

# Factors that Contribute to the Poor Writing Skills in Filipino and English of the Elementary Pupils

**Analyn D. Saavedra<sup>a</sup>, Cheryl P. Barredo<sup>b</sup>,** <sup>a,b</sup>Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City, Philippines, Email: [<sup>a</sup>analyn.saavedra@yahoo.com](mailto:analyn.saavedra@yahoo.com), [<sup>b</sup>cherylbarredo@yahoo.com](mailto:cherylbarredo@yahoo.com)

This study primarily aims to know the factors that contribute to the poor writing skills in English and Filipino of the Six Grader elementary pupils in one of the Divisions in the Zamboanga Peninsula. Using purposive sampling, 43 language teachers teaching English and Filipino who are teaching the subjects from five years and above were selected as respondents. They too are teaching in different public elementaries in the same Division. A standardised survey questionnaire which had undergone validation, reliability, and pilot testing served as the instrument of the study. Using the mean score and standard deviation through the SPSS, the researchers interpreted the data using the 5-point Likert scale, which was rated by the language teachers. The data revealed that there are five factors that language teachers considered to have influenced the poor English and Filipino writing skills of the elementary pupils. Based on their experiences and observations while teaching writing to the pupils, the following was recorded: 1) lack of vocabulary in the target language; 2) difficulty in conveying and organising ideas; 3) pupils' perception that writing is a hard task; 4) lack of motivation and interest in writing; and 5) the difficulty in spelling, grammar and sentence construction are the reasons why many elementary pupils have poor writing skills in English and Filipino. These factors can be attributed to the first languages of the pupils (Chabacano, Bahasa Sug, and Cebuano), where English and Filipino are considered as L2 only. Despite the effort of teachers, they acknowledged that elementary pupils' writing skills still did not meet the standard in writing. That is why they are optimistic that following the K to 12 curricula will pave the way for improving the writing skills of the pupils, which has long been deteriorating. It is also an interesting point that curriculum planners, especially the language specialist, should look to help our pupils improve their writing skills in L2 eventually.



**Key words:** *English, Filipino, factors, writing skills, lack of vocabulary, spelling, grammar, sentence construction, motivation, interest, difficulty in conveying ideas.*

## Introduction

In the field of linguistics, how people come to understand a language can be classified into two categories: language learning and language acquisition. Language can be expressed through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which is also called the four macro skills of communication. These skills are arranged in a hierarchy according to its processes – acquisition and learning.

Furthermore, it is believed that among all the macro skills, writing comes last. In other words, a language learner can only be considered as proficient in a particular language if the learner can write within the rudimentary rules of the language.

According to Gepila (2017), among the four macro skills, writing is considered to be the hardest to teach and learn. It is very challenging for it is similar to teaching a child how to swim. A child who wants to learn how to swim must be exposed to various activities in swimming. Thus, several theories, principles, and practices must be taken into account. Likewise, for a child to successfully learn how to write, he must be exposed to different activities relating to writing. It is important to note that writing teachers must identify the context of learning: this includes culture, literature, and identity.

English and Filipino are the two official languages of the Philippines declared by its institution to be used as the medium of instruction starting in the elementary level. As a result, most Filipino pupils can write using these languages. It was in 1974 that the Bilingual Education Policy (BEP) was established through Department Order no. 52. It was recommended by the Soriano Committee to use both English and Filipino languages as mediums of instruction in both elementary and high school, depending on the subjects. For example, subjects like English Communication Arts, Mathematics, and Science would require the use of the English language. While for Filipino Communication Arts, Social Studies, and History subjects, the Filipino language will be used.

According to Gonzalez (1988), ten years after the implementation of BEP, there were indications that learners from the Tagalog-speaking regions benefit more from the policy because they show improvements in Social Studies.

Also, as stated by Bernardo (2004), the Bilingual Education Policy was altered to refer to the Filipino language as the language of “literacy” and “scholarly” discourse. While the English



language, it is referred to as the “international language” and “non-exclusive language” for science and technology. The recommendation of teaching all the subjects in schools through the use of the Filipino language remained unimplemented because educators have proven the importance of the English language too. Cabigon (2015) stated that the Philippines is known globally as one of the many English-speaking countries where the majority of the people are fluent in the language. English language in the Philippines has always been one of the official languages. Accordingly, more than 14 million Filipinos are using the English language. This language is considered as the language of commerce and law, as well as one of the languages used as the medium of instruction in Philippine education.

In addition, Suelto (2018) explained that understanding the English language is very beneficial. This helps students to express themselves effectively. In order for the students to become productive in different settings, they need to know the English language. English proficiency in the Philippines is, unfortunately, declining. A recent study shows that the Philippines is no longer considered to be the top one English-speaking countries. With this in mind, the Department of Education is trying to strengthen its effort in dealing with the said concern. This includes the consideration of many factors that affect the learners’ proficiency. However, the efforts of the Philippine education system are said to be insufficient to deal with the concern of Filipino students. Educators are also expected to become competitive in using the target language, for they are the ones interacting with the learners, which could be a way of honing the students’ knowledge – especially in communicating with the use of the English language. Exposing learners to different learning activities would help them reach the optimum level of their communicative ability.

Despite the effort of many language teachers in teaching Filipino and English well, it is sad to note that the proficiency of the pupils in these two languages did not meet the standards of the Department of Education and in the international setting. According to Valderama (2019), there was an article that shows Filipinos are declining in English proficiency. The Philippines placed from 14<sup>th</sup> in 2018 to 20<sup>th</sup> in the year 2019. English Proficiency Index (EPI) is said to measure the average level of the English language skills of language learners based on the results of an online Standard English Test (SET). This was administered by a Swiss-based global company focusing on language, academic, cultural exchange, and educational travel programs, named English Proficiency Education First. The country’s English Proficiency Index (EPI) is believed to be a good reason why the country’s education sector should worry and address this concern immediately.

The Philippines has been known as one of the best English-speaking countries in Asia. That is why the country’s EPI result is seen to be important, for it might affect the chances of Filipinos getting jobs in the country and abroad. The English proficiency of Filipinos is one of its strengths that has helped the country’s economy. This has even made the country the top voice

in outsourcing destinations across the globe, surpassing India in 2012. Employers would often consider the applicants' communication skills before hiring them. In other words, applicants with poor English skills are less likely to get the job. Also, with the declining EPI of the Philippines continues, it might have negative impacts on the competitiveness of the Filipinos in the global arena (Valderama, 2019).

Furthermore, it was observed that elementary pupils have the same concern about literacy in Filipino. In the study of Saavedra (2011), results showed that elementary pupils were poor in writing in Filipino in the components being tested. Pambid (2002) also showed the same result in her study. When elementary students were asked to write a composition in Filipino, respondents incurred several errors.

The negative results from different studies drive the researcher to conduct further study behind the poor writing skills of pupils in English and Filipino languages. Thus, this study aims to know the reasons that contribute to the poor writing skills of the elementary pupils in both languages.

### **Objective of the Study**

This study generally sought to know the factors that contribute to the poor writing skills in Filipino and English of the elementary pupils, according to the language teachers.

### **Related Literature**

#### ***Pursuing English Language Proficiency among Filipino Students***

Suelto (2018) emphasised that educators can use different approaches in helping the students improve their English language proficiency. One good example is to let the students use the language regularly whenever they are on the school premises. Some schools are even promoting the English only policy that would encourage their learners to use the English language. It is encouraged that the students practice and do self-study for their development. Interacting with speakers whose mother tongue is the target language is also highly encouraged.

Even in the use of extended communication, students can improve their communication skills. In today's generation, learners are exposed to different electronic media. If learners are using these resources to watch movies and listen to audio recordings in the English language, then it can be an effective way to help them improve their English communication skills. On a negative note, due to the easy access of these resources, students tend to expose much themselves to songs that have grammatical errors. As a result, students tend to adopt the way native speakers deliver the message.



The availability of the internet to students is another way to motivate and help the learners learn more about the target language. This allows them to read different articles with different topics of interest.

The different approaches presented above are of great help in developing the learners' English language proficiency. However, it is important to note that the teacher's assistance in the classroom will greatly affect the students' motivation to learn and develop their English language skills.

### ***State of English in the Philippines: Should We Be Concerned?***

The English proficiency of Filipinos is one of its strengths that has helped the country's economy. This has even made the country the top voice in outsourcing destinations across the globe, surpassing India in 2012. The affluence of foreign learners of English is also evident due to the good quality yet affordable ESL education programs offered locally.

The concern regarding the Philippines' English competency was brought up during the recent discussion organised by the British Council. This was acknowledged by the key stakeholders from the government, academe, private, and non-government sectors. They agreed that the Philippines needs to take extra effort in dealing with such concerns – considering that this has been recognised to be one of the country's strengths. The development of these skills to learners in the use of the language could possibly fortify the Philippines' distinct advantage, particularly with the upcoming ASEAN economic integration.

### ***Writing Skills and Long-Term Academic Success***

According to The Grade Network (2019), different studies show positive results in the proficiency of the learners who were taught at an early age. In other words, language learners who are exposed to the different approaches in learning the target language are less likely to struggle in overall literacy and to communicate.

One way to help students improve their writing skills is to increase writing activities that focus not just on penmanship but on strategies, planning, and organisation. Moreover, learners with confidence and writing skills can help them to be more effective in communicating. This allows them to express their thoughts by demonstrating their knowledge and by engaging in informative discussions that would help them to further their personal understanding. Concerns regarding the relationship between student communication skills and course material were addressed by Nadine Rice in her article, "Meeting the Reading Challenges of Science Textbooks in the Primary Grades."



Young learners must be taught how to plan their writing. Elementary school teachers should consider not just helping the young learners how to write letters by writing their names – introducing the writing processes might be of great help.

Elementary pupils ought to be learning how to choose their ideas by pre-writing, organise all their chosen ideas into logical sequences by writing, and write it down with detailed explanations by rewriting, so they can start expressing their thoughts via written communication at an early age. In this way, we are training young learners to improve their communication skills, which can be very helpful when they are already planning to get a job, especially when considering most employers now are hiring applicants with good communication skills.

### ***Theoretical Bases***

A writing process is an approach to writing that would help students write effectively. Students may have many ideas, but when they are asked to write it down, most of them find it very challenging. By teaching them this process, learners will get a clearer picture of writing. Learners may consider using different writing strategies they deem effective for them.

According to Brown (2001), writing is also a process of thinking where a writer produces a written output based on his thinking that accompanies understanding. Further, a study of the process of writing in 2010, Brown quotes Elbow (1973), saying that “writing should be thought of as an organic, developmental process... not as a way to transmit a message but as a way to grow and cook a message.”

Kroll (1990) also quotes Applebee (1986) as saying that the process approach “provided a way to think about writing in terms of what the writer does (planning, revising, and the like) instead of in terms of what the final product looks like (patterns of organisation, spelling, and grammar)” (p. 96). Learners are seen as “central in learning” in the process approach. The education sector must consider the learners’ various needs, expectations, goals, learning styles, skills, and knowledge.

Through the writing process, learners will have the chance to apply their knowledge with the help of their teachers and other learners. This will also help the learners to express themselves freely without hesitation, for they will be given enough time and opportunity to recheck their own output with the assistance of their instructor.

The writing process usually involves several steps. Typically, this sequence is comprised of three steps: prewriting, writing, and rewriting. Other sequences, however, have four steps, such as thinking, planning, writing, and editing. Some writers use five steps: prewriting, drafting,



revising, editing and evaluating. This is to say that every writer has their own style of writing depending on the level of their readers and the purpose of writing.

Onozawa (2010) also stated the steps of the writing process are generally followed in sequence. For example, students will typically start from the first step – prewriting. In this step, learners will use whatever technique they deem is best for them. They might consider using the brainstorming technique, one of the many ways for students to consider, whenever they are asked to generate ideas. During this step, learners will get the chance to choose and reconsider the topic they want to write about. However, this technique can also be done in the next step of the process. Different techniques can be used all over again if the learners find it necessary. In other words, this process usually follows a step by step procedure to help students in writing, but this does not necessarily suggest a linear learning process that could limit the learners' writing styles. Learners can still achieve good written output regardless of the methods and techniques they prefer to use.

### **Methodology**

To meet the objectives of the study, the researchers used a quantitative descriptive method utilising a standardised survey questionnaire that was validated by experts and had undergone pilot testing and reliability testing. The respondents rated the listed reasons with the corresponding indicators and scale.

Using purposive sampling, teachers teaching English and Filipino subjects to the Grade six pupils were chosen as the respondents of the study. They are coming from the different elementary schools in one of the Divisions of the Zamboanga Peninsula. They have been teaching the subjects from five to twenty-two years. Among the 43 respondents, 14 are male, and 29 are female.

### ***Ethical Consideration***

Prior to the conduct of the study, letters were sent to the school principals to seek their approval. When the permission was granted to the researchers, an orientation was then conducted to the selected teachers, where the researchers explained the salient points of the study to include the respondents' rights and privileges if they participate in this research. They were also asked to sign the informed consent form, which signified their voluntary participation. It was also made clear that the respondents' and the schools' identity will be kept with the utmost confidentiality.

### ***Interpretation of Data***

The researchers utilised the rubric below (Table 1) to interpret the rating made by the respondents. It is a 5-point Likert scale that determines if a particular indicator could be a contributory factor to the poor writing skills in English and Filipino of the selected six-grader pupils. The mean score of all the respondents will be analysed using SPSS.

**Table 1:** Rubric Used to Interpret the Data

<b>Score/Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>4.01-5.00</b>	Extremely contribute
<b>3.01-4.00</b>	Moderately contribute
<b>2.01-3.00</b>	Slightly contribute
<b>1.01-2.00</b>	Undecided
<b>0.00-1.00</b>	Does not contribute at all

### **Results and Discussion**

After conducting and interpreting the data, the following are the factors that respondents considered to be a contributory factor that leads to the poor writing skill in English and Filipino of the pupils:

**Table 2:** Lack of vocabulary in the Target Language

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Lack of vocabulary in the target language</b>	4.092	1.715	Extremely contribute

Table 2 presents the mean score of the indicator “lack of vocabulary in the target language.” The data shows that the mean score of the respondents is 4.092, with a standard deviation of 1.715. This implies that the indicator “lack of vocabulary in the target language” was considered by the selected language teachers to extremely contribute to the poor writing skills in English and Filipino of the elementary pupils. This means that the elementary pupils have a limited vocabulary in the English and Filipino language.

This result is supported by the study of Pratiwi (2012). Accordingly, the basic point that makes writing difficult is the use of language or ability in written like punctuation, spelling, grammatical, vocabulary, and so on. Jordan (1997) also states that writing is often confounded with the process of putting words down on paper in the same structure as an outline prepared with the proper style. A vocabulary and the major ideas were also arranged in some and usually with corrections of mechanical and grammatical errors.

In addition, we can say that the most difficult aspect that was found in the students' writing is language use and vocabulary. Conversely, they found no difficulties in organisation, mechanics, and content. It is said to be the most difficult because most of the students fall into the criteria of poor and very poor. It makes sense if the students have the most difficulty in language use (Pratiwi, 2012).

Bryne (1988) explained that since English is a foreign language, linguistic aspects like grammar, vocabulary, language use, and choice of sentences in writing must be fully monitored. Subsequently, as students of non-native countries, language use always becomes a problem.

Mother tongue has also been one of the factors affecting learners in the process of learning a second language in general and learning writing skills in particular. Although language teachers always emphasise the need to think and write in English as much as possible, it has been habitual for the learners to think in their mother tongue by translating word by word into English. Thus, this makes the article lengthy, incoherent, ambiguous, and misunderstood. Friedlander (1997) indicated that writers often apply both good and bad writing skills from their native languages to the target languages. He expressed that if the learners can write very well in their native language, this does not mean they will be able to write well in another foreign language and vice versa.

**Table 3:** Difficulty in conveying and organising ideas

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Difficulty in conveying and organising ideas</b>	4.218	2.162	Extremely contribute

Table 3 shows the mean score of the indicator "Difficulty in conveying and organising ideas." The respondents' mean score is 4.218, with a standard deviation of 2.162. This means that respondents consider the indicator "difficulty in conveying ideas" as an extremely contributory factor to the poor writing skills in English and Filipino of the selected elementary pupils. Although pupils seem to have ideas, they have trouble whenever they organise these ideas and information in writing.

This finding bears the same result in the study of Trinh (2014). She stated that students faced many problems in writing due to the lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge. It can be concluded that writing appears the most problematic to the students. This could be attributed to the low quality of English language teaching in general and writing teaching in particular.

She believed that in teaching writing, particularly in an argumentative essay, it should be examined in light of current approaches to teaching English writing (Trinh, 2014).

**Table 4:** Perceived writing as a hard task

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Perceived writing as a hard task	3.852	1.923	Moderately contribute

Table 4 reveals the data given by the respondents on the indicator “Perceived writing as a hard task.” The total mean score of the respondents is 3.852, with a standard deviation of 1.923. This denotes that elementary pupils perceived writing as a hard task. That is why the selected language teachers believed that this indicator moderately contributes to poor writing skills in the two languages tested in this study. This also implies that many students feel writing *takes* too long. For some, writing is a very laborious task because there are so many sub-components which need to be pulled together.

In the study of Yaacob, (2014), the same findings were also noted. She found that among the four macro skills, most of the students agree that that writing is the most difficult skill of all. Errors are realised forms of the writing difficulties that can be seen on paper. Thus, an error can be one of the forms of difficulties in writing.

As explained by Hadler (2005), based on some points of view above, the difficulty is an abstract concept which stuck in our mind. Every time the students write their ideas on a piece of paper, they immediately assumed that writing is a difficult task. That is why it is unavoidable that they made errors when they write. Errors are the signs of difficulty in which the students have a problem in doing the writing, although they do not provide all the possible evidence, nor are they to be taken as the only proof.

Moreover, even for the natives, it is naturally the most difficult skill to master. However, despite its complexity and difficulty, it is still an essential and effective skill compared with the other skills by using different styles in writing like process, product, and genre approaches. What is important here is its relationship with the other skills, especially with reading, that’s why it cannot be taught alone (Sahla, 2015)

Also, Nunan (1989) indicated that writing is the most complex and difficult-to-learn skill, especially for those who learn a second language. Given the fact that writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity, the writer needs to have control of all variables simultaneously. This means that, at the sentence level, the writer must consider many factors such as content, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. At a higher level, the writer needs to

have the ability to integrate information into coherent paragraphs and texts. In addition, the course of writing skills should be very time-critical and requires the writer to practice a lot.

**Table 5:** Lack of motivation and interest in writing

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Lack of motivation and interest in writing	3.705	1.817	Moderately contribute

Table 5 shows the mean score of the respondents on the indicator “no motivation and interest in writing.” A mean of 3.705 and a standard deviation of 1.817 was recorded for this indicator. It only means that language teachers believed that many of the elementary pupils in the sixth graders are not really motivated and interested in writing. Hence, this is also another factor that leads to the low level of writing skills in English and Filipino of the elementary pupils.

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) stated that almost half of the world’s population adequately and effectively write. For them, one of the most difficult language skills to learn is writing. Nunan (1989) agreed that “it is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language.” It is really not an easy task since one must work hard, take lengthy steps, have enough time, and practice to be able to master or improve one’s writing skills.

In Jaramillo and Medina’s (2011) study, the written skill is perceived as an art in which willingness and motivation are important. Furthermore, it is necessary to explain that many learners need to express their ideas in a second language, but because of limited ability, they find themselves without the linguistic capacity (Gass and Selinker, 1994). Because they can’t write well in the second language, this means that they did not acquire the knowledge correctly.

Yaacob (2014) also noted in her study that among the identified factors that affect the writing ability of the students, lack of motivation in writing got the highest votes from all the respondents. Thus, motivation can be strongly correlated to achievement. With motivation, it is easier and pleasant for the students and teachers to teach and learn writing. Harmer (1998) also mentioned that there are underlying reasons why students are not motivated and do not achieve a certain writing level. One of these is the fear of failure, which means the fear of not achieving goals in the context of competence or efficacy. This is also brought about by their fear of committing mistakes because they feel that they are weak.

Much of what causes students to make mistakes seems to be their low motivation in learning. Two factors cause low motivation. The first reason is attributed to the little support given by parents to their children. Pupils who showed less support to their children due to many reasons consequently affects the writing level of their children. Another reason is the absence of the

spirit to learn writing correctly or the intrinsic motivation to learn the skill. Their laziness has also apparently contributed to their poor writing skill.

Harmer (2006a) also added to the several factors that caused the reduction of the learners' motivation in writing. First is the feeling of rejection or the fear of failing, which is a common feeling among learners of the second language. Learners are afraid to make mistakes and not achieving their goals. Another reason mentioned is that learners often write in a mood of uncertainty about what to write, which makes it hard for them to decide on what topic to write about or how to organise their thoughts. That is why it has been observed that after they finish their output, they do not dare to show others their articles even to their teachers and try to hide their weaknesses. This may result in an unexpected or incomplete result.

**Table 6:** Difficulty in spelling, grammar and sentence construction

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Difficulty in spelling, grammar and sentence construction</b>	2.971	2.533	Slightly Contribute

Table 6 also presents the data on the indicator "Difficulty in spelling, grammar, and sentence construction." The respondents got a mean of 2.971, with a standard deviation of 2.533. This denotes that selected language teachers believed that the poor writing skills in English and Filipino might be attributed to difficulties in the spelling, grammar, and sentence construction of the Grade six elementary pupils. Although it only slightly contributes to the poor writing skills of the pupils, the errors in spelling, grammar, and the lack of knowledge to form a correct sentence will greatly affect their proficiency in the writing of the students.

Gepila (2017) conducted a similar study and found that in the component of language use and editing, it was observed that the respondents in his study were found to have a good but limited range of vocabulary, with few mechanical errors and only some ungrammatical items such as tense shifting, run-on sentences, and fragments.

Furthermore, Quintero's (2008) study pointed out that problems with grammar, punctuation, lexical choice, and the like have a negative impact on the content of a text. In addition, this study indicated that writing was a complicated skill to develop since it implied the use of mental processes rather than the structures of the language only. (Yaacob, 2014)

Jaramillo and Medina (2011) also focused on their action research to find out the development of writing short descriptive texts in English. They conclude that most of the difficulties which students experienced can be related to the construction of sentences, grammatical errors, and difficulties in reading comprehension. The researchers understood that learners performed



better in writing tasks when they had a clear idea about the topic they are focusing on. Hence, they recommend exposing the learners to more practice, so their writing skills will be improved.

Another study on the analysis of the writer's strategic allocation of time to writing was conducted by Larios (2008). They found that the process of writing formulation took up the largest composition time of the participants, and also that writing processes were differently distributed depending on the writer's proficiency level.

According to Carroll (1990), learning the proper spelling and grammar was never required for students. Consequently, students thought that English and writing are nothing but spelling and grammar. They assumed that it is a common thing to be poor in writing, especially in the second language. Good writing is something they believe that they will never achieve. They don't even know the importance of acquiring proficient writing skills. They often get poor scores when doing tests on writing skills which affects their result. Many mistakes in written works about spelling, grammar, punctuation, and organisation are the basic mistakes often caught by the students.

## **Conclusions**

Writing is one of the indispensable skills one must learn to communicate and express thoughts and feelings. It is also one of the language skills students must learn to prove that one has truly learned and acquired the second language. In this study, there are five factors that teachers attribute to the poor writing skills in English and Filipino. The lack of vocabulary in the target language and the difficulty in conveying and organising ideas were considered by the respondents to extremely contribute to the poor writing skill of the elementary pupils. These factors are the most common reasons that teachers observed in the output of their pupils. The difficulty in the target language is due to the language spoken by the pupils (Chabacano, Bahasa Sug, Cebuano) where English and Filipino are the second languages of the pupils. This could also mean that the pupils did not yet master their L2 (English and Filipino).

Furthermore, pupils' perception that writing is a hard task and the lack of motivation and interest in writing was rated by the language teachers as a moderate contributory factor to the poor writing skill in the two languages tested in this study. However, teachers see that these two factors may be reinforced in school. Still, they believed that pupils' must also recognise and appreciate the importance of learning writing, especially in English and Filipino, since these two languages are being utilised in the Philippines as the media of instruction along with the MTB-MLE instruction.



The teachers also considered the difficulty in spelling, grammar and sentence construction in English and Filipino languages as another factor that leads to the poor writing level of the pupils. Even though it slightly contributes to the pupils' poor writing skills, it still has a great impact on the whole written output because these are the basic linguistic skills that should be mastered in learning writing.



## REFERENCES

- Applebee, A. (1986). *Problems in process approaches: toward a reconceptualization of process instruction*. In A. R. Petrosky & D. Bartholomae (Eds.), *The teaching of writing* (pp. 95-113). Chicago, III: National Society for the study of Education.
- Brown, D. (2001). *Teaching by principle an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. San Francisco: Longman.
- Bryne, D. (1988). *Teaching writing skill*. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Cabigon, M. (2015). *State of english in the philippines: should we be concerned?* Retrieved from <https://www.britishcouncil.ph/teach/state-english-philippines-should-we-be-concerned-2>.
- Caroll, R. (1990) *Students success guide – writing skills* [Accessed 18th March 2015]. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.skepdic.com/refuge/writingskills.pdf>.
- Cristobal, L. (2015). *Literacy in the philippines: the stories behind the numbers*. International Literacy Association.
- Elbow, P. (1973). *Writing without teachers, pp. 12–75*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Friedlander, A. (1997). *Composing in english: effects of a first language on writing in english as a second language*. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom*, Cambridge University Press. pp.109-125.
- Gass and Selinker. (1994). *Second language acquisition, an introductory course*: London, Lawrence Erlbaum associates.
- Gepila, E. (2017). *The impregnable composition writing competency and teaching writing methodologies*. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/969318/inquiry-into-decline-of-english-skill-of-ph-students-sought#ixzz6M1dBIPm9>.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. London: Longman.
- Hadler, G. (2005). *English language learning difficulty in Hongkong schools*. Retrieved from <http://www.tuition.com.hk/academic/difficulties.htm>.
- Harmer, J. (1998). *How to teach English*. Addison Wesley Longman.



- Jaramillo and Medina. (2011). *Adolescents' awareness of environmental care: experiences when writing short descriptive texts in english*. Bogotá, Colombia. Profile, 13(1), 11-30.
- Jordan, R, R. (1977). *English for academic purpose*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kroll, B. (1990). *Second language writing: research insights for the classroom. the Cambridge applied linguistics series*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Larios, M., Murphy, & Marin. (2008). *The foreign language writer's strategic behavior in the allocation of time to writing processes*, Journal of Second Language Writing, 17(1), 30–47.
- Leonen, J. (2018). *Inquiry into decline of English skill of PH students sought*. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/969318/inquiry-into-decline-of-english-skill-of-ph-students-sought#ixzz6M1dNAgtA>.
- Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge University Press.
- Onozawa, C. (2010). *A study of the process writing approach: A suggestion for an eclectic writing approach*. Proceedings of Kyoai Gakuen College, Japan, 10, 153-163.
- Pambid, C. (2002). *Mga araling panlunas para maibsan ang karaniwang kamalian sa pagsulat ng komposisyon sa Filipino ng mga mag-aaral sa ikalimang baitang*. Unpublished thesis. Zamboanga Arturo Euastaquio College. Zamboanga City. Philippines.
- Pratiwi, K. (2012). *Students' difficulties in writing english*. Universitas Bengkulu. Retrieved from <https://ejournal.iainbengkulu.ac.id/index.php/linguists/article/view/106>.
- Quintero, L. M. (2008). *Blogging: a way to foster EFL writing*. Colombian Applied  
Retrieved from <https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/joe/article/download/197/98>.
- Saavedra, A. (2011). *Kasanayang ekspresib ng mga mag-aaral sa ikaanim na baitang*. Western Mindanao State University. Zamboanga City, Philippines.
- Sahla A. (2015). *Linguistic factors affecting students' written paragraphs case study: second year students of english department*. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d2a4/fcf4d7ef926029d3f2e63194793cb6b53ac8.pdf>.



- Suelto, S. (2018). *Pursuing English language proficiency among Filipino students*. Retrieved from <https://bsuexegesis.wordpress.com/authors/language-education/pursuing-english-language-proficiency-among-filipino-students/>.
- Trinh, Q.L. (2014). *Enhancing vietnamese learners' ability in writing argumentative essays*. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 11(2), 63-91.
- Valderama, T. (2019). *Pinoys' English proficiency declines sharply*. Retrieved from <https://www.manilatimes.net/2019/11/18/opinion/columnists/topanalysis/pinoys-english-proficiency-declines-sharply/656784/>.
- Yaacob, S. (2014). *Factors affecting students' writing skills in primary schools shahrohan binti yaakob bachelor of education tesl*. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/20824278/Factors\\_Affecting\\_Students\\_Writing\\_Skills\\_In\\_Primary\\_Schools\\_Shahrohan\\_Binti\\_Yaakob\\_Bachelor\\_of\\_Education\\_TESL\\_Primary\\_Education\\_With\\_Honours](https://www.academia.edu/20824278/Factors_Affecting_Students_Writing_Skills_In_Primary_Schools_Shahrohan_Binti_Yaakob_Bachelor_of_Education_TESL_Primary_Education_With_Honours).