Effects of Teaching Strategies in Annotated Bibliography Writing

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Abstract
The study examines the effect of teaching strategies to improved writing of students in the tertiary level. Specifically, three teaching approaches – the use of modelling, grammar-based, and information element-focused – were tested on their effect on the writing of annotated bibliography in three research classes at a university in Manila. Initially, 125 participants from the three classes were administered a pre-test to check their writing proficiency. Each class was then exposed to a particular teaching approach. All participants were instructed to write an annotated bibliography right after. All annotated bibliographies were rated using one assessment scale. Descriptive statistics as well as Pearson correlations were obtained. Using One-Way ANOVA, the study revealed that the modelling approach has the most marked effect on the success of annotated bibliography writing. The findings in the study may be used by teachers to guide them in their research writing course. The study has impact on the way educators should present their learning materials for the students' more improved writing of annotated bibliography.
Keywords: modelling, grammar-based, information element-focused, annotated bibliography

1.   Introduction

A research writing class in the tertiary level requires students to come up with a few minor writing outputs all of which are related to the major output of writing a research paper. In a research writing class, some of the outputs that the teacher requires from the students as part of the process compliance include note cards, interview report, survey report along with the drafts of the research paper. One significant minor writing output that the students are expected to submit is the annotated bibliography (AB). An annotated bibliography is an academic paper that contains a compilation of the relevant sources that the writer may be using in his research paper. As a compilation, each annotated bibliography consists of an annotation and a citation format, usually following the APA citation format. The annotation is a paragraph of objective description and assessment of the source. According to Flaspohler, Rux and Flaspohler (2007), the annotation contains important elements such as the qualifications of the author, the purpose or scope of the source, its audience and level of reading difficulty, the bias or standpoint of the author and its format or special features. Additionally, the annotated bibliography writer may include the relationship of the source to other works in the field as well as the author's findings, results and conclusions. An annotated bibliography may be written in 100 – 150 words using the 3rd person point of view. The annotated bibliography is not an easy output to write especially if some students have been accustomed to the subjective kind of writing that talks about the personal experience of the writer using the 1st person point of view. Some common concerns that the students writing an annotated bibliography encounter relate to four aspects: focus, content, tense features, and point of view. For instance, when writing the annotated bibliography, some students appropriately starts the annotation with a description of the source. (Plata, Mirador, Parina, Dayag, & Chua, 2013).However, in the next sentence, they lose focus and discuss their research paper topic instead of further examining the source content. An example written by one student illustrates this problem:

> The article discusses the economic impact brought about by Japan-RP ties.
> The Philippine and Japan Pact has finally been made due to the drastic call
> of globalization and the rising advancement of technology. The JPEPA, also
> known as the Japan- Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement aims to
> cut import tariffs on the industrial goods by 90 percent within 10 years.

The research writing teacher may resolve these concerns using three possible strategies for teaching writing. One, the teacher may use the modelling method to let the students understand the required written output expected of them. The second method that the teacher may use capitalizes on the students' metalinguistic awareness. Another method is the more traditional approach of teaching grammar.

Modelling (Abe, 2008) refers to a pattern text written by a native or a writer who has a native-like proficiency. In his study titled "Exploring the Role of Model Essays in the IELTS Writing of Test", Abe investigates the efficacy of modelling as feedback tool on four Japanese EFL students. He colludes that using a pattern text aids the students' writing assignments.

The information element- focused approach is derived from the Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985) and Oxford's (1990) classification of learning strategies. Refuting Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985)that L2 is

acquired if learners are exposed to comprehensible Li +L1 input, Swain (1985, 1995) posits that input alone is not sufficient to develop fluency in L2. She puts forth, in her Output Hypothesis, the three main functions of output – noticing, hypothesis testing, and metalinguistic awareness. In Oxford's (1990) classification of learning strategies, Oxford names cognitive and metacognitive tools to enhance learning. He further defines cognitive as mental strategies that learners use to make sense of their learning. One way of doing cognitive is by creating a structure for both the input and the output.

The grammar-based approach highlights the need for accuracy and competencies in the grammatical features of writing (Hudson, 2001). Foci, for example, on verb form, subject-verb agreement, noun-pronoun consistencies, parallelism in structure, and use of point of view, are considered in the writing of the text. Although previous literatures have touched on the three teaching strategies, they have done so separately . The purpose of the study is to determine the effects of the three strategies in the success of the writing of an annotated bibliography in a research writing class. A second goal is to know if there is significant relationship between a particular teaching approach and the success in the writing of annotated bibliography.

2.0 Method
The study employed Pearson correlations and One-Way ANOVA as well as descriptive statistics in its approach.

2.1 Subjects
The study selected 125 Englres students from thee different classes at a university in Manila during the first trimester of 2010-2011. The classes comprise of students from three colleges - Liberal Arts, Engineering, and Science.

2.2 Procedure
All classes were given assignment to research on what an annotated bibliography is. As pre-test to determine their writing proficiency based on an annotated bibliography prompt, the students were then told to write an annotated bibliography inside the classroom based on what they researched. The written outputs were checked based on Many's (2009) scale. After the test, the first class was taught what an annotated bibliography is. The first set of participants was then given model texts to pattern their AB from. The second class was also given a discussion of what an annotated bibliography is. Then, the students were given a lecture that focused on what verb tense is required of an AB, what point of view is to be used and what voice is preferred. Finally, the third class underwent the same procedure of being taught what an annotated bibliography is. This time, the students were given isolated sentences and they were told to extract from these sentences the information elements embodied in the sentences. All three classes were told to come up with an annotated bibliography. Their ABs were rated on a 1-5 scale using the same reference assessment on Many's. (2009). Handbook of Instructional Practices for Literacy Teacher Educators. The assessment considers grammatical criteria (2 points), annotations (6 points), and quality of writing (2 points). Perfect score is 50 points. Data were entered in Statistica 7. Means and standard deviations were obtained. Correlations among the three strategies with success in writing the AB were computed. Analysis was done using one –way ANOVA.

3.0 Results
Table 1.
Means +/- SD Scores for the Three Teaching Strategies and the Criterion Variable

Variables	N	M	SD
Controlled	125	33.95	3.66
Modeling	40	43.04	2.31
Grammar-based	42	34.6	4.58
Information element-Focused	43	36.41	4.74

Note. The mean score here reflects the average scores of modelling, grammar-based, information element-focused and controlled groups using the assigned scale. Table 1 displays the mean scores of all three groups of Englres students who were involved in the experiment testing the effect of teaching strategies on the success of AB writing. Of the 3 teaching strategies, the one that showed the most efficacy is the modelling approach (43.04). This was followed by the information element-focused approach (36.41). Between the grammar- based approach and the control groups, there is an increase of 0.65 in the mean scores of the class who were subjected the grammar-based approach.

Table 2

 Correlations among the teaching strategies and the criterion variable

Variable controlled	modeling	grammar-based	information element-focused
Controlled	.37*	.01	-.07
Modeling	.37*	. 27	.14
Grammar based	.01	.27	.17
Information Element -focused	-0.07	.14	.17

Note:*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 2 shows the variables that are significantly correlated with the writing of an annotated bibliography. Modelling has the most marked correlation with annotated bibliography writing when compared to the grammar-based, and the information element-focused strategies. This supports the notion that modelling the students essays from an exemplary essay facilitates better understanding among the students about what constitute good writing (Jian, 1990). The information element-focused approach poses a negative magnitude of relationship with the writing of an annotated bibliography. On the other hand, the strength of relationship between the grammar - based and the writing of an annotated bibliography is 0.0 indicating an absence of relationship. Among the predictor variables, the grammar-based and the modelling strategies are correlated with a strength of .27 indicating a low relationship.

Table 3

ANOVA of teaching strategies and criterion variable

Variable	SS	df	N	F ratio variances	p
Modeling	82	41	2.51	0.00 **	
Grammar-based	84	43	1.56	0.14	
Information element Focused	82	41	1.67	0.10	

Note. P < .01**

Table 3 displays the results of the ANOVA computations done using STATISTICA 7. Findings reveal that among the three teaching strategies, the modelling approach has the most significant effect on the improved writing of an annotated bibliography. This supports the claim made by Smagorinsky (1992) in a related study. He maintains that model essays are helpful but only if students have sufficient amount of content knowledge.

4.0 Discussion

The study was conducted to determine the effects of the three strategies in the success of the writing of an annotated bibliography in a research writing class. It also aimed to find out if there is significant relationship between a particular teaching approach and the success   in the writing of annotated bibliography. Findings showed that there is a significant effect of improved writing of the annotated bibliography if students are exposed AB samples in the modelling approach. In fact, Marlin (n.d) notes that the use of modelling and writing frames made teaching and learning explicit (5) .One possible explanation for this is that actually seeing a sample text by which to pattern the students' own writing outputs from provides the students tangible materials to serve as a sort of push to keep them in their writing track. This technique, at the same time, helps the students train their eyes to reflect on the difference between good and poor writing. Modelling their writing to a model text gives the students the opportunity to reflect on the process of writing through brainstorming and at the same time participate in the actual writing of the text. This is what Oxford (1990) mentions as the act of noticing.

5.0 Conclusion

Writing teachers who are expecting good research papers from their students must use all available resources to increase the research writing proficiency of their students. Before coming to a research writing class, the students may not have the schema to actually write an academic output based on the teacher's requirements. Thus, at the initial phase, it is crucial that learners be guided into the proper way of writing by at least being shown model papers. This technique is done initially as there is danger that the students may not be able to establish their own original way of writing if they simply rely on model texts. On the upside, though, the use of modelling technique facilitates the act of noticing since the students themselves will ask questions that will focus on how to improve their own outputs. After modelling, the students need to go beyond and use the information element- focused approach to accentuate their knowledge of content relationships as well as information structures. Future research directed towards the students' writing of an annotated bibliography may explore the effect of

brainstorming with a partner or another classmate to increased improvement of their written output.

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