The impact of reflective writing paper on non-English major learners' autonomy in the context of Vietnam

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Abstract

The article aims to investigate the impact of the reflective writing paper on non- English major learners' learning autonomy in a Vietnamese context. The data was collected by means of questionnaire, competence tests and interviews. The participants did two reflective writing papers as an intervention during the research. The research results show the possibilities for teachers to modify their teaching methods through analysis of feedback from the subjects. The findings showed that most participants appreciated the role of the reflective writing paper and they were aware of the significance of learning autonomy in their study process.

Key words: Learning Methods, Reflective Writing paper, Learning Autonomy, Self-learning, Non-English Major Learners, Teaching Methods.

Introduction

Being able to use at least one foreign language (or many languages) has become an extremely important requirement in the context of Vietnam's accession to the market economy along with being a member of ASEAN and World Trade Organization. In fact, English has become one of the most important subjects in the Vietnamese educational curriculum in recent years (Le & Barnard, 2009). Most Vietnamese students believe that English is "in fashion" and that they may easily find a good job if they are proficient in English (Le, 1999).

Although English plays an important role in the current situation of the Vietnamese labor market, the training quality is not high enough. Most non-majored students of English usually fail to use it for their work even when they have learned this subject for years from early secondary school to higher education.

The reality of English teaching for non-majors at Vinh Long Community College reveals that students have positive attitudes about the importance of this language but most of them feel it is difficult and boring. The goals of learning English well have become unreachable to many students. In another way, the learners cannot find or understand the reasons why they are unable to acquire the language. For that reason, a positive learning attitude is disregarded and the learning process is not successful.

From the above factors, the activity of writing a reflective paper can be designed

to ask students about what they have gained from every lesson and what have missed in class. Then, the teacher encourages learners to engage in self-study to improve their learning and solve the current problems.

This study entitled "The impact of reflective writing paper on non- English major learners' autonomy in the context of Vietnam" aims to investigate the improvements of learners' autonomy through using the tool of the reflective writing paper.

Literature review

The characteristics of non-English major learners in the context of higher education in Vietnam

English has become one of the major courses for non-majored students at Vietnamese colleges or universities since the second half of the 20th century (Hoang, 2008). Non-majored English students are the ones who do not major in English. Those are the students who have enrolled in higher education with mixed levels of English. According to Hoang's (2008) surveys in Ha Noi National University, 62.48% learners studied English since high school, 27.7% learned the language from secondary level, and the rest learned English intensively. The results of Hoang's study are compatible with the findings of Doan (2008). It proved that English classroom for non-English majors have learners from different levels from beginner to upper intermediate. This reality leads to the unlimited difficulties for teachers in classroom management, teaching, and learning activities.

Currently, English is not considered the main course in most higher education programs, except for some universities with

the major of English. Moreover, students have been provided with a limited English speaking environment (Le, 1999). That leads to the bad results in learners' language competence, especially in listening and speaking skills.

In addition, most students are passive or do not dare to present their ideas or pose questions about lessons because they are afraid of losing "face". Under the influence of Confucianism, learners just keep silent and do not feel confident with most activities (Le, 1999). The similar situations are shown by Hui (1997) and Lin (1998) for the learners of English in the contexts of China and Taiwan. In other words, the cultural factors affect the learners' capacity in participating in classroom activities and these also limit the chances for teachers to evaluate the real abilities of their students.

Another considerable issue from cultural aspects is that the learning autonomy of Asian students in general and Vietnamese students in particular is not strong (Palfreyman, 2004). The study of Littlewood (1999, cited in Trinh, 2010) also shows two main barriers that prevent learners from their learning autonomy as (1) the collectivism and (2) the high constant powerful distance in the relationship among teachers and students. This result actually has produced several outcomes by a number of researchers (Vygotsky, 1978; Ho and Crookall, 1995; and Little, 2000). The basis of collectivism is believed to contribute the most in the cooperative activities and teachers' roles as facilitators can design appropriate activities to help learners learn better.

In short, the above characteristics of

students at higher education in Vietnam have shown the reasons that they are not able to learn English well. In this study, the researcher believed that the attitudes and the learning autonomy play a special role in the learners' success. It helps the learners gain knowledge naturally by practicing and self-learning and be more confident in class activities.

To clarify this point, it is important to define the terms of learning autonomy and its roles for non-English majors who are students of English.

Learning autonomy

The term learning autonomy was first used by Holec (1981). Then, many scholars and educational researchers have defined this term from different aspects (Littlewood, 1991; Benson, 2001; Cotterall, 1995; Dam, 1995; Ho & Benson, 1996; Le, 20l00; Chan, 2001; Vanijdee, 2003; and Trịnh, 2010). Learning autonomy which was defined by Holec (1981) is the ability of being self-responsible for one's own learning. Trịnh (2010) also has similar definition with more details. Learning autonomy is concerning the right ways in identifying the learning motivation, the self-management for own study to have positive learning attitudes, and making fine adjustments in all learning activities and assessment activities for one's own education. Trinh states that the learners' ability in learning autonomy may help them be able to work independently and cooperate with their classmates. Littlewood (1991) believes that learning autonomy is an essential issue which is related to the psychology relationship of the learners in their learning process. From the above

definitions and the scale of this research, the author comes into a specific explanation for the term as follows:

Learning autonomy is an expectation from the learners' self-evaluating abilities on the acquisition levels in class. It requires the learners to have awareness and responsibilities for their learning. From that, they must find solutions and develop the appropriate learning methods for themselves.

The role of learning autonomy

Learning autonomy plays an important role in learners' learning process, especially the ones in higher educational levels. In fact, several mismatches in the learning methods between learners at colleges and at high schools are that high- school students only need to master the knowledge gaining from the teachers. Then, the learners are continuously tested, evaluated with measurable assigned exercises (Phan, 2009). On the contrary, learning autonomy can be understood as a compulsory requirement for any learners at higher educational levels. In fact, the learners must refine their skills, widen their knowledge through in-class acquisition, and do research from different valuable sources … At higher educational levels, learners should play vital roles in deciding their learning results and their success. In this scenario, the teachers will be the guider and the facilitator for their learners' learning and researching. However, the teachers have undeniable big roles in developing the learning autonomy awareness for learners in the teaching process. Many researchers have investigated the usages of some methods and tools so that teachers can build up and

enhance the learners' learning autonomy (Cotterall, 1995; Johnson, et al., 1998; Yang, 1998; Nunan, 2000; Chan, 2001; Trinh, 2005; Phan, 2009; Trinh, 2010). The mentioned methods and teaching tools are recognized as (1) making the assurance of "learning must be activated by practicing", (2) changing the teaching contents and methods, (3) altering the traditional role of a teacher, (4) equipping the learners with the useful learning tips, (5) providing competing conditions for learners to learn and cooperate to solve the problems.

Within the scope of this study, besides using some teaching practices mentioned above in creating the learners' ability of learning autonomy, the learners were required to write reflective papers about what they have learned and done during and after the lessons.

Reflective writing paper

The reflective writing paper was designed to be simple and appropriate to the research context as a tool to intervene into the learners' learning process. However, it consisted of the basic characteristics of the reflective writing genre in general, and not necessarily an academic one. For that reason, the learners are more convinced and be confident to share their ideas and thoughts related to them and their learning.

Research methods

The study was conducted on fifty two non- English major college learners from a first-year food processing course. They shared the common age range from 18 to 20 and were recent high school graduates. However, the learners' language levels differed from each other. Thirty nine

students (75%) had studied English for 7 years; eleven students (21.2%) had learned English for 3 years, and the other of 3.8% with different programs. Moreover, most students were from remote areas in Vinh Long and nearby provinces in the Mekong Delta.

Fifteen students in other first-year course of business administration, who were believed to share similar levels of English knowledge and learning autonomy level, helped pilot the research tools.

To resolve the problems in the aforementioned teaching scenario, this research focuses on answering two research questions.

1.   Does the tool of the reflective writing paper affect the learners' ability to learn autonomously in the case of non-English majors?

2.   What have the learners evaluated about themselves from this self-evaluation tool?

To answer the posed questions, the study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The researcher used the questionnaire before and after the intervention time to measure the participants' ability of learning autonomy, the interview questions to gain the insight of the learners about the intervention tool. The collected data was then inputted and analyzed by Microsoft Excel and SPSS 14 programs.

Results

The learners' ability of learning autonomy

The research questionnaire of 12 questions (see appendix 1) was delivered to fifty

two participants at before and after the intervention of writing reflective papers to seek for data about their learning autonomy. Those participants were explained about the purposes of the study and guided how to do the survey. Each had to tick on the appropriate box for their grading on each question which scaled from "Always" to "Never". These data was then coded from 1 for "Never" to 5 for "Always" in the Likert scale. The results from the questionnaire were subjected to the SPSS for the data analysis. The Scale Test was run to check the reliability of the questionnaire. The results showed that the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was (α= .782) for the first delivery and (α= .812) for the second one. The learners' learning autonomy level from the collected data was analyzed all by the Descriptive Statistic Test in SPSS and its results were displayed below in Table 1

Table 1. The mean score of the learners' ability of learning autonomy

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD.
MeanPre	52	2.33	4.67	3.45	.58
MeanPost	52	2.42	4.83	3.61	.61
ValidN (listwise)	52				

As shown in Table 1, the descriptive statistic test described the mean score of the learners' ability in learning autonomy before the intervention and the standard derivation (*M*= 3.45, *SD*= .58). This figure is significantly higher than the mean score (*M*= 3.0) of the five scales (*t*= 5.627, *df*= 51, *p*=.00). Similarly, the mean score collected from the questionnaire at the end of the study (*M*= 3.61, *SD*= .61) is simultaneously higher than the average mean score of the scale (*t*= 7.179, *df*= 51, *p*= .00). This result leads a conclusion that the participants have potential awareness and slightly above average levels of learner autonomy at the

two points of measurements. The results also illustrate that their learning autonomy ability increased (Mean Post>Mean Pre).

In order to identify the learners' autonomy, the questionnaire was designed to focus on three clusters of (1) the frequency of using the ways to study English better, (2) ways to deal with problems with lessons in class, and (3) the awareness towards reviewing the lessons and self-studying. Each cluster will be analyzed using *Descriptive Statistic Test* and *One Sample T- Test* for the outputs.

Cluster 1 - The frequency of using the ways to study English better

The Descriptive Statistic Test was done to check whether the learners have used the different ways of bettering their English or not. Then, the data at the two points of measurement will be compared and its results are shown in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Mean scores of the first cluster

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD.
MeanCl1	52	1.60	4.60	3.09	.68
MeanCl1p	52	1.80	4.80	3.39	.67
Valid N (listwise)					

The results illustrated the mean score of the first cluster in the questionnaire both before and after the study were all higher than the average mean score (M = 3.0) of the five scales (M Pre = 3.09 and M Post = 3.39). This statistical data shows that the learners have used several ways to improve their English learning. Their methods to improve their learning after the intervention are slightly higher than that of the first measurement. The analysis from the *One Sample T- Test* which can be found in appendix 5 will clarify this specifically.

The results from *One Sample T- Test* proved that the learners have used different

ways to learn better at the average level. However, their ability before the study is not significantly different from the average mean score of the five scales ($t= 1.017$, $df= 51$, $p= .3$).

At the second time of measurement, the difference is significant ($t= 4.187$, $df= 51$, $p=.00$). This result proves that the intervention of reflective writing paper is effective to the learners in the ways leading them to useful learning methods. The special point is that they have tried and got successes.

Cluster 2 – The ways to deal with problems with lessons in class

Similar to the first cluster, the *Descriptive Statistic Test and One Sample T- Test* provides the following results:

Table 3. Mean scores of the second cluster at the two points of measurement

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD.
MeanCl2	52	1.75	4.75	3.58	.77
MeanCl2p	52	1.75		3.61	.84
Valid N (listwise)			5.00		

The scores shown in Table 3 after 2 times of measurements demonstrated that the learners have awareness about their learning through focusing in solving the problems. Those problems are the knowledge that has missed in class (Mean Pre = 3.58 and Mean Post = 3.61).

The results from *One Sample T-Test* (see appendix 5) showed that the mean scores at two points of measurement are significantly different from that of the five scale (M=3.0). This level is the acceptable average which showed the learners' ability in learning autonomy by taking into action ways of solving problems in class. The mean scores

before and after the study *M pre*= 3.58 and *M post* = 3.61 were considerably higher than the average scale of 3.0 ($t= 5.4$ and 5.1, $df= 51$, $p= .00$).

Cluster 3 - The awareness about reviewing the lessons and self-studying.

The *Descriptive Statistic Test* showed the results as in Table 4 below.

Table 4: The mean scores of Cluster 3

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD.
MeanCl3	52	3.00	5.00	3.89	.60
MeanCl3p	52	3.00	5.00	4.00	.61
Valid N (listwise)					

Similarly to Clusters 1 and 2, the statistic data with the *Descriptive Statistic Test* and *One Sample T-Test* (see appendix 5) explained that the learners have somewhat the awareness on reviewing their lessons in class and at home at both times of measurement. In some particular cases, the mean scores (M Pre = 3.89 and M Post = 4.00) were relatively higher than the comparative mean score (3.0) of the five scale ($t= 10.7$ and 11.6, $df= 51$, $p= .00$). The results demonstrate that the learners were affected by the reflective writing papers in their learning autonomy. However, the data reveals that learners are still under the impact of some learning regulations of in-class testing and examination.

In short, the above analyzed clusters provide evidences that the learners have learning autonomy awareness. The reflective writing paper has a certain role in improving the learners' ability in this research issue though there are some different outcomes among the clusters. The next part will be about the impact of reflective writing paper on the learners' awareness in learning autonomy.

Table 5. Participants' feedback on their real actions about their learning autonomy

	Do nothing	Review the lessons	Find solutions from different sources	Do homework	Ask teacher or friends	Enroll to study at a language center	Others
Pre test	0%	69%	17%	46%	71%	25%	19%
Post test	1,96%	64,71%	19,61%	17,65%	54,90%	0%	72,55%

The learners' awareness in learning autonomy through reflective writing paper

The data collected at the two points of measurement are displayed as in the Table 5. Those activities were mentioned by students in answering the open questions.

The figures shown in table 5 demonstrate the huge differences in the learners' awareness and actions through several named specific activities between the two times of measurement. The differences can be found from the actions of "doing homework", "ask teacher or friend"; "enroll to study at a language center" and "others". In this research aspect, the item "others" is actually an open-ended question to call for the learner's real experiences and actions in their learning which help them understand the lessons and study better.

Though the question contents in the reflective writing paper are not different between the two points of data collection, a significant difference was found at the second intervention can be inferred from the type of question. In the first intervention, the questions included closed and open-ended questions. However, in the post one test, the paper had only the open-ended items (see appendix 3). The questions A and B in both questionnaire pretest and posttest are only the hooking questions to see the learners' reflection on their understanding levels in class which can help the teacher modifies the in appropriate teaching activities later.

The design of open-ended questions at the second time has a real meaning in collecting data about the learning autonomy activities which the participants have done. Actually, the ways the learners answer the research questionnaire go from intensive selections with provided options about self-studied activities to the awareness and response

Table 6. The conceptions about the awareness of learning autonomy used by the learners in the item "others"

The conceptions used by the learners	At the first time	At the second time	Differences in number of ideas
Re-take the exercises at home and review the lessons learned before	0	8	8
Use the dictionary or ask friends	3	8	5
Search for information by reading book, practice more, read more references and re-read the lesson	3	10	7
Surf the Internet or Google	2	6	4
Study the lessons, the formula, ways to write sentences…study harder, write words, sentences into the notes and tick them to the place where I can study, watch English movies, listen to English…	2	5	3
Learn vocabulary	1	7	6
Study and discuss in groups	0	3	3
Ask friends, check the parts that I still have questions or problems, discuss and study with friends about them	0	3	3
Try harder	0	1	1
Preview the lessons	0	1	1

to what they have done. They individually wrote responses to the activities that they have used for improving their learning. The item "others" at the second time of measurement indicates that the learners improved their ability in learning autonomy. It increased from 19% at the first time to 72.55% after that. Table 6 above presents some learning activities through the item "others".

Data from Table 6 demonstrated that the learning autonomy activities at the second point of measurement are diversified and higher in quantity in comparison to that of at the first point. Particularly, many activities which have been used are not mentioned at the first time but named at the second time. From that result, though just the learning autonomy activities may not make big progress in the learners' ability, the study shows the evidences that the learners have changed their mind and had awareness about their learning and tried to find more appropriate ways for learning better.

To ensure the role of the activity of writing reflective paper as analyzed above, the next part will focus on the results from the competence tests of English during the experimental study.

The learners' English competence

English competence was simultaneously conducted by the questionnaire to measure the changes in the learners' ability. These tests were assumed similarly at difficult levels of reliability (see appendix 4). The test results can be found at appendix 6 with the mean score at the first measurement is 0.978 and 1.135 out of 2.0 at the second time.

Table 7. Learners' English competence

Mean score	First test	Second test	Mean difference
Mean	0.978	1.135	MD=0.16

From the above comparison, it could be seen that the learners' English competence increased about eight percent. Although the mean score was slight above the average score of 1.0 (Mean =1.135), the learners' English competence was influenced slightly during the intervention and improved positively. This result has a high compatibility with the data gaining from the questionnaire about their learning autonomy. It proves that when learners change their learning attitude, they have awareness and develop learning habits, causing learning autonomy to be increased thereby, helping learners improve their English competence.

After analyzing the quantitative data from the questionnaire and tests, fifteen participants were invited to join an interview to evaluate their insights into the learners' learning autonomy and the effectiveness of the intervention of reflective writing paper.

The effectiveness of reflective writing paper on learners' learning autonomy

The interview questions (see appendix 2) included three items focusing on (1) the learners' demands when learning English, (2) ways of learning autonomy, and (3) the effectiveness of the research tool for intervention.

(1) The learners' demands when learning English

All interviewers showed that they wanted to study English better in general and the skills in particular. Among four English skills, twelve items at 80% were about speaking skills. Nine items at 60% were for

listening skills and 13.3% represented the rest of the English language skills. Their reasons for improving their English were to meet the social needs, find a job easily, and to be able to communicate with foreigners. This result shows that learners were aware of the importance of learning the language skills for their competence.

(2) Ways of learning autonomy

To learn English better, the participants provided several solutions which they used during the learning process. Besides some common autonomous ways such as "asking friends", "reviewing lessons at home", and "paying attention in class", learners also showed some creative ways of learning as "using all senses to learn", "combining both writing and speaking", and "listening to radio and cassette regularly". This data illustrates that the learners actually want to study English and have the thoughts about their competence.

However, the interview also showed that 77.8% of the learners only care about their grammar and vocabulary and 22.3% for other language skills. This result is explained by the reality of the impact of testing and research. When the tests are mostly based on grammar and reading, learners' attention to certain skills are highly different from what they are required to study. Furthermore, learners still have negative thoughts about learning with 26.6% of the learners wanting to learn for the exam.

In short, the learners present their ability to learning autonomy through the activities that they have changed for their learning process. However, most of the concentration is still on language knowledge not the skills and learning methods which are influenced by passive learning techniques.

(3) The effectiveness of the research tool for intervention

All subjects said that the reflective writing papers were useful for them. Their explanation and reasons could be divided into two main categories.

First, thanks to reflective writing paper, the teacher could easily understand each learner's English competence and abilities. The teacher could find the learning problems from students to improve the lessons or activities. In other words, the reflective writing paper assisted teachers to understand learners' understanding better to modify teaching methods.

Second, the reflective writing paper provided learners a chance to look back at their learning methods and results, evaluate their abilities, and improve their competence and skills. From that, they can find solutions to help themselves and consolidate knowledge.

In conclusion, the ideas extracted from the interviews focused on the important roles of the reflective writing paper. It helped learners strengthen the awareness about positive learning and has led each participant to their goal of learning English better.

Conclusions and Implications

The research results showed that the reflective writing paper played an important role in enhancing the participants' learning autonomy. The learners were aware of the significance of learning autonomy and appreciated the role of the reflective writing

paper towards their own language learning process.

The learners' self-learning capacity before and after the intervention changed positively. In other words, the learners were self-aware of their learning and desired to find the most suitable learning techniques for themselves. These findings were compatible with the research of Benson (2001) and Wendi (2002).

However, the results also indicated that learners didn't recognize the close relationship between all four skills of a language; therefore, their learning focus was still on grammar and vocabulary.

From aforementioned findings, it is suggested that the EFL teachers create opportunities for their students to express ideas about what they have learned and what they are not able to acquire or follow after every class. From this, teachers can adjust their teaching methods to satisfy a variety of learning styles.

In addition, not only teachers but also administrators need to recognize that improving learning autonomy for students is as important as increasing training quality for the institute. As a result, it is necessary to encourage learners in general and EFL learners in particular, that self-learning and self- researching are especially important in changing traditional learning habits.

Moreover, it should be determined that learning is not just for testing purposes, but a philosophy, and a passion that exists during one's life.

About the author

Phan Thi Tuyet Van is a lecturer at Vinh Long Community College, Mekong Delta. She is interested in doing research and teaching English as a foreign language in this context of Vietnam. This article is a piece of work that remarks her professional development. From her teaching situations, she is also conducting different studies about learners' autonomy, innovative language teaching tools, and English for special purposes.

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Appendix-I

QUESTIONNAIRE

(This questionnaire aims to collect the data towards the students' learning autonomy before and after taking the reflective writing papers)

A.   Please provide your personal information: *please tick (√) to the appropriate box*

1. What your name? (*optional*): …………………………………… □ Male □ Female

2. You are from: □ A rural area   □ An urban area

3. You studied English at high school for:

     □ Seven years   □ Three years   □ Other

4. Which level of English are you in?

     □ Elementary   □ Low-intermediate   □ Intermediate   □ Other

5. English is necessary for you in some ways

     □ Yes   □ No

6. Which skill(s) of English do you like best? (*You can tick on more than one box*)

     □ Listening   □ Speaking   □ Reading   □ Writing

7. Your e-mail address (*optional*): …………………………………….

B. Please read the statements carefully and indicate your response with a tick in one of the boxes on the right

No	Items	Always	Sometimes	Average	Rarely	Never
1	The way(s) you have used to study English well					
	1a. Learn English words by heart					
	1b. Take English classes from a Center of Foreign Languages					
	1c. Read English books or magazines					
	1d. Surf the Internet for information					
	1e. Review on the lessons studied in the class					
	1g. Other(s), please specify:					
2	When you haven't understood any points of English, you will					
	2a. Ask for help from teachers or friends					
	2b. Try to find the answers from different sources					
	2c. Study together to solve the problems					
	2d. Do nothing					
	2e. Other(s), please specify:					
3	You will review the lessons whenever					
	3a. The teacher asks you to recite the lessons every class					
	3b. You finish every class					
	3c. You take a test or an exam					
	3d. Other(s), please specify:					

Appendix II

THE INTERVIEW

1. Do you really want to study English well? Please specify the skill(s) you want to be good at?

2. Please tell about your own ways of studying English? Do you review the lessons after every English class? (If yes, what do you do with any points which you didn't understand in class? If no, when will you review the English lessons?)

3. Do you think the reflections that you took after classes were useful for you in some ways? Please specify?

Appendix III
REFLECTIVE WRITING 1

A. Which part(s) of the current unit do you like best? Why?

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B. Which content(s) don't you understand? Why?

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C. What will you do when you don't understand any contents of the unit?
  1. Do nothing
  2. Review the lessons
  3. Try to find out solutions from some sources
  4. Do homework
  5. Ask for help from teacher(s) or friend(s)
  6. Take an English course
7. Others: (Please specify)

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

D. Describing about what you have done to solve the problems you faced in the last class? ……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

REFLECTIVE WRITING 2

A. What have you learned from the current unit?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………..

B. Which part(s) of this unit do you like best? Why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………...
....

C. Which content(s) don't you understand? What will you do to improve?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………...

D. What have you done to solve the problems you faced in the last class?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………...

Appendix IV

English Competence Pre-Test
Time allotted: 60'

I. VOCABULARY: Fill in the blanks with given suitable words or phrases (0.5 m)

ties   train   degree   learn   fail   messages

positive   pass   hard   Internet   negative   market

1. Many workers want to go back to school to ………………for a new career.
2. Sorry, I can't send you ……………. because I am busy with my project.
3. He likes to wear shirts with ……………. for the whole week.
4. She got a ……………….. in France and from Cantho University and now works as a teacher.
5. You can buy things and finds information on the ………………
6. How did you …………….. to swim or scuba dive?
7. Goods in the supermarket are more expensive than in the ………………
8. Tom has a ………… attitude towards life. He is an optimistic person.
9. They have to take the exam again because they didn't ………… the first exam.
10. Don't press that button so …………… unless you'll break the camera.

II. GRAMMAR
A. Circle the correct answers (0.5 m)

1. We didn't arrive until seven o'clock ……………. the traffic was terrible.
   a. to   b. because   c. because of   d. none is correct
2. Jane has already eaten her lunch, but I'm saving ………… until late
   a. my   b. mine   c. I   d. me
3. I want you to open the door …………….
   a. carefulb. carefully   c. the most careful   d. care
4. It isn't my dog. It's ……………
   a. him   b. he   c. himself   d. his
5. Don't tell that story ……………. his parents.
   a. to   b. for   c. by   d. with
6. He hopes …………… a job offered from this company.
   a. getting   b. for get   c. to get   d. get

7. Dennis …………… to the English Speaking Club every week.

    a. is going   b. goes   c. go   d. are going

8. There was ……….. food for everyone at the party

    a. too   b. really   c. enough   d. pretty

9. Ellen enjoys ………….. shopping with her friends.

    a. going   b. to go   c. go   d. goes

10. ………………… has stolen my sandals.

    a. Anyone   b. Someone   c. Something   d. Nowhere

B. Give the correct forms of the verbs in brackets (0.25 m)

1. My cell phone is such good quality that I ……………….. (have) the same phone for years.

2. Trees …………. (lose) their leaves in autumn.

3. Eric ……………. (wear) a new shirt today.

4. Tokyo ……………. (be) the capital of Japan.

5. **Did** you **add** flour, **pour** in the milk, and then .... (**add**) the eggs?

C. Make complete sentences (0.25 m)

1. Let's/ write/ letter/ John/ California.

    …………………………………………………

2. What/you/free time?

    …………………………………………………

3. Mary/not finish/homework/yet.

    …………………………………………………

4. Tom and I/go/fly/kite/last week.

    …………………………………………………

5. A lazy person/not like/work hard.

    …………………………………………………

III. READING (0.5m)

Student services

As a full-time student at Blue Sky College, you will have your own counselor. He or she helps you plan your study, deal with your home-stay issues or your personal problems. Your counselor can guide you through your studies and discuss any study problems arising. On Orientation Day you will learn who is your counselor and can arrange a meeting after this. Besides, you can get help from other staff members if you need to improve your writing, oral and numeracy skills for the successful completion of your college course. Help with basic skills is also available. Note that you may always ask for assistance at the reception

desk at any time.

Write True (T) or False (F) for each of the sentences below:

1…….. Student at Blue Sky College have their own counselors.
2…….. A counselor can support students in solving their individual problems.
3…….. Students can meet their counselors on Orientation Day.
4…….. Students find out their counselors' names from the reception desk.
5…….. Counselors can help students improve their writing skill.
6…….. Students can get the staff's support in presenting information.
7…….. Students need the skill of handling numbers while studying at Blue Sky College.
8…….. Staff members can support students in achieving basic skills.
9…….. It is important for students to ask for help at the reception desk.
10……Writing skill is necessary for a student to successfully complete the course.

English Competence Post-Test

Time allotted: 60'

I.   VOCABULARY: Fill in the blanks with given suitable words or phrases (0.5m)

journalist   get here   character   playing   get a taxi   bills

mechanic   medicine   keep up with   disappointed   hard   look

1.   You ……………. unhappy. What's the matter?
2.   That film is very exciting. My favorite actor plays the ……………… of a doctor.
3.   Dolores is studying ……………. because she wants to be a doctor.
4.   Many adults take classes to ……………...... the changes in their field.
5.   A ……………. is a person who writes for newspapers and magazines.
6.   They try to work …………… to earn a lot of money.
7.   I was ………………when I saw that film. I didn't like it at all
8.   I didn't know you were here. What time did you ………………?
9.   Every month, he has the responsibility for paying ………….. for the whole family.
10.   The children love …………………... in the park.

II. GRAMMAR

A. Circle the correct answers (0.5m)

1.   I didn't eat …………….. because I wasn't hungry.

a. someone   b. anyone   c. something   d. anything

2. My room is bigger than …………….

    a. her   b. she   c. hers d. herself

3. He plays the guitar …………….

    a. more terrible   b. terrible   c. terribly   d. none is correct

4. What's wrong? "There's ……………. in my eye."

    a. something   b. someone   c. somewhere d. anything

5. Can we use your washing machine. ………… is broken

    a. We   b. Our c. We're   d. Ours

6. I do the same thing every day. My job is very ……………

    a. bored   b. boring   c. bore d. none is correct

7. That book…………. interesting.

    a. look   b. looks   c. is looking   d. looking

8. It's not …………….. that you failed the exam. You never did any work.

    a. surprising   b. surprise   c. surprised   d. surprises

9. Kyoko doesn't like ………………...out the garbage.

    a. take   b. taking   c. takes d. to take

10. I'm studying English …………. I'm going to be a pilot

    a. to   b. because   c. of   d. in order to

B. *Give the correct forms of the verbs in brackets (0.35m)*

1. He …………….. (be) in the library now.

2. John went to Venezuela last year, but he ……………...... (never been) to Colombia

3. Kathy ………………. (attend) the English class three times a weeks

4. Susan! You look worried. What ………… you …………… (think) about?

5. Jane ………………… (already eat) her lunch, but I'm saving mine until late.

6. She usually…………. (wear) a dress, but now she ………………(wear) jeans.

C. *Make complete sentences (0.25m)*

1. Alice/enjoy/go shopping/her friends/weekends.

    …………………………………………………

2. Vietnam/become/150th member of the WTO/2007.

    …………………………………………………

3. What/you/do/the last summer?

    …………………………………………………

4. A stubborn person/not like/change his plans.

………………………………………………

5. I/send/some flowers/Mary/two days ago.

………………………………………………

III. READING (0.4m)

Student services

The University of Iowa's main campus is in Iowa City, bordered by Park Road to the north and Dubuque and Gilbert Streets roughly to the east. The Iowa River flows through the campus dividing it into west and east sides. At the center of the University of Iowa campus is the Pentacrest, which is sometimes referred to as the "center of academic life at the University", especially for Liberal Arts students. It consists of five buildings; the Old Capitol and four lecture halls, Schaeffer, Macbride, MacLean, and Jessup. A variety of classes are held in these four buildings, mostly relating to the Liberal Arts. Macbride Hall and the Old Capital also contain museums of natural history and Iowa state history, respectively.

Write True (T) or False (F) for each of the sentences below:

1   ……. Park Road and Dubuque are in the north of Iowa City.

2   ……. The border between the east and the west side of the campus is a river.

3   ……. The Pentacrest is the center of the campus.

4   ……. There are five buildings in the Pentacrest.

5   ……. Liberal Arts students have lectures in the buildings of the Pentacrest.

6   ……. The Old Capitol is one of the lecture halls of the Pentacrest.

7   ……. Only Liberal Arts classes are held in the four buildings.

8   ……. Macbride Hall contains the museum of Iowa state history.

Appendix V

The output data of Questionnaire

1. The Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.782	.788	12

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	3.460	2.269	4.404	2.135	1.941	.321	12

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q1a	37.7500	42.426	.562	.536	.755
Q1b	38.6731	37.283	.602	.491	.744
Q1c	39.2500	42.113	.511	.390	.758
Q1d	38.5769	47.739	.080	.243	.800
Q1e	37.8654	42.315	.537	.323	.757
Q2a	37.8846	40.810	.592	.456	.749
Q2b	38.2115	39.307	.666	.593	.740
Q2c	38.1346	40.354	.589	.394	.749
Q2d	37.5000	47.431	.064	.175	.807
Q3a	37.8846	47.398	.097	.305	.799
Q3b	37.8654	42.942	.448	.488	.765
Q3c	37.1154	44.222	.468	.398	.765

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.812	.819	12

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum/ Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	3.617	3.000	4.327	1.327	1.442	.124	12

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
P1a	39.5192	47.117	.597	.733	.788
P1b	40.1731	45.205	.569	.484	.787
P1c	40.4038	45.932	.524	.398	.792

P1d	40.1731	48.891	.317	.478	.811
P1e	39.7885	49.111	.337	.283	.808
P2a	39.7308	44.710	.615	.494	.783
P2b	39.8846	44.614	.624	.567	.782
P2c	39.8269	44.146	.674	.523	.778
P2d	39.7308	48.867	.226	.319	.826
P3a	39.5769	51.465	.203	.387	.818
P3b	39.5577	46.722	.602	.570	.787
P3c	39.0769	50.425	.367	.278	.805

2. The Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
MeanPre	52	2.33	4.67	3.4599	.58937
MeanPost	52	2.42	4.83	3.6170	.61972
Valid N (listwise)	52				

3. The One Sample T- Test

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeanPre	52	3.4599	.58937	.08173
MeanPost	52	3.6170	.61972	.08594

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
MeanPre	5.627	51	.000	.45994	.2959	.6240
MeanPost	7.179	51	.000	.61699	.4445	.7895

4. The Descriptive statistical tests for each cluster at the two points of measurements

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
MeanCl1	52	3.00	1.60	4.60	161.00	3.0962	.68197	.465
MeanCl2	52	3.00	1.75	4.75	186.50	3.5865	.77156	.595
MeanCl3	52	2.00	3.00	5.00	202.67	3.8974	.60333	.364
MeanCl1p	52	3.00	1.80	4.80	176.40	3.3923	.67558	.456
MeanCl2p	52	3.25	1.75	5.00	187.75	3.6106	.84947	.722

	N							
MeanCl3p	52	2.00	3.00	5.00	208.00	4.0000	.61923	.383
Valid N (listwise)	52							

5. The One Sample T-Test for Cluster 1

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeanCl1	52	3.0962	.68197	.09457
MeanCl1p	52	3.3923	.67558	.09369

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
MeanCl1	1.017	51	.314	.09615	-.0937	.2860
MeanCl1p	4.187	51	.000	.39231	.2042	.5804

6. The One Sample T-Test for Cluster 2

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeanCl2	52	3.5865	.77156	.10700
MeanCl2p	52	3.6106	.84947	.11780

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
MeanCl2	5.482	51	.000	.58654	.3717	.8013
MeanCl2p	5.183	51	.000	.61058	.3741	.8471

7. **The One Sample T-Test for Cluster 3**

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeanCl3	52	3.8974	.60333	.08367
MeanCl3p	52	4.0000	.61923	.08587

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
MeanCl3	10.726	51	.000	.89744	.7295	1.0654
MeanCl3p	11.645	51	.000	1.00000	.8276	1.1724

Appendix VI

English Competence Test Scores (Max=2)

Index No	Pre Test	Post Test	Differences
1	0.6	0.85	0.25
2	0.95	0.7	-0.25
3	1.3	1.5	0.2
4	0.95	1	0.05
5	1.25	1.4	0.15
6	0.9	1.05	0.15
7	0.75	1.45	0.7
8	0.65	0.75	0.1
9	1.15	1.2	0.05
10	0.9	0.9	0
11	0.7	1.35	0.65
12	1.3	1.5	0.2
13	1.15	1.3	0.15
14	1.2	1.2	0
15	0.7	1.05	0.35
16	1.15	1.4	0.25
17	1.05	1.3	0.25
18	1.05	1.05	0
19	0.6	1.3	0.7
20	1.1	1	-0.1
21	1.2	1.3	0.1
22	1.05	1	-0.05
23	1.05	0.75	-0.3
24	0.45	1	0.55
25	0.5	0.55	0.05
26	1	0.95	-0.05
27	0.95	0.95	0
28	1.1	1.2	0.1
29	0.55	0.95	0.4
30	1.2	1.55	0.35
31	0.95	1.25	0.3
32	1.3	1.6	0.3
33	1.25	1.35	0.1
34	1.05	1	-0.05
35	0.95	0.9	-0.05
36	1.05	1.25	0.2
37	1.2	1.45	0.25
38	0.95	0.9	-0.05
39	0.6	1.05	0.45
40	0.95	0.75	-0.2
41	0.95	1.25	0.3
42	1.2	1.3	0.1
43	0.65	0.75	0.1
44	0.45	0.45	0
45	1.3	1.4	0.1
46	1.25	1.35	0.1
47	0.8	1.3	0.5

48	1.05	1.4	0.35
49	0.95	1.05	0.1
50	1	1.4	0.4
51	1.35	1.2	-0.15
52	1.25	1.2	-0.05
Mean	0.978846	1.134615	0.155769