

Academic Writing Skills of English as a Secondary Language Learners

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate English as a Second Language (ESL) learners' writing skills to help develop an instructional module for SY 2026-2027. Specifically, the profile of the learners was presented, writing skills were measured in terms of correctness, clarity, engagement, and delivery, and the differences were analyzed by age, grade, parents' educational attainment, and family monthly income. The quantitative descriptive comparative method was applied in the Research. 151 learners were chosen from the 7th to the 10th grade of a private secondary school in Bacolod City. The students completed a 250-300-word argumentative paper. The paper was evaluated by two independent raters with a previously tested analytical scale. Different statistical methods (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA) were applied at the 0.05 significance level. As provided, no significant difference was found between the age of students and parental education. According to the results, the overall writing performance level was high ($M = 31.77$). The results indicated that clarity ($M = 8.34$) and engagement ($M = 8.14$) were very high. The delivery ($M = 7.73$) and correctness ($M = 7.57$) were high.

Keywords: *academic writing skills, ESL learners, correctness, clarity, engagement, delivery, instructional module*

Introduction

Nature of the Problem

Academic writing is regarded as a key literacy competence, enabling learners to structure knowledge, unveil connections, support arguments, and express opinions. In the case of learners whose first language is something other than English, successful letter writing does not only require using correct grammar. In addition, successful writing involves developing and supporting a coherent line of thought, involving the reader, and writing fluently and appropriately. These multiple facets of writing are crucial for making the text understandable and meaningful.

The necessity to develop these competencies is evident in the conditions of the Philippines. For instance, the program for International Student Assessment supports the idea of pervasive reading literacy problems and their impact on writing and understanding written materials (OECD, 2023). Commonly seen problems are also confirmed by classroom observations. Problems with grammar and organizing ideas can be directly related to Sustainable Development Goal 4, which emphasizes the necessity of providing equitable access to quality education and learning (United Nations, 2023).

According to recent studies, there are some issues that are evident in the writing of adolescent second language learners. For example, sentence-boundary issues, limited syntactic variation, and limited lexical sophistication are also mentioned (Maamujav et al., 2021). In addition, good coherence and organization help separate good writing from poor writing (Ada & Funa, 2025). Moreover, cognitive engagement plays an important role in the writing practices of L2 writers from the Philippines (Quinto et al., 2021). While feedback is important for improving behavioral and cognitive engagement, students still need explicit feedback to be able to understand and apply it correctly (Ranalli, 2021; Zhang & Hyland, 2022).

However, despite the availability of this evidence, there is limited research that examines correctness, coherence, engagement, and expression in relation to each other in junior high school students. A number of studies focus on linguistic accuracy or proficiency, and very few transition multidimensional assessments into teaching practices. This study has covered this gap by measuring the four aspects of writing using a real essay task and using the obtained results for creating an instructional module.

Current State of Knowledge

Correctness involves the importance of grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Maamujav et al. (2021) have shown that syntactic complexity and lexical sophistication correlate with human evaluation of L2 adolescent writing, meaning that linguistic control is an important element of quality. Nevertheless, correctness is not sufficient for effective communication. Composing a grammatically correct essay does not mean that it will not be difficult to understand because the ideas offered are poorly structured or not developed in a sufficient way.

Clarity is connected with the significance and organization of ideas, their coherence and development. Ada and Funa (2025) have established coherence and organization problems in the essays of junior high school students in the Philippines. The significance of their findings is that clarity can be evaluated separately from readability.

Engagement refers to the writer of a text showing relevance, meaningfulness, voice awareness, and engaging the audience. Quinto et al. (2021) established a relationship between cognitive and emotional engagement and L2 writing outcomes for Filipino students. At the same time, Zhang and Hyland (2022) emphasized the improvement in the writing process due to revision and feedback. This evidence reinforces the importance of involvement in writing and the ability of a text to keep the reader's attention during the writing process.

Delivery refers to fluency, readability, sentence variety, tone and overall quality of written communication. Barrot (2021) shows that the writer can improve the quality of writing through interactive feedback, revision and authentic audience involvement. This shows that delivery improves if linguistic control, organization and audience awareness function together.

While learner characteristics may play the role in affecting writing results, previous studies provide mixed evidence. For instance, Nagode et al. (2023) have found that sociocultural characteristics can explain only a small part of EFL writing results and that parent education level is not equally effective. This means that some profile variables should be analyzed for a particular category instead of generalizing the whole group of learners.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The current research is based on the principles of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which defines learning as a process mediated through collaboration, help, and culture (Vygotsky, 1978). The Zone of Proximal Development explains that learners' skills develop thanks to the skills of teachers, classmates, and learning resources (Lantolf et al., 2020). Academic writing is considered beneficial in this respect because it requires modeling, assistance, and iterations.

According to this theory, correctness, clarity, engagement, and delivery are the learnable concepts as opposed to fixed learner characteristics. By finding weaknesses in students' writing, teachers can organize their instruction based on the graduated activities, beginning with the most supported performance. That means that the theory contributes not only to the evaluation of students' writing skills but to the creation of the course with example texts, structured tasks, feedback, and revisions.

Objective of the study

This research focused on the academic writing capabilities of ESL learners in a private high school in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, during Academic Year 2026-2027 to develop a teaching module. In particular, the research characterized the respondents based on age, level in school, highest education achieved by the parents, and average family monthly income; assessed their academic writing skills in terms of correctness, clarity, engagement, and delivery;

characterized the performance based on profile variables; and tested whether a significant difference existed in the level of academic writing skills of ESL learners when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

Research Methodology

This section presents the research design, data-gathering procedure, other instrumentation, and statistical tools. It also discusses the parameters, especially the statistical tools, the respondents, and the study's locality.

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive-comparative design was used in the research. The descriptive part quantified the characteristics and academic writing skills of the respondents without changing the learning condition or administering a treatment. The comparative part evaluated whether the differences in rubric scores observed among different groups of students according to the specified profile characteristics are significant. The design was appropriate for the study since it aimed to describe the present performance, compare naturally occurring groups, and identify the strengths and needs for an instructional module.

Study Respondents

The participants in this study comprised a total of 248 ESL learners currently studying at the private secondary school in Bacolod City, which is located in Negros Occidental. The sample of 151 learners was selected through the process of simple random selection, which allowed every eligible learner to be included in the sample. The final sample included 39 learners from Grade 10, 35 learners from Grade 9, 44 learners from Grade 8, and 33 learners from Grade 7.

Instrument

The data were collected through a profile sheet created by the researcher, an essay writing task in argumentative form, and an analytical scoring rubric. The students were given five prompts for their age group, and they were required to write a 250- 300-word argumentative essay where they needed to take a clear position defended with supporting details. The rubric used had four dimensions, namely correctness, clarity, engagement, and delivery. Each of these dimensions would be scored using 2, 4, 6, 8, or 10, which corresponded to the Very Low, Low, Moderate, High, and Very High-performance levels, respectively, making the maximum total score 40.

The specialists in subject matter examined this tool for content validity. The trial essays were evaluated by two trained raters, who made use of the same criteria on their separate scoring sheets. The inter-rater reliability was determined by the intraclass correlation coefficient for numerical scores and the weighted kappa coefficient for agreement across the performance classifications. It was evaluated how the rubric would vary from one occasion to another before the assessment was carried out.

Data Gathering Procedure

Once permission from the relevant school and academic authorities was obtained, the researcher arranged the necessary scheduling and orchestration of the administration of the test with school personnel. Accordingly, parents or guardians provided written consent for their students to participate, and students completed an assent form as well. The essay task was administered as per routine class schedules under the same guidelines and uniformity in classroom procedures. Students were made aware that participation was completely voluntary and that students were able to refuse participation at any time without consequences.

Following the administration of the essays, identification of the students was concealed using a code, and the scoring of the essays was done independently by the two raters. The scoring sheets were completed; the results were encoded, tabulated, and prepared for analysis. The aggregated data representations were interpreted based on the research question and the information needs from the study were established for the instructional module that was designed.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

The profile of the respondents was described with frequencies and percentages. The means were reported regarding performance in terms of accuracy, clarity, engagement, delivery, and the overall scores for the entire sample and the individual profile categories. Each of the independent categories defined as age, parental education, and family income was analyzed using independent-samples t-tests, while one-way analysis of variance was utilized when examining the comparisons among the four grades. Testing of the null hypothesis was performed at a .05 level of significance. The dimensions of the means were classified in the following ranges: 8.01 and above, Very High; 6.01 to 8.00, High; 4.01 to 6.00, Moderate; 2.01 to 4.00, Low; and 0.00 to 2.00, Very Low. The overall means were examined using the ranges which were given.

Ethical Considerations

The research ensured that the dignity, safety, privacy, and voluntary involvement of the participants were honored. Since the respondents were minor learners, both informed consent from parents and assent from learners were obtained prior to data collection. Names were substituted with codes while identifiers were separated from collected data, and evaluators received only coded essays. Record-keeping was done safely and utilized solely for academic and investigatory affairs. In reporting, neither the name of the participating institution nor that of the students was revealed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger (below 14 years old)	60	39.70
	Older (14 years old and above)	91	60.30
	Total	151	100
Grade Level	Grade A	33	21.9
	Grade B	44	29.1
	Grade C	35	23.2
	Grade D	39	25.8
	Total	151	100
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment	Lower (Elementary and High School)	93	61.60
	Higher (Bachelor's, Master's, and Vocational)	58	38.40
	Total	151	100
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower (below Php 16,000.00)	68	45.00
	Higher (Php 16,000.00 and above)	83	55.00
	Total	151	100

The data of the 151 ESL learners presented in Table 2 help delineate the population. In terms of age, it was noted that at least 91 participants are of age 14 or above while 60 of them were under 14 years old. As regards grade levels, there were 44 ninth graders (29.20%), 39 tenth graders (25.80%), 35 eighth graders (23.20%), and 33 seventh graders (21.90%). Among all respondents, 93 of them responded that one or both of their parents had received less than a high school education (61.60%) while 58 reported receiving more than a high school education (38.40%). In the monthly family income category, the 83 respondents earned more than the poverty line while 68 earned less than the poverty line.

These details provide a comprehensive picture of the demographics since there were variables in this report of the students who belonged to different age groups grade levels as well as educational background thus providing the information that can explain students writing performance either by clarity correctness engagement or delivery as discussed further. Nevertheless, subject demographic characteristics cannot really determine their performance; and rather serve only as comparative variables (Baguilat 2024).

Furthermore, other researchers have made similar conclusions regarding the effect of parents level of education on students writing performances such as Nagode et al. (2023). They have examined how different demographics affect EFL writing performance based on demographic attributes utilized in their research. Besides, Custodio (2026) assessed features associated with the writing skills of senior high school learners taking into account family monthly earnings.

Table 2

Level of Academic Writing Skills of ESL Learners

Skills	Mean	Interpretation
Correctness	7.57	High Level
Clarity	8.34	Very High Level
Engagement	8.14	Very High Level
Delivery	7.73	High Level
Overall	31.77	High Level

The ESL learners' advanced academic writing skills facilitate their capacity to articulate their points of view in an organized manner, thus demonstrating their mastery of the application of language principles in writing. The findings of the study indicate that the average score of the scholars was 31.77, and since the score was placed in the high-level category, it indicates that the scholars have a good academic writing skill irrespective of the parameters set. The clarity aspect being the best attained was scored 8.34, while engagement was next in line with a score of 8.14 both in the high-level category. Delivery and correctness have attained lesser scores of 7.73 and 7.57 respectively, but they both lie in the high-level category as well. Overall, the results show that the scholars were more adept in their clarity and engagement skills than correctness and delivery aspects.

The implication derived from the current results is that the scholars could be able to convey their messages uniformly and succeeded in keeping the audience attentive in their presentations. However, the decrease in the correctness and delivery scores means that there is a need for giving the corresponding tasks to the students which will be aimed at increasing awareness regarding proper grammar use, sentence construction, and vocabulary usage while at the same time utilizing one's strengths in clarity and engagement means.

Similar findings were presented in the works of Heinsch and Schindler (2022) which pointed out that the writing quality and effectiveness issues can be dealt with through proper structure and coherency of the presented ideas. At the same time, Quinto et al. (2021) corroborated the data with the help of cognitive and psychological engagement meaningfulness in the improvement of writing performance of Filipino ESL learners.

Other research may further complement the literature established by Baguilat (2024), the fact that junior high school learners struggle with the grammatical aspect presented in the paper, and the difficulties connected with the grammar forms of verbs were prevalent in the research by Maamuujav et al. (2021) explaining the problems of organization encountered by adolescents. problems with language accuracy and quality of writing.

Table 3

Academic Writing Skills According to Age

Skills	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Correctness	7.26	High Level	7.77	High Level
Clarity	8.12	Very High Level	8.48	Very High Level
Engagement	7.99	High Level	8.24	Very High Level
Delivery	7.45	High Level	7.92	High Level
Overall	30.81	High Level	32.40	Very High Level

Table 3 shows the academic writing skills of ESL learners divided according to age. The older group had a higher score of a mean of 32.40, described as Very High, in comparison with the 30.81 mean score achieved by the younger group, which was regarded as having a High level of writing skills. In the four dimensions, the older group had a higher mean score of correctness 7.77, clarity 8.48, engagement 8.24, and delivery 7.92 when compared to the younger group which had the scores of 7.26, 8.12, 7.99, and 7.45 in descending order respectively in accordance with the four dimensions of accuracy of sentence content. In the two groups, the mean score in clarity is the highest since there is also low mean score in the correctness and delivery dimensions. While the two groups differ descriptively, the computed means do not show significant differences statistically.

The two groups differ descriptively, with the older group registering higher means and both groups having better clarity skills with lower mean scores for correctness. While the differences are based on the age justification, the means computed do not yield a significant difference statistically.

The above results have been supported by Baguilat (2024), who reported the mean differences of junior high school learners based on age in writing competence. This fact is also

supported by Maamuujav et al. (2021) on the challenges experienced by adolescent language writer in relation to the use of unconventional forms, lack of syntactic variations and advanced vocabulary as a result, demonstrating some of the parameters that influence quality in writing.

Table 4

Academic Writing Skills According to Grade Level

Skills	Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
	Me an	Interpret ation	Me an	Interpret ation	Me an	Interpret ation	Me an	Interpret ation
Correct ness	7.3 2	High Level	6.9 7	High Level	7.7 3	High Level	8.3 1	Very High Level
Clarity	8.0 8	Very High Level	7.9 2	High Level	8.3 7	Very High Level	9.0 0	Very High Level
Engage ment	8.0 0	Very High Level	7.9 0	High Level	8.1 9	Very High Level	8.4 9	Very High Level
Delivery	7.5 0	High Level	7.1 9	High Level	7.8 4	High Level	8.4 4	Very High Level
Overall	30. 88	High Level	29. 98	High Level	32. 11	Very High Level	34. 23	Very High Level

Table 4 provides the data for the academic writing skill levels of ESL learners in relation to class level. The analysis presents data indicating Grade 10 is the highest performing level with a 34.23 overall mean value, which is interpreted as a very high performance level. Next is Grade 9 with a 32.11 overall mean value, which is also considered as a very high performance level. The lowest level of performance among the grades is Grade 8 with a 29.98 mean value followed by Grade 7 with a 30.88 mean score, both representing high performance levels.

In each of the areas related to correctness (8.31), clarity (9.00), engagement (8.49), and delivery (8.44), Grade 10 again shows the highest mean score. It is also noted that Grade 8 has the lowest mean scores in the areas of correctness (6.97) and delivery (7.19). The implication is that there are differences between the academic writing skill levels of students in different grade levels however a description of the mean differences alone does not indicate whether the differences are statistically significant.

These findings are agreed by Baguilat (2024) indicating differences in writing across the grades. The results also support the work of Maamuujav et al. (2021) who highlight the various aspects of language use with emphasis being placed upon syntax and lexical sophistication. Heinsch and Schindler (2022) find that the quality of writing is related to coherence and the development of ideas. The results demonstrate that writing performance is multidimensional in nature thus affirming the findings of this study.

Table 5

Academic Writing Skills According to Parents' Highest Educational Attainment

Skills	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Correctness	7.62	High Level	7.47	High Level
Clarity	8.33	Very High Level	8.36	Very High Level
Engagement	8.12	Very High Level	8.16	Very High Level
Delivery	7.78	High Level	7.66	High Level
Overall	31.84	High Level	31.65	High Level

In table 5, the academic writing skill level experienced by ESL learners is expressed as per the educational level of their parents. The lower educational group has a whole mean score of 31.84 while the higher educational group scored a mean of 31.65. According to the findings, in terms of correctness and delivery, respondents from the lower group got higher mean scores of 7.62 and 7.78 while respondents from the higher group achieved scores of 7.47 and 7.66 for both correctness and delivery respectively. On the other hand, the higher education groups scored a higher score in clarity and engagement which showed 8.36 and 8.16 respectively compared to the lower educational group who scored 8.33 and 8.12. Even though there are apparent differences in the scores of various dimensions being analyzed, both groups achieved a Very High Level of clarity and engagement in addition to high levels of correctness and delivery.

Because of the almost identical mean obtained by both groups of parents, this shows that their academic writing performance was more or less the same. This means that the kind of assistance given to the learners should be based on the actual writing needs they exhibit rather than on the assumption of the level of education attained by their parents. However, inferential test is important in order to determine if the differences found are significant statistically.

Based on the past literature, it can be established that the findings better understood. This can be shown on the research of nagode et al. (2023) that indicated that the parental education variables have an influence on the writing skills of EFL learners. In the study, it indicates that parental education variable is very important although the different levels of educational attainment of mothers and fathers where it indicated that both educational attainment of mothers is significantly while fathers does not have any significance. The study by nagode et al. (2023) further indicated that the demographic variables studied had accounted for only 9.9% variance in EFL writing performance.

Table 6

Academic Writing Skills According to Average Family Monthly Income

Skills	Lower		Higher	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Correctness	7.13	High Level	7.92	High Level
Clarity	8.02	Very High Level	8.60	Very High Level
Engagement	7.91	High Level	8.33	Very High Level
Delivery	7.47	High Level	7.95	High Level
Overall	30.51	High Level	32.80	Very High Level

Respondents' average level of academic writing ability as second language learners is given in Table 8. The mean of the family income group is 32.80. This means that the range of students in this family group was classified at level 1 (very high ability). For the lower income family, the overall mean of 30.51 was found at level 2 (high level). In each of the four dimensions, greater means were found for the family income group of respondents in questions relating to accuracy (7.92), clarity (8.60), involvement (8.33), and expression (7.95). For respondents in the lower income family group, scores were 7.13 for accuracy, 8.02 for clarity, 7.91 for involvement, and 7.47 for expression. This means that results for both family groups were available in complete detail with regard to academic writing.

In conclusion, both income level groups performed well in the task of academic writing; however, the family income group had a higher descriptive mean score. There was a major difference in the ability to provide accurate writing. The implication from this study is that all students must have equal access to writing models, feedback, and practice regardless of whether their family income is low or high. In other words, the responses captured in this study should not be interpreted as meaning that because of income differences there is necessarily a difference in performance level.

According to Custodio (2026), the author indicated that a study of 326 respondents demonstrated that there were no differences in writing ability among Grade 12 students even though many students came from families earning an income of less than ₱15,000 per month. Thus, it can be concluded that writing ability is based on more than just family income.

Table 7

Differences in Correctness According to Profile Variables

Variable	Category	N	t-test	F	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	60	-1.650		0.101	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	91					
Grade Level	Grade 7			4.062	0.008		Significant
	Grade 8						
	Grade 9						
	Grade 10						
Parents Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	93	0.476		0.635		Not Significant
	Higher	58					
Average Family Monthly Income	Few	68	-2.628		0.009		Significant

The difference in correctness between grade levels was significant according to the F value of 4.062 and p value of .008; there were also significant differences according to family income ($t = -2.628$, $p = .009$), but there were no significant differences for age or level of parents' education. The average measure of the higher-income group was higher than that of the lower-income group, resulting in differences for grade level, with eighth grade being the lowest level and tenth grade being the highest level. The findings indicate that grammar and sentence-level instruction should vary according to the degree of success exhibited by students, while providing them equal access to resources and feedback.

Baguilat's (2024) research echoed some of the findings in that writing proficiency and error patterns were found to differ by grade level; however, unlike the current researcher, Baguilat found no significant difference based on age. In contrast, the finding of significant differences between income groups for correctness contradicted the work of Custodio (2026), whom found no significant differences concerning income. These differences may relate to the characteristics of the learners in each study and the various dimensions of writing evaluated in each study.

Table 8

Differences in Clarity According to Profile Variables

Variable	Category	N	t-test	F	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	60	-1.430		0.155	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	91					
Grade Level	Grade 7			4.023	0.009		Significant
	Grade 8						
	Grade 9						
	Grade 10						
Parents Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	93	-0.105		0.916		Not Significant
	Higher	58					
Average Family Monthly Income	Few	68	-2.361		0.020		Significant

The clarity of these various means differed depending on both the grade level, $F=4.023$, $p=.009$ and income level, $t=-2.361$, $p=.020$ but not depending on age or educational attainment of parents. The tenth grade, in particular, produced the best descriptive results while the high-income group had a better descriptive performance than the low-income group. As this research is nonexperimental, the differences that have been found in this study point to specific groups that deserve further instruction, not a causal effect. Therefore, the instructional suggestions include use of structured outlines, paragraph formatting, use of discourse markers, and providing students with models.

According to Baguilat (2024) junior high school students also demonstrate differences in writing proficiency based on grade level. Ada and Funa (2025) report that the clarity dimension studied here was cited as an area of difficulty by many junior high school students in the Philippines due to issues with coherence, organization, and logical presentation of ideas, but this finding diverges from the results reported by Custodio (2026) who found no significant differences present in terms of overall writing proficiency based on income level.

Table 9

Differences in Engagement According to Profile Variables

Variable	Category	N	t-test	F	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	60	-1.352		0.179	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	91					
Grade Level	Grade 7			2.299	0.080		Not Significant
	Grade 8						
	Grade 9						
	Grade 10						
Parents Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	93	-0.219		0.827		Not Significant
	Higher	58					
Average Family Monthly Income	Few	68	-2.352		0.020		Significant

Engagement differed significantly only by family income, $t = -2.352$, $p = .020$. No significant differences were found by age, grade level, or parents' educational attainment. Although the higher-income group had a higher engagement mean, the finding should be treated as an association within the sampled groups. The lack of grade-level difference suggests that audience awareness, relevance, and persuasiveness should be strengthened across Grades 7–10. Feedback-rich and revision-oriented activities are supported by Quinto et al. (2021) and Zhang and Hyland (2022).

Quinto et al. (2021) have shown correlation between cognitive and psychological engagement and the level of performance in L2 writing among Filipino ESL students. Zhang and Hyland (2022) placed strong emphasis on cognitive, behavioral, and affective engagement in writing and also demonstrated how feedback and revision can promote active engagement in writing. The findings of these studies support the idea of using responsive tasks and feedback in order to keep people engaged in this learning task no matter what group they belong.

Table 10

Differences in Delivery According to Profile Variables

Variable	Category	N	t-test	F	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	60	-1.708		0.090	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	91					
Grade Level	Grade 7			4.452	0.005	_____	Significant
	Grade 8						
	Grade 9						
	Grade 10						
Parents Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	93	0.447		0.655	_____	Not Significant
	Higher	58					
Average Family Monthly Income	Few	68	-1.766		0.080	_____	Not Significant

Delivery varied significantly by grade level, $F = 4.452$, $p = .005$, but not by age, parents' educational level, or income. Grade 10 has the highest descriptive mean while Grade 8 has the lowest. This finding means that the teaching of the lesson must be adapted according to students' performance on fluency, readability, sentence diversity, tone, and effectiveness.

In showing important grade level differences, Baguilat (2024) has demonstrated one characteristic of development in the area of junior high writing proficiency to support this finding. Custodio (2026) also illustrates that family income has no bearing on differences found in relation to delivery, consistently with this study which also found the same result.

Conclusion

The ESL students exhibited a proficient overall level of academic writing aptitude. These learners demonstrated their capacity to be clear and engaging in writing thereby enabling them to convey the essence of their thoughts to the audience. The correctness and delivery aspects in academic writing, however, were to some extent weaker than clarity and engagement which indicates the area to be prioritized for further improvement.

Between the groups of learners, a remarkable descriptive variation was observed in their writing ability. In terms of their overall mean, grade 10 students and those from high income family background outperformed other groups of learners, whereas students whose parents had a similar level of education performed same. From an inferential perspective, age level facilitated the differentiation between the learner's ability in terms of correctness, clarity and delivery whereas financial background caused the difference only in terms of correctness and clarity and engagement aspect.

This finding demonstrates that academic writing is a multidimensional construct and that the demographic characteristics of learners do not always point to the assessed needs. Given the descriptive-comparative design of the current study the significant differences should be analyzed in order to provide possible learning objectives of the responsive teaching modules which will be oriented primarily on the academic performance of students.

Recommendations

Teachers of English must systematically apply instructional techniques matched to the rubric in the areas of grammar, mechanics, construction of sentences, fluency of expression, and art of expressing ideas in a meaningful way while also working to enhance the students' artistic skills in their writing and their ability to determine and appeal to their target audience. In their instructions, the students should be given models, guided practice, timely feedback, and time for revision when needed. Differences among the grade levels should have been taken into account to determine the pacing and the difficulty of the lessons with special focus placed on the areas needing improvement for the lower achieving students.

Curriculum developers and school administrators must take the steps to ensure the support for this proposed course of action is in place by providing writing materials for teachers and promoting the collaboration between teachers assessing writing. Resources should be made available equally so students can participate in this research regardless of their socioeconomic status. Future studies can expand upon this research to determine how the findings can be applied across different school contexts to include additional factors, specifically including students' reading capacity, previous writing experiences, motivation levels, and access to educational resources.

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