

Proficiency Level in English Writing of the Students Enrolled at Isabela State University San Mariano Campus

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ABSTRACT--*The study focused on identifying the English Writing Proficiency of students at Isabela State University San Mariano campus. The descriptive survey method was utilized involving 632 students. The English Writing Proficiency was identified by asking the students to write a composition under controlled condition. The outputs of the students were evaluated using a rubric covering organization, mechanics, content and grammar. Majority of the students were found out to have committed errors on writing incomplete sentences, spelling, tenses of verbs and on subject and verb agreement. Furthermore, the English Writing Proficiency of students is dependent on their age, sex, curriculum level, parents' educational attainment and dialect spoken. It is recommended that professors, instructors, teachers of English must expose students in writing exercises like writing essays, short stories, poems, editorial, news articles, etc. for the enhancement of their proficiency in writing. Finally, teachers must teach the students the principles of clear and effective writing like correct spelling, correct use of punctuations, grammar, diction and among others.*

Keywords--*English Writing, Controlled Writing, Effective Writing*

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing, like listening, reading, speaking, and viewing is assumed to be the most complex of all the five macro skills of English which teachers should develop and nourish among students in order to become competent Filipinos in as far as communicating the English language is concerned especially if they wish to express their thoughts, ideas, observations, feelings or emotions, and experiences. One's ability to express his/her own unique idea in a logical and accurate manner whether oral or written is a key factor that enables one to step in bridges that link the world together as asserted by Calanoga (2019).

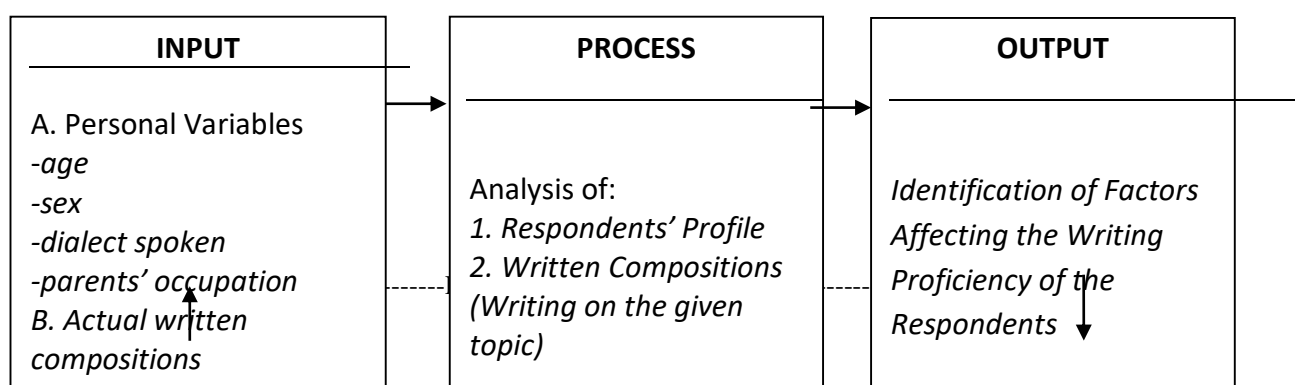
However, getting along in the way of teaching, incompetence in writing using the English language is still apparent among all the students in the campus. They have valuable ideas in mind however they lack the necessary knowledge in expressing these ideas into writing. Incorrect use of punctuations, capitalization, spelling and subject-verb agreement hamper them to write effectively. These are the major problems everyone is concerned to in terms of writing while in fact it is one of the most important ways to ensure that all college students after acquiring the basic literacy skills can write good compositions in English as among the phases of language teaching that need considerable attention.

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Therefore critical analysis on students written outputs should be evaluated thus, this study was conducted in order to identify certain factors that disturb the writing proficiency of all college students enrolled in the campus and in order to furnish tools that could be utilized and shared in the development of writing skills since becoming aware of the writing problems of our students and their causes, call for a step to help check these problems.

Conceptual Framework

According to Allen and Vallete (2004), writing is considered difficult of all the language skills. Persons who write are expected to write correctly with observance on correct grammar, organization of ideas, choice of words, and punctuation and capitalization although it takes many years of intensive study to write the English language with fluency.



Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the students enrolled in terms of:
 - a. age
 - b. sex
 - c. dialect spoken
 - d. parent's educational attainment
 - e. curriculum year
 - f. classification of school graduated from
2. What is the writing proficiency level of the students in terms of:
 - a. Content
 - b. Organization
 - c. Mechanics
 - d. Grammar
3. Is there a significant relationship between the student profile variable and their writing proficiency level?

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study on the Determinants of the English Writing Proficiency of the Students of Isabela State University San Mariano Campus for Academic Year 2014 -2015 used the descriptive survey method. An analysis was also used to interpret the data gathered using a rubric which was validated by experts in English/professors in English.

Research Participants

The research comprised the 632 students enrolled in the campus for the first semester of the academic year 2014 - 2015.

Instrumentation

There was a set of composition writing – the controlled which contained a minimum of 150 words to evaluate the proficiency of students in terms of content, organization and mechanics. These served as the bases in determining their writing performance.

In general, the students’ writing proficiency was based on the written composition under controlled.

III. RESULTS

As can be seen in the first table, 326 with 51.58% of the respondents are first year college students; 122 with 19.30% are second year; 123 with 19.46% are third year; and 61 with 9.66% are 4th year students. All the respondents are regular college students.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of the Respondents According to Year Level

Curriculum Year	Frequency	PERCENTAGE
First Year	326	51.58
Second Year	122	19.30
Third Year	123	19.46
Fourth Year	61	9.66
Total	632	100.00

Table 2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to age. It can be gleaned on the table that primarily, 306 with 48.41% of the respondents are at the age bracket 15 to 17. Secondly, 174 with 27.53% are at the age bracket 18 to 20. There are eleven with 1.74% who are at the age bracket 24 to 26. Also, there is only one or 0.15% whose age is between 27 to 29 and another one from the age bracket 30 to 32. Finally, there were 2 respondents whose ages range from 33 to 35. It can be said that majority of the respondents are in the normal age brackets of expected students in college.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	PERCENTAGE
15 – 17	306	48.41
18 – 20	174	27.53

21 – 23	133	21.04
24– 26	11	1.74
27 – 29	2	0.15
30 – 32	2	0.15
33 – 35	4	0.31
TOTAL	632	100

As can be seen from the table, 236 or 37.34 % of the respondents are male and 396 or 62.66 % are female. It reveals that respondents are predominantly female. It can be said therefore that more responses can be elicited from the female respondents knowing them also as social beings who are more articulate, stylish and fond in stating lengthy sentences and/or descriptions unlike men who are inclined or fond of giving shorter or direct responses. Evidence to this is the statement of Kraner (1973) as cited by Montenegro (1981) that men and women speak a different language. It was further cited that women have propensity for hyperbole.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	PERCENTAGE
Male	236	37.34
Female	396	62.66
Total	632	100

Table 4. presents the most spoken or major dialect spoken by the respondents in their daily transactions and conversations at home and in other places. With this, the table reveals that 318 with 50.31% use Ilocano. There were 113 or 17.87 % who usually speak in Tagalog. And there were 201 who claimed they always use Ibanag while nobody responded on the other types of dialects or languages as their major medium of communication every day. This signifies that the school is comprised of students who use to speak in Ilocano, Tagalog and Ibanag.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Most Spoken Dialect by the Respondents

Dialects	Frequency	PERCENTAGE
Ilocano	318	50.31
Ibanag	113	17.87
Tagalog	201	31.81
Visaya	-	-
Itawis	-	-
English	-	-
TOTAL	632	100

As can be seen from the table, 180 with 28.66% of the respondents have fathers who are elementary undergraduates. 139 or 22.13% have fathers who finished grade 6. There are 125 or 19.90 % who did not finish high school. 117 with 18.63% of them noted that their fathers finished high school. 61, 9.71% declared their fathers

are college undergraduate. Lastly, there are 6 with 0.95% of the respondents who claimed their fathers finished college. The data reveal that majority of the respondents have fathers who are elementary undergraduate.

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to their Fathers' Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	%
Elem. Undergraduate	180	28.66
Elementary Graduate	139	22.13
High School Undergraduate	125	19.90
High School Graduate	117	18.63
College Undergraduate	61	9.71
College Graduate	6	0.95
TOTAL	628 (4 DID NOT REVEAL THEIR FATHERS' EDUC ATTAINMENT)	100

Table 6 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to their mothers' educational attainment. It is shown that 193 with 30.53% have mothers who finished high school followed by 148 with 23.41% whose mothers did not complete their elementary education. 112 or 17.72% said their mothers are elementary graduates. There are 100 or 15.83% whose mothers did not finish high school. Besides, there are 67 or 10.60% who have mothers who stepped in college but did not finish it. Lastly, there are 12 or 1.89% who have mothers who finished college. This implies that many of the mothers of the respondents had stepped in the basic education courses only and never pursued complete higher education courses.

Table 6. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to their Mothers' Educational Attainment.

Educational Attainment	Frequency	%
Elem. Undergraduate	148	23.41
Elementary Graduate	112	17.72
High School Undergraduate	100	15.82
High School Graduate	193	30.53
College Undergraduate	67	10.60
College Graduate	12	1.89
TOTAL	632	100

As seen in table 7, 617 or 97.62% of the respondents finished their high school education in public while there are 15 who completed their high school education in private.

Table 7. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Type of School Graduated from.

Types of School Graduated	Frequency	Percentage
Public	617	97.62
Private	15	2.37
Total	632	100

Table 8 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents' English writing proficiency in terms of organization. As shown in the table, 348 or 55.6% of the respondents have the interval of 2. This implies that majority of the respondents had written outputs about the topic given that contain incomplete statements in beginning, middle and final sentences and that they are not in order. Of the respondents, 162 or 25.63% of them have the interval of 3. This means, they were able to develop composition that have well developed beginning, middle and end, used adequate supporting details, and used variety of transitional devices. There are 104 or 16.45% who wrote sentences as well as group of words that are unrelated with no manifestation of good sentence structures used, and beginning, middle and end statements are poorly defined. No one of the respondents was rated 4 or perfect in terms or organization. On the other hand, there are 18 or 2.84% who manifested incapacity to write anything on the given topic to write on.

Table 8. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' English Writing Proficiency in Terms of Organization

NUMERICAL RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
4	0	-
3	162	25.63
2	348	55.06
1	104	16.45
0	18	2.84
TOTAL	632	100

As can be gleaned from the table, 372 or 58.86% of the respondents have compositions that used end marks correctly but not always, used of capitalization occasionally, messages are readable however, contained spelling errors, and printing is legible most of the time with some appropriate spacing and sizing. Also, the table says that 125 or 19.77% produced compositions with no evidence of end marks used while some were randomly placed, neglected capitalization, misspelled most of the words, and integrated upper and lower cases everywhere in the paragraphs. Further, 117 or 18.51 % have manifested correct use of end marks, correct use of capitalization at the beginning of sentences most of the time, consistent spacing pattern, and with legible printing. There were 18 or 2.84% whose writing was not evident/have almost written nothing with illegible pen craft. Nobody was rated 4 in this criterion.

Table 9. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' English Writing Proficiency in Terms of Mechanics

NUMERICAL RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
4	0	-

3	117	18.51
2	372	58.86
1	125	19.77
0	18	2.84
TOTAL	632	100

Table 10 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents' English writing proficiency in terms of content. As shown in the table, 256 or 40.50% of the respondents came up into composition which information wander on the topic given with only few examples and which accuracy of ideas is not fully developed. However, 210 or 33.22% were able to come up with compositions which information related to the topic, and examples given helped the reader understand the topic better. There were 147 or 23.25% of them whose paragraphs contained insufficient information caused by inaccuracy of the examples presented. In general, the composition is confusing because the topic is not developed. There were 18 respondents with 2.84% who did not write something despite instructions and enough time given for them to write. However, there was only one, 0.15%, who came up into a perfect composition.

Table 10. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' English Writing Proficiency in Terms of Content

NUMERICAL RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
4	1	0.15%
3	210	33.22
2	256	40.50
1	147	23.25
0	18	2.84
TOTAL	632	100

As reflected in the data, 244 or 39.73% of the respondents were rated 2 which means, compositions committed errors in the use of tense of verb and subject – verb agreement in half of the composition. 188 or 30.61% committed more than 75 errors in the use of tense of verb and subject – verb agreement in the whole composition. 154 or 25.08% incurred seldom (5 to 10) errors in the correct use of the subject – verb agreement and tense of verb. 28 with 4.56% showed poor performance in grammar wherein, every sentence contained grammar errors. On the other hand, nobody submitted paper with perfect grammar construction. 18 of the respondents did not write anything on the topic given to them.\

Table 11. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' English Writing Proficiency in Terms of Grammar

NUMERICAL RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
4	0	-
3	154	25.08
2	244	39.73

1	188	30.61
0	2	4.56
TOTAL	614	100

As presented in table 12, majority with 88 or 46.81% of the respondents were rated satisfactory in terms of writing; sixty-two or 32.98% as very satisfactory; twenty-six or 132.83% as poor; seven or 3.73% as excellent/proficient; and five or 2.65% as very poor.

ARBITRARY LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
12 and above	0	
9 – 11	188	
6 – 8	365	
3 – 5	52	
0 – 2	9	
TOTAL		100

Relationship Between Students’ Profile Variables and their English Writing Proficiency

The degree of relationship of the students’ profile variables and their English writing proficiency was determine through the Pearson Chi-Square.

Table 13 shows the expected and observed frequencies and the Chi-square value of the curriculum level and writing proficiency of the students. The computed chi-square value (27.75) was found to be greater than the critical value (5.911) which means significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the writing proficiency level of students is dependent with their curriculum level.

Table 13. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (x^2) of the Curriculum Level and Writing Proficiency of Students

VARIABLE	POOR (0 – 4)	SATISFACTORY (5 – 8)	VERY SATISFACTORY (9 and above)	TOTAL
1st year to 2nd year	81 72.30	312 298.43	55 77.26	448
3rd year to 4th year	21 29.69	109 122.56	54 31.73	184
TOTAL	102	421	109	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (x^2)	27.75		Significant	
Critical Value	5.911			

Level of Significance: 0.05

It can be gleaned from table 14 the expected and observed frequencies and chi-square value of the age and writing proficiency level of students. It shows that the computed chi-square value (54.83) was found to be greater than the critical value (5.911) which means reject the null hypothesis and significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is a relationship between writing proficiency of the students and their age.

Table 14. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (χ^2) of the Age and Writing Proficiency of Students

Variable	Poor	Satisfactory	V. Satisfactory	Total
19 years old and above	20 44.37	188 144.02	38 57.61	246
18 years old and below	94 69.63	182 255.98	110 90.39	386
TOTAL	110	370	148	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (χ^2)	54.83		Significant	
Critical Value	5.911			

Level of Significance: 0.05

The expected and observed frequencies and chi-square value of the gender and writing proficiency of students are presented in Table 15. The gender level of respondents and their writing proficiency are dependent ($\chi^2_c = 14.73$ is greater than $\chi^2_{0.05} = 5.911$). The result indicates that male/female students do necessarily mean affect their writing proficiency in English.

Table 15. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (χ^2) of the Gender and Writing Proficiency of Students

VARIABLE	POOR	SATISFACTORY	V. SATISFACTORY	TOTAL
MALE	98 76.18	101 116.88	37 42.94	236
FEMALE	106 127.82	212 196.12	78 72.06	396
Total	204	313	115	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (χ^2)	14.73		Significant	
Critical Value	5.911			

Level of Significance

Table 16 shows the expected and observed frequencies and the Chi-square value of the dialect spoken and writing proficiency of the students. The computed chi-square value (13.04) was found to be greater than the critical value (9.488) which means significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the writing proficiency level of students is dependent with their dialect spoken.

Table 16. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (χ^2) of the Dialect Spoken and Writing Proficiency of Students

VARIABLE	POOR	SATISFACTORY	V. SATISFACTORY	TOTAL
ILOCANO	84	187	47	318
	92.58	181.64	43.77	
IBANAG	25	76	12	113
	32.89	64.54	15.55	
TAGALOG	75	98	28	201
	58.51	114.81	27.66	
TOTAL	184	361	87	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (χ^2)		13.04	Significant	
Critical Value		9.488		

Level of Significance: 05

It can be gleaned from table 17 the expected and observed frequencies and chi-square value of their fathers' educational attainment and writing proficiency level of students. It shows that the computed chi-square value (23.66) was found to be greater than the critical value (9.488) which means reject the null hypothesis and significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is a relationship between writing proficiency of the students and the educational attainment of their fathers.

Table 17. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (χ^2) of the Parents Educational Attainment (Father) and Writing Proficiency of Students

VARIABLE	POOR	SATISFACTORY	VERY SATISFACTORY	TOTAL
COLLEGE GRAD AND NOT	12	39	16	67
	21.94	33.07	11.97	
HIGH SCHOOL GRAD AND NOT	89	131	24	244
	79.91	120.45	43.63	
ELEM GRAD AND NOT	106	142	73	321
	105.13	158.46	57.39	
TOTAL	207	312	133	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (χ^2)		23.66	Significant	
Critical Value		9.488		

Level of Significance: 05

It can be gleaned from table 17 the expected and observed frequencies and chi-square value of their mother educational attainment and writing proficiency level of students. It shows that the computed chi-square value (25.61) was found to be greater than the critical value (9.488) which means reject the null hypothesis and significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is a relationship between writing proficiency of the students and the educational attainment of their mothers.

Table 18. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (x^2) of the Parents Educational Attainment (Mother) and Writing Proficiency of Students

VARIABLE	POOR	SATISFACTORY	VERY SATISFACTORY	TOTAL
College Grad and Not	12 26.37	47 33.65	20 19	79
High School Grad and Not	101 97.82	106 124.71	86 70.46	293
Elem Grad and Not	98 86.80	116 110.66	46 62.53	260
TOTAL	211	269	152	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (x^2)	25.61		Significant	
Critical Value	9.488			

Level of Significance: 0.05

The expected and observed frequencies and chi-square value of the gender and writing proficiency of students are presented in Table 19. The gender level of respondents and their writing proficiency are dependent ($X^2_c = 0.89$ is less than $X^2_{0.05} = 5.911$). The result indicates that the school where students graduated from do not necessarily affect their writing proficiency level.

Table 19. Expected and Observed Frequencies and Chi-square Value (x^2) of the School Graduated from and Writing Proficiency of Students

VARIABLE	POOR	SATISFACTORY	VERY SATISFACTORY	TOTAL
PRIVATE	4 5.74	8 6.62	3 2.63	15
PUBLIC	238 236.36	271 272.38	108 108.37	617
TOTAL	242	279	111	632
Computed Chi-Square Value (x^2)	0.89		Not Significant	
Critical Value	5.911			

Level of Significance: 0.05

Table 20 shows the summary of the computed chi-square values between the students' profile variables and their English writing proficiency. The computed chi-square values for the profile variables of the students and their English writing proficiency are significant as indicated by the values of 54.83 (age), 14.73 (sex), 27.75 (curriculum level), 23.66 (fathers' educational attainment), 25.61 (mothers' educational attainment), and 13.04 (dialect spoken). While the computed chi-square value for classification of school (0.89) was found to be less than the critical value (5.911) at 0.05 level of significance which means not significant. This implies that the students

English writing proficiency are dependent with their age, sex, curriculum level, parent educational attainment and dialect spoken, while no relationship in terms of the classification of school they came from.

Table 20. Summary of Chi Square Values Between Students' Profile Variables and their Writing Proficiency

Variables	Chi-square value	Relationship
Age	54.83*	Significant
Sex	14.73*	Significant
Dialect Spoken	13.04**	Significant
Parents' Educational Attainment		
Father	23.66**	Significant
Mother	25.61**	Significant
Curriculum Year	27.75	
Classification of School	0.89*	Not Significant

Critical Values: *5.911

Level of Significance: 0.05

****9.488**

IV. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations, which were drawn formulated and deduced based from the analysis of the data gathered.

Analysis of the data yielded the following findings:

1. More than half of the total respondents (326 or 51.58 %) are first year college students of the campus.
2. Majority of the respondents are in the age bracket 15 – 17 with 306 or 48.41%.
3. In terms of the respondent gender, 396 or 62.66 are female.
4. Almost half of the respondents with 318 or 50.31% use Ilocano as the major dialect followed by Tagalog/Filipino with 201 or 31.81%.
5. As to the educational attainment of the respondent parents, majority of them had fathers who are elementary undergraduate with 180 or 28.66% while most of their mothers are high school graduate with 193 or 30.53%.
6. Along the type of school where the respondents graduated from, 617 or 97.62% of the respondents finished their high school education in public.
7. In terms of organization, 348 or 55.6% of the respondents have the interval of 2 which implies that majority of the respondents had written outputs about the topic given that contain incomplete statements in beginning, middle and final sentences and that they are not in order.
8. As to mechanics, 372 or 58.86% of the respondents have interval of 2 which means, compositions used end marks correctly but not always, used of capitalization occasionally, messages are readable however, contained spelling errors, and printing is legible most of the time with some appropriate spacing and sizing.
9. The respondents' English writing proficiency in terms of content got the interval of 2 where, 256 or 40.50% of the respondents came up into composition which information wander on the topic given with only few examples and which accuracy of ideas is not fully developed.

10. Majority with 244 or 39.73% of the respondents were rated 2 which means, compositions committed errors in the use of tense of verb and subject – verb agreement in half of the composition.

Conclusions:

Based on the findings of the study, the students English writing proficiency is dependent with their age, sex, curriculum level, parent educational attainment and dialect spoken, while there was no relationship in terms of the classification of school they came from.

Recommendations:

Based on the forgoing findings and conclusions, the following are strongly recommended:

1. Students must be motivated to actively involve themselves in writing tasks.
- 2.

must teach the students principles of clear and effective writing like correct spelling, correct use of punctuations, grammar, diction and among others.

4. Parents Professors, instructors, teachers of English must expose students in writing exercises like writing essays, short stories, poems, editorial, news articles, etc. for the enhancement of their proficiency in writing.

3. Teachers must monitor the writing performance of their children in school through checking their lecture notes and other written tests.

5. English teachers should design learning materials that would expose students in writing tasks.

6. Teachers who are not specialized in English must also encourage students to write essays.

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