Writing Proficiency in English Language of Non-Traditional Students in a Local College : A Parallel Convergent Approach

Evelyn G. Erellana, Maed
College Instructor Kapalong College Of Agriculture,
Sciences and Technology

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

REFERENCES

Appendices

Curriculum Vitae

List of Tables

ABSTRACT

:- Writing is an important skill for language production. However, it is considered a difficult skill, particularly in English wherein students face many challenges. The study aimed to determine the status of the Writing Proficiency in English Language of Non-traditional students in a local college. The study employed a mixed method in a convergent parallel design. The participants in the quantitative phase was determined through universal sampling which comprised a total of one hundred sixty-seven (167) participants. The researcher utilized the rubric as a tool for quantitative phase and a researcher-made questionnaire for qualitative phase. Consequently, the study revealed a high level of writing proficiency using English language of non-traditional students. Moreover, four themes emerged from the lived experiences of non-traditional in their acquisition of writing of writing proficiency of English language namely lack of grammatical competence, lack of self-confidence, being optimistic and integration and exposure to English resources. Four themes also emerged from the participants' experiences as differentiated by the identified demographic profiles in their attitude and aspirations towards writing proficiency namely learning difficulties, self-driven person, being optimistic and determined and opportunity seeker and strong determination.

Keywords:- English, Writing proficiency, Non-traditional students, Mixed Method Design, Philippines.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Writing is an important skill for language production. However, it is considered a difficult skill, particularly in English wherein students face many challenges in writing. Writing proficiency is achieved when one is constantly exposed to language stimulus; however, the long absence from school is one of the main reasons why non-traditional students find it difficult in using the English language (Gass, 2013). This challenge is being recognized by many educational institutions, and non-traditional educational opportunities are becoming widely available. School and institutions are realizing the increasing importance of making learning accessible to everyone and are, consequently, offering more flexible options for students (Caschera, 2013).

In Pakistan, the writing skills of the students are alarmingly weak and substandard. Although, English language users in Pakistan have exponentially increased to 49% in 2003 from 2% in 1961, they still face issues in English language particularly in writing (Dar & Khan, 2015). These issues generally arise from incompetence in syntax, coherence, idea expansion, content selection, topic sentence, rhetorical conventions, mechanics, organization, lack of vocabulary, inappropriate use of vocabulary. In the same context, the difficulties experienced by Malaysian students is also emerging according to (Rabab'ah, 2013). Students face many problems relevant to writing competence and they are incapable of using their own words or reformat sentences to be more effective. Organizing the functions of writing and the process of reading to writing is also a problem. Most students commit many mistakes related to sentence structure.

In the Philippine setting, particularly in Technological University of the Philippines (TUP) – Manila, assessing owns work appeared difficult for the students. Most of the learner think about the content than are trying to organize their ideas before writing. Most of the time, students tend to be conscious about what to write. Meanwhile, it is found out that students still pay attention to the content and vocabulary. They are said to be very conscious with their grammar and organization of ideas (Mojica, 2010).Moreover, in Metro Manila, entering college is a big challenge for the non-traditional students specially attending schools because of their multiple roles. Yet more often, these multiple roles may result to stress, anxiety, and depression for adult learners which caused them quitting in school. Also, it present challenges in students' allocation of time for both academic and participation in campus-based organizations and activity. Through this, it may affect the way adults learn their subjects in school and their writing proficiency (Soliven & Reyes, 2008).

The researcher has not come across with a study about the writing proficiency of non-traditional at the local setting. Though there were already studies on writing proficiency but it was conducted at national setting and usually the respondents of the study were students of bigger and prestigious universities. Thus, it made the study different from the previous studies since this will be conducted in a local college. Also, the researcher would like to determine the writing proficiency of non-traditional students not just only in education program but in all college programs.

Further, this study would provide relevant concepts regarding the writing proficiency of non-traditional students most especially those who are studying at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. Also, it aims to give a comprehensive emphasis about the writing proficiency of college students in Kapalong and will generate relevant concepts that will possibly contribute to the academic community.

The results of the study will be presented to the different conferences and forums for the next two years. Also, it is hoped that initial actions will be made relevant to the result of the study. Furthermore, the completed paper will be presented to research conferences and reviews and is hoped to be submitted for publication to reach broader range of readers.

B. Worldview and Theoretical Lens

Writing proficiency is the ability to reflect upon and talk about one's own writing. It involves the learner's active engagement in his/her thinking and writing processes on a metacognitive level. However, adult learners need to master a variety of forms of writing for them to be successful in their academic and professional endeavors. As a researcher, I believe that solving problem is the application of using solution or method that is suited to the conditions and that is how I look problem solving sensible. As a pragmatist, I decided to conduct a mixed method research which is connected to pragmatism. Pragmatism is defined as a philosophical movement that includes those who claim that an ideology or proposition is true if it works satisfactorily, that the meaning of a proposition is to be found in the practical consequences of accepting it, and that unpractical ideas are to be rejected (Creswell, 2007).

Worldviews plays an important role in the mixed methods. Worldviews is a general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher holds (Creswell, 2008). Among the four commonly agreed worldviews, only the transformative and pragmatism worldviews are seen to be compatible with mixed methods research.

The primary aim of this study is to unveil the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students in a local college. Also, pragmatism as a philosophical lens is most appropriate lens to employ as it is oriented toward solving practical problems in the "real world" (Feilzer, 2010) rather than on assumptions about the nature of knowledge. In view of the primary aim

of this study, which is to unearth and address arising problems of the non-traditional students in their language, pragmatism as a philosophical lens is most suited lens to utilize as it is oriented and concerned with the applications what works and solutions to problems (Patton, 1990).

Moreover, Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute unity. In a similar way, mixed methods researchers look to many approaches for collecting and analyzing data rather than subscribing to only one way (Cherryholmes, 1992; Morgan, 2007; Creswell, 2008). Thus, mixed methods research is employed in this study as it uses both quantitative and qualitative data to provide the best understanding of the research problem.

This study is anchored on the Cognitive Writing Theory of Flower and Hayes (2009) and the concepts of Valdez (2016) on writing for Academic Purposes. Flower and Hayes hypothesize a cognitive process theory of writing, which states that writing is a set of distinct processes. This explains that writers arrange and organize ideas while composing. The processes of writing are hierarchical, which is to say they are not linear, and they possess an embedded organization in which any process can be embedded in any other. To them, writing is goal-oriented. It is guided by the writer's own growing network of goals. Flower and Hayes focus on research providing insight into the writing process, and are also committed to providing pedagogical advancements addressing difficulties.

The study of Flower and Hayes is anchored on the proposition of Richard-Amato (1996) which states that students returning to school after a long break in their studies have experienced difficulties in writing and problems pursuing English language. The success in language learning is naively expected to take place only when the student's attitude is favorable, internal motivation is secured and high self-esteem is guaranteed. Adults learn a second language at a much later time, even though second language acquisition research has indicated that the process for the first and second language learning are similar in many respects, the brain functions of adult learners with regards to language processing may be very different from those of children who acquire their first language. As they are older in age, they tend to be inhibited, anxious, or afraid of making errors.

Also, non-traditional students were found to have a lower ability to construct sentences. Age was found to negatively affect writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students. Aside from long absence of the language, the students' age will affect the way they learn the language. Many non-traditional students are not persisting in their courses and programs for reasons such as unfamiliarity with the learning strategies and learning concepts, especially when they are dealing with their younger peers (Gass, 2013).

Also, research has described many non-traditional students as feeling like a frustrated participant in college setting, as well as experiencing higher levels of feelings of isolation into traditional students. In addition, non-traditional students tend to have poor or rust writing skills, lack of confidence in their motivations and question their motivations (Kimborough & Weaver, 2000).

In the same manner, non-traditional students performed in school at a higher academic level than their younger counterparts. However, due to many responsibilities outside the four corners of the classroom, these groups of students often lack the confidence in their academic ability and are less satisfied with their writing skills (Carney-Crompton & Tan, 2002).

Moreover, the term non-traditional students referred to adult students who delay their entry, students with children, students who are married, students attending part-time, students working full time, students who are financially independent, students who lack a high school diploma, and the variety of student groups who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. These underrepresented groups, including first generation and minority students, have warranted considerable attention on their own (Horn & Carroll, 1996).

Non-traditional students are also known as adult learners who are at least 25 years old, attend school part-time, work full-time, be a veteran, have children, wait at least one year after high school before entering college, have a GED instead of a high school diploma, be a first-generation student (FGS), be enrolled in non degree programs, or have reentered a college program (Sheehy, 2013). However, according to Andragogy theory of (NODA, 2017) as cited by McDonald (2018) that age, marital status and type of students greatly influenced the writing proficiency. Academically, given their length of time out of school, most adult learners struggle with transitioning back into the classroom facing problems with skills like note taking, test taking, reading textbooks, and time management, thus, they faced significant challenges with their writing performance.

Also, the term non traditional has been applied to a complex population of students who are considered more mature, have been exposed to numerous life experiences, have diverse educational backgrounds and aspirations, choose a variety of enrollment patterns and are fulfilling diverse role relationship simultaneously (Kasworm, 2005).

In addition, for nontraditional students, college can be isolating and traumatic because non-traditional students are typically 25 years old and beyond and they have commitments to the different aspects of their lives. They are afraid of how can they accomplish all various tasks, especially in school, work and family (Buerck, Malmstrom & Peppers, 2002).

C. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 shows the relationship between the different variables of the study. This study conceptualizes the possible mediating effect of writing proficiency in English language to the Non-traditional students. It is a single variable study and this variable is the writing proficiency. Itis a form of communication that allows students to put their feelings and ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments, and to convey meaning through well-constructed text. It is also a significant skill in language production and its significance increases when it comes to writing in English language which is extensively used for global mediation of knowledge. This variable is indicated by ideas, organization, expression, conventions and legibility as given by Cox (2018). Ideas are what the topic is all about. It is the most important part of a piece of writing; organization assesses the fluency of expression, statement and support of ideas, appropriate paragraphing, effective essay parts, coherence and cohesion; expression is an act which requires thinking process at the highest level among language skills; conventions are the formal rules and informal guidelines that define what is considered to be correct (or appropriate) and incorrect (or inappropriate) in a piece of writing; legibility is the most important measure in determining whether the students are able to write the information effectively.
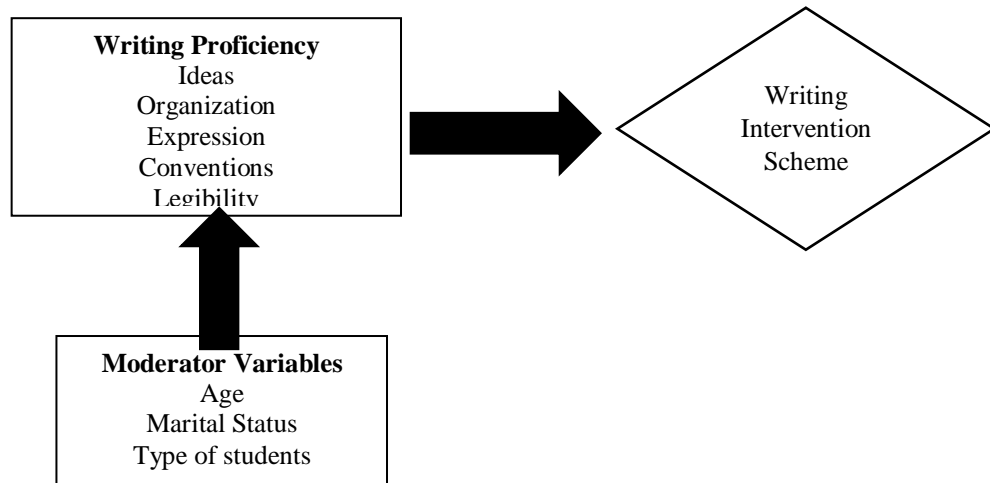

Writing Proficiency
Ideas
Organization
Expression
Conventions
Legibility

Writing
Intervention
Scheme

Moderator Variables
Age
Marital Status
Type of students

Fig. 1 : Conceptual Framework of the Study

D. Audience

In a certain institution, it is very observable that there are numerous population of adult learners. However, it has also been observed that there are students who discriminated them because of the performance that they manifested especially in English language use, particularly in their writing skills.

Moreover, this research on the non-traditional students provide additional insight into the factors that affect non-traditional students' success in higher education. Also, this will help other students to understand the situation of non-traditional students especially in their performance and participation in their various academic activities. Thus, this mixed methods study will be written for audiences who will assist in shaping and strengthening the decisions to be made for the choice of design in the study.

This research served as a porthole to glance the lives of non-traditional students who were both striving with the pressure of their studies and dealing with the demands of their courses. Through this, non-traditional students would have a reflective viewpoint of how their decisions and actions contributes on how they would wrestle their way towards their future success.

This would also help in giving consideration to the adult students in their academic performance most especially in performance pertaining to writing proficiency. This would also serve as a stepping stone so that the adult students will be spared from ridicule and discriminations gained from whole studentry whenever they commit mistakes in using English language. Thus, these students would continue in pursuing their dreams in life in behalf of the difficulties that they may encounter inside school zone.

To the participants of conferences, this study will help them develop a wider perspective on the mixed methods format, and learn from the experiences of the researchers in incorporating blended learning in education.

In the part of teachers, this study became the avenue to address the needs of their learner's specially the special needs of non-traditional students to cope and perform well in class.

To the school administrator, this became an ideal belvedere to promote and establish programs that were practical and responsive with compromising quality of teaching and learning. To the research adviser, panelists, the Research Ethics Committee, and Research Director, who are experienced and seasoned practitioner of mixed methods can share their expertise and significant concepts to enhance the study.

Lastly, this study enlightened and inspired future researchers to further conduct researches which are of similar concept but may look on other perspectives for non-traditional students and may use this as reference.

E. Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study is to unveil the writing proficiency in English language of lifelong learners in a local college most especially those who are studying at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. It was expected that personal accounts of the particular students from school records were involved in order to produce quality information in explaining the conditions of the respondents.

Also, this mixed methods study will address the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students most especially among the tertiary learners in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. A convergent parallel mixed method design will be used to collect complementary data on the same topic. In this study, an adapted research tool will be used to test the theory of Richard-Amato (1996) which states that students returning to school after a long break in their studies have experienced difficulties in their writing proficiency in English language. Concurrent with this data collection, qualitative interview will employ to analyze the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data is to bring together the strengths of both forms of research to corroborate results.

As a mixed method study applying the convergent parallel approach, relying upon the gathered data are not sufficient to move into conclusion. Thus, undergoing through inquiries is vital to obtain better analyses and broaden the gauge of knowledge about the difficulties of the students in dealing the language.

This study will serve as a more relevant reference of the writing proficiency of non-traditional students perceived in the locality of Kapalong, particularly in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology (KCAST). Thus, the study will aim to give a comprehensive emphasis on context with data and information about the writing proficiency of college students in Kapalong.

F. Research Questions

This study looked into the lives of non-traditional students of Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology who were out-of-school for many years but chosen to re-enter schooling at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. Specifically, it aims to seek answer to the following research questions.

1. What is the nature of writing proficiency in English Language of non-traditional students?
2. Is there a significant difference of non-traditional students' nature of writing proficiency based on the identified demographic profile?
3. What are the lived experiences of non-traditional students in their acquisition of writing proficiency of English language?
4. How do these experiences as differentiated by the identified demographic profiles shaped their attitude and aspirations towards writing proficiency?
5. To what extent do the qualitative data corroborate with quantitative data?
6. On the basis of the findings, what writing intervention can be crafted?

G. Literature Review

This part presents some related literature and studies that run parallel to this research in terms of area of concern and nature of study. This literature review is set to discuss the writing proficiency and its indicators: ideas, organization, expression, conventions and legibility; and the non-traditional students.

- Writing Proficiency

Writing is a form of communication that allows students to put their feelings and ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments, and to convey meaning through well-constructed text. It is a significant skill in language production and its significance increases when it comes to writing in English language which is extensively used for global mediation of knowledge (Mahboob, 2014; Mansoor, 2005; Marlina & Giri, 2014; Rahman, 2002).

Also, writing is a fundamental skill that facilitates communication among individuals. As children proceed in formal education, writing is employed as a form of communication which demonstrates knowledge and creativity. Over time, the ability to effectively write becomes increasingly important. In fact, writing has been identified as a threshold skill for employment and promotion (National Commission on Writing [NCW], 2004).

Writing skills play a critical role across the lifespan. Beginning in the grade school level, students may be expected to write in order to demonstrate their knowledge on a specific topic (Graham, 2006). Writing can be used as a vehicle for increasing a student's understanding of a topic (Graham & Hebert, 2010) or improve other literacy skills (Abbott, Berninger & Fayol, 2010; NICHD & IRA, 2012). Being able to produce high quality compositions becomes a vital skill for students.

Writing is a most important skill for individuals, allowing them to express themselves effectively, and to communicate efficiently with others. According to Akyol (2007), writing entails the ability to use motor skills to generate the symbols and signs, which in turn generate our thoughts. To Güneş (2007), on the other hand, writing is the expression of the information in the brain,

in the written form. That is why it is crucial for students to understand, and reflect in their brains, what they listen to or read. However, it is the hardest to master language skill because writing is a complex process requiring the coordination of many cognitive skills such as planning, combining, transforming, and reviewing (Benjamin, 2005; Canady, 2008;García and Fidalgo, 2008). Writing is not a skill we are born with, but one developed solely through education (Duran and Akyol, 2010).

Children must begin mastering writing skills early in school so they can successfully build on new knowledge they obtain each year. Knowledge about the writing topic as well as knowledge on how to write both influence compositions and obtaining these types of knowledge is complex (McCutchen, 1986; Olinghouse, Graham, & Gillespie, 2015). Like many academic skills, the hierarchical nature of obtaining writing ability requires that certain skills are mastered in a specific order and takes years to develop (Kellogg, 2008). The development of these skills can be altered as early as first grade (Kim, Puranik, & Otaiba, 2015).

Writing has been given great emphasis in the Philippine educational system since the teaching and learning of English support the aim of enhancing the English competence of Filipino learners. Authorities agree that writing is one of the highest forms of academic skills for it reflects a person's level of language competence, concept development, and abstraction. However, writing is the most challenging area in learning second language. It is based on appropriate and strategic use of language with structural accuracy and communicative potential (Dar & Khan, 2015; Hyland, 2003; Mahboob, 2014).

Also, it is a complicated process primarily because it requires a combination of skills (Lasaten, et. al, 2018). Also, Lasaten added that writing is frequently accepted as being the last language skill to be acquired. Mastering written skills is a major challenge for learners. Writing in English is considered a challenging task for students who learn English as a second language. Moreover, the social and cultural background of the learners greatly affect their writing proficiency since some of them may experience lexical, syntactical, and morphological difficulties as influenced by their native language.

Also, writing is a process of construction and it has been one of the most difficult skills that students have. It is an important part of language learning, because it is an essential activity that requires enough thinking about a specific topic to analyze and classify any background knowledge. Authors believed that writing is all about process. Learning how you write, or how you create, is just as important as what you're actually writing about. Thus, authors suggested writing processes and these are: listen to your heart not your head, ignore your haters, find your creative zone, embrace imperfection, and put yourself out there (Guemide, 2012).

According to Grenville (2001), writing involves a set of mental steps that most experienced writers do almost unconsciously. They go through these mental steps —so fast and so seamlessly. Novice learners of writing, however, need to think about it consciously, and practice it till it becomes an automatic activity. In addition, writing is not merely a linguistic and social activity. It is actually a skill that can be honed through rigid practice. Students, in this skill, should present their work to audience in a specific context, and with a specific purpose for them to get feedback for improvement and seek one's attitude towards writing (Ducken, 2014; Mubarak, 2013; Santoso, 2010).

Moreover, writing has been seen as secondary or only a written form of the spoken language, hence, it has been neglected as an area in language teaching in favor of the spoken mode. Unlike the spoken interaction, the writing process is claimed to be a different task given the demands it imposes on the text and the text's producer. There is no immediate feedback that may serve as a guide for the writer, helping her, thus, to make some anticipations about the reader's reaction vis-à- vis her/his text (Olshtain, 1991).

One's ability to write well in a second/foreign language also necessitates an adequate knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary, stylistic and so on, of the language in question. An important point concerning writing is that learning to write can be based on a real-world need. This is clearly observed in foreign language contexts whereby learners learn to write in the target language because they have more realistic needs for writing in that language (Weigle, 2002).

Writing is a kind of skill, which is needed to be used in several stages of life of an individual, as well as it is included in the skill types supposed to be used in an active way for students. By developing the writing proficiency of the students, making them qualified writers is considered as an important matter all over the world (Seban & Tavşanlı, 2015; Beach & Ward, 2013; Gerde, Bingham & Wasik, 2012; Smith, 2008). Although there are many skills that affect the literacy development of the individuals, it is seen that writing skill has become prominent during the process. In the report of the National Early Literacy Panel [NELP] (2008), one of the six skills that are related with the literacy development at the highest level is the writing skill. Since the writing skill affects literacy and reading comprehension skills directly in the upcoming years, it is indicated as one of the most important skills which are needed to be developed since early childhood (Hammill, 2004; Gerde, Bingham & Wasik, 2012).

- Ideas.

According to (Peha, 2003), ideas are what the topic is all about. It is the most important part of a piece of writing and it is the main reason why writers write. It looks into the treatment of the topic, variety of ideas, interpretation of the topic, relevance, accuracy of details and purpose of writing. If we didn't have any ideas, we wouldn't need any words to express them. Without ideas there wouldn't be any writing. Imagine taking an entire piece and scrunching it down into a single sentence that still said more or less the same thing. As Peha added that a good paragraph should contain sentences that are relevant to the paragraph's main subject and point. While the topic sentence sets up the main idea, the rest of the sentences provide details that support or explain this main idea. If you see a sentence that does not seem to relate to the topic sentence, it is probably irrelevant. The simplest way to think about the

main idea of a piece is to think of it as the one most important thing the writer wants to know. If the writer had to write just one sentence to represent everything he or she wanted to say, that would be the main idea. While a main idea is absolutely essential, it's not the whole piece. For one thing, it's hard for readers to understand what a writer means if they only have a single sentence to go on. And that's why good writing includes lots of interesting details.

Abdulkareem (2013) asserts that teaching students how to brainstorm ideas can contribute in minimizing their problems in academic writing. Furthermore, Al Fadda (2012) concludes that preparing an outline of their topics before starting to write, and following the three main stages (planning, writing, and editing) might assist novice writers to be successful in academic writing.

- Organization.

Assesses the fluency of expression, statement and support of ideas, appropriate paragraphing, effective essay parts, coherence and cohesion. No matter how well you write, no matter how carefully you proofread, your article or story can't live up to its potential if it's not well organized. Organizing thoughts and ideas is important in written communication (Hertzberg, 2018). Moreover, Hertzberg added that when preparing long form text, your goal is to make that text as easy for your reader to absorb as possible. If the reader has to double back to make sense of your article, or if it's presented in a babbling stream of consciousness from which the reader must fish for your main points, your article will have less impact. A side from making your article more readable, organization can make it more attractive. When a reader comes to your page and finds a visually appealing post, she's more likely to stick around and read what you have to say about your subject.

According to Wilson(2006) that communicating your ideas effectively towards your readers require good structure and organization. Knowing what to say first, how to guide your reader from one section to another, and where to add information and insights can make your writing powerful and professional. No matter what kind of writing you do, you'll find that good organization takes your work to the next level. Moreover, whether you write fiction, non-fiction, or any other type of work, writing is always about clearly communicating ideas to your reader. In order to be clear and compelling, you need to present the right information in the right order. The order you use and the details you choose to include can drastically affect how well your reader understands what you're trying to say. In addition, your reader will take away an impression from your work. If it is poorly organized and hard to follow, your audience may see it as amateurish and rough feeling. On the other hand, if your organization is clear with smooth transitions and just the right amount of detail, your reader will feel confident in the information you are presenting. Your work will look polished and professional, and that's important for any kind of writing.

- Expression.

Expression is an act which requires thinking process at the highest level among language skills (Olinghouse & Santangelo, 2010). Expression is a crucial part of communication and critical thinking. For students, developing strong writing skills not only helps students' grades but also prepares them for their academic and professional futures. Whether writing essays, taking notes or applying for scholarships, students must learn to develop their ideas and proofread their written work before sharing it.

Olinghouse & Santangelo added that expression is one of the most challenging tasks for children to learn. Students who experience difficulties in acquiring fluent and efficient writing skills may struggle to generate ideas, construct meaningful sentences, sequence and organise their ideas into paragraphs, and use grammar appropriately.

- Conventions.

Conventions is a set of generally accepted standards for written English. It is used to make the writing more readable. In other words, writers do things in a certain way so the reader can figure out what the writer is trying to say. Writing conventions such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure help make a student's essay clear and understandable. Through this, students should apply spelling rules correctly, use correct punctuation to smoothly guide the reader through the paper, use verb tenses correctly, write sentences that express complete thoughts and demonstrate paragraph organization and use smooth transitions. When the audience can finish reading, without having to stop to try to figure out what was actually intended, the value of learning these writing conventions becomes clear (Kautzer, 2010).

According to Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), (2011) that conventions are the formal rules and informal guidelines that define what is considered to be correct (or appropriate) and incorrect (or inappropriate) in a piece of writing. Conventions include the surface features of a text such as mechanics, spelling, and attribution of sources, as well as more global concerns such as content, tone, style, organization, and evidence. Conventions facilitate reading by making material easier to comprehend and creating common expectations between writer and reader. As multimodal texts become more prevalent, teachers will also need to attend to the evolving conventions of these new forms, developing appropriate conventions with new students and colleagues. Correct use of conventions is defined within specific contexts and genres. The ability to understand, analyze, and make decisions about using conventions appropriate for the purpose, audience, and genre is important in writing. Moreover, writers use conventions to enhance and clarify the meaning of what they write. Conventions allow writers to specify the exact way a word or phrase should be interpreted by the reader; they help the reader understand exactly what the writer had in mind. When you can't be there to read your writing to someone else, conventions can help do the reading for you. Whenever you write something, you hear it in your head first. You know exactly how it should sound, but the reader doesn't. Conventions guide the reader through your

writing by telling the reader when to stop, when to go, when to speed up, when to slow down, and so on. They make your writing sound just the way it sounded to you when you wrote it down.

Conventions, according Peha (2003) are the formally and informally agreed-upon ways we use language, whether spoken or written. Some conventions may be grammatical, but others depend largely on how language is used by groups with higher social standing. Without conventions, writing would be a mess. If we didn't put a space between each word, everything would run together. Without the convention of correct spelling, writers could never be sure if readers would be able to read the words they had written. And even if we all spelled each word the same way, without the convention of punctuation, writers would still have trouble getting their message across. Without conventions we might be able to communicate very simple ideas and emotions in our writing, but we wouldn't be able to capture the complexity of our thinking or the rich rhythms of human speech. Our voices would be muted because we'd never be able to make what we write match the way we wanted to sound.

Moreover, Peha believes that at first, conventions can seem like a big hassle. But the more you work with them, the more you'll be able to make them work for you. Conventions are a powerful part of writing, and you can tap into that power with something as simple as a comma or a pair of quotation marks. Your ideas are important. They deserve to be read and to be understood exactly the way you intend.

- Legibility.

Legibility is a most important measure in determining whether the students have developed adequate cursive handwriting skills. Legibility is based on criteria such as accurate writing of letters in compatible sizes, with acceptable connections between letters, as well as forming correct extensions of letters, adjusting for correct pitch and spaces between words, and strict observation of the line of letters (Akyol, 2007; Tseng and Chow, 2000).

Legibility is the lowest-level consideration in content usability: it's whether people are able to see, distinguish, and recognize the characters and words in your text. Legibility is thus mainly determined by visual design, specifically typography. Legibility involves the readability of letters, as well as spacing within and between words. Speed is important as children advance beyond the first few grades so that they can use writing efficiently in a variety of tasks (Nielsen, 2015).

The importance of having legible handwriting is still high, despite the increased use of digital technology in most environments. The ability to produce legible handwriting at speed is a skill that once acquired will benefit people throughout their life. By being able to write in a legible manner, we can all spend more time concentrating on the structure of what we're writing. This not only leads to having writing which is easier to read, but it is also easier to understand the message which is trying to be conveyed. It seems that technology firms have increased their awareness in the need for legible handwriting too. More and more personal computers are being equipped with handwriting recognition technology. This software encourages the use of handwriting to interact with devices along with acknowledging that handwriting remains an important skill required for communication (Sally Wenham, 2014).

- Non-traditional Students

A nontraditional student is a student who is 25 years of age and beyond, experienced delayed enrollment into college, attends school part or full time, works part or full time while enrolled, is financially independent, has dependents other than spouse, or is a single parent (Shillingford & Karlin, 2013). In this connection, most non-traditional college students lack academic preparedness, motivation, family and financial support, which align with key factors most researchers listto define "at risk" students. Researchers have shown that motivation is a factor in student success, and the learning environment, as well as the learners' past and present environmental circumstances, affect motivation and student learning and success. Students' perceptions of a supported classroom environment often predict their motivation, engagement, and achievement (Buhs, 2013; Howley, 2014; McKimm & Zumbrunn, 2014).

In addition, adult students, also known as "non-traditional students", "re-entry students", "returning students" are defined as adults who return to school full-time or part-time while maintaining responsibilities such as employment, family, and other responsibilities of adult life. They are the students who have been out from schooling for long years and decided to return to school for some purposes. Also, these students face serious barriers to both re-enrollment and degree completion. Many of these learners originally left college due to financial challenges and difficulties with balancing life, work, and school, and those challenges are still part of their lives (Dreckmeier & Tichman, 2010).

Moreover, Shan (2014) construed that adult learners acknowledged and perceived English language as important for their future career, and they showed eagerness to learn the language and finish their careers. However, the somehow experienced difficulties and problems in learning the language, although they have some advantages over children in terms of life experiences, since their exposure is not solely on the language but in their mother tongue languages.

Also, non-traditional students bring learning styles and life experiences to the college experiences that may help or hinder learning and provide critical foundations for future success. The authors stated that although non-traditional students present challenges for educators, they also provide opportunities for life experience and wisdom to positively affect college environment (Kenner, 2011; Weinerman, 2011).

Challenges were encountered, however, by the positive traits mature learners bring to the college environment. Non-traditional students are often more achievement-oriented than traditional students with increased motivation and desire to link their lives, work, and studies. Also, non-traditional students are more likely view their education as an investment rather than traditional students. However, even though these adult learners are more goal-oriented and participate more in class, they can still feel isolated from their traditional classmates. Although community colleges attract a diverse mix of students, most community college environments are designed for traditional learners (Ayers, 2015; Gilardi, 2011; Ryan, 2013).

Moreover, nontraditional students possess more respect for themselves and others than traditional students due to their own experiences as adults, parents, employees and employers, caregivers, and respected members of the community. Whether those skills set influence their traditional peers in the community college classroom has not been explored (Wyatt, 2011; Hagedorn, 2010).

In fact, researchers have shown that non-traditional students are a challenge to community colleges, with different expectations and needs than traditional-aged students. technological inadequacies, conflicting personal commitments, and time priorities of non-traditional students also compound their struggles for success. In addition, it claims that the more college student works, the less likely he or she will persist in college (Dillow&Synder, 2013; Haberler, 2014).

Furthermore, many non-traditional students attend classes part-time or at night because they work a full-time job. It is also often the case that these students rely on that full-time job to make their living. In cases like this, it can be difficult to balance work commitments with finding the time to not only attend classes but to do homework and to study. Even attending classes part-time can be a major commitment of time and you may also have trouble working your class schedule around your work schedule. This is one of the main reasons many non-traditional students prefer online classes – they offer greater flexibility and you don't always have to travel to the school to attend class (Barrington, 2017).

Many non-traditional students, attending college is a life-long dream and they have worked very hard to make it a reality. Unfortunately, it is also fairly common for non-traditional students to lack the kind of support system that many traditional students have. This makes it even more important to have confidence in yourself and in your abilities – that is the only way you are going to succeed. Also, because these students are older and typically balancing jobs, families, and school, they face different issues than their traditional counterparts (Bidwell, 2014). Time management is a significant issue for adult learners as they struggle to find a balance between maintaining their family and financial obligations while still performing well in school (Ross-Gordon, 2011).

American colleges and universities face additional challenges in providing a quality education to first-generation, nontraditional students. These students are inadequately prepared academically and psychologically for college-level work and learning (Howell, 2001). Challenges such as these continue to be exaggerated when students are unable to garner a sense of belonging or connection. Students must become involved in the academic experience and level necessary to achieve academic and personal success (Chaves, 2003).

Academically, given their length of time out of school, most adult learners struggle with transitioning back into the classroom facing problems with skills like note taking, test taking, reading textbooks, time management, and teacher expectations (Higgins, 2010; Ross-Gordon, 2011). Some have never encountered a syllabus, nor have they ever been taught how to create academic structure for themselves, upon which they thrive (Bidwell, 2014; Peters, Hyun, Taylor, & Varney, 2010).

Finally, adult learners' anxieties can be their biggest battle. More than half of students surveyed in a study by the Lumina Foundation said fear kept them from even trying to return to school (Erisman& Steele, 2012). Once classes have started, many experience various anxieties related to the classroom like attending classes with younger students, guilt over missing events in their family's lives, selfishness, and low self-esteem (Erisman& Steele, 2012; Perna, 2016). Not addressing these issues leads nearly 70% of nontraditional students to drop out of school, some within four short months (Deming, Goldin, & Katz, 2013; New, 2014).

- Perspective on the Impact of Demographic Profile on the Writing Proficiency
Numerous demographic variables have been studied in collaboration with Writing Proficiency such as age, marital status and type of students.

Different studies have been conducted to explore the possible effect of age on the writing proficiency of non-traditional students. Concerning on the effect of age on writing proficiency in English language, research suggests that age is a considerable predictor that relates to writing proficiency among non-traditional students. As based on the study of Donovan and MacIntyre (2004), examining the relationship between age and writing proficiency has shown conflicting results. Studies have shown that there is significant negative and positive relationship between writing proficiency and age. However, previous studies of age in more collectivist cultures have shown that older people are venerated due to their knowledge, sage and experience resulting from age (McCann, Kellerman, Giles, Gallois & Viladot, 2004).

Sunbul (2003) found that age could influence different dimensions of writing, and that young age was a significant predictor of a low level of writing proficiency. Overall Sunbul's results showed that the younger the learner, the higher their level of proficiency in writing. Likewise, Antoniou et al. (2006) as well as Ozdemir (2007) found that younger learner reported to have higher writing proficiency levels than older learners.

Similarly, in a study in Macau, Luk, Chan, Cheong, and Ko (2010) revealed that age was one of the demographic variables which could significantly contribute to writing proficiency. Younger learners tended to show higher levels of writing proficiency than their older colleagues. However, on the contrary to the findings of the aforementioned studies, Brewer and Shapard (2004) revealed that older learners have higher writing proficiency levels than younger ones.

However, as Dewaele (2007) stated that age is also a neglected variable regarding the writing proficiency in English language, while it is evident that adult and young learners cannot be treated equally in regards to their responses to language learning and writing proficiency. In his study, Dewaele (2002) found that mature learners found it harder to accommodate to the rules of English language; therefore, their proficiency in writing is lower than the younger learners.

Marital status has also been investigated as another demographic variable related to writing proficiency in English language in several studies, resulting in inconsistent findings. In most studies higher level of writing proficiency was recorded for married learners while in a few other studies the reverse was the case.

Some researchers have found that single learners have higher level of writing proficiency than those who are married(De Heus & Diekstra, (1999); Ozdemir, (2007); Yongxin et al,(2007). Similarly, it was found that single learners experience higher level of proficiency than those who are married (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). In another study in Malaysia, Mukundan and Khandehroo (2009) confirmed that the writing proficiency of married learners is higher than those single learners. This implies that single learners have experienced difficulty in writing compared with married learners due to their lack of focus and motivation. In the same line, according toGoutas (2008), unmarried learners tended to experience low level of writing proficiency than married people non-traditional students.

However, some research findings show no significant difference between the level of writing proficiency of married and single non-traditional students. A study by Louw, George, and Esterhuyse (2011)reported that marital status was one of the demographic factors which did not make significant differences in students' writing proficiency levels.

Concerning on the type of students, Dunca et. al (2013) stated that students who are working and non-working have a big impact on their level of writing proficiency. However, working students are those individuals who find ways to make things possible for them. Also, Duncastated that it is technically possible to work full-time while studying full-time and both areas are important and require constant attention. Also, the student's jobs have become a sort of trend among students around the world, who want to work while studying. However, this trend become one of the reasons why some students face academic problems most especially in their level of writing proficiency. This problem has been developed with the question as to how the corresponding workloads and required working hours of working students affect their academic performance. Moreover, working in full time while attending school creates time shortage and the students require highly developed time management skill in order to handle school and work.

In the study of Anderson (2013), students who work as full time may have a negative effect on their academic performance including their writing proficiency. According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), that when students work more hours, their grades decline. They are also more likely to have lower ability to write and career goals, including being less likely to attend classes, than their non-working counterparts.

Moreover, students with part time job do not tend to have higher academic achievement and their level of writing proficiency is also affected, because their focus time of study has been divided with their working time. Better academic achievement only can be achieved by students who spend more time on academic related activities (Sarah &Hudson, 2005). In addition, the effect of part-time jobs towards students' academic performance do not come out of thin air. Many researches indicating that employment have negatively affected students' academic achievement. Most students have lower grades, their level of writing proficiency is low rather than those full time students (Watanabe, 2005).

The different works, studies and literature mentioned apparently view that writing proficiency in English language have a significant effect to the non-traditional students. The related literature and study strongly support the idea that these non-traditional students must be heard, supported and empowered. In the same manner, the above-mentioned literature/studies helped me understand better my study. It is evident, therefore, that on the basis of the various literature we can seek to discover and understand the meaning of a particular phenomenon.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODS

This section of the paper discussed the methods and processes as well as the instruments in looking for the relevant and reliable information and evidences to further address the study.

A. Research Design

Mixed methods research includes collecting, analyzing and interpreting data using both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or series of studies in order to investigate a phenomenon or attempt to answer a research question. In successful mixed methods research, the methodologies chosen will have complementary strengths and no overlapping weaknesses. This will result in a comprehensive look at the research problem from many perspectives and will offer a more complete picture when analyzing results (CIRT, 2018).

Mixed methods research represents research that involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008). More generally, one can consider mixing at any or all of the following research components: purposes, research questions, theoretical drive, methods, methodology, paradigm data, analysis, and results. One can also include mixing views of different researches, participants, or stakeholders. The creativity of the mixed methods researcher designing a study is extensive (Schoonenboom & Burke Johnson, 2017).

Apparently, descriptive-comparative approach is part of the quantitative phase. Descriptive-comparative approach aims to describe current conditions. It uses large samples, tests, questionnaires, and surveys which focused on information related to preferences, attitudes, practices, concerns, or interests. Statistical analysis of numerical data is part of the procedure (AECT, 2001). This study is employing descriptive survey for it describes the utterances involved in the writing proficiency of non-traditional students in English language. Instrument development is also expected in the quantitative phase.

For the phenomenological approach, it focuses on the rich description of some aspects of experience, described through language. However, phenomenological philosophy has developed in different directions. Therefore, each phenomenologically inspired approach has a different emphasis depending on the specific strand of phenomenological philosophy that informs the methodology (Langdridge, D. 2007).

Further, Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Typically, interviews are conducted with a group of individuals who have first-hand knowledge of an event, situation or experience. The interview(s) attempts to answer two broad questions (Moustakas, 1994): What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situation have typically influenced your experiences of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013)? Other forms of data such as documents, observations and art may also be used. The data is then read and reread and culled for like phrases and themes that are then grouped to form clusters of meaning (Creswell, 2013). Through this process the researcher may construct the universal meaning of the event, situation or experience and arrive at a more profound understanding of the phenomenon.

The selected research design of this study is a convergent parallel mixed method, the most of the well-known approach to mixed method. In this design, both types of data are collected concurrently prioritized equally. As to order, survey is collected first then followed by focus group or one-on-one interview. Then, these two data sets are analyzed separately. After which, the results are merge and combined results are interpreted. Additionally, the design is appropriate in the study as it try to look for convergence, divergence, contradictions, or relationships of two sources of data (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Scholars began discussing this design as early as 1970's (e.g., Jack, 1979), and it is probably the most common approach used across disciplines. The convergent design was initially conceptualized as a triangulation design where the two different methods were used to obtain triangulated results about a single topic, but it often becomes confused with the use of triangulation in qualitative research, and researched often use this design for purposes other than to produce triangulated findings. Since the 1970's, this design has gone many names, including simultaneous triangulation (Morse, 1991), parallel study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), convergence model (Creswell, 1999), and concurrent triangulation (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al. 2003). Regardless of the name, the convergent design occurs when the researcher collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data during the same phase of the research process and then merges the two sets of results into an overall interpretation.

In a convergent parallel design, qualitative data through interview, audio and video recording and transcription, and quantitative data through a survey questionnaire will be collected and analyzed simultaneously. For a qualitative phase, thematic analysis will be used in order to analyze the result. For the quantitative data, statistical analysis will be employed to get the results on the stories and language proficiency of non-traditional students, and extent on how quantitative data corroborate qualitative data.

The purpose of the convergent design is to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic (Morse, 1991) to best understand the research problem. The intent in using this design is to bring together the differing strengths and no overlapping weaknesses of quantitative methods (large sample size, trends, generalization) with those of qualitative methods (Patton, 1990). This design is used when the researcher wants to triangulate the methods by directly comparing and contrasting quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings for corroboration and validation purposes.
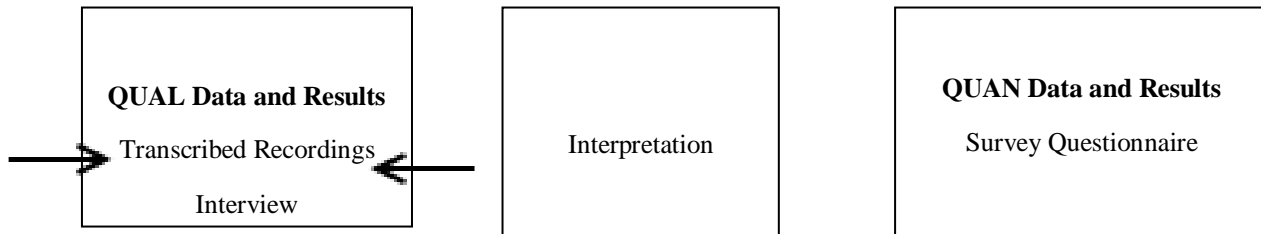
QUAL Data and Results Transcribed Recordings Interview	Interpretation	QUAN Data and Results Survey Questionnaire

Fig. 2 : Convergent Parallel Design

B. Place of Study

Davao del Norte, and once known simply as Davao, is a province of the Philippines located in the Davao Region in Mindanao. It's subdivided into 8 municipalities and 3 cities, the provincial capital is Tagum City. It borders the province of Agusan del Sur to the north, Bukidnon to the west, Compostela Valley to the east, and the city of Davao to the south. Davao also includes Samal Island to the south in the Davao Gulf. The province of Compostela Valley used to be part of Davao until it was made into an independent province in 1998. Before 1967, the four provinces-Davao, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, and Compostela Valley-were once a single province named Davao. The Davao Region covers this historic province. Davao del Norte is also known as "the banana capital of the Philippines."

Davao del Norte has a population of 743,811 and an area of 3,463.0 km², making it the country's 32nd most populated province. The population density is 215 per km². Main languages spoken are Bisaya and Davaoeño.The Davao Region is coterminous with this former province.

The main attraction of Davao del Norte to tourists is its remoteness to urbanity. Because the province is highly industrial and agricultural at the same time, it is considered as among the most progressive provinces in all of Region XI in Mindanao. There are many beach resorts and agricultural farms that welcome tourists and travelers who like to watch and observe.

Davao del Norte is noted for its great diving sites, white-sand pristine, and ideally preserved flora and fauna. People also come to buy bulks of fresh fruits, specially bananas as there are huge banana plantations in the area. Other harvested produce includes mangoes, rice, corn, coconuts, and of course the very controversial durian.

The study will be conducted in Kapalong, Davao del Norte. The municipality has the only local college and it is one of the four recognized local colleges in Mindanao that offers tuition-free higher education. Moreover, the institution offered seven(7) programs namely: Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in English, Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education – Generalist, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Financial Management and Marketing Management, Bachelor of Science in Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Office Administration major in Office Management, Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Bachelor of Agricultural Technology which are all CHED-recognized and it has the population of 2,093 enrollees.

Furthermore, it is the first local college to be accredited Level 1 of its four programs namely: BSEd major in English, BEEd – Generelist, BSBA major in Financial Management and BAT in Mindanao by the Association of Local Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (ALCU-COA). Recently, the said institution undergone Level II accreditation visit on September 25-27, 2018 while the three remaining CHED recognized programs namely BPA, BSOA major in Office Management, and BSC were also subjected for Level I accreditation on the same dates.

Fig. 3: Map of Kapalong, Davao del Norte

C. Participants

The participants to be selected will be those who can best inform satisfy the research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study (Kuper, Lingard & Levinson, 2008). In this study, the key participants will bethe students coming from the different programs of the only local college of the Municipality of Kapalong who are enrolled in the second semester of the school year 2018-2019 regardless of courses taken and year level.

- *Quantitative Phase*

In the quantitative phase, a total of 150 respondents will be chosen using the universal sampling. Universal sampling or otherwise known as total population sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique where one chooses to examine the entire population (i.e., the total population) that have a particular set of characteristics. Since total population sampling involves all members within the population of interest, it is possible to get deep insights into the phenomenon that is existing. With such wide coverage of the population of interest, there is also a reduced risk of missing potential insights from members that are not included. Whilst total population sampling is a purposive sampling technique (i.e., a type of non-probability sampling), which means that it is not possible to make statistical generalizations about the sample being studied, the use of universal sampling does make it possible to make analytical generalizations about the population being studied (Lund Research, 2012).

- *Qualitative Phase*

In the qualitative phase, universal sampling will be used in the study wherein informants were selected based upon their age. There were 17 non-traditional students who were selected based on prescribed pre-inclusion criteria. These students were divided equally into informants and participants. Ten which served as research informants for the In-depth interview while the remaining seven served as the research participants for the Focus Group Discussion. The universal sampling method will be used in determining the respondents to ensure the acquisition of authentic experiences relevant to the study. The participants of the study will be selected based on the following criteria: KCAST students whose age is 25 and beyond and stopped schooling for almost 3 years and beyond after graduating in high school before proceeding to college.

Moreover, to protect the identity of the participants, coding will be used in the form of pseudonyms. Each participant in the interview will be coded and given pseudonyms base on their personality and behavior manifested during the activity.

The selected students served as the key witnesses to testify their experiences in the experiment to be conducted. Also, these students were the source of information to reveal their experiences in dealing with the language in behalf of their situation. The selected and identified number of respondents that were involved in this research has also been supported by (Mason, 2010) who said that there are at least six participants for the in-depth and at least another six for focus group discussion in a qualitative study was enough to reach the saturation point where themes were extracted.

Moreover, the students were also selected from different college departments for the study to reflect more realistic findings. All of these were done to ensure the quality of the conduct as well as the findings of the study.

D. Research Instrument
- Validity Issues

To address the validity issues of the methods and designs employed in the study, experts will be consulted. The use and conduct of concurrent parallel mixed method design will be consulted to an expert in the field. Interview guide questions and survey questionnaires will be checked and validated by the experts. The sampling technique to be used in choosing the participants for interview and survey will be based from the suggestions of the expert panels. For the qualitative data, furnished copy of transcriptions will be provided to the concerned interview participants in assurance that nothing will be altered in the transcription. For quantitative data, especially on the statistical aspect, expert statistician will be referred to. To achieve validity of this study, all suggestions from the experts will be considered with the approval of the adviser.

- Quantitative Phase

For the quantitative phase, the researcher will utilize an adapted research tool to assess the participants in terms of the indicators of writing proficiency such as ideas, organization, expression, conventions and legibility together with its rubrics (See Appendix A for references). The 5-point Likert scale will be utilized to determine the frequency of the indicators. The scale will range from 5 with always to 1 with never. The survey questionnaire will be made to corroborate the results which will be gathered in the recorded interview. After the formulation, the instrument would undergo validation from the experts.

- Qualitative Phase

For the qualitative phase, during the IDI and FGD, guide questions will frame the process. This set of questions will also be subject for expert validation. There will be important devices to be used in the study which served as an essential tool for the justification of evidences wherein the information about the informants will be from their own perspective.

The use of camera is necessary to capture the real expressions and emotions to be showed by the informants during the interview. Also, for the interview, guide questions will be utilized. The set of questions will also be subject for expert validation. In addition, the use of video camera is also important. This is a credible source of evidence that covered the detailed observation of expressions and emotions of the participants in the process of interview. Moreover, a voice recorder was a helpful device to be used in the study. As this offered a clear voice records that was also needed for verifications that were not clear in the video.

The device specified above were the most important tools that were utilized in the process of the conduct of the study, for these gave trustworthy information since it showed realistic and probable evidences. They will be positioned at the back of the interviewee, facing the interviewer. An interview notes will be prepared and used during the course of the interview to take note very important ideas/information shared which will have great chance of becoming a core idea or theme.

To interpret the data of the language proficiency of the non-traditional college students, the table below with a 4-point scale will be used to determine its level.

Ranges of Means for indicator	Ranges of means for overall	Description	Interpretation	Indications
3.25 – 4.00	16-20	Very High	The language of Non-traditional Students is very extensive.	Strong
2.50 – 3.24	11-15	High	The language of Non-traditional Students is extensive.	Developing
1.75 – 2.49	6-10	Low	The language of Non-traditional Students is less extensive.	Emerging

| 1.00 – 1.74 | 1-5 | Very Low | The language of Non-traditional Students is not extensive. | Beginning |

Writing Proficiency in English Language of Non-traditional Students

E. Data Collection
The following procedures were followed during the conduct of the study:

- Permission

Prior to the conduct of the study, a letter of approval to conduct the study from the Dean of Graduate School of Immaculate Conception Graduate School, MAEd-English, to the administrator, to the Office of Registrar of Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology where the information that I needed were highly available,to the Officer In-Charge of the office of the College President of the said institution in particular was obtained noted by the research adviser. The use of forms for data collection as recommended in the convergent parallel mixed method design will be done.

➢ *Quantitative Phase*
- Orientation

Upon approval, the participants and individuals were oriented about the conduct of the study, its significance, its purpose, and objectives. Each item on the survey questionnaire and the corresponding individual scale explained thoroughly to the participants. More so, the participants were asked to sign an Informed Consent Form specifying their voluntary participation in the study. Next, as the researcher, the participants were informed about the protection of their confidentiality. Hence, the data gathered was used only for the study. A schedule was set for the administration of survey questionnaire.

- Survey Questionnaire

In the quantitative phase, a standardized survey questionnaire will be used. It will be administered to a group of non-traditional students of Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. The results will be tallied, computed and analyzed to corroborate with the results of the qualitative data. The qualitative and quantitative phases of the study will be done simultaneously.

The gathered document would remain confidential between the researcher and the participants. Also, the interview and the retrieved documents were analyzed, interpreted and treated basing upon the problem of the study and serve as a great help to acquire a clear vision in showing the occurrences of the phenomena in the students' lives. The information that obtained from recordings was written down for greater degree of accuracy in the analysis of data. To make the results genuine, it was supported with related literature.

➢ *Qualitative Phase*
- Orientation

Upon approval, the participants and individuals will be oriented about the conduct of the study, its significance, its purpose, and objectives. Each question on the interview guide question can be translated to any language that the participants understand best. Furthermore, the questions can be answered in any language the participant is most comfortable with. More so, the participants will be asked to sign an Informed Consent Form specifying their voluntary participation in the study. Next, as the researcher, it will be important to inform the participants on the protection of their confidentiality. Hence, the data gathered will be used only for the study. A schedule shall be set for the conduct of in-depth interview and focus group discussion.

To start the interview, the researcher first introduces herself to the participants. Thank them for their time and willingness to share their views. Then, present the purpose and scope of the study, and inform the participants that the interview will be video recorded but it will be positioned in an angle hiding the participants' identity. In addition, the researcher prepares questions before the schedule for the conduct of in-depth interview and FGD and these questions were validated by the experts. Moreover, the researcher starts with a question that is important, and followed by supplementary questions and probing questions. The researcher may proceeds from one question to the other once the question has been answered on her satisfaction. Each question on the interview guide can be translated to any language that the participants understand best. Furthermore, the questions can be answered in any language the participant is most comfortable with. She encourages and elicits responses with non-committal body language, such as nodding, or murmuring "uh huh," and so on. The researcher ends the interview by thanking the participants.

- In-Depth Interview (IDI)

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Boyce and Neale, 2006).

In the qualitative phase, a one-on-one interview will be conducted to the seven (7) participants to gather information on the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students. Each interview will be conducted only once. An adopted and

modified guide questions will be utilized (see Appendix A). Interview notes will be cross-validated using the video-recorded interview. Final transcript will be verified by the interviewee for accuracy. The recorded interview and transcript will be kept.

- Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion involves gathering people from similar backgrounds or experiences together to discuss a specific topic of interest. It is a form of qualitative research where questions are asked about their perceptions attitudes, beliefs, opinion or ideas. In focus group discussion participants are free to talk with other group members; unlike other research methods it encourages discussions with other participants. In this study, a group of students will be interviewed. FGD is utilized to validate the gathered data in the IDI. Also, it is used to dig more about and confirm if results in IDI and FGD have similarities.

F. Data Analysis

In analyzing the quantitative phase, the data that will be generated from the questionnaire will be treated employing various statistical tools such mean, and standard deviation will be used to analyze the data.

However, for the qualitative data, the use of thematic analysis will be applied. This will be used to identify the themes that are being generated from the statements of the participants/informants during the interview.

➢ Quantitative Data

Mean will be used to determine the level of writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students. Standard Deviation will be used to measure the level of the students' writing proficiency skills in ideas, organization, expression, conventions and legibility.

➢ Qualitative Phase

Thematic Analysis. In this study, I will be probing for patterns and themes that are being generated in the utterances or statements of the participants/informants during the one-on-one interview. The themes will be framed on the purpose of analyzing the language proficiency of non-traditional students in Kapalong particularly those who are studying at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology.

G. Sequence, Emphasis and Mixing Procedure

- Sequence. The selected research design of the study is a convergent parallel mixed method. The qualitative data will be collected through video and audio recording, transcription and interview;and quantitative data through a survey questionnaire will be collected and analyzed simultaneously. For the qualitative phase, a thematic analysis will be used in order to address the social problems pertaining to the experiences of non-traditional students in their writing proficiency. For the quantitative data, statistical analysis will be employed to get the results on the profiling status of the students as well as the indicators of the writing proficiency in English language.
- Emphasis. In this study, emphasis will be given on the results of both qualitative and quantitative phases. The framework which is the parallel convergent design shows two (2) phases with the data collection and analysis from the qualitative and quantitative phases which will be done simultaneously. As for the interpretation, the initial qualitative results will be corroborated to the quantitative phase results.
- Mixing Procedure. In the study, the first linking of data happened at the design-level with the use of a convergent parallel design where the results from the qualitative and quantitative phases will be brought up together. In order to fully address the research questions, interpretation-level integration occurred, connecting the qualitative data with the quantitative data.

H. Figure of Procedures

Figure 3 indicates the systematic procedure of the study. It demonstrates the use of convergent parallel mixed method approach in specific where the qualitative data and quantitative data will be corroborated to obtain a clear understanding on the experiences of non-traditional students of Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. The quantitative phase and qualitative phase will be conducted simultaneously.

In the quantitative phase, standardized survey questionnaire will be administered to the survey participants who will be selected through a universal sampling technique. The consolidated answers will give a numeric data about the problem. To analyze the quantitative data, appropriate statistical tools- mean and standard deviation will be utilized. After these treatments, data will present a descriptive and inferential interpretation of the questions presented. To analyze the qualitative data, thematic analysis will be used. After analysis, coded texts and salient themes will be achieved.

However, in the qualitative phase, to further analyze the phenomenon under study, data was collected through a one-on-one interview. The interview produced a transcribed recording. The guided interview questions used and submitted to the experts for validation. After the validation, an approved interview questions were used to extract data from the participants/informants who are selected through universal sampling technique. The process produced transcribed recording and interview notes.

Results from both phases were compared and synthesized. Then, data was summarized and the extent of corroboration between the qualitative and quantitative results were discussed leading to the interpretation of phenomenon under study.

Fig 4: Flow of Procedures
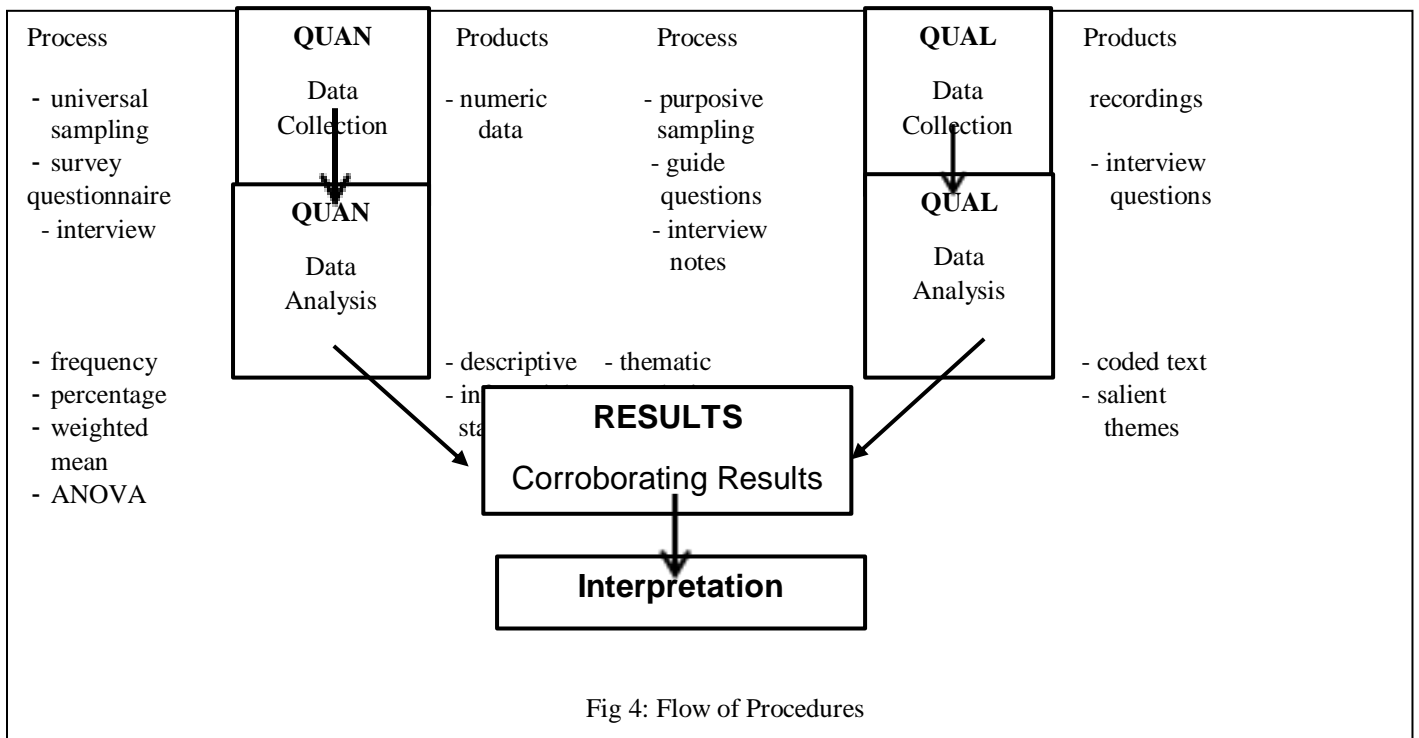
I. Methodological Issues

- *Design.* This study will employ the convergent parallel mixed-method design. The mixed-method combined the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Moreover, the convergent parallel design (convergent/triangulation design) occurs when the researchers use concurrent timing to implement the quantitative and qualitative studies during the same phase of the research process. The two methods in this design have an equal priority so that both play an equally important role in addressing the research problem. This design keeps the studies independent during the data collection and analysis and then mixes or merges the results during the overall interpretation (Petrosyan, 2007). However, the researcher is still at the beginning stage to acquaint herself on how a mixed method research will be conducted. As observed, the research design is very complex and too much time and resources to plan this type of research is really highly needed.

- *Time.* During the conduct of this study, the availability of the respondent will be considered duly since the respondents are the non-traditional students. These non-traditional have also their responsibilities at home and in school. Also, some of these students are working as fulltime. Through this, it is hard to gather them in the same time since they have different time schedules. However, the only time or day that these students will be available is on Friday since the school had no classes on that day. And also, as a researcher, I need to to talk to these participants so that I could explain to them the purpose my study and also, I need to provide an Informed Consent Form and a letter of approval for them to know that I have undergone the processes and have a go signal for the conduct of this study.

- *Participants selection.* For this study, there will be selected seventeen (17) non-traditional students as my participants for the in-depth interview and FGD. The number of participants has been decided by the technical experts who constructively check and evaluate my study. In the selection of my participants, I have to check if they met the qualifications that had been indicated in this study. After which, I have to talk to these participants so that I could explain to them the purpose my study. Also, I have to provide them the furnished copy of the Informed Consent Form. The letter of approval will also be shown to them as a proof that I have undergone the processes and have a go signal for the conduct of this study. Moreover, there are a total of 150 respondents will be chosen through the random sampling to be administered in the survey questionnaire.

- *Resources.* This study involves in-depth interview and focus group discussion. These forms of data need to be recorded. Hence, I need audio and video recording devices that could capture the details during the in-depth interview with the students and focus group discussion for participants. I also need to prepare all my resources since this study apparently entails financial preparation. For the validity of my study, all forms of data that I am using in this study will be validated separately, namely: interview guide questions for the in-depth interview which is part of my qualitative phase; and survey questionnaire for quantitative phase. Furthermore, the survey questionnaire will be computed and analyzed by an expert statistician.

J. Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness is important to report how the results were created. The assurance that the readers were able to follow the analysis and the resulting conclusions, are given importance. Establishing the trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility must be present in every qualitative study (Creswell, 2013). Thus, there is a need to converge every data (Raagas, 2010). A research according to Morrow (2005) is trustworthy when it reflects the reality and ideas of the participants. It was emphasized that the aim of trustworthiness is to support the argument derived from the investigation that needs to be addressed in qualitative study. This is essential especially when the data are raw and not supported by a theory (Kyngas, 2011). It was constructed that qualitative researchers should consider the dependability, credibility, transferability and confirmability as trustworthiness criteria which ensure the rigor of qualitative findings (Schwandt, 2007).

- *Credibility:* Credibility is defined as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. A qualitative researcher establishes rigor of the inquiry by adopting the following credibility strategies such as prolonged and varied field experience, time sampling, flexibility, triangulation, member checking, peer examination, interview technique, establishing authority of researcher and structural coherence.Credibility will be addressed in this paper through the recorded recitations from the interview taken from the participants. Added to this, the recitations will be converted into transcripts, for the participants to verify that there will be no changes done and to ensure the faithfulness of their responses. Interview will also be video recorded and transcribed. During the interview, the documented notes will prove that the answers given by the participants will not change. Lastly, the survey questionnaire to be distributed and the guide interview questions will undergo validation from the experts. According to Fenton &Mazulewicz (2008) (as cited by Kamenye, 2008), credibility is an evaluation of whether the finding of the research are "credible" conceptual interpretation of the information that is obtained from the respondents or not.

- *Transferability:* Transferability is applied when interpretations which are produced by the findings can be generalized or transferred to other setting or groups of people. In other words, this refers to the potential for extrapolation. Furthermore, transferability refers to the degree in which you can form opinion or generalization regarding the group of people basing upon the results of the qualitative study (Pilot, 2012).Also, transferability is a degree to which the method can be applied or transferred beyond the borders of the project (Trochim, 2006). Limitation of the study are also presented in the Anticipated Methodological Aspect to give point of reference for improvement in case of the study will be done. Added to this, Creswell (2013) also noted that the credibility of the study should address questions that would provide a clear description of the research context to make it possible for others to replicate the study. Additionally, from a qualitative perspective, transferability is primarily the responsibility of the one doing the generalizing. The qualitative researcher can enhance transferability of the one doing a thorough job of describing the research context and the assumptions that were central to the research. The person who wishes to "transfer" the results to a different context is then responsible for making the judgement of how sensible the transfer is. Furthermore, this enables judgment about how well the researcher context fits other contexts, thick descriptive data, such as a rich and extensive set of details concerning methodology and context, should be included in the research report. This involves the researcher elucidating all the research processes, from data collection, context of the study to production of the final report (Li, 2004).

- *Dependability:* Dependability means that the same process of conducting the study is consistent across time, along with the techniques used by the researchers. The process should be repeatable as much as possible (Bitsch, 2005). Also, dependability involves participants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study (Cohen, 2011). Also, dependability is established using an audit trail, a code-recode strategy, stepwise replication, triangulation an peer examination or iterator comparisons. Audit trail involves an examination of the inquiry process and product to validate the data, whereby a researcher accounts for all the research decisions and activities to show how the data were collected, recorded and analyzed (Ary et. al., 2010 as stated by Bowen, 2009). Stepwise replication is a qualitative research data evaluation procedure where two or more researchers analyze the same data separately and compare the results. Any inconsistence that arise from these separate analyses need to be addressed to improve the dependability of the inquiry, and if the results of analyses are similar, then dependability of the inquiry is achieved (Chilisa & Preece, 2015).Furthermore, the code-recode strategy involves the researcher coding the same data twice, giving one or two weeks' gestation period between each coding. The results from the two coding are compared to see if the results are the same or different. As with peer examination as there is no different from the member checks strategy employed to enhance the credibility of the inquiry (Bitsch, 2005).

- *Confirmability:* In this study, confirmability will be addressed through documenting the roles, personal biases and reactions that would probably influence the interpretations of the shared experiences. It will be guaranteed to keep the original recordings and the transcribed notes from the classroom observation and original questionnaires that will be answered. The responses will all be based from interviews and survey questionnaires made by the participants. According to Walkins (2012), confirmability is a measure of how well the findings are supported by the gathered data of the researchers. Additionally, confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers. Confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but are clearly derived from the data (Baxter, 1997). It is also a measure of how well the investigation findings are supported by the data collected. It handles the possibility of bias and addresses with another individual can place in the results (Hush, 2005).There are number of strategies for enhancing confirmability. The researcher can document the procedures for checking and rechecking the data throughout the study. Another researcher can take a "devil's advocate" role with respect to the results, and this process can be documented. The researcher can actively search for and describe negative instances that contradict prior observations. After he study, one can conduct a data audit that examines the data collection and analysis procedures and makes judgements about the potential for bias or distortion.

K. Ethical Considerations

To guarantee systematic practices in research, the ethical codes need to be emphasized and applied towards the informants. Also, the context concerning the agreement of both the researchers and the participants. This qualitative paper revolves around the key principles of ethical research which includes consent, confidentiality, anonymity, harm and reciprocity, and reflecting to the issue of power, empowerment and ownership (Halai, 2006).The study also followed the standard that is being set internationally which is to protect the key informants. The privacy of the participants was considered. The data being collected shall remain confidential which is the appropriate thing to do with the group of people. Moreover, this study was reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee (REC).

- *Social Values:* This study aims to address the social problems pertaining to the language proficiency of the non-traditional students. This study will hopefully address the non-traditional students, their stories and language proficiency. It would serve as an eye-opener for teachers and an advantage to students for they considered as the main beneficiary of this study. In order to get full participation from the observed teachers, the main purpose of the study and the procedure for data collection will be explained to them. Results of the study will be presented to the participants and will also be disseminated to other possible audiences who benefit from this study. More importantly, the researcher will adhere to social value in research by being truthfully committed to the rigor of convergent parallel mixed-method design utilized in this study.

- *Informed Consent:* Since this study will need the help of non-traditional students, an informed consent form will be secured. The consent will disclose information on the following: name and affiliation of the researcher; must understood as an invitation to participate; reasons for considering the potential participants; voluntariness; purpose of the research, the procedures to be carried out by the researcher; expected duration of the individual's participation; any foreseeable risks, pain or discomfort, or inconvenience to the individual, including risks to health or well-being of the individual's spouse or partner; direct benefits; whether money or other forms of material goods will be provided in return for the individual's participation; expected benefits of the research to the community or to society at large, or contribution to scientific knowledge; respect for the privacy of research participants and the confidentiality of records in which they are identified; participants are free to withdraw from the research at any time without having to give any reason. Further, Informed Consent Forms will also be given to the research participants to sign, which serve as their guidelines throughout the study.

- *Vulnerability of the Research Participants:* Vulnerable of the participants will be taken into consideration in this study in a way that interviews will only be done during the availability of the participants. Moreover, in the administration of the survey questionnaires, the participants will be asked to answer the instruments on their available time. They will be treated with the highest respect. They will be mindful that they may withdraw their inclusion whenever with no interest for clarification. If there will be inconvenience that they may feel during the testing of the matter, they may inform the researcher about their concerns. Nevertheless, the participants in this study are not vulnerable as they are capable of making a decision if they want to be part of the study.

  In the study, the participants are less vulnerable as they are capable of making a decision if they want to be part of the study.

- *The Risks, Benefits and Safety:* Risks will be minimized in such a way that a comfortable place away from falling objects is secured be used as an administering room of the survey questionnaire. The room will be on the ground floor so that participants who are physically challenged can easily reach to it. Moreover, for participants who are not very articulate with English or Tagalog languages will be encouraged to answer the interview questions in any language that they are most comfortable with. To avoid discomfort of the participants, video recorder will be positioned hiding the identity of the interviewee. The researchers will ensure that the questionnaires that will be used do not contain any degrading, discriminating or any unacceptable language that will be offensive to any of the respondents involved in this study. Interview participants will be assured that they may opt not to answer questions which make them feel any psychological or emotional distress or they can withdraw as a participant of the study if they feel that they cannot discuss the information that is asked of them. The researcher will value their participation and will place their welfare as their highest priority during the course of the study. Additionally, utmost confidentiality will be observed. Data will be kept and stored in a locked, safe area with only the individuals involved and the researcher having access to it. As to the benefits, the results in both qualitative and quantitative data will be advantageous to the learners and teachers as it will serve as an eye-opener to them on how linguistic resources can be used to foster learning process. Teachers are introduced to a teaching and learning resource which mutually supports learning and affirms student's diversity and uniqueness. Learners with diverse linguistic identity will learn to value their language and consequently use it for their academic advantage. As a whole, this study aims to provide deeper knowledge and understanding on the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students in a local college.

- *Privacy and Confidentiality of Information:* Researchers shall adhere to the principles of transparency, legitimate purpose, and proportionality in the collection, retention, and processing of personal information (Data Privacy Act of 2012). Added to this, the researchers have to protect their participants' privacy for they have a moral and legal obligation for involving them in their study (Moxham, 2012). Participants will not be forced to disclose information out of his willingness. In answering the survey questionnaire, their names need not to appear in the survey and their answers will be held confidentially. Codes will be used to keep the identity of the participants of the study. The informed consent can be obtained through the list of enrollees in the registrar or in the teacher's list of students. Recorded oral recitations and interviews will be transcribed by the researcher herself. No individual information will be gathered from them and their names will be excluded to safeguard their identities so they can take that they can participate in answering the survey questionnaire without any fear that their involvement in the study may be revealed.

Before the finalization of this study, results will be shown to the participants. They will be assured of their rights of privacy and confidentiality in the event that the participants wish to remove or keep data hidden. The researcher will secure the data gathered in the study and make sure they will only be used for the purpose stated in the study. Further consent will be secured in case data will be used outside the purpose stated in this study or that confidentiality is waived due to the research design of the study. Raw data, interview guide questions, survey questionnaire, and audio and video recording and transcripts will be kept in a locked-safe storage area.

- *Justice:* Justice requires a reasonable allocation of the risks and benefits as results of the research. As a researcher, I assured that the participants involved are appropriate for the investigation. Participants, as a source of data, are honest and open during data collection. With this, it is very important to acknowledge the contributions of all the participants as they generally part of the success of the research. They must be given due credits in all their endeavors. Participants will be given token as a recognition for taking the burden of participating in the research. Justice will also be achieved by making sure that only the utterances of the participants that are related to the research objectives will be included in this study and that they will be transcribed properly and correctly.

- *Transparency:* The study will adhere to the principles of transparency by fully informing the participants that the research will focus on the stories and language proficiency of non-traditional students. Also, transcribed recitations and interviews will be presented and shared to the participants. Moreover, the participants will be informed that the ongoing study is not funded or sponsored by any organization.

- *Qualifications of the Researcher:* The researcher is credible to undertake the study on non-traditional students, their stories and writing proficiency as she is an Master of Arts in Education major in English candidate. Bilingualism and language teaching is one of her major subjects. Further, the interpretation of statistical data will be credible as the researcher will consult the result to the statistician. The choice of local college as research locale and non-traditional students as participants will be justified as the researcher is currently teaching in Higher Education.

- *Adequacy of Facilities:* In this study, an audio or video recorder will be the primary facility to be used. Adequacy of facilities will be addressed as the main tool of the researcher in gathering data. Laptops and mobile phone with recording application is also available. The facilities mentioned will be addressed as the research will just be utilizing those resources which can be used immediately to avoid any delay on the conduct of the study. Also, sponsorships in a form of solicitation as a source of funds will be made in making this research possible.

- *Community Involvement:* There was a community of non-traditional college students who attended during the Public Forum where this study was initially presented. These learners have witnessed how writing proficiency in English language served as a challenge for non-traditional students. Also, the beneficiaries of this study are those non-traditional students who are part of the community where the study is conducted. This community of learners are suitable to the study wherein an in-depth interview and focus group discussion will be made to gather information that would help address the issues.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of data in both the quantitative and qualitative phases. The first phase is the quantitative part which displays the status of writing proficiency among non-traditional students in the local colleges in Davao del Norte. The second phase is the qualitative part which is presented thru matrix form. The matrix shows the responses of the participants on their lived experiences regarding writing proficiency.

A. Writing Proficiency in English Language of Non-traditional Students

Table 1 shows the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students in the local colleges in Davao del Norte specifically in terms of idea, organization, expression, convention and legibility. It shows on the table an overall computed mean of 12.56 described as high which only means that the language of non-traditional students is extensive. On the other hand, the indicator idea got the highest mean of 2.97 described as high which means that the language of non-traditional students is extensive and the lowest mean was obtained by the indicator convention which is 2.32 described as low which means that the language of non-traditional students is less extensive.

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks	Remarks on the Level of Writing Performance
Idea	2.97	0.71	High	The writing performance of the students develops a focus.
Organization	2.37	0.81	Low	The writing performance of the students has some evidence of a beginning, middle, and end; the sequencing is attempted.
Expression	2.35	0.64	Low	The writing performance of the students has a limited word choice, and it has a basic sentence structure.
Convention	2.32	0.80	Low	The writing performance of the students has some difficulty in grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation.
Legibility	2.55	0.73	High	The writing performance of the students was readable with some spacing/forming errors.
Overall	12.56	3.69	High	The writing performance of the students when it comes to idea, organization, expression, convention and legibility is extensive.

Table 1: Writing Proficiency in English Language of Non-traditional Students

- **Idea.** This indicator obtained a mean of 2.97 described as high and a standard deviation of 0.71 which means that the score of the non-traditional students is not extremely high or extremely low since there is homogeneity of the scores obtained. However, if we are going to relate this to the analytic rubric used in this study, we can infer that the participants are trying to develop a focus, uses some descriptive language, their details support the idea and they communicate original ideas as well.
- **Organization.** The indicator organization obtained a mean of 2.37 described as low and a standard deviation of 0.81 which means that the score of non-traditional students is not extremely high or extremely low since there is homogeneity of the scores obtained. Meanwhile, if we are to refer this result to the analytic rubric used in this study, we can conclude that participants have some evidence of a beginning, middle and end as well as the sequencing is attempted.
- **Expression.** This indicator was described as low because of its computed mean of 2.35 described as low and a standard deviation of 0.64 which means that the score of non-traditional students is not extremely high or extremely low since there is homogeneity of the scores obtained. However, if we are going to relate this one to the analytic rubric used in this study, we can say that the participants have limited word choice and have basic sentence structure.
- **Conventions.** The indicator conventions as used in this study have a computed mean of 2.32 described as low and a standard deviation of 0.80 which means that the score of non-traditional students is not extremely high or extremely low since there is homogeneity of the scores obtained. Meanwhile, in relation to the analytic rubric that was used in this study to assess the writing composition of the participants, we can conclude that the participants have some difficulty in grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation.
- **Legibility.** This indicator as used in this study has a computed mean of 2.55 described as high and a standard deviation of 0.73 which means that the score of non-traditional students is not extremely high or extremely low since there is homogeneity of the scores obtained. Meanwhile, in relation to the analytic rubric that was used in this study to assess the writing composition of the participants, we can conclude that the participants output is readable with some spacing/forming errors.

B. Significance of the difference in Writing Proficiency of Non-traditional Students Based on the Identified Demographic Profile

Table 2 shows the interpretation between the difference in writing proficiency of the 150 participants as the chosen samples based on their age, marital status and types of students whether working or non-working students using the regression analysis. The result shows only the age significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students since the computed p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance (p-value < 0.05)

On the other hand, the computed p-value of marital status is .273 (p-value >.05) which is greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus, marital status as moderator of writing proficiency does not significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students. Also, the computed p-value of type of students is .582 which is greater than .05 (p-value >.05) means that type of students as well doesn't significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students in the local colleges of Davao del Norte. Thus, we can infer

Variables	Groupings	N	Mean	SD	T	p-value	Remarks
Age	25-30	125	12.34	2.77	-2.11	.037	S
	30-up	25	13.64	2.97			
Marital Status	Single	109	12.40	2.86	-1.10	.273	NS
	Married	41	12.97	2.76			
Type of Students	Working	53	12.37	2.88	-582	.562	NS
	Non-working	97	12.66	2.82			

Table 2: Significance of the difference in Writing Proficiency of Non-traditional
Students Based on the Identified Demographic Profile

from the given result that even a non-traditional student who is working or not-working, married or single, may be effective or not in their writing proficiency.

Thus, from the Table, we can infer that age is a contributory factor to the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students. We can conclude as well that the higher the age of the students when going back to school, the more they are challenged in engaging themselves in different writing activities.

- **Participants information:** Both study groups answered the same set of questions. There were 17 non-traditional students who participated actively during the interview. These students were divided equally into informants and participants. Ten of them served as research informants for the In-depth interview while the remaining seven served as research participants for the Focus
- Group Discussion.

Assumed Name	Age	Marital Status	Type of Students	Study Group
IDI01	26	Single	Working	In-depth Interview
IDI02	25	Single	Working	In-depth Interview
IDI03	26	Married	Non-working	In-depth Interview
IDI04	25	Married	Non-working	In-depth Interview
IDI05	25	Single	Non-working	In-depth Interview
IDI06	28	Married	Working	In-depth Interview
IDI07	25	Single	Working	In-depth Interview
IDI08	27	Single	Working	In-depth Interview
IDI09	25	Married	Non-working	In-depth Interview
IDI10	26	Single	Working	In-depth Interview
FGD01	31	Married	Working	Focus Group Discussion
FGD02	25	Married	Non-working	Focus Group Discussion
FGD03	28	Married	Non-working	Focus Group Discussion
FGD04	25	Single	Non-working	Focus Group Discussion
FGD05	26	Single	Working	Focus Group Discussion
FGD06	25	Married	Non-working	Focus Group Discussion
FGD07	27	Married	Working	Focus Group Discussion

Table 3 : Participants' Information

My meetings with the informants facilitated the collection of rich information. My experience in handling and being open with them as my students brought in the element of trust which I needed in order for them to share sensitive and insightful information about the controversial topic. Though I met some of them for the very first time during the interview, they trusted me enough to answer each of my interview questions completely.

The focus group discussion was very interesting and stimulating. The rich interaction and sharing of ideas made it possible for the FGD participants to recall their experiences. The discussion was so intense which resulted to rich and diverse ideas and information extracted from the participants.

C. The Lived Experiences of Non-traditional Students in their Acquisition of Writing Proficiency of English Language

There were four essential themes which were drawn out from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion of the participants on the first research question of the quantitative research instrument. It also talks about the lived experiences throughout their life as being a student with their encounter of the English language. the essential themes that emerged from the transcriptions of the participants in the research question consist the overarching themes and the code and categories which were summarized in

the Table.

- **Lack of Grammatical Competence.** This is one of the overarching themes that emerged from the responses of the participants of this study with the sub-categories difficulty in formulating and constructing ideas. The participants mentioned that the main reason that they are having hard time in writing because of their needs to enhance their grammatical competence.

Student 2 mentioned that:
> I've experienced that when I don't know the term I cannot express my ideas very well because like what I said I don't know the correct or the correct term or ideas or concepts for that thing ma'am. (IDI02)

Also, Student 5 made mentioned that:
> I experienced difficulties in punctuation and tenses. **(IDI05)**

Similarly, Student 6 affirmed that:
> One of my experiences that I never forget is the challenge because as a beginner, you will face a lot of struggles on how to construct grammar, how to construct words. Even in a very simple way. **(IDI06)**.

Likewise, the same idea was mentioned by Student 7 stating that:

My experiences in writing using English language is the vocabularies that I have is sometimes not enough or it cannot be the best option to express my ideas through writing. One of my experiences that I never forget is the challenge because as a beginner, you will face a lot of struggles on how to construct grammar, how to construct words. Even in the simplest way. (IDI07).

ISSUES PROBED	CORE IDEAS	CODE/ CATEGORIES	ESSENTIAL THEME	THEORETICAL SUPPORT
Experiences in writing using English language	- Struggling in expressing ideas through writing. - Being afraid to write because of lacking vocabulary words. - Having difficulties in tenses and punctuation. - Being afraid to write because of grammatical issues. - failing to express ideas because of not knowing the correct term to be used.	Difficulty in formulating and constructing Ideas	Lack of Grammatical competence	Interpretive-semantic Theory
Emotions felt for having an idea but cannot express it in writing using English language	- Being disappointed for not able to express ideas using English language. - Lacking of experiences in writing using English language. - Being unable to express ideas in their minds. - Struggling in formulating ideas because of lack of vocabulary words.	Disappointment and shame	Lack of Self-confidence	Social Learning Theory
Feelings felt in writing composition using English language	- Being afraid to construct sentences due to lack of vocabularies. - Feeling ashamed and afraid for having ideas in mind but cannot express it in writing. - Being disappointed because it is hard to express ideas in writing.	Anxious and shame		
Feeling of committing mistakes and feedbacks in writing	- Feeling guilty of writing incorrect words. - Being ashamed of committing errors as corrected by the teacher.	Being challenged and motivated	Being optimistic	Dispositional Optimism
	- Feeling challenged for this will serve as avenue to improve writing skills. - Being motivated to learn more strategies to develop writing skills.	Being motivated		
Ways and means to improve writing skills	- Reading books to improve vocabulary words. - Taking down unfamiliar words and look its meaning in the dictionary. - Looking the meaning of certain word and apply and use it in a sentence.	Reading books and use of dictionaries	Integration and Exposure to English Resources	Theory of Learning

		Surfing in the internet		
	- Translating vernacular words into English. - Looking for subtitles of movies - Reading articles in the internet to gain knowledge in writing.			
	- Knowing the use of subject-verb agreement and punctuation marks.	Reviewing subject-verb agreement		

Table 4 : Lived experiences of non-traditional students in their acquisition of writing proficiency of English language

Similarly, Student 8 mentioned that:
I have many experiences in using, encountered in writing using English language especially one of those is the grammar and the usage of words, spelling so they are very difficult for me.**(IDI08)**

Another is the statement of Sudent 9 stating:
I have difficulties especially in grammar and composition of sentence. **(IDI09)**

Lastly is the statement of Student 10 which states that:
My experiences are . . . and English kay kuan man gudsiyamaammao ng atua gamitonsapakikipaghalubilosauban kay ang English man gud ang international language. Ug sa una kay ma confused pako kung unsaonpag mag construct ko ug sentence taposkadugayan kay nakahibalo ra japun ko maamperohantudkarundilijudingnunnakananghawdnajudkaau. **(IDI10)**

(My experiences in English is important because it is the tool that we used to socialize others because English is the International Language. And at first I am confused how to construct sentences and later on I have learned ma'am but until now I am not that really good like an expert. **(IDI10)**)

- **Lack of Self-confidence:**
This is another overarching theme that emerged from the responses of the respondents during their in-depth interview and focus group discussion. This theme has some subcategories namely disappointment and shame as well as anxious and guilty. Additionally, several responses from the participants affirmed the theme that emerged.

To be specific, Student 1 mentioned that:
I felt feeling of disappointment maam whem I'm expressing English through writing but I cannot express it through writing maam. And also, I felt disappointed and I feel to myself that I'm guilty and I felt upset and also being anxious on that situation. (IDI01)

Also, Student 2 mentioned that:
I feel shame on myself for not knowing how to write my ideas using the English language. (IDI02)

Similarly, Student 5 said that:
I feel sorry to myself because I know that I can do it but because of the limitation of my knowledge on how to speak-up in English so I'd rather keep my mouth shut when the teacher called me. (IDI05)

Additionally, Student 6 confirmed that:
I feel not totally bad but sometimes there is disappointment within myself but someday I will be a good and fluent in writing using English therefore I strive harder in order to improve my communication skills in writing. (IDI06)

Student 7 said as well that:
Feeling shy because I know that I have the idea but I cannot be able to express it. (IDI07)

Student 8 mentioned as well that:
I feel, I feel guilty for myself because I can't write, I can't write in English and I can't express it. (IDI08)

Lastly, student 10 said that:
Syempremaam kay lisod kay ug unsa to imong idea *taposmaglisod ka ug pagawassa* English form *nimo kay muragdiligani ka ma kuanmaam kay syempreimuhang* idea *kay nahunahunaannimoperodilinimomapagawasmaam.* **(IDI10)**

Of course ma'am because it's really difficult because you have the idea but you don't know how to express it in English because seems to be... because your idea is there in your mind it just that you cannot express it. (IDI10)

Also, the FGD participants have the same idea with regards to their responses stating:
I feel embarrassed at the same time I feel motivated it is because it feels like I need to mold myself, to learn a lot, and I need to gain knowledge with my writing so that I can be more than me. (FGD05)

I feel very sad about myself because I know I can but I can't express in writing. (FGD03)

Well for me, I can't be able to write my writing in case to case bases ma'am whenever the subject is hard for me to understand if there is a certain word that I can't be able to understand, so the idea is very hard for me to come out when that certain word is not well expounded by other people or by the instructor or someone that taught us to teach us like poem or essay. (FGD02)

- **Being Optimistic.**
Another emerging theme from the conduct of in-depth interview and focus group discussion is being optimistic which has a subcategories being challenged and being motivated. However, this theme was thoroughly expressed by the participants' wherein they made mentioned some of their specific experiences.

Consequently, Student 1 mentioned that:
The feeling that I've commit ma'am is that when I commit mistakes especially in my paper works is that self-guilt ma'am, I felt guilty in my mind but why did I write that one . . . (IDI01)

Also, Student 2 affirmed that:
Yes ma'am. To improve my writing skills, I take it as a good feedback to me to improve my writing skills. I think I do take this feedback as my motivation because it can help me be motivated to learn more about the English language. (IDI02)

Similarly, Student 5 confirmed that:
Yes, it is always been a pleasure that someone corrected you in order for you to excel in writing. So I take this as motivation when my teacher had feedback in my composition. (IDI05)

Likewise, the same idea was said by Student 6 stating:
Yes ma'am, I used it as a motivation because it brings me to the good future someday that I will be a good and fluent in writing using English and it could help me to be more aware about my grammar, my writing skill. (IDI06)

Consequently, Student 7 also said that:
Yes ma'am because I gain knowledge and ideas by correcting my mistakes. (IDI07)

Student 8 also said that:
        Yes most of them because most of them... mistakes are not always mistakes ma'am. (IDI08)

Further, Student 9 said as well that:
        Yes, because it can help to develop my writing skills. (IDI09)

Student 10 also confirmed that:
Yes ma'am. *Kay kadugayan man gudmaamna kung sige ta ug kamalimakabalo naman ta kung unsaatuangdapatbuhaton kay na correct tong tongmgamalinato.* (IDI10)

Yes ma'am because later on if we always commits mistakes, we will know what to do because those mistakes were corrected already. (IDI10)

Student 1 also added that:
Feeling of blessed and feeling of sometimes anxious on that situation for the first things when I read the feedback is that I am feeling blessed but in another point is that I felt anxious because why... why did I commit on that. (IDI01)

Similarly, Student 2 added as well that:
I reacted by getting to just thing that how I have errors in this case so I need to develop my language skills in this area. (IDI02)

Lastly, Student 8 concluded that:
My writing strategies is that, when I read a text, I keep remembering that one. Then, I rearrange it just like paraphrasing or then it helps me to develop... our vocabulary then familiarizing of words, the arrangement also. It helps me to arrange the text so that I can't get many errors in the grammar.

- **Integration and Exposure to English Resources.** This is the last emerging theme that emerged in the responses of the participants during the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. This theme has three subcategories namely

reading books and use of dictionaries, surfing in the internet, and reviewing subject-verb agreement. Moreover, participants mentioned as well that these are the ways and means to improve their writing skills.

Consequently, Participant 1 affirmed the idea when he said that:
So the first thing that I've encountered or the first thing that strategized me to learn using English language is through reading because in reading it helps me to formulate my vocabulary or to enhances my skill in writing. I read more words that new to me so that I can use it in my writing peace.(IDI01)

Also, Student 2 confirmed that:
The strategies that I did was using specific words that I am confident to use in writing so that I can improve my language through writing. (IDI02)

Similarly, Student 5 affirmed that:
For me, through reading I learned a lot and I am maybe I could write composition not a something that a beginner one. Through reading it helps a lot because you can copy the structure, the titles you can rephrase all those structure of the book you read. (IDI05)

Likewise, Student 6 agreed that:
One of the best strategies that I did was reading books. You need to expose in the books so that you can learn new words. I also read novels and magazines and if I encounter unfamiliar words I searched it to the dictionary. (IDI06)

Student 7 also said that:
Strategies, I read books, reading articles in the internet so that I can gain knowledge in writing English. (IDI07)

Consequently, Student 8 said that:
The strategy that I used is that reading, taz what I read I write it and sometimes listening to music tazkanang getting their main point then I can write something out of it just like listening something then write it in a poetry taz the words that they used I searched it in the dictionaries then I noted its anoyung meaning niyatapos how it function and panosiyagamitin din in different taposanoyungiba'tibanggamitniya. Yung ano din niya synonyms at antonyms niya. (IDI08)

The strategy that I used is that reading and what I read, I write it and sometimes listening to music and then getting their main point then I can write something out of it just like listening something then write it in a poetry and the words that they used I searched it in the dictionaries then I noted its meaning then how it functions and how to use it in different ways then its different usage. Also, its synonyms and antonyms.

Additionally, Student 9 said that:
Uhhmyunmaam read more books and I'm observing the kind of ay . . yung pano nilaginawa then search sa net for more tutorial on how to make a composition. (IDI09)

That's it ma'am, read more books and I'm observing the kind of ... what they did in the internet for more tutorial on how to make a composition.

Lastly, FGD Students commend as well the idea because they stated that:

As what I've said , I used not familiar words, it means I used flowering words to be good at the reading at my writing. (FGD04)

For me, it is very useful because memorizing 5 words a day, let us say in writing a composition, it is easy for me to write because I already gained, although not a lot of words but some of the words. (FGD04)

Yes ma'am it is very effective, the eating while reading or writing because at the same time my brain is also memorizing it while having fun eating my chocolates, it really helps me to improve whenever I'm having my strategy. (FGD02)
For me ma'am it is effective because you can get the idea and you can apply it in my writing. (FGD06)

Constant using of the English language as well as constant writing. In our place ma'am I used tutor all my cousins just to refresh my vocabulary skills as well as my writing skills. (FGD01)

D. Experiences as Differentiated by the Identified Demographic Profiles in their Attitude and Aspirations towards Writing Proficiency

Table 4 shows the experiences of the non-traditional students as differentiated by the identified demographic profiles in their attitude and aspirations towards writing proficiency. The table revealed four essential themes that were drawn from the responses of the participants both in in-depth interview and focus group discussion namely learning difficulties, self-driven person/s, being optimistic and determined, and opportunity-seeker and strong determination. The responses of the participants have revealed that they encountered learning difficulties towards writing, however, amidst the difficulty, they were still driven and determined to pursue study.

- **Learning Difficulties:**

This is one of the emerging themes that emerged from the responses of the participants both in in-depth interview and focus group discussion with subcategories namely age barrier, being not updated with the curriculum, and adjustments with the environment. The participants made mentioned that because of their age and being a long time of not going to school, they need to adjust with their environment and to cope with the curriculum.

Consequently, Student 1 mentioned that:
Yes ma'am, I consider myself that my age is a barrier because ahm, when you learn that situation for example my age has its own uhh level, level to be learn for example at the age of… the age of that specific age you should develop your writing skill but for me uhhmm that age ma'am I can say that it is not congruent to the level where I came from so that I have the struggle in writing ma'am. (IDI01)

ISSUES PROBED	CORE IDEAS	CODE/ CATEGORIES	ESSENTIAL THEME	THEORETICAL SUPPORT
Difficulties Experienced upon Going Back to School	- Thinking not young anymore to know those particular things. - Confusing oneself in writing because of not going to school for a long time. - Finding difficult to write down ideas because of 9 years away from the school. - Being not updated with the trends today. - Having hard time expressing thoughts compared to the younger ones.	Age Barrier	*Learning Difficulties*	Cognitive Writing Theory
	- Being not able to cope with the things to be learned in school. - Thinking being left behind by younger classmates. - Having hard time to connect and understand the lessons of the teacher. - Thinking all the lessons are new.	Being not Updated with the Curriculum		
	- Having gap between classmates. - Adjusting with the environment especially with the people around. - Having big adjustments knowing that the younger classmates are brighter compared to oneself.	Adjustments with the Environment		
Viewpoints in Managing Time both in School and Outside Priorities	- Having time management. - Having notes wherein listed the entire to-do list within a day. - Doing task scheduling when at work. - Scheduling all the things to be done. - Posting daily routine on the door of the room. - Arranging all the works at night to be ready the next day.	Self-discipline	*Self-driven Person/s*	Self-determination Theory
	- Helping the parents while studying. - Reaching dreams and to earn diploma. - Proving parents that one can do things without bothering them. - Being the breadwinner of the family. - Dreaming to work in a bigger company in the future.	Having Intrinsic and extrinsic Motivation		
Viewpoints on Enduring Negativities such as Criticisms, Disappointment and Discouragement	- Just don't mind them. - Putting in mind that this is not their dreams. - ignoring them or tolerating them until they get tired of judging. - Ignoring them because what you do is the most important thing. - Continuing what has been started and stay focused.	Ignoring Criticisms	*Being Optimistic and Determined*	Dispositional Optimism
	- Thinking they were there to make oneself more motivated. - Using it as source of motivation to continue studying. - Having in mind the principle that education is an investment to have a stable future.	Stay Motivated		

	- Being more focused and dedicated to finish studying.			
Viewpoints to Inspire Others to Pursue their Study	- Seeking opportunity to go to school. - Having in mind that education is the key to have a good future. - Studying is the opportunity one must not miss. - Needing for education for poverty is not the hindrance to become successful.	Giving Importance toward Education	*Opportunity-seeker and Strong Determination*	Self Determination Theory
	- Saying age is just a number when you are determined to study. - Having in mind that studying doesn't define your age. - Pursuing education amidst the number of age	Treating Age as just a Number		

Table 5: Experiences as Differentiated by the Identified Demographic Profiles in their
Attitude and Aspirations towards Writing Proficiency

Similarly, Student 2 mentioned that:
Uhhmm I think yes, it is a barrier and in my writing skills most especially using English language uhhmm because uhmm I'm not that good enough in uhhh my writing skills when I am using English. (IDI02)

Also, Student 3 affirmed that:
Yes, because for me ahhm ahh time is rapidly ahh running so fast and nowadays we encounter this word that *uhm kumbagayung ahh yungwika ay nagbabago din* so when I in some point *sa . .* during those days when I am writing *yungmga* term ay *yungmga* word na*ginagamitnatinehhhindinasiyaanongayon .hindinasiyamasyadongnaiintindihan ng mga millennials*. (IDI03)

Yes, because for me, time is rapidly running so fast and nowadays we encounter this word that as if the language is changing as well so when I in some point during those days when I am writing those terms that we used before is no longer understandable by millennial.

Also, Student 6 confirmed that:
No ma'am because for me age doesn't matter anymore even though you are 80 years old or you are 70 years old as long as you have that eagerness to learn still you can learn. Age will not stop you from learning. (IDI06)

Similarly, Student 7 said that:
A big adjustment especially in the field of English, I have to adjust myself, I have to retrieve the ideas and knowledge that I gained. (IDI07)

Student 8 said as well that:
Ano, kanangdakokaauna adjustments. For example, *Kanangmgabata pa saimoimongmgakaubantapos mas bright pajudsiyasaimuhamaolisodkaausiyataz ma* look down *ka so Dapatpud mag* persevere *jud ka namakatuonjud ka parihasailang* level because its hard *man gudnga mag* stay *lang ka saimong* level *nganakat'unanniyatigulangnaka.* (IDI08)

There's a huge adjustment. For example, your classmates are much younger compared to you and more intelligent, that's why it's so difficult. You'll be underestimated. So, you need to persevere to learn the same with their level because it's hard to stay with your level of understanding considering your age.

Consequently, Students 9 said also that:
Bumalikyungna experience *ko datiyung* elementary *datina parang may* gap between my classmates. And my classmates are more active while me is observing them. (IDI09)

My experience before during elementary repeats like there is a gap between my classmates. And my classmates are more active while me is observing them.

Lastly, Student 10 confirmed that:
Kanangkuan man, kanang mag adjust *samgapalibotparehasanangmgataonamakaubansasulodsaeskwelahan.* Most especially ma'am *na nay ipabuhat ang* teacher *na* essay or any composition, *maulawjud ko* mag express *saakuang* idea *kay basin ma mali ko.* (IDI10)

Adjustment with the environment just like with the people you will be with inside the school most especially ma'am if your teacher let you make an essay or any composition, I am shy to express my ideas because might be I am wrong.

- **Self-driven Person/s.** Another theme that emerged from the responses of the participants from their in-depth interview and focus group discussion is self-driven person. It has two subcategories namely self-discipline and having intrinsic

and extrinsic motivation. The participants mentioned that amidst their inside and outside priorities, they still manage to do both because they are determined to do it and they have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Consequently, Student 1 affirmed that:
Okay, I managed my time through my discipline ma'am because discipline is one of the most fundamental things we need to consider especially in managing our time, the discipline, self-discipline.(IDI01)

Additionally, Student 2 mentioned that:
I can manage my time both in school and outside priorities by having a schedule, my priorities in outside and my priorities in school. (IDI02)

Similarly, Student 5 mentioned that:
When if it is school business so I manage my time well. My schedule is night in school and I have classes and Monday to Friday and because I worked in church in Saturday and Sunday and Monday to Friday I spend it in school but I have classes on night so I also do my other things in daytime. (IDI05)

In addition, Student 6 confirmed that:
I have the notebook *kung saannakalagaynaduon ang lahat ng gagawin ko.* All the things that I need to accomplish within that day. *Kung baga,* I managed my time very well. (IDI06)

I have the notebook where I listed all my to-do things. All the things that I need to accomplish within that day. It's like, I managed my time very well.

Student 7 mentioned as well that:
I managed it by doing a task scheduling when I am in a work I have my task schedule to be done. When it comes to school, I have this task schedule so that others should be organized time spending so that I can spend my time wisely. (IDI07)

Also, Student 8 said that:
So *ano lang judsiyamaam* time management and *anojudnaka schedule tanannakongbuhaton* example *ana na day kay lisodkaau kung ano lang siyamawalapudakuangtrabaho kay maopudsiyaynagakuansakongpagskewla.* (IDI08)

So it's only time management ma'am and you must schedule all the things you'll do because it's so hard to lose my job for it sustains my schooling as well.

Additionally, Student 9 confirmed that:
Actually in my room I posted schedule in my daily routine, I posted it in my door para paggising ko yunnayungmakikita ko. (IDI09)

Actually in my room I posted my schedule in my daily routine. I posted it in my door so that I can see it every time I wake up.

Lastly, Student 10 concluded that:
Kuanmaamkananggina manage nako angakuang time. *Kay akuangclasemaam no kay 12:30 man mag starthantud 5 pm, pagulinakosa among balaymaam akua dayun ng plastarunakongtrabahuonpagkaugmapurapagkaugma dire-diretsona.* (IDI10)

I manage my time ma'am because my class will start by 12:30PM until 5:00P. Then when I got home, I sorted the things I will do the next day to have a smooth flow of it.

- **Being Optimistic and Determined.** This is another emerging theme drawn from the responses of the participants from the in-depth interview and focus group discussion with two subcategories namely ignoring criticisms and stay motivated; non-traditional students mentioned that though there are negativities arises, they still stay to be motivated and they just ignore criticisms.

Consequently, Student 1 affirmed that:
So the things that I've done ma'am is to stay calm and stay positive where you are even there are negativities, criticism and disappointment I'm stay calm because that things I can do better than them because, because of that I stay calm. I, I don't even uhhh giving such attention to them. (IDI01)

In addition, Student 2 also added that:
I can say that negativities such as criticism, disappointment and other discouragement that relevant in my situation is, I think that they are only there to make me motivated in my studies. (IDI02)

It is also added by Student 5 stating:
For me, first Ifocus on my study and for me I think I am a well-aged right now, I am not easily irritated because I used it as my motivation to continue my study. (IDI05)

Also, Student 6 said that:
I can say that negativities such as criticism, disappointment and other discouragement that relevant in my situation is, I think that they are only there to make me motivated in my studies. (IDI06)

Additionally, Student 7 affirmed that:
I just embrace, accept and ignore them sometimes because I believe that age is not a hindrance or an obstacle that cannot make you a study and pursue your dreams in life because I have this principle in mind that education is an investment to have a stable future. (IDI07)

Likewise, Student 8 made mentioned that:
*Ano lang siyamaam neglect lang nakosiya. Kanangipagwalangkibo , , kanangwala lang, kanangdeadma lang kay wala man silakabalosa*reason *nako* why I continue schooling. (IDI08)

I just neglected it ma'am. Just don't care. I just don't mind because they don't know my reason why I continue schooling.

Another confirmation as well from Student 9 stating:
Nung una its hard because arawaraw ka nilang I criticize pero I put it in my mind na this is not a their dreams in life, akin to kaya walasilangmagagawa. Ano, I ignore ko nalangsila. (IDI09)

At first it's hard because every day they judged you but I put in my mind that this is not their dreams in life. This is mine that is why they can't do anything. I will just ignore them.

Lastly, Student 10 mentioned as well that:
Kuanmaammaningkamot ko para mapakitanakonamaliilanggiingunsa akua. Dapatmahuman ko ug skwelaarunmakaingunsilanga . . ay malid.iakongnaingund.i. (IDI10)

Strive more ma'am to show them that what they are saying against me is wrong. I must finish my study so that they will realize that they were wrong. (IDI10)

Consequently, FGD participants affirm the idea based on their responses stating:
For me ma'am it is very basic to face criticism as part of the LGBT community, and as my neighbor says I am old enough to college so I can be able to tell them that they are wrong. (FGD02)

For me ma'am, as a member of the LGBTQ because my partner is a lesbian, and in school age gap is just basic because in my relatives, in my family, I am always discriminated but then I kept motivated because I need to be successful because my family needs me. (FGD04)

Criticisms attack my way, I just laughed and never get affected to it, staying positive always and focus to my goals no matter things happens. (FGD05)

For me ma'am I eat all the negativities in my studies because in our community, we are in the family where all the negativities are surrounded, then we have this fortune teller community that when you are in the family of early marriage, you are in line of these persons ngapuhoningon ana lang gihpon ang mahitabo. (FGD01)

For me ma'am I eat all the negativities in my studies because in our community, we are in the family where all the negativities are surrounded, then we have this fortune teller community that when you are in the family of early marriage, you are in line of these persons that someday, the same thing will happen as well.

- **Opportunity Seeker and Strong Determination:** This is the last essential theme drawn from the responses of the participants in their in-depth interview and focus group discussion. This theme has subcategories namely giving importance towards education and treating age as just a number. Participants mentioned that they can inspire others to pursue their study for education is very important even though their age is much higher compared with their classmates.

Additionally, Student 1 affirmed the idea stating:
So the first thing is that continue their learning's because learning is very vital even though you are behind to that certain or late age you should going to learn because learning is a lifelong process. It is not necessary that even you are old then you could not able to learn because learning is a lifelong process it not even choses any ages to learn ma'am. (IDI01)

Student 2 confirmed the idea as well stating:
I can say that age is just a number when you have the energy, you have the guts, you are free to study then go study. (IDI02)

Likewise, Student 5 said that:
I would say that there is no specific age bracket in learning as long as you believe, we must learn continuously, as long as we live, you must learn because we didn't stop learning in life. (IDI05)

Additionally, Student 6 mentioned as well that:
They should bear in their mind that education is key in order for us to have a good future. And I will influence that education is very important to become literate because kahitsaankamanpumunta as long as you are educated person, many people will respect you and other than that, you are not prone in discrimination. (IDI06)

They should bear in their mind that education is key in order for us to have a good future. And I will influence that education is very important to become literate because wherever you go as long as you are educated person, many people will respect you and other than that, you are not prone in discrimination.

Likewise, Student 7 said that:
All I can say is continue on pursuing their dreams, continue to reach their goals in life and study because life is a day to day lesson that I know someday you yourself only is the only beneficiary of what you have learned in life. (IDI07)

Student 8 said also that:
Studying doesn't define in your age just like in love kanangwalasiyanagasulti kung kuntahaytigulangnaka di nakapwedemubalik ug skwela. In'anamaam. (IDI08)

Studying doesn't define in your age just like in love it doesn't dictate if you are old enough you are not allowed going back to school. Just like that ma'am.

Also, Student 9 made mentioned that:
Yun ngakahitnaganitoedad ko I pursue my schooling kasi I have a dream, tuladnila meron din silang dream sakanilangbuhay so huwagnalangnilangisipinyungmga criticism sakanila kasi yun ang magigingsagabal para makamitnilayung gusto nilasabuhay. (IDI09)

That's it, even I have this age already, and I pursue my schooling because I have a dream. Just like them, they have dreams as well in their lives. So they must better don' mind those criticisms for them because that might hinder to reach their dreams in life.

Lastly, Student 10 said that:
Kuansamtangnaa pay panahonnapwede pa mag skwela, mag skwela ra gihapun ta para dili pa iwit ang tanan. (IDI10)

While you have still time, you have still the chance going to school because it is not too late.

Additionally, FGD participants confirmed also the idea stating:

They need to cope up with the challenges for nothing can help them aside from themselves except from God. Age is not really matter, when you have this dream you have to pursue it, fight for it to achieve your dreams and goals in life. (FGD02)

Learning is a continuous process no matter what age you belong. I have a saying that someone graduated at the age 22 but waited for 5 years in securing a good job, which it is true that fresh graduate who didn't employ yet and waited for long years before getting a job. (FGD02)

Don't lose hope, always do what you want , don't mind what other people will say because whether you like it or not people have something to say. (FGD08)

Age doesn't matter because everything you do includes you, everything you act, it is your choice. (FGD04)
For me ma'am it is just dream big but stay humble that though you will finish your college degree in the future, you can say that even at my age I finish that will inspire other generation. (FGD01)

E. Data Integration of the Salient Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

For writing proficiency of non-traditional students, the results show that the code age barrier from Table 4 is confirmed in the quantitative data as reflected. Table 2 shows age has the p-value of .037 which has the writing significance of the difference in writing proficiency. This presents the merging nature of data integration which functions as converging. Hence, quantitative data result converges the qualitative data result for the theme learning difficulties. For the axiological perspective, the result implies that Non-traditional students are having learning difficulties with their environment and the curriculum because of their age and not going to school for long period of time.

For the code difficulty in formulating and constructing ideas from Table 3 confirmed in the quantitative data as reflected Table 1 on item organization rated low with the mean of 2.37 and SD of 0.81. This presents the merging nature of data integration which functions as converging. Hence, quantitative data result converges the qualitative data result for the theme lack of grammatical competence. For the axiological perspective, the knowledge about spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and syntax among non-traditional students would improve their self-esteem in writing using English language.

For the code disappointment and shame from Table 3 confirmed in the quantitative data as reflected Table 1 on item expression rated low with the mean of 2.35 and SD of 0.65. This presents the merging nature of data integration which functions as converging. Hence, quantitative data result converges the qualitative data result for the theme lack of vocabulary words. For the axiological perspective, the result implies that having lack of self-esteem within oneself among non-traditional students when writing is the reason why most students felt negative feelings than positive ones.

- **Writing Intervention Program based on the findings of the study:** What follows is an intervention program use to adhere the problem of non-traditional students in their writing proficiency.

"Developing oneself towards Writing Proficiency"

Aspect of Focal Point	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	Nature of data integration	Axiological implication
Writing proficiency of non-traditional students	Table 2. on descriptors, *age* has the p-value of .037 which has the significance of the difference in writing proficiency	Table 4 on *Difficulties Experienced upon Going Back to School* has code *Age Barrier* highlighting the theme *Learning Difficulties*	Merging – Converging	Non-traditional students are having learning difficulties with their environment and the curriculum because of their age and not going to school for long period of time.
	Table 1 on item *organization* rated low with the mean of 2.37 and SD of 0.81	Table 3 on *Experiences in writing using English language* has code *Difficulty in formulating and constructing ideas* highlighting the theme *Lack of Grammatical competence*	Merging – Converging	Knowledge about spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and syntax among non-traditional students would improve their self-esteem in writing using English language.
	Table 1 on item *expression* rated low with the mean of 2.35 and SD of 0.64	Table 3 on *emotions felt for having an idea but cannot express it in writing using English language* has code *Disappointment and shame* highlighting the theme *Lack of vocabulary words*	Merging – Converging	Having lack of self-esteem within oneself among non-traditional students when writing is the reason why most students felt negative feelings than positive ones.

Table 6: Data Integration of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Author: Evelyn G. Erellana
School: University of the Immaculate Conception
Affiliations:Practicum and LET Coordinator

- **Rationale:** This activity plan was made to address the needs of the non-traditional students most especially in writing. The purpose of this intervention is to help non-traditional students increase their writing proficiency and to provide model for correct sentence construction. A benefit of this intervention is that it allows students to experience writing success while building their skills.

PROBLEMS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	PERSONS IN-CHARGE	TIME ELEMENT
Struggles in expressing ideas in writing using	To produce highly competent students	Seminar-Workshop on different writing Strategies- A3-week Seminar-Workshop which will focus on strengthening the writing strategies of the non-traditional students. They will be acquainted with the different writing strategies that will help them develop their writing skills.	School President, Program Heads and Instructors	3 Weeks
English language Lack of vocabulary and grammatical structure	To let the students know about the subject-verb agreement

To improve their writing skills and increase their vocabulary. | Creating an activity such as pair or group tutorial – A 7 days tutorial sessions which will focus in developing the ability of the non-traditional students to write especially in using English language.

Provide an activity such as giving at least 2 to 3 words a day and let the students define each word and use it in a sentence to improve their vocabulary and writing skills. | School President, Program Heads and Instructors | 1 Week |

Table 7 : Intervention Scheme Based on the Findings of the Study

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

This chapter focuses on the discussions of the major themes of the writing proficiency in English Language of non-traditional students. Discussion on the construction of measurement tool and the correlation of the emerging variables are also presented. The data integration of both the qualitative and quantitative data results is also thoroughly discussed in this chapter.

A. Writing proficiency in English Language of non-traditional students:
The output of this study is the development of a measurement tool on the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students in the local college. The tool had been administered to 150 respondents. The instrument of this study which is table 1 consists of 5 items: idea, organization, expression, convention and legibility. The shows an overall computed mean described as high which only means that the language of non-traditional students is extensive. On the other hand, the indicator idea got the highest mean described as high which means that the language of non-traditional students is extensive and the lowest mean was obtained by the indicator convention described as low which means that the language of non-traditional students is less extensive. These findings support the proposition of Amato (1996) which states that students returning to school after a long break in their studies have experienced difficulties in writing and problems pursuing English language. Adults learn a second language at a much later time, even though second language acquisition research has indicated that the process for the first and second language learning are similar in many respects, the brain functions of adult learners with regards to language processing may be very different from those of children who acquire their first language. As they are older in age, they tend to be inhibited, anxious, or afraid of making errors.

B. Significance of the difference in Writing Proficiency of Non-traditional Students based on the identified demographic profile:
Table 2 shows the interpretation between the difference in writing proficiency of the 150 participants as the chosen samples based on their age, marital status and types of students whether working or non-working students using the regression analysis. The result shows only the age significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students since the computed p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance (p-value < 0.05)

On the other hand, the computed p-value of marital status is greater than the level of significance, thus, marital status as moderator of writing proficiency does not significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students. Also, the computed p-value of type of students is greater than .05 (p-value >.05) means that type of students as well doesn't significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students in the local colleges of Davao del Norte. Thus, we can infer from the given result that even a non-traditional student who is working or not-working, married or single, may be effective or not in their writing proficiency.

C. The Lived Experiences of Non-traditional Students in Their Acquisition of Writing Proficiency of English Language:
The research questions generally focused on the experiences of the non-traditional students in their acquisition of writing proficiency of English language. The implications of essential themes that emerged from the transcriptions of the participants are as follows.

• Lack of Grammatical Competence:
The responses of the participants in terms of their experiences in the acquisition of writing proficiency using English language shows that non-traditional students have struggles in expressing ideas through writing. Thomas and Heath (2014) supported that this lack of language development is particularly problematic for non-traditional students. They were being afraid to write even short sentences because of lacking of correct vocabularies and experienced grammatical issues. Also, the non-traditional students encountered difficulties in applying tenses and punctuation in writing. The students faced the burden of applying correct structure of grammar using English language (Rolls, 2011).

• Lack of Self-confidence:
This theme shows the emotions felt by the non-traditional students for having an idea in the mind but cannot express it in writing using English language. It was revealed that they were disappointment and felt shameful for not able to express ideas using English language. Students who are not academically exposed in using English language lessen their confidence in doing do it and faced significant challenges with foundational writing (Erisman& Steele, 2012).

Moreover, the results also showed that non-traditional students lacked experiences in writing using English language which caused them unable to express ideas in their minds. Long absence of English language exposure results to lack of confidence to express their ideas for the fear of criticisms and negative correction for teachers and classmates (Kokemuller, 2017). This may lead as well to failure to formulate sentences for lack of vocabulary knowledge.

Further, the result also exposed the feelings felt by the non-traditional students in writing composition using English language. They tend to become anxious in starting composing sentences and found it disappointing for they were not capable to apply the ideas in their minds in writing. This was supported by Cardoza (2013) stating that students experience frustration and anxiety that

can get in the way of writing composition. They may have negative associations with using English language in writing difficulties that have gone undiagnosed and cause them to struggle with the application of appropriate words (Cicerchia, 2016).

- Being Optimistic:

Non-traditional students experienced challenges in writing using English language, however they developed positive attitude to be motivated more to learn. This theme exposed how the non-traditional students deal their feeling of committing mistakes and feedbacks in writing. It was shown that they felt guilty of writing incorrect words and ashamed of committing errors as corrected by the teacher (Perna, 2016).

On the other hand, the students felt challenged when they were corrected, for it served as an avenue for them to improve their writing skills. As such, it was revealed that they were motivated to learn more strategies to develop their writing skills. They have drawn positive attitude to the mistakes that they had committed and feedbacks were used as motivation to learn more which created a positive learning experience (Berling, 2013; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, &Gonyea, 2008).

- Integration and Exposure to English Resources:

In this comprehensive theme, the participants emphasized that their ages are not the hindrance for them to quit from learning substantial skills in writing. In fact, they revealed the ways and means to improve their writing skills which focused on the integration and exposure to English resources like reading books to improve vocabulary words and taking down unfamiliar words and by looking its meaning in the dictionary so it could be used in constructing sentences and paragraphs. This encourages the students to use the appropriate vocabulary in composing their responses on paper, and to write extensively (Rass, 2018).

Moreover, the participants showed that to learn more vocabularies, they surfed data from the internet, watched English movies and read beneficial articles to gain more vocabularies that they could use in the future. These provide the avenue for them to understand and note high-falutin words which are useful in sentence construction, and gave review of the correct use of the rules in subject-verb-agreement.

D. Experiences as Differentiated by the Identified Demographic Profiles in their Attitude and Aspirations towards Writing Proficiency:

This research question of the study explains the experiences as differentiated by the identified demographic profiles in their attitude and aspirations towards writing proficiency which involves four (4) essential themes. This includes the difficulties they experienced upon going back to school, viewpoints on enduring negativities such as criticisms, disappointment and discouragement which gave inspiration and realization to others to continue schooling despite of age.

- Learning Difficulties:

It is exposed by the participants of this study that less exposure to English language becomes a barrier resulting to learning difficulties. As revealed by the non-traditional students, they thought that they were not young anymore to learn the skills in writing. They emphasized that they experienced hard time expressing thoughts compared to the younger ones, which implies that age becomes a barrier in learning. This barrier may include the lack of language skills which are very much important in learning process, especially in writing. Due a unfavorable condition in life, some non-traditional students do not want participate in learning (Wu, 2013).

Moreover, the non-traditional students also expounded that being not able to cope with the things to be learned in school because of the thinking being left behind by younger classmates are considering factors which contributed to their learning difficulties. They also added that they were having hard time to connect and understand the lessons of the teacher for lessons were new to them. This was supported by Cortiella and Horowitz (2014), stating that students are constantly being monitored based on their performance levels and progress. This means that when students are not updated with the curriculum it would tend them to face learning difficulties.

Further, non-traditional students also bared that they were having gap between classmates and they were adjusting with the environment especially with the people around. They also tend to underestimate themselves because of the idea that younger classmates were more intelligent compared to oneself.

- Self-driven Persons:

The result of this study exposed the students' viewpoints in managing time both in school and outside priorities. It was shown that adult students were self-driven persons for they still managed to be in school and continued to learn by applying different strategies like taking down notes wherein listed the entire to-do list within a day and managed their time well. Only they will know the schedule they are currently keeping and which areas they are willing to adjust so they will be able to finish their degree. If an education is truly important to them - the adult learner will find a way (Douglas, 2012).

It was also shown in this study that adult students' eagerness to continue learning is due to their both Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation like helping their parents while studying for they inculcated not to bother their parents but to give them the diploma as they have reached their dreams. Non-traditional learners can be defined as persons who are no longer dependent on parents or

guardians, have assumed major life responsibilities; however, in order for them to become more effective, they need to be motivated. All learners learn best when they are motivated; so do adults (Sogunro, 2015).

• Being Optimistic and Determined:
This theme focused on the viewpoints of the non-traditional students on enduring negativities such as criticisms, disappointment and discouragement. It was shown that they just ignored criticisms by not minding them and putting in mind that they have to continue and focus to reach their dreams in life despite the challenges.

Likewise, they stayed motivated and used criticisms as source of motivation to continue studying. They also set in their mind the principle that education is an investment to have a stable future. Through this, they were more focused and dedicated to finish studying. According to Rotgans and Schmidt (2012), motivation is an important condition in the success of learning, it is more applicable when interest in learning diminishes because of external criticisms.

• Opportunity-seeker and Strong Determination:
The study revealed that non-traditional students gave importance to education. They sought opportunity to go to school and having in mind that education is the key to have a good future. Svinicki (2004) postulated four ideas about what strong determination does for learning including, directing learners' attention to the task at hand and making them less distractible; changing what learners pay attention to; helping learners' persistence when they encounter obstacles; serving as benchmarks that the learners can use to monitor their own learning and recognize when they are making progress and when they have finished a task. Non-traditional students have a practical reason for their learning. They want to learn something that they can apply in the future (Sogunro, 2015). Further, the non-traditional students treated age as just a number. Age is just a number when persons are determined to study for studying doesn't define your age and they have to pursue education amidst the number of age (Branson, 2015).

E. Joint Display of Salient Quantitative and Qualitative:
For writing proficiency of non-traditional students, the results show that Non-traditional students are having learning difficulties with their environment and the curriculum because of their age and not going to school for long period of time. This result is congruent with the study of Gass (2013) which states that writing is an important skill for language production. However, it is considered a difficult skill, particularly in English wherein students face many challenges in writing. Writing proficiency is achieved when one is constantly exposed to language stimulus; however, the long absence from school is one of the main reasons why non-traditional students find it difficult in using the English language.

For the code difficulty in formulating and constructing ideas, the result shows that students lack of grammatical competence. The knowledge about spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and syntax among non-traditional students would improve their self-esteem in writing using English language. However, in order to come up with structured sentences, one must know the basic rules of grammar. This statement is anchored on the study of Peacock (2006) which states that learners who believe in learning grammar rules and getting word meanings through the use of dictionary to comprehend the meaning were found to be proficient in writing using English language.

For the code disappointment and shame, the result implies that having lack of self-esteem within oneself among non-traditional students when writing is the reason why most students felt negative feelings than positive ones. Being ashamed to commit mistakes affects as they become more anxious in expressing their feelings and ideas. As the informants revealed their weakness of being ashamed in the communication process especially when people laughed at them when they commit mistakes in using English language. in the same manner, Hieu(2011) concluded that feeling of being ashamed is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation. Thus, this hindered their language learning, since they would not attempt any more to express the ideas they have because of this feeling.

• Implications for Educational Practice
This study provides a view of the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students. The results of this study are proposed for the possible contribution to the field of English and to the possible use of teaching writing proficiency on the language particularly in writing using English language.

• Writing proficiency of non-traditional students
In every language, it possesses a certain skill of a particular students. I, as a researcher of this study, found happiness and satisfaction of its result despite the problems that I went through which led to the success of this academic requirement. I believe, the disclosure of the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students contributes a lot in studying language.

• Learning Difficulties:
Learning difficulties also known as learning disabilities are conditions that impact on an individual's ability to gain knowledge and skills at the same rate as his or her peers. They may be due to a mental handicap or a cognitive disorder. Having a learning difficulty does not make someone less intelligent, it just means they learn in a different way that can render traditional classroom activities problematic. In this idea, I was able to appreciate the importance of writing and its effect on students' performance,that is why as a teacher, giving interventions to students with disabilities is very important since people with learning difficulties often

require specific strategy training and customized lessons in order for them to overcome challenges and make progress in an academic environment.

- Lack of Grammatical competence

Having the difficulty in constructing a sentence is one of the main reasons why students find it difficult to express their thoughts and ideas. Grammatical competence defines as the knowledge of language stored in a person's mind. This term refers to the implicit knowledge of structural regularities of language in the mind and the ability to recognize and produce these distinctive grammatical structures. With this, through the help of the activity plan that was created the problem of these students will be resolved and it will help them develop their writing skills.

- Lack of vocabulary words:

Vocabulary is one of factors that support students for mastering language. Students find it difficult to use English in expressing their ideas through writing because they lack of vocabularies. However, I strongly believe that reading books, watching English movies, and many more help the learners appreciate the words and its meaning. This is also a resource material that may aid the learner to collect words a day and use it in a sentence. Also, it is suggestive that teachers can have a pair or group tutoring to help students develop their skills.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

A. Conclusions

a) Writing proficiency in English Language of non-traditional students:

This study is the development of a measurement tool on the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students in the local college. The tool had been administered to 150 respondents. The instrument of this study consists of 5 items: idea, organization, expression, convention and legibility. The study shows an overall computed mean described as high which only means that the language of non-traditional students is extensive. On the other hand, the indicator idea got the highest mean described as high which means that the language of non-traditional students is extensive and the lowest mean was obtained by the indicator convention described as low which means that the language of non-traditional students is less extensive.

b) Significance of the difference in Writing Proficiency of Non-traditional Students based on the identified demographic profile:

The interpretation between the difference in writing proficiency of the participants as the chosen samples based on their age, marital status and types of students whether working or non-working students. The result shows only the age significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students. On the other hand, the computed p-value of marital status and the type of students whether working or non-working is greater than the level of significance does not significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students in the local colleges of Davao del Norte. Thus, we can infer from the given result that even a non-traditional student who is working or not-working, married or single, may be effective or not in their writing proficiency.

c) The Lived Experiences of Non-traditional Students in Their Acquisition of Writing Proficiency of English Language:

The research questions generally focused on the experiences of the non-traditional students in their acquisition of writing proficiency of English language. For the lack of Grammatical Competence, the responses of the participants in terms of their experiences in the acquisition of writing proficiency using English language shows that non-traditional students have struggles in expressing ideas through writing. For the lack of self-confidence, lacking of experiences and exposure in writing using English language caused them unable to express ideas in their minds. For being optimistic, this theme exposed how the non-traditional students deal their feeling of committing mistakes and feedbacks in writing and for the integration and exposure to English resources, this encourages the students to use the appropriate vocabulary in composing their responses on paper, and to write extensively.

d) Experiences as Differentiated by the Identified Demographic Profiles in their Attitude and Aspirations towards Writing Proficiency:

This research question generated four themes namely learning difficulties, self-driven person, being optimistic and determined and opportunity seeker and strong determination which explains the experiences as differentiated by the identified demographic profiles in their attitude and aspirations towards writing proficiency of non-traditional students. This also includes the difficulties they experienced upon going back to school, viewpoints on enduring negativities such as criticisms, disappointment and discouragement which gave inspiration and realization to others to continue schooling despite of age.

e) Joint Display of Salient Quantitative and Qualitative:

For writing proficiency of non-traditional students, the results show that Non-traditional students are having learning difficulties with their environment and the curriculum because of their age and not going to school for long period of time.For the code difficulty in formulating and constructing ideas, the result shows that students lack of grammatical competence. The knowledge about spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and syntax among non-traditional students would improve their self-esteem in writing using English language.For the code disappointment and shame, the result implies that having lack of self-esteem within oneself among non-traditional students when writing is the reason why most students felt negative feelings than positive ones.

B. Recommendations

Based from the results established, the following recommendations were formulated.

Despite the overall rating of high for the writing proficiency in English language of non-traditional students, there should still an intervention that would help improve their capability in terms of writing using English language.

The interpretation between the difference in writing proficiency of the participants as the chosen samples based on their age, marital status and types of students whether working or non-working students shows that age significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students. Moreover, we can infer from the given result that even a non-traditional student who is working or not-working, married or single, may be effective or not in their writing proficiency.

From the lived experiences of non-traditional students in their acquisition of writing proficiency using English language, one of its major concern is the lack of grammatical competence. With this, it is better to implement a workshop that would help improve the writing performance of the non-traditional students.

The essential themes from the experiences as differentiated by the identified demographic profiles were drawn from the responses of the participants both in in-depth interview and focus group discussion namely learning difficulties, self-driven person/s, being optimistic and determined, and opportunity-seeker and strong determination. The responses of the participants have revealed that they encountered learning difficulties towards writing, however, amidst the difficulty, they were still driven and determined to pursue study. Through this, the institution should provide an intervention that supports the eagerness of the non-traditional students to continue studying since they are motivated to pursue their study despite of their situation in life.

a) Recommendations for Future Research:

Recommendations for this study will be based on the result of the qualitative phase and quantitative phase. The result shows that the students' writing proficiency in English language influence on the way they perceived communication in terms of writing. Positive attitude has a big impact in motivating to learn writing using English to achieve language fluency.

There are also certainly for other research opportunities to consider in terms of the research participant's demographics. My study is only limited to the writing proficiency of students using English language, the issue on writing skills that is relevant pedagogical practices of teacher might warrant a separate research endeavor.

For educational institutions, these findings imply that non-traditional students writing proficiency should take into considerations since we cannot avoid the fact that that learners have individual needs and differences; hence, stressing the need for differentiated instruction based on multiple intelligences, learning styles, and others. For the writing Proficiency of non-traditional Students based on the identified demographic profile, the result shows that only the age significantly influences the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students. However, marital status as moderator of writing proficiency does not significantly influence the writing proficiency of the non-traditional students and so with the type of students they are. Thus, we can infer from the given result that even a non-traditional student who is working or not-working, married or single, may be effective or not in their writing proficiency.

For students who are studying Masters of Arts in English, may this paper serves as an inspiration to conduct further research study about writing proficiency in English language. Though studying writing proficiency in English is time consuming but one's contribution to its intervention is a fulfillment for contributing something in the linguistic community.

The study will also give another opportunity to the future researchers, and this will also serve as a reference for those who are planning to conduct a research focusing on writing communications. This research may inspire them to explore the different aspects.

The codes of the emerging themes of the qualitative phase were for the development of a measurement tool. One of the limitations of this study is the exclusivity of the respondents in one school only. With this, it is suggested that research will be including other schools in Kapalong, Davao del Norte. Hence, increasing the population size can enhance the generalizability of the scale. The developed instrument may be utilized by other norms to further test its validity and reliability.

REFERENCES

[1.] Abdulkareem, M. (2013). Investigation study of academic writing problems faced by Arab postgraduate students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM).Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 3(9), 1552-1557.

[2.] Al Fadda, H. (2012). Difficulties in academic writing: From the perspective of King Saud University postgraduate students. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

[3.] American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2012). Assessments for world languages https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf

[4.] Anderson (2013) What Are the Effects of Part Time Jobs on High School Students? https://www.theclassroom.com/effects-part-time-jobs-high-school-students-18007.html

[5.] Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C. K., (2010). Introduction to research in education (8ed.). Retrieved on 28 October 2018 from college_of_education_culture_and_climate.

[6.] Akyol, (2007); Tseng & Chow, (2000) An analysis of the legibility of cursive handwriting of prospective primary school teachers　　　　　https://ac.els-cdn.com/S1877042812021489/1-s2.0-S1877042812021489-main. pdf?_tid=5b53081f7fee4486b673fa72742e9b30 & acdnat=1548144212_3158f2776e8c94e04ac931cc3c7c9fa2

[7.] Baeta, Elbert O., Solomo, Odessa D. et al., (2012) English language proficiency of college freshmen at central bicol state university　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　of　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　agriculture. http://www.academia.edu/2078274/ENGLISH_LANGUAGE_PROFICIENCY_OF_COLLEGE_FRESHMEN_AT_CENTR AL_BICOL_STATE_UNIVERSITY_OF_AGRICULTURE_S_Y_2011-_2012.

[8.] Barrington, K., (2017) The Top Challenges for Non-Traditional Students in Community College https://www.communitycollegereview.com/blog/the-top-challenges-for-non-traditional-students-in-community-college

[9.] Baxter, D. D., (1997). Pathways to college for undeserved and non-traditional students. The State of College Access and Completion: Improving College Success for Students from Underrepresented Groups, 34.

[10.] Benshoff and Lewis, (1992). Barriers and Challenges of Female Adult Students Enrolled in Higher Education: A Literature Review.

[11.] Bitsch, C., (2005). College Teaching, Research 40(3), 114-117.

[12.] Bidwell, (2014). A Review of the Literature: The Needs of Nontraditional Students in Postsecondary Education. Nontraditional Student Issues https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sem3.20115

[13.] Binder & Smith, (2013). The Influence of Language Difficulties on the Wellbeing of International Students: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. Retrieved on 03 November 2018 from http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/1042/the-influence-of-language-difficulties-on-the-wellbeing-of-international-students-an-interpretive-phenomenological-analysis

[14.] Brown, R., (1991). Helping students confront and deal with stress and pro crastination. Journal of college student. Psychotherapy. 62,87-102.doi:10.1300/j035v06no2_9

[15.] Buck, (2001) Considerations in Assessing Speaking and Listening https://www.scribd.com/document/254524052/Considerations-in Assessing-

[16.] Canady, C. E. (2008). Effects of models, writing frames, and sentence combining on second grade writing quality, doctoral of dissertation, University of Virginia.

[17.] Chaves, D.L., (2003). Research Methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies (Oxford applied linguistics).

[18.] Cook, V. 2016. Second language learning and language teaching. 5th ed. New York: Routledge.

[19.] Council of Writing Program Administrators, (2011) Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing https://www.basicknowledge101.com/pdf/knowledge%20of%20conventions%20writing%20skills.pdf

[20.] Chillisa, A., &Preece, S., (2005). Student reputation enhancement: Differentiating delinquent and nondelinquent youths. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines, 40(4), 593-606.

[21.] Cohen, B.I., (2011). Impact of parental support on the academic performance and self-concept of the student. Journal of Research and Reflections in Education, (4)1, 14-26.

[22.] Creswell, J.W. (2013). Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. (pp. 77-83)

[23.] Dewaele (2007) Age, Gender and Grade effect on Foreign Language Anxiety among Children https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317722348_AGE_GENDER_AND_GRADE_EFFECT_ON_FOREIGN_LANGU AGE_ANXIETY_AMONG_CHILDREN

[24.] Dunca et. al (2013) Factors Affecting the Academic Performance of the Working http://www.academia.edu/5323781/FACTORS_AFFECTING_THE_ACADEMIC_PERFORMANCE_OF_THE_WORKIN G

[25.] Dreckmeier, Kai, and Christopher Tilghman, (2010). An Analysis of inquiry: non start, and drop reasons in Non-traditional University student populations. Portland, Or: Inside Track. Retrieved on 30 September 2018 from http://www.insidetrack.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/adult-student-reseach-paper-chris-tilghman-kai-drekmeier.pdf.

[26.] Ducken, D. (2014). Written Corrective Feedback in the L2 Writing Classroom. EUW Master's Thesis Collection. Paper 221.

[27.] Erisman& Steele, (2012). A Review of the Literature: The Needs of Nontraditional Students in Postsecondary Education https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sem3.20115

[28.] Flower, L. and J.R. Hayes (2009). A cognitive process theory of writing. College Composition and Communication. url: https://goo.gl/duMyeY. Date retrieved: January 20, 2019.

[29.] Garcia, J.N and Fidalgo, R. (2008). Orchestration of writing processes and writing products: a comparison of sixth-grade students with and without learning disabilities, Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal, 6(2), 77-98.

[30.] Gass, S. M. (2013). Second Language acquisition. Introductory course. www.altaanz.org/upload5/9/0/8/5908292/7_frost_on_gass.pdf

[31.] Graham & Hebert, (2010) The Development of Writing Skills: The Use of Genre-Specific Elements in Second and Third Grade Students' Writing https://repository.asu.edu/attachments/172768/content/Ingebrand_asu_0010E_16199.pdf

[32.] Guemide, B. (2012). A New Way of Developing Coherence in Writing. The quarterly journal of David's English teaching world. Issue 5. 22-23 http://www.eltworld.net/journal/horizons%20issue%2005.pdf

[33.] Halai, W.L. (2006). Impact of students financial aid on access. In J. Froomkin (Ed.), The crisis in higher education (pp. 84-96). New York: The Academy of Political Science.

[34.] Hertzberg (2018) Why Organization Is So Important in Writing https://www.grammarly.com/blog/organization-tips-for-writers/

[35.] Horn, L., Carroll, C., & MPR Associates, B., (1996). Non-traditional undergraduates: Institute for Higher Education Policy, W. (1998). Reaping the benefits: Defining the public and private value of going to college. Retrieved from ERIC Database.

[36.] Hush, L.J., (2005). Getting ready to pay for college: What students and their parents know about the cost of college tuition and what they are doing to find out (NCES 2003-030). Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

[37.] Kasworm, C. (2003). Adult Learners in a research university: Negotiating undergraduate student identity. Adult Education Quarterly, 60, 143-160.

[38.] Kautzer, K. (2010) Teaching writing conventions https://writeshop.com/teaching-writing-conventions/

[39.] Kenner, S.D and Weinerman, R.T, (2011). "Yesterday's Non-traditional Student is Today's Traditional Student".

[40.] Kimborough, Doris R. and Gabriela C. Weaver, (2000). Improving the Background Knowledge of Non-traditional Students". Innovative Higher Education 23, no. 3: 197-219.

[41.] Langdridge, D. 2007. Phenomenological psychology. Theory, research and method, Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

[42.] Lasaten, R.C & Pablo, J.C (2018) Writing Difficulties and Quality of Academic Essays of Senior High School Students. http://www.apjmr.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/APJMR-2018-6.4.06.pdf

[43.] Leech & Onwuegbuzie, (2008). Mixed Methods Research. https://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/681023/Dr-r-cameron_mixed-methodology.pdf

[44.] Leonen, J., (2018) English proficiency of Pinoy students, teachers lagging-survey https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/969318/inquiry-into-decline-of-english-skill-of-ph-students-sought

[45.] Li, C., (2004). Colleges enhance support form non-traditional students. Jobs for the Future. Retrieved on 29 October from eric.ed.gov.

[46.] Maxwell, J.A. (2013). Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. (pp. 135-136)

[47.] McCabe, E. E., (2008). A developmental progress of a Qualitative Research 45(4), 513-520.

[48.] Nielsen, J., (2015) Legibility, Readability, and Comprehension: Making Users Read Your Words https://www.nngroup.com/articles/legibility-readability-comprehension/

[49.] NODA (2017) The Needs of Nontraditional Students in Postsecondary Education https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sem3.20115

[50.] Olinghouse & Santangelo, (2010) The Development of the Written Expression Skills of a First Grade Student at Home, School and University Program: A Case Study

[51.] Petters (2000) Non-traditional college students: Assumptions, perceptions, and directions for a meaningful academic experience. International Journal in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, 6(4), 1-10. Google Scholar, Crossref

[52.] Patton, M.Q. (2002). Qualitative research and evaluation methods (3rd ed.). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

[53.] Peha (2003) Looking for Quality in Student Writing https://www.ttms.org/writing_quality/ideas.htm

[54.] Racca, R.M, and Lasaten, R.C. (2016). English Language Proficiency and Academic Performance of Philippine Science High School Students. http://www.ijlll.org/vol2/65-LL0011.pdf

[55.] Resnik, C., (2010). The Relationship between time management skills and academic achievement of potential teachers. Educational Research Quarterly, 33(4).

[56.] Ross-Gordon, (2011). A Review of the Literature: The Needs of Nontraditional Students in Postsecondary Education. Nontraditional Student Issues https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sem3.20115

[57.] Santoso, A. (2010). Scaffolding an EFL effective writing class in a hybrid learning community. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Queensland: Queensland University of Technology.

[58.] Schoonenboom, J. & Burke Johnson (2017). How to Construct a Mixed Methods Research Design. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5602001/

[59.] Shaw(2009) The English Language, retrieved from https://books.google.com.ph/books/about/The_English_Language.html?id=Hrc0AlvgowQC&redir_esc=y

[60.] Sheehy (2013) The Needs of Nontraditional Students in Postsecondary Education https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sem3.20115

[61.] Soliven, D.L and Reyes, C.V (2008) Establishing dependability and conformability in naturalistic inquiry through an Audit.

[62.] Valdez, P. M. (2016). English for academic and professional purposes. Quezon City: Phoenix Publishing House. http://www.apjmr.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/APJMR-2018 6.4.06.pdf

[63.] Watanabe, Laurent E. (2005). The Effect of College Student Employment on Academic Achievement. The University of Central Florida Undergraduate Research Journal, 1:38-47

[64.] Wenham, S., (2014) The Importance of Legible Handwriting https://blog.postofficeshop.co.uk/importance-legible-handwriting/

[65.] Wilson, Kate M., (2006) Why Is Organization Important in Writing? https://freelance-writing.lovetoknow.com/about-freelance-writing/why-is-organization-important-writing

[66.] Wyatt, Linda G., (2011). "Non-traditional Student Engagement: Increasing Adult Student Success and Retention". The Journal of Continuing Higher Education 59: 10-11.

[67.] Wu, C. V., & Fournier, E.J. (2000). Coping with course content demands in a Problem-Based Learning Environment [Electronic Version]. Journal of Alabama Academy of Science, 71 (3). 110.

[68.] Zumbrunn, Y.L., McKimm, H.S., Buhs, E.W., & Hawley, C. (2014) "Supporting Mature-Aged Students from a Low Socioeconomic Background". High Education 58: 505-29.

APPENDIX A

Research Questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Davao City

October 19, 2018
Dear respondents,

Praised be Jesus and Mary!

I, Evelyn G. Erellana, a candidate for the Master of Arts in Education Major in English of the University of the Immaculate Conception, is currently conducting my dissertation entitled **"WRITING PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS IN A LOCAL COLLEGE."**

In line with this, may I humbly request for your cooperation to my study by answering the survey questionnaire. I assure you that whatever data I will learn from your participation will be kept in utmost secrecy. As a researcher, I am obliged to protect you by keeping your identity and your answers confidentially.

I am hoping for your kindness, as our intention is clean.

Truly yours,

Evelyn G. Erellana
Researcher

Noted by:

Virgion H.Mamonong
Adviser

Name: (Optional) _____

Year & Section: _____

Age: _____

Marital Status: _____

Type of Student (*working or non-working*): _____

WRITING PERFORMANCE TEST

Essay

Direction: This test aims to measure different aspects of your writing proficiency in English language. There are no wrong answers here. Just write your thoughts and ideas as naturally as you can. Express your answer in not more than 3 paragraphs.

Question:*If you had the opportunity to bring any person — past or present, fictional   or nonfictional — to a place that is special to you (your hometown or   country, a favourite location, etc.), who would you bring and why? Tell us what you would share with that person.*

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

WRITING PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RUBRIC

Feature	4 Strong	3 Developing	2 Emerging	1 Beginning	Score
Ideas	Establishes a clear focus Uses descriptive language Provides relevant information Communicates creative ideas	Develops a focus Uses some descriptive language Details support idea Communicates original ideas	Attempts a focus in developing ideas Ideas not fully developed Ideas lack support details	Lacks focus and development	
Organization	Establishes a strong beginning, middle, and end Demonstrates an orderly flow of ideas	Attempts an adequate introduction and ending Evidence of logical sequencing	Some evidence of a beginning, middle, and end Sequencing is attempted	Little or no organization Relies on single idea	
Expression	Uses effective language Uses high-level vocabulary Use of sentence variety	Diverse word choice Uses descriptive words Sentence variety	Limited word choice Basic sentence structure	No sense of sentence structure	
Conventions	Few or no errors in: grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation	Some errors in: grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation	Has some difficulty in: grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation	Little or no evidence of correct grammar, spelling, capitalization or punctuation	
Legibility	Easy to read Properly spaced Proper letter formation	Readable with some spacing/forming errors	Difficult to read due to spacing/forming letter	Difficult to read due to spacing/forming letter	

From: https://www.thoughtco.com/writing-rubric-2081370