

The Effects of a Holistic Approach to Developing Foreign Language Writing Competence of Students at Tertiary Level

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects a holistic approach on development of students' writing ability in terms of the quality of texts across various aspects of foreign language (FL) writing. This research adopted one-group pretest-posttest design. The participants of this study were 83 English-major students in their second year at a public university. They enrolled on a 15-week writing course in which a holistic approach to FL writing instruction was implemented. They were asked to compose an argumentative essay of between 250 and 350 words at the start and the end of the course as parts of a pretest and a posttest respectively. The essays were marked by two raters using a multiple-trait scoring system. The data were then analyzed by using t-test. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant increase in the mean scores from a pretest and a posttest across all areas of writing ($p < .01$). The results suggested that a holistic approach had significant effects on development of FL writing ability of the university students. This reflected the students' progress of accumulation of expectations and requirements of writing conventions after the explicit writing instruction based on a holistic approach.

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