

Graduate Thesis Assessment Rubric

Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia

Thesis Author: František Lejsek

Title: Teaching Writing Skills: Process Writing

Length: 56

Text Length: 47

Assessment Criteria	Scale	Comments
1. Introduction is well written, brief, interesting, and compelling. It motivates the work and provides a clear statement of the problem. It places the problem in context. It presents and overview of the thesis.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	
2. Literature review is comprehensive and complete. It synthesizes a variety of sources and provides context for the research. It shows the author's understanding of the most relevant literature on the subject matter.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	For the selected format of action research, there is plenty of comprehensive and "teacher-friendly" literature. Employing any of these sources might have improved the quality of the realized research (e.g. McNiff et al., J. (2006). <i>All You Need To Know About Action Research</i> . Sage Publications.; McNiff, J. Lomax, P., & Whitehead, J. (1996). <i>You and your action research project</i> . New York: Routledge, Schmuck, R.A. (1997). <i>Practical action research for change</i> . Arlington Heights, IL: IRI/Skylight Training and Publishing, among others)
3. The methodology chapter provides clear and thorough description of the research methodology. It discusses why and what methods were chosen for research. The research methodology is appropriate for the identified research questions.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	For the proposed aim of the thesis, i.e. "comparing the results of product-oriented writing and process-oriented writing (...)" (thesis, p. 1), the selected research design is not adequate. The author himself provides lengthy (and excessive) passages describing the main characteristics of action research (pp. 16 – 19), claiming that AR is "a form of self-assessment of a pedagogical situation (...) helps us find answers on how to improve it (Nezvalová, 2003, in thesis p. 16)" and then applies it as a quasi-experimental scheme without neither keeping the basic characteristics of AR (see Schmuck,

		<p>1997, 2006; Elliot, 2007) nor of experimental research design. In other words, to compare two writing methods or approaches, the research scheme requires ways to ensure validity and reliability, e.g. the research results would have differed if the author, for instance, had changed the order of steps, i.e. starting with the process writing and finishing with product writing within the same research cycle, etc.</p> <p>For AR, the main hypothesis is somewhat acceptable – without referring to the comparison of the above-mentioned writing methods – through different formats are more feasible. Moreover, process-oriented writing was declared as “introducing a new dimension into the teaching of writing” already in the 1990s (Richards, 2015, p. 481) – why should we research its positive effect in the 21st century, compared to product writing?</p> <p>However, in terms of the realized AR, there are several drawbacks – including the employment of the selected tools, e.g. the surveys with no participant identification, but employing them to compare the respondents’ answers after both tasks; no further details regarding the participants (i.e. the results might be influenced by their language proficiency and not by the method), etc. There is no research tool description in the thesis, i.e., the structure of the surveys, items, and the data analysis description or information regarding the sample is missing, too.</p>
<p>4. The results/data are analyzed and interpreted effectively. The chapter ties the theory with the findings. It addresses the applications and implications of the research. It discusses strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the research.</p>	<p>Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient</p>	
<p>5. The thesis shows critical and analytical thinking about the area of study and the author’s expertise in this area.</p>	<p>Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient</p>	<p>Regarding the selected research format (see above).</p>

6. The text is organized in a logical manner. It flows naturally and is easy to follow. Transitions, summaries and conclusions exist as appropriate. The author demonstrates high quality writing skills and uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	As implied above, there is an excessive passage on AR (pp. 16 – 19) depicting the distinction between theoretical and action research – not related to the thesis content or research.
7. The thesis meets the general requirements (formatting, chapters, length, division into sections, etc.). References are cited properly within the text and a complete reference list is provided.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	

Final Comments & Questions

The thesis topic is the teaching of writing skills, particularly focusing on process writing and its implementation in the EFL classroom. In the theoretical part, the author outlines the history of teaching writing skills in the language classroom (though without further explanation, the author starts in the 1950s and 1960s – not mentioning the previous eras, such as GTM or DM, which are connected with, for instance, *paragraph writing* or *composition*, which in many ways resembles the activity the author employed as the product-oriented activity). The following parts describe the process approach and its methods and prototypical activities that the author (i.e. a selection of these) implemented in his research. The research part has several deficient aspects that are articulated in the individual sections above and will be reflected in the questions below. Nevertheless, the thesis represents an interesting insight into the complex issue of teaching writing skills through the lens of one concrete ELT teacher employing one concrete approach – process writing. It would be very rewarding to explore some of the points that the present research touched upon – the varied opinions on the activities employed and the relatively good results of the draft writing activity.

Suggested grade: 3

1. How could you transform the research design of the thesis to comply with the action research format (i.e. what was your research issue, how could you form an action research question, and how could you design the AR cycle/s)?
2. How could you transform your surveys to be able to match the surveys after the two stages, i.e. survey 1 after product-writing and survey 2 after process-writing, and to explore your sample to a greater extent?
3. Try to expand one of your research results concerning the varied opinions on the process-writing activities (apart from the peer reviews) – what suggestions would you give to another ELT teacher willing to implement process-writing in his or her language lessons?

Reviewer: PhDr. Eva Skopečková, Ph.D.

Date: 31.5.2024

Signature: