanmar language teaching and the one also has a M.A. in Myanmar language. They were given learning materials in advance to study. And then they had been advised how to teach writing according to process approach model and lesson plans. The total time taken for treatment was (27) hours, (36) periods. After the treatment period, a posttest was administered to all students in experimental groups and control groups to measure their writing skill achievement. The posttest took (1:30) hours, (2) periods. The experimental study finished in November, 2016.

Qualitative Research Method

Population and Sample Size

Only experimental groups from the selected schools were participated in qualitative study. So only (48) students from B.E.H.S (2), Lanmadaw, (44) students form B.E.H.S (3), Sanchaung, (43) students from B.E.H.S (6), Insein and (63) students from B.E.H.S (6), Hlaingthayar were participated.

Instrument

To examine the students' attitudes towards the developed process approach to teaching writing, a questionnaire was constructed. It was divided into two parts: attitudes towards the new teaching approach and attitudes towards the learning materials. The first part includes (20) items and the second one includes (10) items. Five-point Likert scale with (5) assigned to strongly agree and (1) assigned to strongly disagree, was used to indicate the attitudes towards each item. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted with (46) students at Practising High School (TTC), Yangon University of Education. According to the pilot study, the internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of the questionnaire was (.782).

Procedure

Data collection process was carried out in November, 2016. The questionnaire was administered to all students participated in experimental groups in all four selected schools. The teachers gave help to distribute the questionnaires and collect the questionnaires in their schools. It took about (20) minutes to complete the questionnaire. It was completed at the last week of experimental teaching.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version (24) was used to analyze the quantitative data. The data were analyzed by the independent samples *t*-test to compare the differences between the experimental groups and control groups. For qualitative study, percentage of responses will be used to know the attitudes of the students involved in the experiment towards the new teaching approach after instruction.

Research Findings

Quantitative Research Findings

Analysis of Pretest Scores

Table 1 : *t* Values for Pretest Scores in Overall Writing Skill Achievement

School	Group	N	M	SD	MD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig (2-tailed)
S1	Experimental	48	20.65	4.715	1.42	1.424	89	.158 (ns)
	Control	43	19.23	4.740				
S2	Experimental	44	19.41	6.147	0.92	.734	87	.465 (ns)
	Control	45	18.49	5.679				
S3	Experimental	43	18.95	4.111	1.31	1.324	85	.189 (ns)
	Control	44	17.64	5.104				
S4	Experimental	63	16.24	4.173	1.24	1.748	123	.083 (ns)
	Control	62	15.00	3.728				

Note: ns = not significant

The results show that there were no significant differences between the experimental groups and the control groups for scores on pretest ($p > .05$) because the mean scores of the experimental groups and the control groups were nearly the same in all four schools. This means that the two groups in all selected schools were equivalent before the treatment. Therefore, their scores on posttest will be analyzed by using the independent samples *t*-test.

Analysis of Posttest Scores in Overall Writing Skill Achievement

Table 2: *t* Values for Posttest Scores in Overall Writing Skill Achievement

School	Group	N	M	SD	MD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
S1	Experimental	48	31.38	5.782	11.57	11.241	89	.000***
	Control	43	19.81	3.942				
S2	Experimental	44	31.32	4.714	10.96	13.405	87	.000***
	Control	45	20.36	2.715				
S3	Experimental	43	27.42	6.437	8.42	7.023	85	.000***
	Control	44	19.00	4.615				
S4	Experimental	63	28.38	5.641	11.33	13.405	123	.000***
	Control	62	17.05	3.605				

Note: *** $p < .001$

In the above table, it can be seen that the mean scores of the groups who were instructed through the process approach were significantly higher than that of the other groups in each school (see Table 2). The independent samples *t*-test results indicates that there were significant differences between the experimental groups who were instructed through the process approach proposed by the researcher and the control groups who were instructed through product approach, teacher-led instruction in each school on the scores of the overall writing achievement ($p < .001$). Therefore, the hypothesis that students who are instructed through the process approach proposed by the researcher will exhibit significantly higher overall writing skill achievement than students who are instructed through product approach, teacher-led instruction was supported by this result.

Analysis of Posttest Scores in Basic Writing Skill Achievement

Table 3: *t* Values for Posttest Scores in Basic Writing Skill Achievement

School	Group	N	M	SD	MD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
S1	Experimental	48	12.73	3.174	3.26	5.305	89	.000***
	Control	43	9.47	2.631				
S2	Experimental	44	13.02	2.377	4.8	10.549	87	.000***
	Control	45	8.22	1.882				
S3	Experimental	43	10.93	2.622	3.32	5.380	85	.000***
	Control	44	7.61	3.112				
S4	Experimental	63	11.21	1.696	4.08	10.344	123	.000***
	Control	62	7.13	2.608				

Note. *** $p < .001$

From the table, it is clear that the mean scores in basic writing skill achievement of the experimental groups whose teachers used the process approach were significantly higher than that of the control groups whose teachers did not use it in each school ($p < .001$) (see Table 3). It shows that there were significant differences between the experimental groups and the control groups in each school on the scores in basic writing skill achievement at the .001 level. This result supported the hypothesis that students who are instructed through the process approach proposed by the researcher will exhibit significantly higher basic writing skill achievement than students who

are instructed through product approach, teacher-led instruction. But, the mean scores of both groups cannot be said to be excellent because even the mean scores of the students in experimental groups were approximately 12 out of 22.

Analysis of Posttest Scores in Paragraph Writing Skill Achievement

Table 4: *t* Values for Posttest Scores in Paragraph Writing Skill Achievement

School	Group	N	M	SD	MD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
S1	Experimental	48	5.23	1.225	2.02	7.371	89	.000***
	Control	43	3.21	1.390				
S2	Experimental	44	5.41	1.064	2.08	10.046	87	.000***
	Control	45	3.33	.879				
S3	Experimental	43	5.02	1.422	1.25	4.533	85	.000***
	Control	44	3.77	1.138				
S4	Experimental	63	4.67	1.513	1.65	7.473	123	.000***
	Control	62	3.02	.878				

Note: *** $p < .001$

The above table shows that the mean scores in paragraph writing skill achievement of the experimental groups were significantly higher than that of the control groups in each school (see Table 4). It means that there were significant differences between the groups who were instructed using the process approach and the control groups who were instructed without using it in each school on the scores in paragraph writing skill achievement at the .001 level. This result also supported the hypothesis that students who are instructed through the process approach proposed by the researcher will exhibit significantly higher paragraph writing skill achievement than students who are instructed through the product approach, teacher-led instruction.

Analysis of Posttest Scores in Essay Writing Skill Achievement

Table 5: *t* Values for Posttest Scores in Essay Writing Skill Achievement

School	Group	N	M	SD	MD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
S1	Experimental	48	13.44	2.982	6.30	11.446	89	.000***
	Control	43	7.14	2.133				
S2	Experimental	44	12.89	2.517	4.13	9.151	87	.000***
	Control	45	8.76	1.640				
S3	Experimental	43	11.56	3.990	4.04	5.721	85	.000***
	Control	44	7.52	2.367				
S4	Experimental	63	12.48	4.295	5.54	8.765	123	.000***
	Control	62	6.94	2.573				

Note: *** $p < .001$

The table indicates that the mean scores in essay writing skill achievement of the experimental groups were significantly higher than that of the control groups in each school (see Table 5). It means that there were significant differences between the groups who were instructed using the process approach and the control groups who were instructed as usual in each school on the scores in paragraph writing skill achievement at the .001 level. This result supported the hypothesis that students who are instructed through the process approach proposed by the researcher will exhibit significantly higher essay writing skill achievement than students who are instructed through product approach, teacher-led instruction.

Qualitative Research Findings

Attitudes towards the Learning Materials

The qualitative data analysis shows that most of the participants in the experimental groups were positive in their attitudes towards the developed learning materials and the process to teaching writing (see Appendix).

In short, the process approach to teaching writing has profound impact on the improvement of high school students' Myanmar language writing skill.

Discussion, Recommendations, Suggestions and Conclusion

Discussion

The major purpose of this study was to investigate into the impact of process approach to teaching writing in Myanmar language at the high school level. For this reason, learning materials and a teaching model for writing were developed, based on the process approach to teaching writing. To investigate their effectiveness, a quantitative research was conducted, hypothesizing that there is a significant difference in the improvement of writing skill between students who are taught through the process approach proposed by the researcher and those who are taught through product approach, teacher-led instruction. A qualitative research was also carried out to inquire the attitudes of students who participated in the experimental groups towards the process approach.

The results of the quantitative study support its original hypotheses. The means of all the experimental groups who were taught through process approach were significantly higher than that of all the control groups not only on the overall writing skill but also on individual writing skills: basic writing skill, paragraph writing skill and essay writing skill. It can, therefore, be interpreted that the use of process approach to teaching writing had significant effect on the writing skill achievement of the students. It can also be inferred that both the method of teaching writing and the materials have positively contributed to the learning and teaching writing in Myanmar language at schools.

The results of the study were consistent with the findings of previous research studies. The results of the study by Goldstein and Carr (1996) who examined the 1992 National Assessment of Educational Performance writing assessment indicated that process-related activities are strongly related to writing proficiency. Belinda Ho (2006) who studied the effectiveness of using the process approach to teaching writing in six Hong Kong primary classrooms also found that the program brought about positive results across all classes. The experiment with the process approach as writing instruction by Vanderpyl (2012) has found that the process approach is effective on several levels. The results of quantitative research are also consistent with the qualitative results and the teaching-learning theories in the following ways.

The results of qualitative study also support the results of quantitative study. They are also consistent with teaching-learning theories. Nearly all the students who participated in qualitative study were receptive to the proposed process approach to teaching writing. They liked the proposed process approach and learning materials. They agreed that every stage of writing process is essential and useful for producing a good product of writing. So it can be interpreted that the proposed process approach to teaching writing and learning materials had made positive contribution to the improvement of students' writing skill.

The two teachers who participated in experimenting teaching also expressed their experiences and opinions regarding the proposed approach. The difficulty level in implementing the process approach differed depending on class size. Although one of the teachers whose class size was over forty had no difficulty in using the process approach to writing, the other teacher who taught a large class of over sixty found this approach difficult to control students in doing group activities and to provide individual feedback. But they both believed that the study had brought about considerable benefits to all the participants, both teachers and students. Their teaching became improved and their students showed noticeable improvement in their writing by participating in the study. One of them remarked that this kind of study should have been done a long time ago.

However, it is unreliable to generalize the results of this study to all high school students in Myanmar as the study was conducted only in Yangon City Development Area and the sample size was too small for the total populations of high school students in Myanmar. But, the results of this study may throw new light on the method of teaching essay writing for all middle and high school students in Myanmar.

Recommendations

1. In this study, the sample schools were randomly selected from Yangon City Development Area. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct the similar research in other states and regions. Then, the research results will be more reliable than present results.

2. In this study, the participants were only high school students. Actually, essay writing is included in both middle and high school levels. So, the similar research on process approach to writing should be carried out at middle school level. Then, the research results will be generalized to a wider population.
3. Moreover, the impact of process approach should be studied for essay writing in English language teaching too.
4. In this study, students were asked to keep their writings in a portfolio which is a collection of students' work that demonstrates to the students and others their effort, progress and achievements in given areas. But their portfolios were not assessed. Instead, a posttest, product assessment which is incompatible with process approach, was used. So, in future research on process approach to writing, portfolio assessment which is a natural partner of process approach should be used and its impact on students' writing skill should also be studied.

Suggestions

The aim of essay writing is to enable students to express their own ideas and thoughts in their own words effectively. Essay writing serves as a training ground for this expressive ability. Essay question in exam is to inquire students' own personality, creative power, thinking skill and writing ability. Essay writing is the lesson to be practiced, not the lesson to be memorized. Firstly, both teachers and students need to understand this real aim of essay writing to achieve this.

But the current practices of teaching essay writing which focus on the completed essays, product, and which seems weak in encouraging students to write misinterpreted the meaning of essay writing and lead to the problem of plagiarism. So, teachers should abandon this traditional product approach to teaching essay writing and adopt the proposed process approach in their teaching of writing. From this study, it is clear that the process approach is an effective method of teaching. Adopting this new approach may be one of the solutions for teachers to overcome the problem of plagiarism, make real improvement of students' writing skill and make essay writing in schools meaningful.

Moreover, in order to teach writing effectively, there are some important things to be considered. Firstly, the class-size should be small enough whether the teacher uses the current teaching practices or the proposed approach. It shouldn't be more than forty. If the class-sizes are larger than that, teachers have difficulties to control and to provide feedback individually. But, peer feedback and group assignment, an alternative to individual assignment in the process approach can release teachers from over-workload of giving individual feedback. Teachers can give group assignment according to the experiences and interest of the students. For instance, when the teacher teaches narrative writing, individual work is more appropriate because different students have different stories. But group assignment is appropriate for cause and effect writing topics for which students can have common interest and knowledge.

Secondly, teaching writing classroom should have certain books for students and teacher. Reference books such as Myanmar dictionary and Myanmar orthographic text are the two essential requirements for teaching writing class. It is better to have a number of these two kinds of books for students to be able to use at the same time. They enable students do editing their own works and others' works. In addition to these reference books, readings such as Myanmar essay (100), (101), (102) and the writings of great Myanmar prose writers should also be available for students to study. There should also be well-stock school library for students to do research or search the required information for their essays.

Teaching writing should be related to other text teaching such as prose, poems and grammar. Teachers should enable students to apply the study of words and sentence structure in grammar, the characteristics of good prose and rhetorical composition in poems and prose in their own writings. Teaching writing should also be related to other subjects. For example, in teaching compare and contrast pattern writing, the sun and the moon in geography can be a good topic to compare or contrast. Moreover, the study of history can be useful in narration pattern of writing paragraph because all the stories in history texts are narrated. For instance, if students write about Bojyoke Aung San for the topic 'The person I admire most', they can learn about him from their Myanmar history text.

Moreover, it should be kept in mind that teaching students to write has started since the primary level. The reader, 'Myself' in Grade One Myanmar textbook, is aimed at enabling students to write about themselves by substituting their real lives in Mg Hla's. Similarly, the aim of teaching the reader, 'Letter to a friend' from Grade Two Myanmar textbook, should enable students to write a letter to their real friend, not to memorize the prescribed reader. Moreover, students should be given writing tasks such as paraphrasing and summarizing in teaching poems and prose.

The most important of all, before teaching essay writing, students should be introduced with paragraph writing first. At the middle level, strategies for writing paragraphs should be covered. The easiest strategies, narration, should be taught at the lowest grade, Grade Five, and the more difficult one, description and example should be added to Grade Six teaching writing. Cause and effect, and definition which call for thinking skills although they are familiar to Myanmar students because the above mentioned four types of writing used to be taught in teaching essay writing should be prescribed in Grade Seven. The unfamiliar ones which also require thinking skills, compare and contrast, and classification should be taught to Grade Eight students, the oldest at the middle school level. And then, at the high school level, students will be ready to learn how to write essays effectively. Teaching two strategies of writing through the process approach will take about (10) out of (18) periods allocated for teaching writing in an academic year. Therefore, students will have enough time to practice the newly learned writing strategies and the old ones. As a prescribed text or guide book, the learning materials which were already developed by the researcher can be used.

It is not suggested to use the proposed model for teaching writing and learning materials developed by the researcher exactly as they are. They can be adapted to meet the needs of the teachers and students. Teachers can replace certain paragraphs and essays in the learning materials with more appropriate ones. Learning materials can be widely available if teachers collect students' works or students are asked to keep their works at different stages of writing process in a portfolio. Students' excellent works can be used

as learning materials as needed. Students' outstanding works can be used as models. Their drafts can be used to teach how to revise and edit.

According to Basic Education Curriculum Syllabus and Textbook Committee, in an academic year, the time allocation for teaching essay writing is (18) periods (45 minutes each) in each grade at the middle and high school levels. For each month, two topics are given for students to write. So, Students are supposed to write (18) essays in an academic year. But, if students are taught writing through the process approach, they cannot be expected to write many paragraphs or essays in an academic year like using the product approach. Every student can write at least (6) paragraphs or essays on the topics of their own choice in an academic year. Some students can write more. It depends on their ability. All these paragraphs or essays will be the students' original works. If quality education is preferred to quantity education, the process approach should be implemented in teaching writing.

Finally, in order to implement such writing program successfully, teachers who are change agents need to understand the process approach to teaching writing and the art of writing. So, the proposed process approach to teaching writing model should be added to the existing curriculum of teaching of Myanmar in universities of education and education colleges.

Conclusion

To conclude, the proposed model for teaching writing and learning materials seem to be a feasible solution to the problems that the teachers and students are facing in teaching and learning essay writing by fulfilling the requirements of the guide book which shows what to teach and how to teach. It is believed that they could place essay writing back in its right place, training ground. They will heighten the ability and confidence of both students and teachers in teaching and learning writing skills. The learning materials developed could be sources of reference for anyone who would like to learn how to write. It is hoped that with the help of the empirical evidence, process writing will soon become a part of school curriculum of Myanmar language teaching, so that students' interest and success in their writing will be enhanced more speedily and effectively than before. So this study was a worthwhile task although it was challenging.

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Appendix

Attitudes towards Learning Materials

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
		F & %	F & %	F & %	F & %	F & %
1	Learning materials are interesting.	1	8	32	125	32
		.5	4	16.2	63.1	16.2
2	They are easy to understand.	1	10	38	113	36
		.5	5.1	19.2	57.1	18.2
3	Example paragraphs and essays help me understand the writing concepts.	-	5	29	102	62
		-	2.5	14.6	51.5	31.3
4	They are also helpful in considering topic to write.	-	4	25	106	63
		-	2	12.6	53.5	31.8
5	Activities or exercises make sure the understanding of the lesson.	2	5	35	104	52
		1	2.5	17.7	52.5	26.3
6	I enjoy doing these activities.	3	13	29	110	43
		1.5	6.6	14.6	55.6	21.7
7	It is easy to do these activities.	8	36	64	70	20
		4	18.2	32.3	35.4	10.1
8	Having learned them, I think I can write paragraph effectively.	1	24	83	76	14
		.5	12.1	41.9	38.4	7.1
9	Having learned them, I can write essay with confidence.	2	11	60	86	39
		1	5.6	30.3	43.4	19.7
10	Having learned them, I notice an improvement in my writing skill.	-	6	20	80	92
		-	3	10.1	40.4	46.2

Attitudes towards Process Approach to Teaching Writing

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
		F & %	F & %	F & %	F & %	F & %
1	I like teaching writing through process approach.	2	9	22	111	54
		1	4.5	11.1	56.1	27.3
2	This approach enables me to write to serve the purpose of writing.	-	4	25	117	52
		-	2	12.6	59.1	26.3
3	This approach makes it possible for me to use appropriate language for the intended audience.	2	19	46	95	36
		1	9.6	23.2	48	18.2
4	I like having the right to choose topic.	-	3	12	70	113
		-	1.5	6.1	35.4	57.1
5	Activities like clustering, asking questions, brainstorming and free-writing are effective for idea gathering.	2	17	46	97	36
		1	8.6	23.2	49	18.2
6	This approach enables me to present my ideas in proper order.	-	9	44	115	30
		-	4.5	22.2	58.1	15.2
7	Drafting is essential stage to produce a good piece of writing.	-	2	10	85	101
		-	1	5.1	42.9	51
8	This approach makes me know how to revise my draft.	2	10	25	104	57
		1	5.1	12.6	52.5	28.8
9	In revising, feedback from others let me see my weak points.	1	6	15	86	90
		.5	3	7.6	43.4	45.5
10	After revising, it is important to rewrite.	-	4	17	110	67
		-	2	8.6	55.6	33.8
11	This approach enables me to know how to edit.	-	6	25	97	70
		-	3	12.6	39	35.4
12	Peer editing is interesting and effective.	-	6	14	91	87

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
		F & %	F & %	F & %	F & %	F & %
		-	3	7.1	46	43.9
13	Sharing my final product with others make writing meaningful.	-	5	28	82	83
		-	2.5	14.1	41.4	42
14	Sharing my essays or paragraphs with others is something to be proud of.	-	3	21	83	91
		-	1.5	10.6	41.9	46
15	This approach encourages cooperation between teacher and students, and between students.	-	6	4	96	92
		-	3	2	48.5	46.5
16	Having the right to read, listen to and give feedback to others' essays helps me improve my writing skill.	1	4	15	80	98
		0.5	2	7.6	40.4	49.5
17	Writing a topic in group also improve cooperation between students.	2	5	11	83	97
		1	2.5	5.6	41.9	49
18	This approach can provoke willingness to write.	3	5	26	98	66
		1.5	2.5	13.1	49.5	33.3
19	Learning through this approach enables me to present my ideas in my own words.	-	1	12	104	81
		-	.5	6.1	52.5	40.9
20	This approach contributes to the improvement of students' Myanmar language writing skill.	-	1	7	64	126
		-	.5	3.5	32.3	63.6

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Uncertain,
4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree F = Frequency