

DEVELOPMENT OF ESSAY WRITING ABILITY FOR GRADE 7 STUDENTS BY IMPLEMENTING CIRC COLLABORATIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES

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ABSTRACT

Writing skills are an important skill in communication especially for grade 7 students who need to be able to write essays but students had the most problems with this type of writing. The purpose of this research was studying the effect of implementing innovations develop essay writing abilities of grade 7 students whose assessment results pass the standard criteria of 50 percent but do not pass the criteria of 60 percent. There were 3 phases of implementation, phase 1, analysis of classroom problems, phase 2, innovation development, phase 3, implementation of the learning management model. The result showed that 1) essay writing is the assessed skill that needs to be developed the most. From the survey of the problem, it was found that there were 5 students who did not pass the criteria set by the researcher from a total of 42 students. The main reason is the inability to write the order of thoughts, inability to write a clear main idea, unable to write sequence of events, unable to write concepts, lack of proper punctuation, and unable to spell words. 2) Innovation used for development is using cooperative learning management activities, CIRC techniques, the results of innovation checks from experts found that the innovations were suitable for use in development for essay writing, the IOC value is 0.90. 3) The results of applying innovation to solve problems showed that all 5 target students passed the criteria for essay writing assessment with scores of 70, 80, 80, 80 and 90 respectively.

Keywords: Essay Writing, Collaborative Learning, CIRC Techniques

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the important communication skills which communicates feeling, thought, knowledge, and emotion from the writer to the reader. The people who have writing abilities must be competent in listening, speaking, and reading. Therefore, they can convey in writing correctly and clearly (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2009: 3). In addition, The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) in Thailand was prescribed goals and learning in Strand 2 Writing standard T2.1 that students must be able to write the descriptive essay.

The essay is a focused test of writing skills which is important and defined in the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) in Thailand. Learning management and techniques can help to teach writing more effective and encourage students to practice conveying their thoughts systematically. The teacher is an important role and have a great impact on students' achievement of learning outcomes.

The researcher surveyed learning management Thai language subject, and the problem of students from 'The Essay Writing Ability Test', was designed by the researcher, found that 11.90% or 5 out of 42 students' in grade 7 assessment results passed the standard criteria but did not pass the criteria of 60 percent which was determined by the researcher. Therefore, the researcher chooses purposive sampling students from the students that did not pass test.

From the context of analysis of classroom problems and causes, the researcher studied the innovation to solve the problems of essay writing ability. The results revealed that most of the researchers choose the collaborative learning process CIRC collaborated with another innovation to develop the essay writing ability. It is a small group learning activity that consist of group members with different abilities and help each other for learn to reach the goals of the group. The learning management process usually focuses on the interaction between teachers and students, students and lessons more than students and students. There are the research results that clearly express that the learners' feelings towards themselves, school, teachers, and classmates affect learning (Khaemmani. T., 2021: 98). Furthermore, the research was conducted by Sinphiban. W., (2020) showed that cooperative learning increases student needs in terms of academic and social needs by integrate reading and writing together, and Sirkramkrun, R. (2013) was referred in Yusir, K., (2022) stated that cooperative learning activities with CIRC techniques was a group learning activity that promotes reading and writing of language skills.

The researcher considered and explored the grade 7 students' ability, basic knowledge, and the content of essay writing. The results revealed that cooperative learning activities are suitable for essay writing development, and the researcher thought that the CIRC technique was a teaching program that directly applied cooperative learning to reading and writing. (Fukkhaio, S. 1999. Was referred in Yusir, K. 2022: 51).

From the above content shows that the learning management by using cooperative learning activities CIRC technique might be develop essay writing abilities. Moreover, the essay writing is a basic skill that can provide more opportunities and credibility to individuals. When the researcher considered the importance, the researcher had opinion that grade 7 students should be helped and improved their essay writing abilities by using cooperative learning activities CIRC technique. The purpose of this research was to study the issues in the classroom affect to the essay writing ability of students, analyze the problems, determine the causes of the problems, develop innovation, and study the effect of using innovation.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

An essay is a type of prose writing composed according to the feelings and thoughts of the writer by constructing sentences and paragraphs with continuity based on the subject being discussed by the writer. Sukying, F., Sahachartkosi, K., kerdaon, P., and Intonprapun, R. (2021:

39) who designed Grade-7-Student Thai Book said that essay writing is very necessary and important in learning the Thai language because the writer must research a topic, understand the content to be written, and express their knowledge, opinions, and feelings through their composition. It requires the use of appropriate language with precise and clear language while being pleasant to read in order to express the wisdom of the writer. (Ministry of Thai Education, 2008, was referred in Tiangtong, S. 2019). There are three parts in an essay: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. (Ministry of Education, 2012 was referred in Sangkhet, S., 2014) The good essay includes unity, relationship, and substance throughout the story. (Singkaew, k., 2019) The process of essay writing follows the following steps 1) Choose a topic 2) Determine the scope and the purpose 3) Draft 4) Seek and collect knowledge 5) Edit, and 6) Proofread. (Laksanasiri, J. & Hutinta, A. were referred in Singkaew, k. 2019) For Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) for writing and language skills, there are 4 students in each group. Two successful and two underperforming students were assigned to each group. Then, the students were sub-divided into pairs of one successful student and one underperforming student. When the teacher works with one group, the rest of the pairs try to continue to do the activities such as reading the story and letting their partner predict the ending of the story, telling a short story to a friend, and answering the questions in the test, practicing to memorize, spell words and find the meaning of the words that appear in the story. The successful students and unsuccessful students are paired off within the groups. In general, the activities are to summarize the main points of the story and practice reading for comprehension, however the outline of the essay, the writing, and reviewing of the essay will be done individually. The student's scores will be averaged in both reading and writing. The team gets scores higher than the teacher's criteria will be praised. The collaborative learning process CIRC is synthesized in the effects of the writing process approach with the CIRC technique on Thai language learning achievements and ability in communication writing of grade 7 students which is Khanchanok Yusri's research (2021) there are 5 stages of learning management; introduction, knowledge sharing, draft and writing, review and revising, presentation and assessment.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.

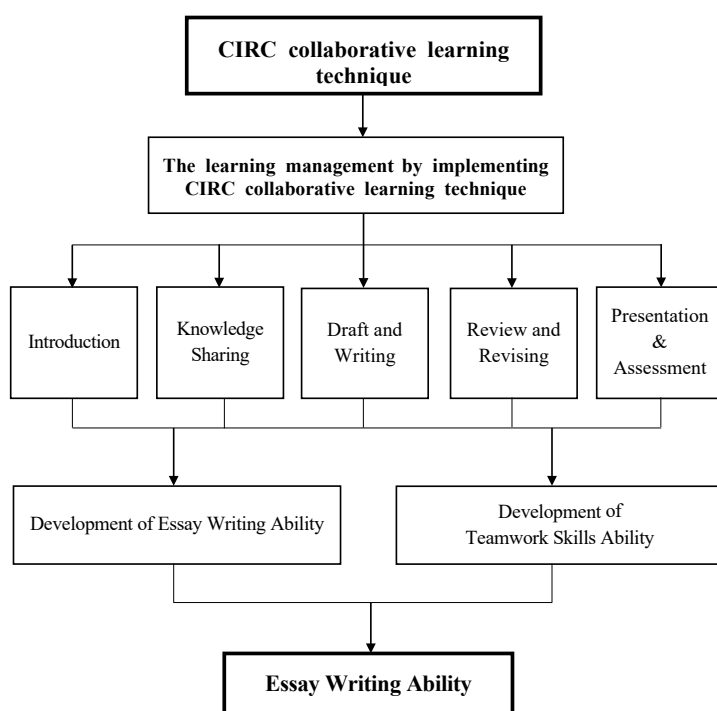


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target group of this research was 5 students in grade 7, a high school in Bangkok, the academic year of 2022 by using a purposive sampling method from students whose assessment results passed the standard criteria but did not pass the criteria of 60 percent determined by the researcher. The researcher collects data from November, 14th 2022 to 21st January 2023. The process was conducted in 3 phases: Phase 1, analysis of classroom problems, Phase 2, develop teaching methods to improve essay writing abilities, Phase 3, using cooperative learning activities with CIRC techniques to develop essay writing ability. The research tools were essay writing learning management plan by using cooperative learning management activity, CIRC techniques, 3 lesson plans, and 3 essay writing activities. The development of innovation for learning was based on the theory of research that had been done by Yusir, K. (2022), Singkaew, k. (2019), and Sangkhet, S. (2014) studied the learning management process to analyze, synthesize and develop innovation by using the CIRC cooperative technique for essay writing ability. There are 5 stages of learning management: Introduction; the teacher introduces the students to a topic, explains and imparts knowledge related to it, Knowledge Sharing; students are divided into groups then share knowledge and discuss the topics, Draft and Write; students write a basic draft outline for their essay then follow through with writing the full essay, Review and Revise; students review, proofread and make changes to the essay, and Presentation and Assessment; students do a presentation based on the essay or submit the essay to be assessed by the teacher.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Research results in phase 1 The main issue observed, the students were unable to expand on and support ideas sufficiently to meet the minimum required length for the essay within the allocated time limit. Furthermore, they were unable to write continuously without frequent and extended pausing, unable to write within a reasonable timeframe and convey ideas with correct punctuation, struggled to spell words, use incorrect grammar and vocabulary, and unable to complete the essay writing which was determined by the researcher.

Research results in phase 2 ‘Development of teaching methods to improve essay writing abilities’ resulted in the learning management plans, consisting of units named “My School”, “Bangkok Life”, and “Life after COVID-19” has a consistency index of the item objective congruence (IOC) ranged 0.90, 0.95, and 0.95 respectively. Thus, the methods of using cooperative learning management activities with CIRC techniques were suitable for improving essays for students.

Research results in phase 3 application of the learning management model by using cooperative learning activities with CIRC techniques to develop essay writing ability found out that the students developed their essay writing respectively and passed the essay writing post-test after using cooperative learning activities with CIRC techniques; all 5 students in the class passed 60 percent of the criteria for the essay writing assessment.

Table 1 Result of the First Essay Writing Test “My School”

student	Score (20)	Percentage	Result
1	11	55	failed
2	11	55	failed
3	14	70	passed
4	13	65	passed
5	14	70	passed

Table 1 shows that in the first essay writing test, the 3rd and 5th students passed with the 70 percent highest score, the 4th student passed with the 65 percent score, and the 1st and 2nd students failed with the 55 percent score respectively.

Table 2 Result of the Second Test “Bangkok Life”

student	Score (20)	Percentage	Result
1	11	55	failed
2	14	70	passed
3	11	55	failed
4	14	70	passed
5	15	75	passed

Table 2 shows that in the second essay writing test, the 5th student passed with the 75 percent highest score, and the 2nd and 4th students passed with the 70 percent score. The 1st and 3rd students failed with the 55 percent score respectively.

Table 3 Result of the Third Test “Life after COVID-19”

student	Score (20)	Percentage	Result
1	13	65	passed
2	15	75	passed
3	15	75	passed
4	15	75	passed
5	17	85	passed

Table 3 shows that in the third essay writing test, the 5th student passed with the 85 percent highest score, and the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th students passed with the 75 percent score. The 1st student passed with the 65 percent score respectively.

Table 4 Result of the Post Test “My Best Friend”

student	Score (20)	Percentage	Result
1	14	70	passed
2	16	80	passed
3	16	80	passed
4	16	80	passed
5	18	90	passed

Table 4 shows that in the post test essay writing test that all 5 students passed with the 90 percent the highest score and the 70 percent the lowest score.

After using cooperative learning activities with CIRC techniques to develop essay writing ability, it was found that underperforming students were provided opportunities to develop their essay writing abilities through collaborative working teams which included multiple-skill students. All students can express their opinions, exchange data, and learn to work as a team. Each group consists of students at various levels of skill including successful, underperforming, and improving students. The underperforming and improving students have more confidence to write the essay because students successful at essay writing can give advice and help their fellow members in the groups. In addition, reviewed prior knowledge and generate new knowledge about writing essays through teamwork process.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The results of the development essay writing ability for grade 7 students by implementing CIRC collaborative learning techniques can discuss and conclude that results of the test score survey using a screening tool "Essay writing" and the results of the survey of problems in a class of students in grade 7 students was found that the condition of learning management that required the most development was essay writing. There were 5 students whose scores passed the standard criteria but did not pass the criteria of 60 percent determined by the researcher. The impact of problems on learning management resulted in some students who were unable to write continuously without frequent and extended pausing, unable to write within a reasonable timeframe and convey ideas with incorrect punctuation, struggled to spell words, use incorrect grammar and vocabulary, and unable to complete the essay writing which was determined by the researcher. Impact of basic essay writing on students' ability to rely on those processes and formats. Essay writing is an exercise for writers to express their thoughts, opinions, and knowledge to impart information and convey their feelings to the readers. Readers can read and understand the sequence of the content step by step because the essay must be written according to the principles of correct language and content that is readable. This is different from other types of writing and composition. A person who writes essays well and is good at reading will achieve in many ways whether performed direct or indirect, such as helping in writing, speaking, and memorizing examinations. (Chamcharat, 2014). And the essay writing ability is the basis for communication. If you can write a good essay, you may be more successful in various fields. (Tiangtong, S., 2019)

There were 3 essay topics; consisting of units named "My School", "Bangkok Life", and "Life after COVID-19". The improved teaching methods were checked by 3 experts and found that a consistency index of the item objective congruence (IOC) ranged 0.90, 0.95, and 0.95 respectively, indicating the methods were suitable for improving essays for students. The research followed the experts' comments by correcting and revising innovation.

The results after using the improved method showed that after using the improved method, all 5 students in the class passed 60 percent of the criteria for essay writing assessment. Due to the observation of students' behavior from the five learning steps, it was found that the first step Introduction can help students to review content, and knowledge and build a body of knowledge about writing essays. Step 2 Knowledge Sharing can help students exchange and learn to work with others' different abilities. Step 3 Draft and Write can help students to connect the knowledge and ideas of group members and themselves in writing and practice by themselves. Step 4 Review and Revise can help students express their abilities and review what they have learned from their teachers and friends through the review of friends' verification to find the flaws. Step 5 Presentation and Assessment can help students to see their and others' strengths and weaknesses in essays that will be able to benefit them in daily life. The students and teachers jointly assess and express their opinions. It shows all 5 steps can help students to completely write an essay with all 3 elements, consisting of introduction, body, and conclusion and that students can write content and write the thematic essay, be able to write creatively without copying or imitating, be able to choose correct and appropriate language for writing, be able to write words correctly and write in an orderly manner in sentences through the group process.

Johnson and Johnson (1994: 31-37) was cited in Instruction science: Knowledge for efficiency learning process which is the Book of Khaemmani. T. (2021) talked about the advantages of a cooperative learning management model help students have greater efforts, higher achievement, and productivity. Learning by more intrinsic, extrinsic, and achievement motivation. Effective time management, better reasoning, more critical thinking, and more positive interaction among students help students to be more cooperative, attend to others, appreciate diversity, have greater psychological health, better mental health, more self-

confidence, develop social skills, and cope with stress and variations. Laoriendee, W. (2004) was cited in Yusir, K. (2022) said that CIRC technique is a cooperative teaching method learning for reading and essay writing technique for teaching English essay writing by integrating with teaching reading. Starting from teaching reading to gaining knowledge and understanding. Furthermore, reading helps develop the ability to write essays. The CIRC technique is collaborative learning for group members to work together to learn seriously. Everyone has mutual acceptance and the same goal of success and Fukkhao, S. (1999) cited in Yusir, K. (2022) referred to CIRC technique that it is a program for teaching reading, writing, and Language arts. CIRC - Writing; students work together to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish the essays in which the teachers present some lessons about the style, content, and writing strategies.

As the above Cooperative learning activities using the CIRC technique can be developed and applied to solve essay-writing problems that students are struggling with.

Finally, the researcher had the following suggestions: first, teachers should consider the intimacy of the students in the group so that each student can learn and share ideas straightforwardly, reducing the pressure, and frustration within the group. Second, activities should use technology or other media that can create clarity as guidelines for writing, and to arouse interest the students. Last, the future research can compare the differences between the use of the cooperative learning management model CIRC technique and other teaching methods such as the inquiry process, etc., to compare student learning retention.

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