Project Echo (End-of-Class Hurdle on One paragraph): Exit Slip Towards Writing Skills Enhancement of Practical Research Students

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Abstract: Research writing is a great way for high school students to explore topics that they are interested in, discover information, and expand their research skills. However, there are challenges met by the teachers in teaching practical research that may vary from the essentials of writing. The study utilized mix method action research wherein it was subjected to one-group pretest-posttest design (quantitative) and thematic analysis on the lived experiences of participants as they go through the intervention (qualitative). The PROJECT ECHO initiative was helpful to practical research students as it enhances their writing skills. It was clearly manifested with the results of the paired t – test on before and after the intervention with established alpha error and degrees of freedom to produce critical value, the computed R value of 0.198 was less than the critical value of .273. This was interpreted to accept the null hypothesis. Momentarily, after the intervention, computed T value (3.785) was greater than that of the critical value (2.009), which afforded to reject the null hypothesis. This signifies that there was a significant difference between the pre and post – assessments of the writing skills of the practical research students before and after the intervention. As to the live experiences of the students on this initiative, the participants boarded on the relevance of exit slip as a way meaningful for writing skills enhancement.

Keywords: Exit Slip, Research Writing, Practical Research, SHS, Department of Education
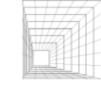
Introduction

In senior high school, practical research is one of the applied subjects to be taken by all students. This requires learners to be acquainted and equipped with writing skills at the same time boost their knowledge and foundation on scientific inquiries, investigation, numeracy and or statistics. Moreover, this subject area strives to develop research literacy among students while keeping in mind that there may be other intervening elements in the subject's delivery (teacher competency, availability of learning resources, etc.) Results showed that overall, the student's research capabilities were only at the average level. Male and female students were comparable in the ability to conduct research. Opportunities for quantitative instruction were lacking in the context of the participants. The implications for research instruction are discussed in the paper (Estacio et al., 2018). Another problem that needs to be addressed is students' poor writing skills in research. Several literature studies have documented the problem. Findings show that the students have difficulties in writing academic essays, such as a lack of variety of ideas in terms of content and ideas, lack of connectives in terms of paragraph organization, incorrect word or idiom, and word usage in terms of vocabulary and word choice, poor sentence structures in terms of language use, use of the first-person pronoun in terms of formality and

objectivity, and lack of citations in terms of referencing (Center, 2020). In the Philippines, a similar predicament is being confronted by teachers. In a study by Paurillo (2019) entitled Research Writing Ability of Senior High School (SHS) students as Perceived by Teachers of Sampled Schools in Quezon City, students are generally familiar and knowledgeable in most of the essentials of research writing such as punctuation, grammar, word choice, spelling, syntax, citation, paraphrasing, and organization. Meanwhile, challenges met by the teachers in teaching research vary from the rudiments of writing, which include syntax, citation, and paraphrasing, among many others, to the insufficient teaching strategies in research (Estacio et al., 2018)

Students in Grade 11 and 12 in Practical Research, in Salcedo Vocational High School, Schools Division of Eastern Samar, are having similar issues. To address this, the researcher wants to implement a school-based technique called Project ECHO (End of the Class Hurdle on One Paragraph).

The research objective is to introduce the innovation and measure the influence of the innovation on students' writing abilities. Once shown to be effective, the innovation will be shared with schools in other districts so that they can follow suit, and we will then be able to support the Department of Education's Vision and Mission, which is to nurture learners by eliminating learning gaps. Researcher hopes that all students will become our society's best writers and researchers.

Action Research Questions

This study aimed to ascertain the impact of the "End-of-Class Hurdle on One paragraph" strategy in Practical research on students' writing skills improvement. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the writing skills level of practical research students before and after the intervention?

2. Is there a significant difference between the writing skills of the practical research students before and after the intervention?

3. What are the lived experiences of students as they go through the intervention?

Ho: There is no significant difference between the writing skills of the practical research students before and after the intervention.

Proposed Innovation, Intervention, and Strategy

The theory of practice making perfect is somewhat of a blanket statement. There are also different types of practice, such as active and passive. The active practice would be defined as physically participating in a repetitive activity in an attempt to gain a higher skill level (Practice Makes Perfect: Testing the Theory | Essay Sample, Words: 1061, 2021).
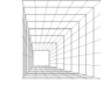
In this regard, the proponent devised the strategy "One Paragraph Before the End of the Class" or Project ECHO (End-of -Class Hurdle on One Paragraph) as a means to practice practical research students' writing skills. The innovation aims to raise by 100% writing skills as observed through their performance in writing, hitting the competencies on how to write a research paper correctly. To do this, the research teacher will require students to write one Paragraph on a topic the teacher would select. A paragraph is a unit of writing in a larger body of work. A paragraph expresses a particular topic or theme. A paragraph is a component of fictional prose and non-fiction writings. When writing essays, research papers, books, etc., new paragraphs are indented to show their beginnings (Writing Explained, 2016). After writing a paragraph on a given theme, the students will submit the output to the teacher,

which will serve as a ticket to exit the class. In this way, students will be motivated to finish the output to get the reward of getting done on the class activity. The teacher will in turn evaluate the outputs and provide written feedback. By the next day, the teacher will discuss common mistakes and how to improve them based on the consolidated opportunities and strengths gathered from evaluating students' work. By the end of the class, another theme will be given from where students will expound on writing again before leaving the class. This will be done daily until the end of the implementation phase. Limitations of this innovation include the availability of vocabulary and facts and figures students would use to support claims on their work which will be mitigated by placing a dictionary in the class and allowing students to access the internet. The practical research teacher(s) will primarily observe this innovation, while the school head will monitor the entire activity from pre-implementation to post-implementation.

Methodology

Participants and Other Sources of Data and Information

The participants of this study were the 52 purposively selected Grade 11 and 12 Practical Research students in Salcedo Vocational High School officially enrolled for the School year 2022-2023. They were selected as participants since they were evaluated and or observed by their research teachers to have poor writing skills in research, making them fit for the study. Distribution of participants shall be as follows:

Table 1
Distribution of Participants

TRACK	No. of Participants
Accountancy Business & Management (ABM)	8
Humanities & Social Sciences (HUMSS)	17
Electrical Installation & Maintenance (EIM)	14
Cookery	5
Agri-Fishery Arts (AFA)	8
TOTAL	**52**

Data Gathering Methods

This study utilized a pre-experimental design, particularly the One Group Pretest and posttest design. This design is a quasi-experiment in which the outcome of interest is measured two times: once before and once after exposing a non-random group of participants to a specific intervention/treatment (Quantifying Health, 2022). Meanwhile, in this particular study, the independent variable or the treatment shall be the 'One Paragraph Before the End of the Class,' or Project ECHO (End-of -Class Hurdle on One Paragraph) while the dependent variables shall be students' writing skills.
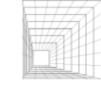
The writing skill has been evaluated based on a research paper rubric which was also researcher-made. The participants were judged on content, organization, style, sources/ format, and conventions. The total perfect score was 20.

The researcher requested permission from the school head. After approval, the survey instrument, which shall be the pretest and posttest, underwent a validity and reliability test. After the validation, the researcher administered the survey instrument before and following the intervention. To end the implementation phase, a structured interview was conducted among identified participants in a form of Focal Group Discussion (FGD) to answer questions about lived experiences. Answers were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

This study used descriptive statistics and tests of significance. In order to determine the writing skills level of the students (problem 1) after data gathering, the mean was used. It was then categorized into the following:

Table 2
Research Writing Skills Scaling

Mean Range	Descriptive Statistics
16.5-20.0	**Outstanding**
12.5-16.4	**Very Proficient**
8.5-12.4	**Proficient**
4.5-8.4	**Poor**
0.0-4.4	**Needs Assistance**

For problem number 2, determining the significant difference between two test results, the dependent sample T-test was used. Moreover, for problem 3, the lived experiences of practical research students as they go through the intervention were determined through thematic analysis wherein 6 participants were invited for a focus group discussion (FGD).

Results and Discussion

The following results and discussions are established to lay down the foundations of the interpretations and analyses pertaining to the study of PROJECT ECHO.

Table 3
Mean Range Scaling on the Levels of the Writing
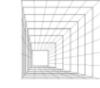Skills of Practical Research Students (Before and After)

STRAND	BEFORE	DESCRIPTION	AFTER	DESCRIPTION
ABM	6.40	Poor	16.02	Very Proficient
HUMSS	4.25	Needs Assistance	15.29	Very Proficient
EIM	2.98	Needs Assistance	8.75	Proficient
COOKERY	3.85	Needs Assistance	9.22	Proficient
AFA	3.39	Needs Assistance	8.65	Proficient

Based on the mean range scaling on the levels of the writing skills of practical research students before the intervention, only the Accountancy, Business, and Management got the descriptive statistics of POOR description on their writing skills, the rest of the other strand needed to be assisted in their writing performance or skills. Surprisingly, after the appropriations of the PROJECT ECHO, the two strands namely ABM and HUMSS, got the Very Proficient remarks. The remaining strands obtained Proficient remarks. Somehow, the PROJECT ECHO could be the solution to the improvisations of the writing skills of the students in practical research.

Table 4

The Paired T – Test Results on the Significant Differences Between the Writing Skills of the Practical Research Students, with Pearson R Results (Before and After)

ALPHA	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	CRITICAL VALUE	COMPUTED R	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
0.05	51	0.273	0.198	ACCEPT HO	Not Significant

Since the computed – R (0.198) is negligible, thus the two assessing scores were not correlated and even remarkable*.

Paired T – Test

ALPHA	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	CRITICAL VALUE	COMPUTED T	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
0.05	51	2.009	3.785	REJECT HO	Significant

Since the Pearson R results show that the pre – assessment and post assessment scores of the students were not correlated nor being remarkably associated, the paired t – test is used in this table. And in accordance with the results of the paired t – test with established alpha error and degrees of freedom to produce critical value, since the computed T value of 3.785 was greater than that of the critical value of 2.009, the researcher decided to reject the null hypothesis. This signifies that there was a significant difference between the pre – assessments and post – assessments of the writing skills of the practical research students before and after the intervention.

Thematic Analyses on the Lived Experiences of Students as they go through the PROJECT ECHO Intervention

1. How does the PROJECT ECHO help you in improving your writing skills?

Significant Statements per Participant	Translated Statements	Formulated Meanings	Codes	Themes
The said project helped me to improve my writing skills by answering different tasks given by our research teacher. Because of this, I get to practice on constructing paragraphs and expressing my thoughts and opinions by means of having a systematic flow of message and appropriate writing style and structuring.	The said project has been commended by the participants.	The project ECHO establishes good rapport for utilizations.	Project ECHO Commended	PROJECT ECHO RECOMMENDATIONS
The PROJECT ECHO improved my writing skills by learning from the teacher's advice or suggestions on grammar and expanding my vocabulary.				
Being participants in the PROJECT ECHO, we had been given a task to try and correct us of what was the proper way to craft a paragraph and to avoid the mistakes from using it again. It gave me what I needed to know more by trying and challenging myself by a task. I did realize and believe that my abilities can be developed and that I can gain endless information until it can improve my personal growth or skills. It gave me the mindset that to develop my writing skills,				

I should exert some effort and try or challenge myself as it is an opportunity for me to learn and improve my writing skills. I made some mistakes in writing and the PROJECT ECHO made me realize that it can be avoided by giving myself a chance to learn and a chance for the next time that I make my mistakes, I do it right.				
PROJECT ECHO helped me a lot especially in terms of improving my writing skills because by this kind of project gives me confident to share my own opinion or my own thoughts about the given question or situation by making it as a paragraph and also, I'm not shy to share my answer because I know sir Jericho that he will correct my grammar if I'm wrong.				
PROJECT ECHO helped me improve my skills particularly in writing with proper grammar and composition. Now I can say that I'm learning it little by little and by regular participation, I'm hoping that my improvement will be visible so that I could be able to share my knowledge to my fellow students or youth.				

Project Echo improved my writing skills by helping to improve my grammar, helped me practice my spelling and organized my thoughts and ideas in writing.				

The participants had embarked on the advantages of the well – commended innovation made by the teacher – researcher in searching for such improvisations in their vocabularies and writing capabilities. The project ECHO had established a wide range of good rapport for the utilizations on the learners' lived experiences during the innovative applications for the wider vocabulary institutionalizations. As a coded theme, the project ECHO was commended and appreciated for recommendations for continuation of its implementation.

2. What are your difficulties in participating the PROJECT ECHO?

Significant Statements per Participant	Translated Statements	Formulated Meanings	Codes	Themes
At first, I had to deal with my grammar. My inner self is pushing me to check my work a hundred times before submitting it to make sure that there will be no mistake. But, as many people claim, including me, having a mistake doesn't mean that you're not going to succeed, after all, the word failure has always been a part of success. That is why I am giving big thanks to those who corrected my grammar and gave me some points to consider that will surely help me to improve my writing skills.	The participants had some hardships to participate in the project ECHO.	The project ECHO needs more improvisations as time makes more changes in literary classes.	Improvisations for further strategic methods	Project ECHO Improvisations
The difficulty in participating in the PROJECT ECHO was that I'm having a hard time passing the task in the exact time because my				

preparation for the next subject will be compromised.					
My difficulties in participating the PROJECT ECHO include having a lack of knowledge about proper writing. I also fear that I can make mistakes and I can't make it right. Being participants in the project, it requires dedication, commitment, practice and willingness, but I might be lacking one of those. When I also practice exercises or have questions, I have difficulties in seeking clarification.					
My difficulties in participating the PROJECT ECHO sometimes comes to my mind that it will be difficult for me to share my answer because I'm not really good at English and I'm afraid if my grammar is incorrect.					
My difficulty in participating the PROJECT ECHO was I didn't have enough time to comply with the given task because I am not really good at writing. However, it will not stop my preference in learning.					
My difficulty in participating the project ECHO was that I couldn't respond yet and the tasks					

given by my teacher were a little bit too hard for me.				

The participants suffered some hardships as forms of challenges or barriers sort of, on participating in the innovative PROJECT ECHO. The said project needs more improvisations as time makes more progress in the transformation schemes for the research class. Thus, the thematic code for this lived experience will be the improvement of the ECHO Project to co – enhance the socializations of the exit ticket in a way to propagate further embarking the commensurations of the project.

3. How do you know if you truly improved in your writing skills when the PROJECT ECHO was implemented?
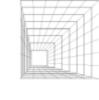
Significant Statements per Participant	Translated Statements	Formulated Meanings	Codes	Themes
When Project Echo was implemented, I had to admit to myself that I am not really that good when it comes to constructing sentences, having a not so broad vocabulary is also one of my weaknesses. But as I see myself, after answering the previous tasks that our research gave us, I got to say that I did improve because my not so broad vocabulary is now quite extensive. I learned when to use 'has' and 'have' when dealing with singular and plural subjects. 'Furthermore' and 'Moreover' are way better to use instead of what I used before on my first task. I am proud to say that I have shared my experiences, expressed my thoughts and opinions starting with the main topic to be followed by its supporting sentences which is one of the keys for me to have a	The participants embarked on the importance of the exit card as way meaningful for a wider range of vocabularies.	The project ECHO though there are lots of things to consider improvisations, the learners had experienced a wider range of improving their vocabularies.	Project ECHO Consolidations	Consolidating Performance

systematic flow of message and a clear point of view on a certain topic.				
I know that I improved my writing skills when PROJECT ECHO was implemented because I got to use the new words and build clear sentences and construct my ideas clearly.				
Well, when the PROJECT ECHO was implemented, it motivated me to start taking exercises to make progress in my writing skills. It helped me to set goals and be consistent in learning. I did make some mistakes in my learning process on developing my writing skills but I have learned the proper or correct way. I did see in myself that my learning had expanded and my brain or thinking had developed.				
As the time goes by, I can say that I have improved my writing skills by gaining some confidence in times of sharing of opinion or answer, also by using words that focus only on the question and not beating around the bush. And to be honest, I learned a lot of things when ECHO PROJECT was implemented.				
I know that I truly improved in my writing skills when the said project was implemented because				

I can write a passage of paragraph within a half-minute. Moreover, I grab the opportunity to learn in writing during our summer vacation. So that in this upcoming school year I'm ready enough to face academic pressure.				
When Project Echo was implemented it helped me write a good writing skill and I can easily be able to put my message across in a piece of writing that is concise and interesting that captivates the readers to read more.				

The participants embarked on the importance of exit cards as way meaningful for a wider range of vocabulary of the learners while using the innovative PROJECT ECHO. This way around utilization can instill for the learners that though there are lots of things to consider improvisations, the learners have experienced a wider range of improving their vocabulary, this will consolidate the performance of the learners.
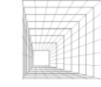
Conclusion and Recommendations

1.   Only the Accountancy, Business, and Management got the descriptive statistics of POOR description on their writing skills, the rest of the other strand needed to be assisted in their writing performance or skills. Momentarily, after the appropriations of the PROJECT ECHO, the ABM and HUMSS got the Proficient description. Thus, the PROJECT ECHO could be the solution to the improvisations of the writing skills of the students in practical research. This implies that the PROJECT ECHO can be used as a tool for enhancing and improving the writing skills of the practical research students through the processing of the exit slip through the one – paragraph learning target attained during their research writing.

2.   In accordance with the results of the paired t – test with established alpha error and degrees of freedom to produce critical value, since the computed T value is greater than that of the critical value, the research decided to reject the null hypothesis. This signifies that there is a significant difference between the pre – assessments and post – assessments of the writing skills of the practical research students before and after the intervention namely the PROJECT ECHO. This implies further that there was a remarkable improvements or enhancement on the writing skills of the practical research students through the exit slip or exit ticket through one paragraph prompting so that the learners could easily give abstractions or summary – elicitations from the learners just to juxtapose the intervention or innovation namely the PROJECT ECHO.

3.   The participants had embarked on the advantages of the well – commended innovation made by their teacher – researcher in searching for such improvisations in their vocabularies. The project ECHO had established a wide range of good rapport for the utilizations on the learners' lived experiences during the innovative applications for the wider vocabulary institutionalizations. The participants suffered some hardships as forms of challenges or barriers sort of, on participating in the innovative PROJECT ECHO. The said project needs more improvisations as time makes more progressiveness in the transformation schemes for the literature classes. Thus, the thematic code for this lived experience will be the improvement of the ECHO Project to enhance the socializations of the exit ticket in a way to propagate further embarking the commensurations of the project. The participants embarked on the importance of exit slip as way meaningful for a wider range of vocabulary of the learners while using the innovative PROJECT ECHO. This way around utilization can instill for the learners that though there are lots of things to consider improvisations, the learners have experienced a wider range of improving their vocabulary, this will consolidate the performance of the learners.

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