

# The Effectiveness of Activities for Teaching EFL Writing in a Context of Vietnam

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## Abstract

The article aims at pointing out what kinds of activities designed to improve the learners' writing proficiency are effective in a Vietnamese context. With a two-group pretest and posttest design of an empirical research, the authors implemented a series of teaching activities in the classroom. The data were collected by means of pre-tests, post-tests, and interviews. The results indicated that the participants in the experimental condition significantly gained in their writing performance. Qualitative analysis of the data shows that the majority of participants positively evaluated the effectiveness of the activities. However, a consideration for contextual adjustment should be taken when several activities together might be overload to the learners.

**Key words:** Writing proficiency, EFL writing, Teaching EFL writing activities, Effectiveness of writing activities, Classroom activities for writing

## Introduction

In the context of teaching EFL in a community college in Vietnam, various approaches and activities have been conducted with an aim to improve learners' motivation and EFL writing performance (Hoang, 2007; Huynh, 2008; Nguyen, 2009; and Nguyen, 2009). However, the separated activities applied to writing classes have been found not sufficient and effective enough to foster the learners in this skill. The numerous challenges for learners have been recognized as lacking of vocabularies and ideas. For example, they do not find and use the appropriate words for the ideas that they want to express. In addition, limitations on grammatical knowledge are also affect accuracy in writing. The others are because of less confidence when basic and common errors regularly found in someone's compositions. The mentioned issues prevent the writing learners from being interesting in writing subject and a series of writing activities needs to be taken into consideration. Therefore, this paper aims to seek for the activities that better

suit the writing classes in the context. In what follows, we first provide research context with some theoretical background, the research question, and the series of suggested teaching-to-write activities. And then we move on to the methodology which presents the scales of participants, instruments, intervention, and the research procedure. Finally, the results will show the researchers' analysis and from that the discussions, conclusion, and implications will be displayed.

Theoretically to some teaching contexts, the main challenges are determined not only from the learners themselves and/or the teachers' approaches, but inappropriate activities used for learning and practicing writing as well. O'Farell's (2005) study shows that the activities which help the learners write have a strong correlation with the improvement of their writing ability. This author promoted writing activities and critical feedback. Then, the qualitative data were analyzed from the participants' compositions. The similar results are found in the contexts of the writing-

to-learn activities for German and Scandinavian language classes at University of Minnesota (Homstad, 1996; Thorson, 1996). They have used varied activities of free-writing, note-taking, and summarizing in their course and these improved the participants' writing ability. With a series of activities designed for teaching writing we expect to gain high results towards teaching writing English as a foreign language in Vietnamese context. In other words, writing English are hoped to become an easier activity for the learners and the learners have a great interest with this subject. To consider the effectiveness of the suggested writing activities, this paper focuses on answering the question of whether the designed activities effectively improve the learners' writing ability or not. To answer it, we reviewed the literature in brief and reflected our own experiences before designing the activities for teaching writing.

According to the authors' teaching experience and the results from many studies of Nunan (1991), Oluwadiya (1992), Homstad and Thorson (1996), Snow (1996), and Liu (2006), a series of appropriate activities have been conducted to search for the ways to improve the learners' writing ability. The research by Klassen (1991), Houlette (1998), Jennings (2005), Baggetun and Wasson (2006), and Slie (2007) share the conclusion about the effectiveness of the suitable activities in correlation with the improvement of the learners' performance in writing. These researchers have focused on one or several specific teaching activities have partly or fully resolved the learners' difficulties by providing them opportunities to practice writing and learning from their friends' and teachers' feedback.

On the other hand, although numerous studies have found the positive impact of the activities for teaching writing, the controversial issues are related to the availability of the appropriate ones and their effectiveness. According to Nguyen (2009), only three-fourth of the teaching activities that he conducted were positively evaluated. Along with many compatible studies, the results have showed that learning to write has been one of the most challenging problems with Vietnamese learners of English. In short, arisen from the above issues, teaching experiences, and theoretical background, we designed the writing activities and conducted

a research to find possibly effective approach to improve the learners' writing capacity.

## Methodology

### Participants

Sixty Vietnamese students and three native speakers of English were involved in the study. The participants are determined as follows:

(1) Sixty sophomores in a three-year English program were involved in two writing classes during the study. The initial level of student writing performance (before the study) between the control group and experimental group was the same ( $t = -.79, df = 58, p = .43$ ).

Among 30 participants in the experimental group, nine were selected based on the basis of their achievements after the study for the interview investigating into their evaluation towards the effectiveness of the teaching activities. The three participants with the highest, average and the lowest gain were invited to the interviews.

(2) Three native speakers assisted the researcher in setting criteria for grading and graded the student writing papers during the study. They also participated in validating the writing test and the language use in the questionnaire.

### Instruments

All the data used in this research were obtained through the test and the interview questions.

**The test:** The writing test that was designed consisted of three main parts: the oriented setting, the theme, and the guidelines. An obvious setting about the topic that participants were going to write was clearly established. The question was used to bring the test-taker's attention into a familiar context. Then, a direct request focused on the topic such as "describing a holiday" was used. Next, the test introduced the expectations that the paragraph should be "well-organized" and with an approximate length. The writing test also provided the guidelines for participants, in which participants could follow: "the name of holiday, time, activities, and your feelings or interests." A Vietnamese version of the writing test was attached to ensure participants' exact understanding of the topic.

**The interview:** The interview in this study was designed to investigate participants' evaluation of the implementation the activities for teaching writing. The researcher aimed to collect information on (1) the effectiveness of the activities influencing participants' writing ability and (2) their thinking about the writing activities.

### Intervention

The experiment was conducted with two groups. The control group was treated with lessons with activities designed to accomplish the task in the coursebook. The curriculum used for this cohort aimed to provide the learners all activities in this book. On the other hand, the experimental group was designed with the intervened activities for which the lessons were still sticked to the main contents of the coursebook. The similarity from both groups was that the participants must submit their final products after each chapter. Therefore, the implementation of the lessons in both groups during the study was monitored for quality control and possible biased elements. The intervened activities were resulted from our teaching experiences. Although one or some of the terms are well-known as free-writing or teacher consultation, we have different usages and unique design of each activity. Detailed procedures of each activity can be found in appendix 1. The following teaching-to-write activities were designed with an aim to improve the learners' writing proficiency. Nine different activities which mostly consume more time than expected at the first time of application are described as follows:

#### Free writing

- Goal: Encourage them to write and believe in their writing capacity. Activate their hidden ability and knowledge. Assist students to overcome their fear of writing.
- Suitable stages: Warm-up and Pre-writing
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: any
- Time: 5 minutes

#### Pyramid sharing and deciding

- Goal: Involve students into the task that students must share the ideas to their classmates. Activate their roles in sharing and

convincing the other for their chosen ideas. Train the negotiating skill of students when working in groups and pairs.

- Suitable stage: Pre-writing
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: any
- Time: 5 – 10 minutes

#### Vocabulary sharing

- Goal: Prepare for the vocabulary related to the writing topic. Assist students by involving them into the preparation for vocabulary
- Suitable stage: Pre-writing
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: any
- Time: 5 – 8 minutes

#### Structure consolidation

- Goal: Assist students and involve them into their writing preparation by eliciting and consolidating the mentioned structures.
- Suitable stage: Pre-writing
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: any
- Time: 8 - 10 minutes

#### Teacher consultation

- Goal: Assist students and activate students' capacity
- Suitable stage: All stages
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: 1 student or a group of 3 at a time
- Time: 2 – 3 minutes for each group or student at any time when students are working

#### Group drafting

- Goal: Involve students into the actual writing task of drafting
- Suitable stage: While-writing
- Students' level: any
- Time: 10 – 15 minutes

#### Peer support

- Goal: Encourage students to support each other in terms of simple feedback

- Suitable stages: Post-writing
- Students' level: high, but any students are encouraged to familiarize with this activities
- Number of students: any
- Time: it depends

**Revising – a must**

- Goal: Encourage students to write by themselves using their own ideas and notes
- Suitable stage: Post-writing
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: any
- Time to accomplish: within a week or at the beginning of the next class.

**Trial publishing**

- Goal: Encourage students to learn from their friends' and own strengths and weaknesses in their writing productions
- Suitable stage: Post-writing
- Students' level: any
- Number of students: any
- Time: at least 5 minutes for each 100-word paper

**Procedures**

To collect required data, the writing tests were delivered to participants of both conditions before and after the study. Nine interviews were also conducted. The writing pre-test was delivered to participants to check whether participants' writing proficiency before the study was the same in both conditions. The pre-test and post-test on writing were administered to check for participants' writing before and after the study and to compare their writing achievement of writing performance within and between participants in the two conditions. For the qualitative part of the study, each of nine participants was asked two

main questions about their evaluation towards the use of the teaching activities.

The participants' papers were graded by two raters, the two native speakers of English, who were teaching English at the school where the research was conducted. Another native speaker of English graded participants' papers when the score given to a paper is over 1.5, in which 10 is the maximum score and 0 is the minimum. Participants' papers were copied and given to the raters to grade separately, using the same analytic marking scale and criteria of grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and fluency.

**Results**

Participants' writing performance at the two points of measurement (from the pre-test to post-test)

The writing tests were delivered before and after the study to evaluate participants' writing ability. The analytic marking scale was used to grade the participants' papers separately by three raters. The score ranges from 0 as the minimum to 10 as the maximum. Then, all test scores were programmed into SPSS for data analysis. The following section will present the results of participants' writing performance before and after the study: (1) *between* two groups and (2) *within* the two groups (draw data can be found in appendix 2)

**Participants' writing performance at the two points of measurement between two groups**

The *Descriptive Statistics Test* was run to analyze the participants' writing ability between the two groups at two points of the study. The mean score of the participants' writing performance was analyzed by using the *Independent Samples T-test*. All tests were conducted at the level of .05 and their results were presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Participants' writing performance between two groups before and after the study

Writing Test	Conditions	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	MD	SD
Pre -	Control	30	3.20	9.25	6.8939	.29	1.58
	Experimental	30	4.27	8.40	6.6039		1.25
Post-	Control	30	4.50	8.75	7.0106	-.69	1.10
	Experimental	30	5.90	9.30	7.7047		.94

**Participants' writing performance between the two groups before the study**

The results indicated that the initial level of student writing performance (before the study) between the control group and experimental group was the same ( $t = -.79, df = 58, p = .43$ ).

**Participants' writing performance between two groups after the study**

The *Independent Samples T-test* was conducted to test the mean differences of participants' levels of writing performance from the two groups. Table 1 shows that the mean score of writing performance in the experimental group ( $Me = 7.71$ ) was higher than that of the participants in the control group ( $Mc = 7.01$ ). After the study, the mean difference ( $MD = -.69$ ) in participants' performance in writing between the two conditions was statistically significant ( $t = 2.63, df = 58, p = .01$ ). Participants in the experimental group learned to write and wrote better than those in the control group after the study. In other words, participants in the experimental group gained more in their writing ability after the study.

**Participants' writing performance at the two points of measurement within two groups**

The *Descriptive Statistics Test* was used to analyze the participants' writing performance within the two groups at the two points of measurement. Then, the mean score of the participants' writing performance was compared by using the *Independent Samples T-test*. The test was analyzed at the level of .05. The results of these tests are displayed below in Table 2.

Participants' writing performance within the control group before and after the study

Table 2 shows that the mean score in writing of the control group before and after the study was the same ( $t = -.486, df. = 29, p. = .630$ ).

Participants' writing performance within the

experimental group before and after the study

As shown in Table 2, the mean score of participants' writing performance after the study ( $M_{post} = 7.70$ ) was higher than that before the study ( $M_{pre} = 6.60$ ). Moreover, this mean difference ( $MD = -1.10$ ) was statistically significant ( $t. = -5.269, df. = 29, p. = .00$ ). These results show that participants in the experimental group performed better in their writing after the study.

Figure 1 below illustrates the participants' writing. The figure also reveals that there was a significant improvement in the participants' writing ability in the experimental group whereas the result of the participants in the control groups stayed the same.

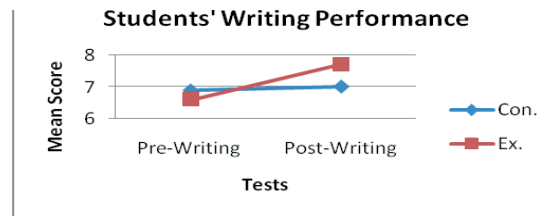


Figure 1: Participants' writing performance

After administering the pre-tests and post-tests, the researcher interviewed nine participants, one male and eight female participants, in the experimental group. The interviews were conducted to gain insights into the participants' perceptions of the implementation. The interviewees were selected on the basis of those who gained the most (from 3.5 to 4.15), an average (from 1.0 to 2.0), and the least (from -.97 to -.35) in their writing performance. The score scheme ranged from 0 to 10. The overall result of the study showed that participants liked the teaching writing activities. The following section presents the results of these interviews.

**The effectiveness of the writing activities on participants' writing ability**

The results from the interviews show that the activities helped participants improve their

Table 2: Participants' writing performance within two groups before and after the study

Conditions	Questionnaire	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	MD	SD
Control	Pre-	30	3.20	9.25	6.8939	-1.12	1.58
	Post-		4.50	8.75	7.0106		1.10
Experimental	Pre-	30	4.27	8.40	6.6039	-1.10	1.25
	Post-		5.90	9.30	7.7047		.94

Table 3: The effectiveness of the activities in the writing course

Activities	Effective	Not effective	Neutral
Trial publishing	9 (100%)	0	0
Teacher consultation	8 (89%)	0	1 (11%)
Structure consolidation	7 (78%)	0	2 (22%)
Vocabulary sharing	7 (78%)	0	2 (22%)
Group drafting	7 (78%)	0	2 (22%)
Free writing	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)
Peer support	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)
Pyramid sharing and decision	6 (67%)	1 (11%)	2 (22%)
Revision – a must	5 (56%)	1 (11%)	3 (33%)

writing performances. Table 3 shows the results of the effectiveness of the activities as evaluated by the interviewees. Each column represents the number of participants who evaluated the activities as effective, ineffective, or neutral. When the interviewees evaluated a activity as neutral, it did not mean that the activity was ineffective.

From Table 3, it can be seen that “trial publishing” was judged as the most effective group of activities by 100% of the participants. The interviewees gave reasons for the “trial-publishing” to be effective the most because it raised the learners’ awareness of their writing, provided opportunities to approach their friends’ different perspectives about their papers, and gave them more chances to write.

### Qualitative analysis of the interview data

For the second question of the interview, the participants described their in-depth evaluation towards the most effective activity or the least effective one. Consequently, ‘trial publishing’ was assessed as the most efficient activity and the opposite one was ‘revision – a must.’

The first reason for the most effective activity was that the learners have become more aware of their writing from reading other learners’ writing. When the learners have become more aware of what they should and should not do

from the feedback on other learners’ writing, one participant said that ‘analyzing the good and bad writing papers helped every learner become more aware of how to write better papers.’ They also proved their ability through the opportunity to gain from different readers’ perspectives and comments. Those interviewees believed that when they read good writing assignments, they learned from those papers the ways to arrange ideas. Also, when they read comments from peers and poor writing, they learned how to avoid mistakes their classmates made. One interviewee said,

*...When I received the good papers, I studied them carefully and listened to my friends’ evaluations and modifications to those papers. I learned from the readers’ ideas, ways to express information, and also from the papers themselves by taking notes of various errors and feedback...*

Another interviewee added,

*... The course gave me a chance to read my friends’ papers. I was not familiar with reading and sharing somebody’s writing, evaluating it, or giving it my feedback. However, I can find grammatical errors of some papers. My friends and I easily gave more comments to the writing of average partners than the ones from good learners...*

The second reason for positive evaluation was the chance they had to learn how to write. One interviewee shared,

*...I have learned from the course that every activity gave me many opportunities to improve my writing ability and change my passive learning habit. I stopped making many mistakes, which were similar to what some of my friends used to make. I was also able to help myself and my friends to identify the mistakes, what they were about, and what we should learn to correct them...*

As presented, all interviewees have positive evaluation to 'trial publishing' because it effectively affected the learners in their ways of learning and doing activities. The participants paid more attention to sharing and helping their friends which gave them good opportunities to improve their ability and identify somewhat writing strengths and weaknesses.

However, it is certain that no activity is suitable for every objective. The interviewees commented that the activity of "revising – a must" was somewhat effective but a little bit too much for them. Most of the participants were not familiar with taking too many activities in a course like it was during a writing process in this research. They meant to be overloaded and led to the evaluation as ineffective by 33% of the participants. One interviewee argued that,

... Although the activities were effective, a lot of them made me be overloaded. Writing was not my good skill so I did not have a lot of ideas to write and revise my writing. It was too much for me in comparison to different offered courses. Last year, other teachers asked me to write only one or two papers for the whole semester...

Another participant commented that 'I thought that my writing ability was improved a bit, but writing a paper of the same topic more than twice was always too much for me.' Since the final product of each chapter required in the control group was counted as one, the learners might need to revise their papers after the hand-in ones. They had to do the follow-up activities until the latest product was improved. That possibly brings more work load to their learning at the beginning and for some low to average learners. They actually did more than that of similar courses in the previous academic year.

Briefly, through the writing tests and the interviews, the participants positively evaluated

the teaching writing activities. The results show that the learners in the experimental group significantly gained in their writing proficiency more than that of in the control group.

## Discussion

The results from the writing pre-test and post-test confirmed a significant improvement in the quality of participants' writing in the experimental group while those in the control condition were not significantly changed after the study. It is indicated that the activities, which were used in the appropriate stages of learning to write, improved the learners' writing performance.

The results of this study were consistent to those conducted by Sun and Feng (2009). The study revealed that the participant' writing ability was improved after the study. These activities attempted to help the learners write better. Each activity focused on improving the learners' writing ability at different stages of the writing process. For example, the activity of trial publishing was designed for the last stage of post writing. The activities are also compatible to the research of Gau et al. (2003), which indicated that providing participants with more writing time and opportunities to write resulted in the significant progress in their writing ability. The participants showed to write better when these activities partly resolved the learners' problems with a lack of ideas, cohesion and style. The activities provided the participants with more opportunities to draft, revise, proofread, and edit their papers a few times prior to their final product. The activities also provided them with good opportunities to interact with their peers and the teacher's feedback. Although the compatibility is found in associated to the previous studies, a major difference of this study is that both qualitative and quantitative data were measured and strongly supported the thesis at the early stages. For these reasons, all these characteristics of the writing activities were believed to strengthen the learners' writing ability.

The participants' positive evaluation to the use of these writing activities could be the high achievement of their writing ability. The learners reported that they have learned and practiced their writing skills when they knew to pay more attention to their learning and writing abilities.

The activities, such as trial publishing and group drafting, have improved their writing abilities. The learners realized that they have achieved some improvement in vocabulary and the organization of their writing. In the other hand, the participants who evaluated the activities as ineffective could be the workload of the new writing tasks. Perhaps some participants found that these activities were new to them and were not familiar with what they have learned for many years.

## Conclusions and Implications

The results indicated that the participants in the experimental condition significantly gained in their writing performance. In comparison to that of the experimental condition, the learners' writing performance in the control group stayed the same while the positive impact of the use of teaching writing activities improved the quality of writing performance in the experimental group.

To improve the learners' writing ability, the teachers of English in the research context may consider applying the suggested activities in their writing classes. With the regards to the roles of teachers as a facilitator and the learners as the center of the writing activities, if the teachers positively facilitate the learning to write activities by using these activities, the learners' writing performance could be improved.

As the theoretical background in the Nepal context in Bratta (1998), two of several assumptions were that the learners need writing practices and time opportunities to write. That could obviously show that the outcomes of this study could be adaptable to Nepalese classrooms as the similar issues, goals for writing classes and focuses were stated in the previous studies and issues possibly exist. Bhattarai (2006) developed a series of writing activities aiming to help learners become independent writers because they were rarely involved in the writing practices.

In addition, the learners should be the center of the learning process. Teachers should involve them as much as possible in most of the writing activities. When the learners do the activities, these activities help them practice and experience writing. In addition, teachers should also motivate the learners' writing ability by providing them

with confidence to write.

Moreover, the teachers should provide the learners with opportunities to have teacher consultation. The teacher consultation could be very effective when teachers use the questioning strategies to help learners realize their strengths and weaknesses by themselves. When the learners understand what they should do to improve their writing and teachers facilitate their learning process, the learners' writing ability would be changed very fast.

## The Authors

Nguyen Duy Khang, Phan Thi Tuyet Van, and Ly Thi Anh Nguyet are colleagues at Vinh Long Community College. They all share the same interest in doing research and teaching English as a foreign language in a context of Vietnam. This article is the first piece of work that remarks their professional development. From their teaching situations, they are also conducting different studies about learners' autonomy, the application of IT in language teaching, innovative language teaching tools, and English for special purposes.

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## APPENDIX I

### The activities of the teaching EFL writing

Name	Procedures
<b>Free writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask students to take out a piece of paper and a pencil/ pen.</li> <li>- Ask students to think of a topic or choose one from the teacher's list in one minute (<i>topics: what did you do yesterday?/ what do you do at work or school?/ what have you done in the past years?/ what do you do on holidays/ Christmas...? What do you think about technology? When do you write emails/ letters? What are the advantages/ disadvantages of writing emails or using technology?/ describe your city/ country/ what subject do you like to study? why?...</i>)</li> <li>- Notice several rules,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Write as fast as possible until the teacher says "Stop" (mostly in 4 minutes)</li> <li>+ Write in sentences, not words in isolation.</li> <li>+ Do not worry about spelling, grammar, or punctuation.</li> <li>+ If you do not remember a word in English, write it in Vietnamese and continue writing.</li> <li>+ Do not erase or cross out, just write.</li> <li>+ If you do not know what to write, write "I do not know what to write" and continue until you have something to write</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Tell students not to worry about connecting ideas logically.</li> <li>- After 4 minutes, say "Stop". <i>Ask them to count the words and ideas they wrote in complete sentences.</i></li> <li>- Ask students to note their results on a sheet for progress measurement.</li> </ul>
<b>Pyramid sharing and deciding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assign the numbers to students</li> <li>- Ask students with odd numbers to turn to the even ones, and then share their ideas with each other.</li> <li>- Ask them choose three ideas from their six ideas by negotiating and convincing the others.</li> <li>- Then ask the front pairs to turn to the back pairs in every two lines of tables. Ask them to share their chosen ideas.</li> <li>- Ask each group of four to select three ideas out of their six ideas by negotiating and convincing the others.</li> <li>- Continue the activities until there are only two big groups last.</li> <li>- Ask each group to speak out loud their ideas for the teacher to write them on the board.</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary sharing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask students to think of the keywords or difficult words related to the topic, and write down.</li> <li>- Assign groups of 4-6 students.</li> <li>- Ask one student, as a secretary in each group to note the words for further studying and sharing after class.</li> <li>- Ask them take turn to speak out loud one word at a time that they have and explain the form, meaning, and use of those words when necessary.</li> <li>- The list of words in all groups will be published in a specific place of the classroom so that students can use it.</li> <li>Notes: Students should be encouraged to use Dictionary.</li> <li>Time consuming is high at the first time before students are familiar to it.</li> </ul>
<b>Structure consolidation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elicit several structures and grammar points that should be used in certain writing topics.</li> <li>- Ask students to consolidate those structures by asking them to give examples</li> <li>- Divide class into groups, each group consolidates one grammatical point.</li> <li>- A secretary of each group writes the example note-take the example and common notice,; all groups present their work at the same place for further uses future use during the writing class</li> <li>Notes: Time consuming is high at the first time before students are familiar to it</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher consultation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set the rules for consultation</li> <li>- Students should know that they are encouraged to ask and share what they are concerning share their concerns.</li> <li>- The policy: asking students for sharing and clarification, then asking for plans for the problem to be fixed</li> </ul>

<p><b>Group-drafting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set the groups of 3 – 5 students</li> <li>- Ask students to consider what they have done in the previous stage – pre-writing.</li> <li>- Ask each group choose a leader and a secretary, then list the suggested ideas</li> <li>- The group leader asks every member to take their roles to write about the chosen ideas or the assigned ideas according to the current topic</li> <li>- After a few minutes, the secretary talks first, and then takes notes when other members report. Write all in the poster.</li> <li>- Each group displays the product for exhibition</li> <li>- Each group sends representatives to learn from other products and discuss their compositions with the authors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Peer support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remind students about the general issues related to the writing topic</li> <li>- Give students several questions for checking the common cases of ideas, errors, forms...</li> <li>- Ask students to exchange their drafts in pairs or in groups of even numbers.</li> <li>- Ask students to follow the guided questions when reading their friends' papers for consultation by asking and sharing.</li> <li>- The teacher goes around for note-taking and assisting</li> </ul>
<p><b>Revising – a must</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The policy: Students can do the revising at home when time available in class is not enough when there is not sufficient time in class</li> <li>- Tell students that they have time and their notes, they can use the dictionary, but when they use someone else's ideas, please specify the sources and try to use their own words.</li> <li>- Inform students the deadline, requirements (numbers of words, paragraphs...). If typing is required, publish the font, size, line spacing...</li> <li>- Give students guiding questions to check by themselves</li> </ul>
<p><b>Trial publishing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose several good and poor quality papers.</li> <li>- Publish in the forum, in-class foster, or power point screen</li> <li>- Ask students to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the selected papers (without the author's name on it)</li> <li>- After the students' ideas have been presented, point out and confirm the strengths and weaknesses to all students.</li> </ul>

APPENDIX II

Output data of the writing pre-tests and post-tests

1. Descriptive Pre-test Writing (experimental Group)

Descriptive Statistics(a)

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
MeanPreW	30	4.13	4.27	8.40	198.12	6.6039	.22754	1.24629
Valid N (listwise)	30							

$\alpha$  Group = 1.00

2. Descriptive Post-test Writing (Experimental Group)

Descriptive Statistics(a)

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
MeanPostW	30	3.40	5.90	9.30	231.14	7.7047	.17115	.93743
Valid N (listwise)	30							

$\alpha$  Group = 1.00

3. Descriptive Pre-test Writing (Control Group)

Descriptive Statistics(a)

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
MeanPreW	30	6.05	3.20	9.25	206.82	6.8939	.28833	1.57926
Valid N (listwise)	30							

$\alpha$  Group = 2.00

4. Descriptive Post-test Writing (Control Group)

Descriptive Statistics(a)

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
MeanPostW	30	4.30	4.50	8.80	210.37	7.0122	.20177	1.10514
Valid N (listwise)	30							

$\alpha$  Group = 2.00

5. Independent Samples T-Test Pre-test (between Experimental and Control groups)

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeanPreW	1.00	30	6.6039	1.24629	.22754
	2.00	30	6.8939	1.57926	.28833

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MeanPreW	Equal variances assumed	.572	.453	-.790	58	.433	-.29000	.36730	-1.02523	.44523
	Equal variances not assumed			-.790	55.026	.433	-.29000	.36730	-1.02608	.44608

**6. Independent Samples T-Test Post Test (between Experimental and Control Groups)  
Group Statistics**

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeanPostW	1.00	30	7.7047	.93743	.17115
	2.00	30	7.0122	1.10514	.20177

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MeanPostW	Equal variances assumed	.840	.363	2.617	58	.011	.69250	.26458	.16288	1.22212
	Equal variances not assumed			2.617	56.497	.011	.69250	.26458	.16258	1.22242

**7. Paired samples Test (within Experimental group)  
Paired Samples Statistics(a)**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	MeanPreW	6.6039	30	1.24629	.22754
	MeanPostW	7.7047	30	.93743	.17115

a. Group = 1.00

**Paired Samples Test<sup>a</sup>**

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	MeanPreW - MeanPostW	-1.10083	1.12506	.20541	-1.52094	-.68073	-5.359	29	.000

a. Group = 1.00

**8. Pair samples Test (within Control group)  
Paired Samples Statistics(a)**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	MeanPreW	6.8939	30	1.57926	.28833
	MeanPostW	7.0122	30	1.10514	.20177

a. Group = 2.00

**Paired Samples Test<sup>a</sup>**

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	MeanPreW - MeanPostW	-.11833	1.33294	.24336	-.61606	.37939	-.486	29	.630

a. Group = 2.00

9. GLM Test (Experimental group)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects(a)

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Transformed Variable: Average

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	3071.045	1	3071.045	1706.953	.000
Error	52.175	29	1.799		

$\alpha$  Group = 1.00

10. GLM Test (Control group)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects(a)

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Transformed Variable: Average

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	2900.699	1	2900.699	1026.053	.000
Error	81.984	29	2.827		

$\alpha$  Group = 2.00

## APPENDIX III

### Interview questions

1. Please evaluate the effectiveness of the following teaching writing activities:  
Put a check (  ) on the chosen column

No	Names of activities	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective
1	Free writing			
2	Pyramid sharing and deciding			
3	Vocabulary sharing			
4	Structure consolidation			
5	Teacher consultation			
6	Group-drafting			
7	Peer support			
8	Revising – a must			
9	Trial publishing			

2. Why do you evaluate an activity as effective or ineffective? (Select the activities with ineffective choice and the effective one when most participants chose)

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