

BE SMART IN WRITING WITH DIGITALIZATION; IMPROVING ESSAY WRITING SKILLS OF THE SENIOR SECONDARY ESL LEARNERS UTILIZING BLOGGING

K.A.D.Sandamali

*Department of Secondary and Tertiary Education,
Open University of Sri Lanka
kasan@ou.ac.lk*

Abstract - Essay writing is considered as one of the advanced skills that requires learner to have the knowledge of both macroscopic and microscopic writing skills. Research studies conducted in Sri Lankan context show that the secondary learners are reluctant to write essays in English (Second Language/L2), and they do not have sufficient essay writing skills in relation to English language. With the sudden burst out of COVID 19 global pandemic, the conventional methods which were implemented to enhance the essay writing skills of the learners who learn English as the second language (ESL) were transferred into virtual/online methods. This study focuses on improving essay writing skills of the senior secondary ESL learners using BLOGGING as a supplementary digital tool. It was conducted as action research using a sample of senior secondary ESL learners (N=15) who were randomly selected. Their proficiency in English essay writing was analyzed based on the pretest. Intervention lasted for 10 weeks moving through a cycle; planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. After introducing blogging to the students with authentic examples, the learners were directed to discover most appropriate applications to be utilized in creating blogs. While engaging in blogging, their own reflections and peer evaluations were integrated into further improvement of their essay writing skills. The gathered data of the research was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Based on the findings of this current study, this paper emphasizes the significance of blogging in relation to improving essay writing skills of present senior secondary ESL learners (Digital Natives) while improving both macroscopic and microscopic writing skills, achieving higher order cognitive skills (Analysis, Creativity) and facilitating them to become self-regulated learners who motivate themselves intrinsically.

Keywords: Essay Writing Skills; Blogging; English as a Second Language (ESL); Supplementary Digital Tool; Digital Native