

Survey of the Preferred Elements of Teachers and Students in Preparing Instructional Material in Creative Nonfiction

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ABSTRACT : This study aimed to survey students and teachers in identifying appropriate themes, texts, topics, threads, tasks, and transitions in a proposed instructional material. A researcher-made instrument was utilized in the research. Sixty students and eighteen English teachers were the respondents of the study. Purposive sampling particularly homogeneous sampling was utilized. The researcher employed the statistical tool such as percentage and mean. The teachers identified Creative Nonfiction as the subject that needed an instructional material specifically a textbook or a module. Teachers and students chose elements that they deem fitted in the production of the instructional material.

KEYWORDS : *Survey, Instructional Material, Creative Nonfiction, Humanities and Social Sciences, Lessons*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippine education system shifted wind and changes sands. In meeting the needs and the rights of every Filipino, the quest for quality education at certain epochs of the Philippines has become a national struggle. Change in the educational system is not queer; but, it is still an issue of every Filipino.

Senior high school is one of the features of K to 12 curriculum. Because of the change in the curriculum, there is limited access to instructional materials. Samuel [1] explained that instructional materials are alternative channels of communication, which a teacher can use to convey more vividly instructional information to learners.

Basilan [2] stated that because of the R.A. 10533 or Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum, senior high schools greatly experienced scantiness of instructional materials in the different teaching areas since the students need to stay for two more years in basic education. Among all the specialized subjects covered by English in Humanities and Social Sciences, an instructional material especially in Creative Nonfiction is rarely found. Gerald [3] stated that creative nonfiction satisfies the writer's hunger for the real and to make sense, make order out of chaos.

Kwarteng [4] stressed that instructional materialized makes teaching and learning less arduous; since, it enhances learners' ability to understand what is being taught. Clearly, K to 12 educators must push for more effective and efficient materials and instruction. Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 encourages the production and development of locally produced teaching and learning materials.

Based on the teachers' responses in the needs assessment, there is a need for localized instructional materials in Creative Nonfiction; since, materials were inadequate and not-up-to date to the demands of the K to 12 education. In a study created by Garin, et.al. [5], the findings indicated that the use of indigenous teaching is an effective learning strategy. Mangila [6] expressed that instructional materials must be culturally relevant. It must reflect and accommodate the cultural plurality in order to support student learning in the different classrooms. This study would provide guides among educators in planning localized instructional materials especially in Creative Nonfiction.

This study was based on the Six T's Approach by Stoller and Grabe [7]. This approach includes themes, texts, topics, threads, tasks, and transitions. According to these theories, themes are the central ideas that organize major curricular units; they are chosen to appropriate to student needs and interests, institutional expectations, program resources, and teacher abilities and interests. Normally, a class explores more than one theme in a given semester. Texts, defined in a broad sense, are content resources (written and aural) which drive the basic planning of theme units. Text selection will depend on a number of criteria: student interest, relevance, and instructional appropriateness which provide a first set of guidelines for determining text selection; format appeal, length, coherence, connection to other materials, accessibility, availability, and cost represent secondary criteria. Topics are the sub-units of contents which explore more specific aspects of the theme. They are selected to complement student interest, content resources, teacher preferences, and larger curricular objectives. Threads are linkages across themes which create greater curricular coherence. Tasks are the instructional activities and

techniques utilized for content, language, and strategy instruction in language classrooms (e.g. activities or teaching vocabulary, language structure, discourse organization, communicative interaction, study skills, academic language skills). Transitions are explicitly planned actions which provide coherence across topics in a theme unit and across tasks within the topics.

This paper is anchored on the idea that elements such as themes, texts, topics, threads, tasks, and transitions are essential in designing an instructional material. The figure below shows the theory and concepts revealed in a form of a diagram.

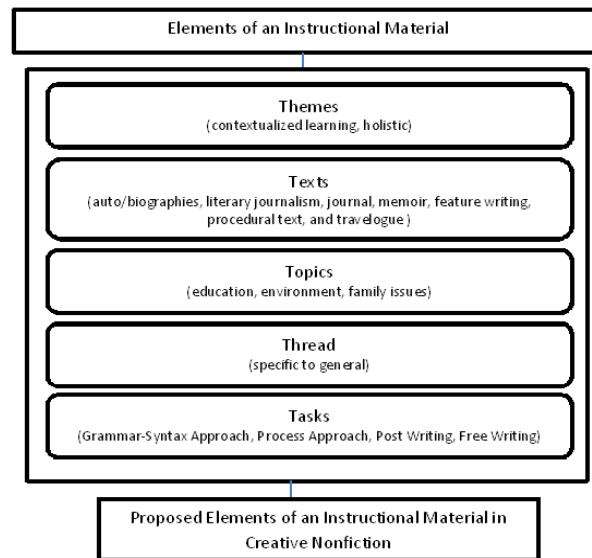


Figure 1: Theory and Concepts of the Study

Instructional Materials. The goal of this work is to identify the elements of an instructional material in Creative Nonfiction so that teachers can create a localized material for their Humanities and Social Sciences students. Tomlinson [8] discussed that a principled and flexible framework would help the teachers develop effective and efficient materials.

Themes must be contextualized and holistic. In a study of Lauricella [9], university students believed that holistic learning would have a positive effect to their success in the secondary education. The participants expressed that holistic education would help them to better choose their course of study in university, help them understand career opportunities, guide to be more informed about the community, natural world and to the citizens to whom they interact. Contextualization is also essential in developing themes. Perin [10] explained that the goal of contextualization is to make teaching effective through the progression to a more advanced work.

Texts must be content rich for both the teachers and the students. Creative nonfiction texts include auto/biographies, literary journalism, journal, memoirs, feature writing, procedural text, and travelogue.

Chosen topics of the students are about education, family issues, and environment. Students must be interested in what they would be writing about. Grahan and Perin as cited in Gallanger [11] believed that writing well is not just an option for young people. It is necessary. Along with reading comprehension, writing skills is a predictor of academic success and a basic requirement for participation in civil life and in global economy. Routman [12] elucidated that reading enhances writing and the later can improve learner's reading ability. This powerful connection was frequently overlooked and undervalued and, most often, reading and writing are artificially separated. A teacher must take action by using exemplary texts, authors to demonstrate what authors do, teach students read like writers, make available and accessible outstanding texts in various genres, do more poetry and writing, write more book reviews, and use daily writing to teach reading to learners who struggle.

Thread follows to specific to general. It only means that topics in the instructional materials must be from specific to general.

Tasks that must be applied in the instructional material are Grammar-Syntax Approach, Process Approach, Post Writing, and Free Writing. Grammar-Syntax organization approach links the purpose of a piece of writing to the forms that are needed to convey the message. Tasks in this approach lead the students to pay attention to organization while they also work on the necessary grammar and syntax. Bayat [13] defined process writing which allows the written product to be checked and evaluated during the writing process. Hashemnezhad [14] defined post process writing wherein writing is focused on the cognitive or internal, multi-stage process, in which the teacher takes a background role. Hwang [15] expressed that in a short period of time

guided free writing increased the second language learners with their writing fluency and their confidence.

This study aimed to identify the preferred elements in preparing an instructional material in the specialized subject of HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences). Theme Based Approach by Stoller and Grabe was used in determining the instructional topics and style preferred by teachers and students. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following sub problems:

1. What is instructional materials do the incoming Humanities and Social Sciences students need based on the recommendations of the English teachers in terms of:
 - 1.1. subject and
 - 1.2. type of instructional material?
2. What are the possible elements of the proposed module in Creative Nonfiction based on the responses of the teachers and students in terms of:
 - 2.1. themes;
 - 2.2. texts;
 - 2.3. topics;
 - 2.4. thread;
 - 2.5. task; and
 - 2.6. transition?

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In order to obtain the data of this study, a researcher-made questionnaire was utilized to identify the preferred elements of teachers and students in preparing an instructional material in Creative Nonfiction. The survey is a five-point Likert scale based on the six T-s of Stoller and Grabe. Approaches to teaching writing were also integrated in the tasks. The researcher-made questionnaire was validated by expert teachers. The changes based on the comments were incorporated in the final copy of the research-made questionnaire.

Respondents of the Study

The researcher-made questionnaire was given to the students of Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand for the school year 2016-2017 and the eighteen English teachers of a school in Manila. This study was conducted to identify the elements preferred by the students and teachers in writing a instructional material in Creative Nonfiction.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

In order to obtain data for this study, a researcher made-questionnaire was utilized as the main instrument of the study. The questionnaire had two types. The first questionnaire was a needs assessment for the English teachers. The second type of questionnaire was about the elements preferred by the teachers and students in planning an instructional material in Creative Nonfiction. It is a five-point Likert scale based on the six T's of Stoller and Grabe. Approches. The researcher-made questionnaire was validated by experts. Based on the suggestions made by the experts, it was revised by the experts. The changes based on the comments were incorporated in the final copy of the rsearcher-made questionnaire. The sampling procedure used was purposive sampling particularly homogeneous sampling.

Analysis of Data

The data gathered from the respondents were tallied and treated with the use of statistical tools like mean and percentage.

Percentage. It was used to identify the subject and type of instructional material that is needed in teaching specialized subject in English. It was used to identify the number of the teachers who favoured a specific transition and tread.

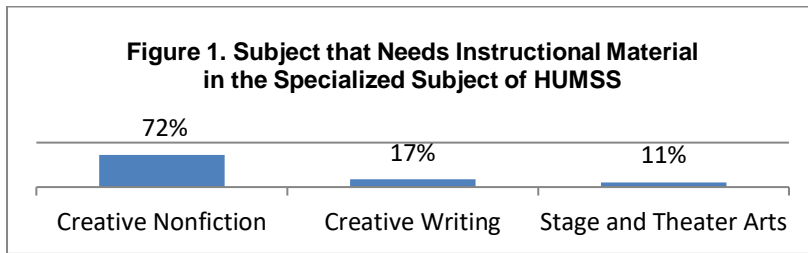
Mean. To determine the most preferred choices of the teachers and students among the given items, the researcher followed the formula in computing the mean of every given item. The scale was described as follows: 4.50-5.00- Most Appropriate, 3.50-4.49-More Appropriate, 2.50-3.49-Appropriate, 1.50-2.49-Less Appropriate, and 1.00-1.49-Not Appropriate.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were gathered through the researcher-made questionnaire. These data were treated with the use of frequency count, ranking, mean, and percentage. The data were arranged in tabular forms and were presented following the arrangement of the statement of the problem.

Subject: All of the eighteen English teachers agreed that there is a need to develop instructional materials especially in Creative Nonfiction. Figure one presents the possible subjects in the specialized strand of HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences).

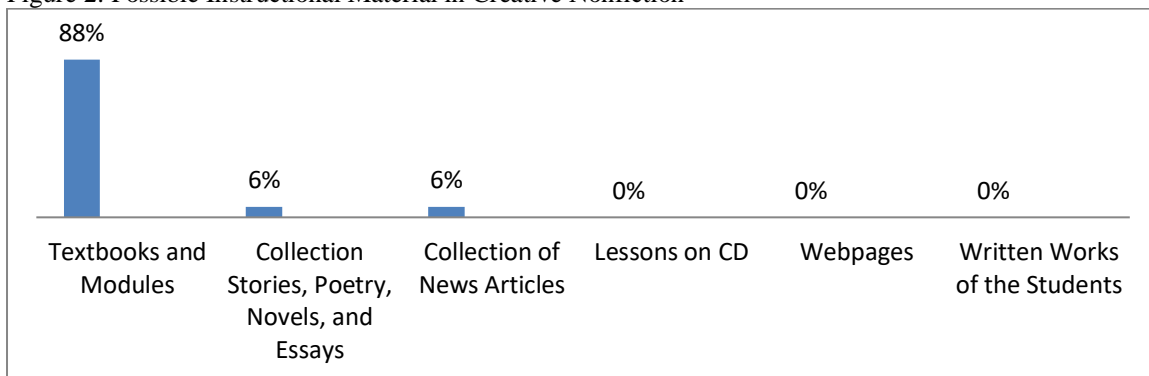
Figure 1. Subject that Needs Instructional Material in the Specialized Subject of HUMSS



The English teachers determined the instructional material needed for HUMSS specialization. Thirteen out of eighteen chose Creative Nonfiction as the subject of the instructional material. Three out of eighteen English teachers prefer Creative Writing and two out of eighteen favour Stage and Theatre Arts.

Type. The researcher asked teachers to identify the type of instructional materials needed for HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences). Figure 2 presents the result of the findings.

Figure 2: Possible Instructional Material in Creative Nonfiction



Textbooks and modules are the recommended instructional material with a percentage of 88%. Undeniably, teachers still rely on textbooks and modules in teaching 21st century learners. Oates [16] stated that the move to on-line materials is a significant matter; but, textbooks have been long developed to support highly effective pedagogic practices. Carefully-developed textbooks have played a crucial role in enhancing the educational outcomes in key nations. It still remains a vital part of maintaining a quality within those nations.

Themes. A researcher-made questionnaire was administered to the respondents to reveal the most appropriate themes for students and teachers. The data are reflected on Table 1.

Table 1: The Mean Distribution, and Description of Themes by Teachers and Students

Themes	Mean Scores (Teaches)	Descriptions (Teachers)	Mean Scores (Students)	Descriptions (Students)
1. contextualized learning	4.22	More Appropriate	3.85	More Appropriate
2. holistic learning	4.28	More Appropriate	4.07	More Appropriate
3. spiral progression	4.11	More Appropriate	3.95	More Appropriate
4. twenty first century skills	4.3	More Appropriate	4.23	More Appropriate

Holistic learning and twenty first century skills are the themes that get the higher mean scores compared to contextualized learning and spiral progression. Holistic learning ensures that every facet of a learner's life is tapped. Mynbayeva, et.al [17] stated that UNESCO recommend teaching strategies that include twenty-first century learning like storytelling, experiential learning, values education, problem solving, storytelling, activities outside the four corners of the classroom, and community problem solving skills.

Texts. The researcher asked students about their preferences in teaching and learning creative nonfiction. Texts are essential in the proposal of instructional materials; since, these are the units that should comprise a module.

Table 2: The Mean Distribution, and Description of Texts by Teachers and Students

Themes	Mean Scores (Teaches)	Descriptions (Teachers)	Mean Scores (Students)	Descriptions (Students)
1. auto/biographies	3.94	More Appropriate	4.15	More Appropriate
2. literary journalism	4.17	More Appropriate	3.93	More Appropriate
3. journal and memoir	4.17	More Appropriate	3.95	More Appropriate

4. feature writing	3.39	More Appropriate	3.70	More Appropriate
5. procedural text	3.72	Appropriate	3.52	More Appropriate
6. travelogue	3.28	Appropriate	4.07	More Appropriate

The teachers rate all items with more appropriate. Auto/biography is in rank one with a mean of 4.15. Travelogue is in second rank with a mean of 4.07. Journal and memoir is in the third rank with a mean of 3.95. Literary journalism is in the fourth rank with 3.93. Feature writing is in the fifth rank with a mean of 3.70. Procedural text is in the sixth rank with a mean of 3.53.

It can be observed that teachers and student had opposing valued texts. For instance, travelogue is second to the priority of the students; while, the teacher considered this as has at least priority. However, the least preferred type of text of the students and teachers is the feature write-up.

Topics. Table 3 reveals the frequency and the mean distribution, the descriptive value, and the ranking of every item.

Table 3: The Mean Distribution, Description of Topics by Teachers and Students

Themes	Mean Scores (Teaches)	Descriptions (Teachers)	Mean Scores (Students)	Descriptions (Students)
1. crime, drugs, and law	4.00	More Appropriate	3.85	More Appropriate
2. education	4.39	More Appropriate	4.37	More Appropriate
3. environment	4.78	More Appropriate	4.47	More Appropriate
4. family issues	4.39	More Appropriate	4.27	More Appropriate
5. health	4.33	More Appropriate	4.35	More Appropriate
6. internet, media, and communication	4.11	More Appropriate	4.22	More Appropriate
7. political issues	3.61	More Appropriate	3.62	More Appropriate
8. psychology	3.61	Appropriate	3.68	More Appropriate
9. religion	3.72	More Appropriate	3.83	More Appropriate
10. social issues	4.22	More Appropriate	3.95	More Appropriate
11. terrorism	3.39	Appropriate	3.40	More Appropriate
12. women and gender	3.61	Appropriate	4.18	More Appropriate

Thread. Eight teachers out of eighteen English teachers favour the specific to general tread. It comprises of 44% of the respondents. Ten-out of eighteen teachers chose specific to general tread. It comprises of 56% of the respondents. The teachers prefer the induction method in writing compositions.

Tasks. Table 4 summarized the overall mean distribution, the descriptive value and the ranking of every item about the approaches in teaching writing rated by the teachers and the students.

Table 4: The Mean Distribution and Description of Tasks

Themes	Mean Scores (Teaches)	Descriptions (Teachers)	Mean Scores (Students)	Descriptions (Students)
Controlled to Free-Writing				
1. fill-up-the blanks in a Dialogue	3.56	More Appropriate	3.93	More Appropriate
2. model accurate language	4.17	More Appropriate	4.47	More Appropriate
3. focus on grammar, syntax, and mechanics	3.83	More Appropriate	4.33	More Appropriate
Free Writing				
4. content and possible audience	4.50	Most Appropriate	4.25	More Appropriate
5. developing fluency	4.39	More Appropriate	4.55	Most Appropriate
6. writing freely and correction of minimal errors	3.83	More Appropriate	3.85	More Appropriate
Paragraph Pattern Approach				

7. re-order scrambled paragraphs	3.72	More Appropriate	4.00	More Appropriate
8. suitable topics and sentences for paragraph	4.28	More Appropriate	4.43	More Appropriate
9. imitate a model piece of writing	3.78	More Appropriate	3.85	Appropriate
Grammar-Syntax Organizational Approach				
10. grammar, syntax, and organization of a text	4.33	More Appropriate	4.20	More Appropriate
11. purpose of writing, the form of writing piece, and intended message	4.56	Most Appropriate	4.10	More Appropriate
12. organize and choose appropriate grammar points and vocabulary	4.28	More Appropriate	4.08	More Appropriate
Genre Based Approach				
13. writing in a real audience	4.17	More Appropriate	3.97	More Appropriate
14. knowing the purpose of the audience	4.50	Most Appropriate	4.27	More Appropriate
15. giving feedbacks, asking questions, and making comments about the work of their classmates	4.17	More Appropriate	4.23	More Appropriate
Process Approach				
16. continuously rewriting of work	4.06	More Appropriate	4.32	More Appropriate
17. teacher give comments in improvements	4.28	More Appropriate	4.05	More Appropriate
18. pre-writing, focusing ideas, and evaluating, structuring, and editing	4.67	Most Appropriate	4.13	More Appropriate
Post Process Approach				
19. the students read reread their work and eliminate fluff (unnecessary and redundant ideas)	4.17	More Appropriate	4.23	More Appropriate
20. the teacher proofreads incorrect spelling, vocabulary, and grammar	4.06	More Appropriate	4.53	Most Appropriate
21. students share their final output to their classmates	4.17	More Appropriate	4.05	More Appropriate

These tasks are considered to be most appropriate by the teachers and the students. All listed tasks on the table can be used in writing an instructional material in Creative Nonfiction since their descriptive value ranges from appropriate, more appropriate, and most appropriate.

Teachers prioritized Process Approach and Grammar Syntax Approach; while the student preferred Post Writing and Free Writing.

The students prioritized tasks under the post process approach and free writing approach. Hashemnezhad defined post process approach that focused on writing as a cognitive or internal, and a multi-stage process. Free writing allows students to write ideas continuously without considering the grammar and syntax. It only showed that teachers still prioritized grammar and syntax and process; while, students would like to be evaluated based on their final output and they would like to be able to express themselves fluently.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of this study are herein presented in the nutshell.

Textbooks or modules are the recommended instructional material of the English teachers with a percentage of 88%. Seventy-two percent of English teachers consider Creative Nonfiction as the most essential

subject for Humanities and Social Sciences. Among all the instructional materials, the textbook or module is believed to be the most appropriate.

The researcher found out that teachers and students had the same priorities for the themes. Their top two priorities are holistic learning and twenty first century skills. In terms of texts, teachers and students think that the students must be well-versed in writing journals, memoirs, and literary journalism. The students like to focus on learning about writing auto/biographies. Among all the topics, the students and teachers would like to teach and learn about environment, family issues, health, internet media and communications. Ten out of eighteen teachers choose specific to general tread. It comprises of 55% of the population of the teachers. Eight teachers out of eighteen English teachers favour the specific thread. It comprised of 55% of the respondents. The process approach to writing, grammar syntax approach, and genre approach are the top choices of the teachers in tasks. On the other hand, the students choose the post writing approach, free writing approach, and process approach to writing in tasks. Ten teachers preferred the task transition than topical transition. Ten teachers favoured task transition, while eight teachers favoured topical transition.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In view of the findings of the study, the researcher arrived at the following conclusions: Teachers and students still believe that students must be holistically nurtured. In keeping-up with the demands of twenty first century skills, education, environment, family, and health issues are still prioritized compared to internet, media, and communication. English writing instruction must focus on improving grammar, syntax, producing products, and continuously re-writing one's work.

In light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommended the following: English teachers should identify the preference of the students in learning how to write. Students must be encouraged to be twenty first century literate by engaging them to topics that they would like to learn about. English teachers must write instructional materials in Creative Nonfiction that would be anchored on the results of the study. The school administrators as well as the instructional leaders should consider proposing-up-to date and varied materials that would guide the teachers in senior high school instruction.

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