

Original Paper

Investigating Writing-Skill Improvement among First Common Year Students at Northern Border University Using Academic Reading Passages from National Geographic: Life

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of structured reading-to-write instruction on the academic writing skills of First Common Year students at Northern Border University. Using academic passages from the National Geographic: Life series, the research examines improvements in organization, cohesion, vocabulary, and overall writing proficiency. Quantitative analyses, including descriptive statistics and paired-sample t-tests, indicate statistically significant gains in writing performance.

Keywords

academic writing, reading-to-write, EFL learners, National Geographic Life, university writing development

1. Introduction

Academic writing is a core component of university education, requiring students to master skills in idea development, clarity, proper organization, and coherence. For EFL learners, developing writing proficiency is especially challenging due to limited exposure to academic texts and vocabulary. This study investigates whether integrating academic reading passages into writing instruction enhances students' academic writing capabilities.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

Forty First Common Year EFL students (aged 18-20) enrolled in LNGT101 participated in the study. All participants shared similar English proficiency levels and were native Arabic speakers.

2.2 Materials

The instructional materials consisted of academic reading passages from the National Geographic: Life series (Levels 1-2). Supplementary worksheets, vocabulary guides, and cohesion-focused exercises were used to reinforce academic writing structures.

2.3 Research Design

A quasi-experimental one-group pre-test/post-test design measured students' writing improvement over an eight-week instructional period. Analytic scoring rubrics assessed writing performance across content, vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and organization.

2.4 Procedure

Week 0 involved a diagnostic pre-test writing task. Weeks 1-7 implemented structured reading-to-write lessons including summarization, paraphrasing, and academic vocabulary exercises. In Week 8, a post-test was administered using the same scoring rubric.

2.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, paired-sample t-tests, and effect size calculations were used to evaluate changes in writing performance. Statistical significance was determined at $p < .05$.

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	Pre-Test	Post-Test
count	40.0	40.0
mean	58.25	66.49
std	7.62	8.12
min	44.32	50.62
25%	52.53	62.35
50%	58.13	65.94
75%	62.64	69.25
max	74.82	90.51

3.2 Paired-Sample t-Test

T-Statistic: -12.784

P-Value: 0.00000

Effect Size (Cohen's d): 2.021

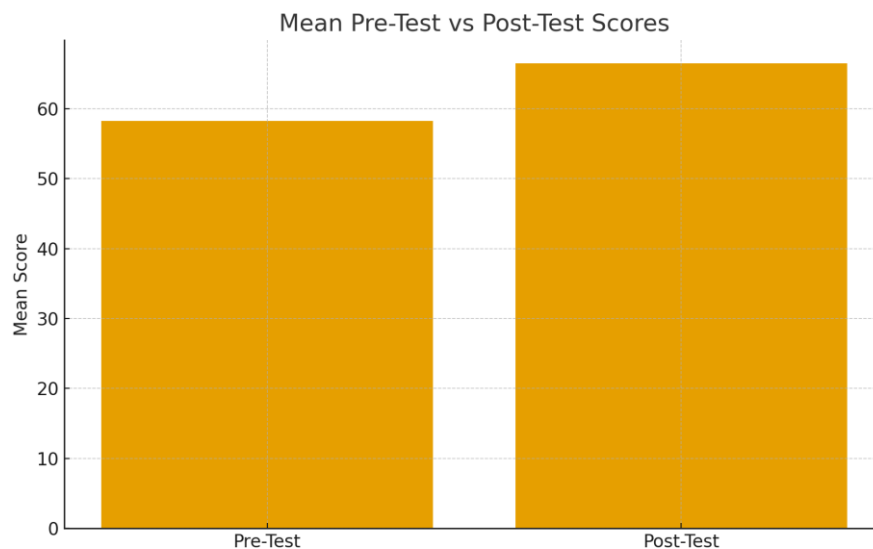


Figure 1. Mean Pre-Test vs Post-Test Scores

4. Discussion

The analysis indicates substantial improvement in students' writing performance following the reading-to-write instructional intervention. The large effect size demonstrates a meaningful pedagogical impact. Students improved particularly in vocabulary use and cohesion, suggesting that exposure to structured academic texts supports higher-level writing development.

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