Proposing Thematic Diversity Reference Model for Essay Writing and Assessment

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ABSTRACT

The tertiary level learners show inadequacy in thematic diversity in their essay writing in English, especially in non-English speaking countries. The learners' effectiveness in developing the topic is unsatisfactory, affecting their creativity and performance and, finally, the evaluation of their essays. Though there are guidelines and textbooks for developing writing skills, inadequate training with a proper practice model reflects *weak performance at the university level. Writers can develop a topic in diverse ways from multidisciplinary, spatial, and temporal perspectives. Therefore, a simplified guiding Model is proposed for facilitation. This paper describes the Model and application instruction in the pre-writing, writing and post-writing processes. It can be an efficient tool for students in their written course assignments, essay questions in examinations, and creative writing. In addition, it can be an effective tool for teachers to teach and assess expressive language skills like essay writing. A visually designed Thematic Diversity Reference Model for textual production and assessment developed in this research addresses this thematic non-diversity. The topic is approached at four levels: 1) Content, 2) Strategic, 3) Tactic, to 4) Logical Approaches. It stimulates feelings, ideas and activities in abstract and concrete ways and from different perspectives, as described in the schema theory of J. Piaget (1957) and the Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura (1999), thus diversifying and enhancing the theme or topic and the sub-themes consequently. The researchers analysed an essay written in English to explain its usefulness in writing and assessment. The analysis was dominantly qualitative. The application reveals a significant failure in all four approaches. It identifies the absence of multidisciplinary nature, critical, creative, temporal, spatial, and contextual expansion,* s*tatistical, ideological, experiential, and referential information, causal and logical relationships, cohesion, and coherence. Thus, the Model assists the writer and the reader, advocating pedagogical solutions in developing writing strategies for better performance and assessment. It applies to interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary writings, social sciences, and humanities.*

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1 INTRODUCTION

Tertiary-level learners, especially in social sciences, humanities, and sciences, need good academic essay writing skills to perform in their academic programs. They should develop their essays with diverse themes, making them multidisciplinary. Further, they must expand the essay qualitatively using specific writing strategies and techniques and organise them logically. However, Giridharan (2012, pp. 578) states, 'there is growing evidence that the lack of competence of university ESL (English as a second language) students in academic writing affects their overall academic performance.' Lack of essay writing skills negatively influences students' self-efficacy and motivation. As a result, their creative, critical and honing skills are poor in their writing. This paper explores the usefulness of a guiding model in the application, evaluation, and feedback. "Research studies revealed that for students entering tertiary levels of post-secondary, academic success is dependent on successful academic writing" (Kelley 2008, cited in Giridharan 2012, pp.579). The successful application of this proposed Model in this paper enhances self-efficacy or academic confidence in essay writing. In addition, the model can compare students' essay themes and sub-themes to explore whether they successfully impact the writing skills involved at the university level. The model application can positively improve the output of thematic diversity at the micro and macro levels in their performance, as many students fail in the writing skills expected when applying this Model for evaluation.

Creative or critical essay writing in humanities and social sciences can diversify its themes and sub-themes on any given topic. For example, the writers can approach a topic like 'the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's lives from multidisciplinary perspectives and diverse contexts. This non-diversity can be one of the "poor academic writing skills which have often been alluded to as a key factor in the failure of ESL and international students in meeting institutional literacy expectations" (Bacha 2002; Zhu 2004, cited in Giridharan 2012, pp. 579).

The students need a reference model to expand or develop their critical and creative essay writing thematically in a diversified manner. Their writing is monotonous, and information is presented at the surface level. The facts and opinions are too generalised. Sometimes, though the topics are complex, they are oversimplified. The repeated ideas become redundant. Some ideas need intensive exploration with examples, as Rijlaarsdam et al. (2005, pp. 127–153) stated about the complexity of essay writing, but they are taken for granted. The writers used clichéd information, points, or ideas in an essay writing task. Therefore, it is required that their writing should bear interesting details. The students should explore it at a deep level. The points need to be diversified, and a multidisciplinary approach is essential. The most crucial incorporation is that the writing should be critical and creative, as Gibbs & Simpson (2004, pp. 3–31.) conditioned on constructive and critical feedback. At the same time, the ideas and examples reveal relevant and logically consistent information, points, or concepts in an essay writing task. One important note is that this research or Model does not facilitate their linguistic or language structural skills but thematic and information production and process skills.

Olivas & Li (2006 cited in Giridharan 2012, pp. 578) state that low second-language proficiency levels in English lead to the poor academic performance of international students studying at both university and college levels in the United States. The research gap was explicit. Though there have been studies and consequent findings on the use of academic language in an academic essay or research article writing, an investigation into product-based academic content and literacy is required. A product-based approach using strategic, tactical and logical approaches has been rare, especially in Sri Lanka and other South Asian countries.

According to Giridharan (2012, pp. 578), although many ESL students at university have moderate knowledge about language structure, many cannot perform academically at expected levels. 'This situation is further exacerbated by a lack of awareness of students' ability in academic writing.' Even if this investigation is available in the West, the findings have been contextually and culturally not applicable or challenging to apply in the Sri Lankan context, where English is used as a second language and as the medium of instruction with many implementation implications.

Even in the case of L1 (first language) students, research reports indicate poor academic writing skills, even though L1 students possess productive knowledge of vocabulary required at tertiary levels and are grammatically more fluent (Hinkel 2004, cited in Giridharan 2012, pp. 579). Therefore, this simplified TDRM is applicable and convenient for Sri Lankan students' reference. Reid (1993) confirms the practice of process-centred instructional methodology in the past. However, at present, Hinkel (2004) relates the product of writing to academic writing evaluations. The application models for the product-based approach have been scarce, and the research gap is observed mainly in the Sri Lankan context.

The paper's thesis statement is as follows: A reference model is proposed as an application guide to essay writing in university assignments, in-course assessments, and final semester examinations to enhance diversity, comprehensiveness and systematic organisation in developing themes and sub-themes.

Background of the Study

University education and evaluation are mainly based on writing and assessing academic essays in humanities, social sciences and biosciences. Sri Lankan university education is followed primarily in the English medium. Further, in Sri Lanka, English is used as a second language. The prevalence of English L2 writing is

"increasingly dominant in both educational programs and professional writing in non-English dominant countries" (Leki 2001, cited in Giridharan 2012, pp. 579). Most Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim students of Sri Lankan Universities do not use the other local tongue as the medium of instruction in their degree programs, primarily in academic essay writing. They use English as the medium of instruction in Science, Engineering and Technology degree programs. Only in Arts or social sciences and Humanities do they use their mother tongue or English as the medium, not the other local tongue. There is no official statistical evidence that many Tamils and Muslims follow their degree programs in Sinhala or Sinhalese follow their degree programs in Tamil. Since the researchers have worked in the Sri Lankan university system for twenty-five years, they know this practical reality. Recently, there has been a change in the policies regarding the medium of instruction at the university level. The University Grants Commission also encourages using English as the medium in Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities.

Therefore, essay writing in English is a challenging demand for many Sri Lankans. However, suppose they follow their degree programs in English, especially in Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Biosciences, except for Mathematics and a few other Technology-oriented subjects in which numbers and formulas dominate. In that case, most of their learning and assessment activities are based on an extended essay or short or structured academic essay writing. If they are good at writing academic essays in English, they can show their knowledge of a subject and demonstrate their abilities in the assessment activities. The undergraduates were selected based on merit performance in the Advanced Level education, and the majority followed the A/L in their mother tongue, not in English. They are intelligent enough to follow their university education. However, the English medium is new to them. Following a tertiary level education program in a new medium,

English, poses challenges, unlike their A/L, secondary level education, which they followed in their mother tongue. University education means advanced, complex and sophisticated ideas and activities. Therefore, they need advanced receptive and expressive language skills to meet the tertiary-level academic writing requirements. This paper attempts to explain a guide for essay writing and assessment and facilitate the teachers and learners with the different types and approaches they can choose from.

The evaluation of their performance in their essay writing at the University of Vavuniya over the last five years has proven this state throughout time and quality in synchronous and asynchronous or chronological aspects. For example, the statistical assessment data available in the Department of English Language Teaching for the batch of students (Academic Year 2017/18) at the University of Vavuniya are as follows:

Table 01: Essay Writing Performance of the Batches (Academic Year 2017/18) in the First Semester ESL Examination at the University of Vavuniya

Mark Range-Essay	% for the essay/FAS	% for the whole Exam/FAS	% for the essay/FBS	% for the whole Exam/FBS	% for the essay/FTS	% for the whole Exam/FTS
0-44	71.3	7.6	71.7	56.6	81.6	25.3
45-60	28.0	32.5	22.0	30.8	18.4	42.5
61-75	0.6	51.0	5.0	11.9	0.0	25.3
76-100	0.0	8.9	1.3	0.6	0.0	6.9

Source: DELT 2017/2018 – *FAS- Faculty of Applied Sciences; FBS – Faculty of Business Studies; FTS – Faculty of Technological Studies.*

Based on the information in Table 01, it can be confirmed that more than 70% of the students scored between the marks range of 0-44 in the essay writing question. However, their overall performance in the whole examination differs. Only 8% of the FAS students scored between the mark range of 0-44. 57% of the FBS students and 25% of the FTS students scored below 44. Though most students scored above 44 marks and passed the examination, their essay performance is comparatively weak.

Conceptual Framework

Rijlaarsdam et al. (2005, pp. 127–153) reveal that writing essays is complex and challenging to master. The success of tertiary and university education depends on essay writing in their assessments. Proficiency in essay writing can promote student achievement. Gibbs & Simpson (2004, pp. 3–31.) prescribe providing constructive and critical feedback on students'

essay writing abilities. The Model developed in this research facilitates this kind of substantial feedback for the students to practice in their future writing. Higgins et al. (2002, pp. 53–64) recommend previous experiences' contributions to their writing process. Brookhart (2001, pp. 153–169) talks about the intended reflective process in writing. This Model facilitates kindling the discourse scripts and frames deposited in their brains regarding a topic according to the diversified thematic perspectives and aspects mentioned above. Therefore, this Model stimulated and activated their previous experiences and intended reflective process related to the topic given for exposition. Braaksma et al. (2004, pp. 1–36) state that research in different cultural contexts has shown the effectiveness of model evaluation in this context. This paper aims to improve students' essay writing skills thematically from this model learning and application by referring to, following and

applying the step-by-step process and procedure of the four levels of the proposed model during the pre-writing, writing and post-writing stages of their essay development. However, the linguistic performance, syntactic, grammatical or stylistic diversity is not under this realm of research but thematic.

This paper applies the Schema theory of J. Piaget (1957) to the Model developed in this paper. The German philosopher Kant introduced this term in 1781. Later Gestalt psycholinguist F. Bartlett applied schema to psychology research in 1932; Rumelhart systematically developed it to make it a theory in 1980. Finally, the educational psychologist Richard Anderson used it for education (Cui 2002, pp. 52-57). The *Schema Theory* "in psychology and cognitive science describes a systematic pattern of thought and behaviour. Schemata affect attention and the absorption of new information. People use schemata to organise prior knowledge and provide a framework for future understanding" (Kramsch 1993, pp. 43-51). They can be frame, script or background knowledge.

Schema is divided into three categories: linguistic, content, and formal (Carrell 1984, pp. 87-112). The explanation of each schema category is as follows: Linguistic schema is related to the readers' and writers' prior linguistic knowledge. They can be phonetics, grammar and vocabulary. Content schema is the background knowledge the reader or writer has before developing the essay or topic. It stimulates the mind to access more ideas, information, and examples and apply them (Carrell 1988, cited in Zhao & Lei Zhu 2012, pp. 112). For example, their past learning and experience related to the topic, cultural background and affiliation related to the topic, conventions and previous domain experience they have on the topic. Formal schema is the "background knowledge about the formal, rhetorical, organisational structures of different kinds of texts" (Carrell & Eisterhold 1983, pp. 81-92). The formal schema is retained at the abstract level in the human mind. They are encoded and internalised as coherent patterns at the meta-linguistic discourse level. The frames and scripts of textual organisation constructed from birth guide expectations in our attempts to understand a meaningful piece of language" (Carrell & Eisterhold 1983, pp. 81-92).

Another application in this paper is Social Learning Theory (SLT) and Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT). Bandura (1999) is the father of this cognitive theory. Learning is "A persisting change in human performance or performance potential as a result of the learner's interaction with the environment" (Driscoll 1994, pp. 8-9). The popular Learning theories are Behaviorism, Social Learning Theory (SLT) and Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT). Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory has influenced many disciplines. There are three stages of social learning: observation, imitation and behaviour modelling (Bandura 2006). Learning takes place "from our interactions with others in a social context. First, by observing the behaviours of others, people develop similar behaviours. Then, they assimilate and imitate that behaviour, if they are positively related to the observed behaviour" (Bandura 1977, pp. 154-196).

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY / MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper follows a qualitative approach. It provides or proposes the Thematic Diversity Reference Model (TDRM) for Textual Production and Assessment to address this thematic non-diversity, expansion and organisation in essay writing.

This paper methodologically presents this TDRM proposal based on the following: existing secondary literature on English writing skills, academic essay writing skills, inter-and multidisciplinary approaches to creative and critical academic writing (see the reference list at the end of the article), the schema theory of

J. Piaget (1957) and the Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura (1999).

Secondly, to support and test this Model's validity and reliability, the proposed model was used or applied to assess the performance in a sample essay written by a student. A case study was conducted to evaluate students' performance in an essay writing on the randomly selected topic: Vegetarian versus Non –Vegetarian. It was a free writing exercise without any formal reference from secondary sources. Ten students were randomly selected from the Faculty of Applied Science among the Bsc in IT students. The reason for choosing students from this particular Degree program was that to be eligible for admission to this degree program; the candidates have to sit for an aptitude examination and possess a credit pass in the O/L Examination. It proves that in addition to their A/L major subjects, they are generally clever in aptitude and good in English knowledge. It was a minor writing assignment for half an hour. They had to write the essay in not less than 350 words. They were not guided using the Model.

Though ten students' data were available, the aim of this research paper was not to do a quantitative analysis of their performance. It can be performed later once this proposed model is recognised and published, but it presents a reference model qualitatively and get recognition and acceptance. Therefore, to support the application of the proposed model, only one sample text of the essay written by one student was selected. The selection was based on the average performance percentage of the ten students. The top and the bottom level performers were not considered. The overall performance score is 45% which is a modest one. The particular student wrote it in 267 words. This student has partial command of the written language. He copes well with the overall meaning in most written aspects, though many mistakes are likely. They can handle basic writing needs. Some grammatical errors were removed from the original text for readability and analysis, facilitating this research as grammar is not the focus.

Objectives

Main Objective

To propose the Thematic Diversity Reference Model (TDRM) for comprehensive, systematic organisation of textual production and assessment to address thematic non-diversity in essay writing.

Sub-objective

To prove the model's usefulness and effectiveness in assessing the performance of essays of multidisciplinary nature.

Research Questions

Research questions are developed based on the following assumptions. Writing plays a vital role in weightage in learning and assessment. Generally, the students' performance is not efficient and effective. To reach this conclusion, the researchers investigated the answer scripts of the in-course assessments and semester examinations. After that, the TDRM was developed and taught, focusing on their writing flaws. The questions are as follows:

1. Do the students need to master special essay writing skills in diversifying, expanding and organising their academic essays?

2. Will there be a successful model to kindle their brain to exploit the thematic potential they already have as discourse scripts and frames and give solutions to improve their writing skills thematically diverse?

Literature Review

Dung & Trung (2020) emphasises the essential nature of academic writing in higher education. Assessment is mainly made by what they write. Therefore, they should learn both general academic conventions and disciplinary writing requirements. "However, statistics show that the quality of academic writing of university students does not meet the disciplinary requirements. This study explores the gap." (pp. 95).

The ideas in developing 'narrative and descriptive essay writing' (Awasthi et al. 2009, pp. 6-11) are referred to in this Model. Action research (Lewin 2009) is applied to prove the proposed Model's effectiveness. It means improving the problematic situation, thematic non-diversity and expansion by identifying and solving it in a specific context. That is, connecting the specific, assigned topic to various disciplines and topic expansion levels (Cohen et al. 2010, pp. 87) as specified in the model proposed. The researchers observed the developmental changes in their creative and critical writing when they explained this model reference and application during the ESL teaching sessions with the students of the same degree program at the University of Vavuniya. The researchers assigned a topic for essay writing, collected their task sheets, and evaluated them. After that, only the researchers decided to publish this paper formally in a recognised journal. However, an extensive application of the model and its quantitative analysis will be planned, and the outcome will be published as the second phase of this research project. Researchers usually practised Nunan's (1992) steps of action research, such as initiation, preliminary investigation, intervention and treatment, evaluation, dissemination, and follow-up.

Hartley (2008) talks about the essential nature of 'planning or thinking at the start and editing and reviewing at the end.' Friedrich (2008) describes the variability of writing in the disciplines regarding information, searching approach, and reference. Kirkman & Turk (1989, pp. 25) state that "thinking about writing can improve it, and everyone can learn to write well." So thinking thematically and diversely can enrich the writing. Nunan (1989, pp. 36) defines writing as a highly complex cognitive activity. It simultaneously demonstrates control of variables such as content, context, cause and effect, time and space. So a complex control activity contains thematic and sub-thematic diversity as variables. However, the writer has to show control over it. The idea of freewriting means 'trusting yourself and your words' (Elbow & Belanof 2003).

Thematic learning has a rich research history within essay writing domains. For example, Bandura (1989) describes social cognitive learning theory which specifies observational learning. Observational learning is interpreted in the TDRM as contextual learning. It embeds and imposes schemas as social constructions acquired and accumulated in the human mind. Later they are recalled, reinterpreted and reproduced in contemporary, informative, critical and creative writings by the people. It happens at the semantic and pragmatic levels. Thus, the TDRM activates schemas and their symbolic representation at the Input, Enhancement and Genre levels specified in the proposed model.

Consequently, the thematic diversity is stimulated in their writing by following Logical, Strategic, Tactic and Content approaches as specified in the proposed model. Bandura (1989, pp. 16) states, 'it is part of a continuous interaction between cognitive, behavioural and environmental influences.' Creative and critical writing demands 'the expression of ideas systematically' and 'the utilisation of a special vocabulary and certain refinement structure.' (Rivers 1968, pp. 243).

Thompson & Kamler (2013) stress 'the ways of arguing and locating used in particular discourses' (pp. 13). A proper application of the TDRM will bring in such quality. Writing is not merely an appropriate linguistic outcome. It is

a published or visual language or code with semantic and pragmatic meaning through a thinking process which generates, focuses, structures, drafts and evaluates ideas. Writing is the outcome of the permanent record in the human mind (White & Arndt 1991, pp. 11-37). The Approaches and Aspects of the TDRM facilitate the thinking process and the linguistic outcome. Hartley (2008) describes 'writer's block' in developing an essay or composition. Writer's block refers to the schemas applied as Four Levels in the proposed TDRM. Suppose the writer cannot recall, reinterpret and exploit the schemas ingrained in the human brain or mind as a block. In that case, they cannot recollect or develop sub-thematic ideas to expand the thematic idea, primary topic, or theme.

Consciousness-raising instructions for improving the writing skill 'to a higher level standard and learners to become more independent (Sa-ngiamwibool 2007); guided writing (Basnet 2008), and product and process approach (Hasan & Akhand 2010) are some of the concepts applied in this proposed Model. Inefficient activities used in teaching essays (Acharya 2011) are another reason for demotivation. Crème & Lea (2003) state that academic writing needs reasons backed up with evidence and a critical approach. Craig (2013) states that citation gives recognition and maturity to academic writing. Proper reference and citation

are evidence of an objective approach to writing, the practice of academic and research ethics and giving due recognition and acknowledgement to authenticity.

Wallace & Gray (2006) provide three questions regarding the many other authors' statements and texts on diverse themes, relevance, and incorporation in writing. They provide a reference for critically approaching the topic given or selected for writing or to build on the

work already initiated and in progress. Kamler & Thomson (2006) focus on questioning and interrogation into the existing texts. This practice honours the authors who contributed to the same topic and kindles critical skills in the present writing task.

While searching, collecting, developing and expanding the sub-thematic content for the theme, the students can use the TDRM Approaches and Aspects. Of course, it is vital to refrain from "exaggeration and unsubstantiated generalisations, oversimplification, illogical presentation, reference to wrong authorities, emotional expressions, and outdated information" (Leki 1998, pp. 258). However, the proposed Model directs the students to avoid these damaging practices. At the same time, when using the TDRM, the writers must be mindful of what Richards & Miller (2005) have said about retaining the unique and distinct quality of a voice in writing, which expresses the writer to others in their writing. Securing a distinct voice demands "a combination of the writer and reader personalities; the writer and audience perspective, the purpose and previous knowledge, and the text tone" (Mulvaney & Jolliffe 2005, pp. 155).

3 ANALYSIS, RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The Thematic Diversity Reference Model (TDRM) for textual production developed in this research addresses this thematic non-diversity in essay writing. A general or specific topic in essay writing can be expanded or set in diverse multidisciplinary ways in different contexts and social institutions. Figure 01 describes the process and the product of the TDRM. The author of this paper developed the model given below during this research. First, the topic or central theme is approached at four levels. Then, the topic is gradually enhanced by the four Approaches: 1) Content, 2) Strategic, 3) Tactic, to 4) Logical.
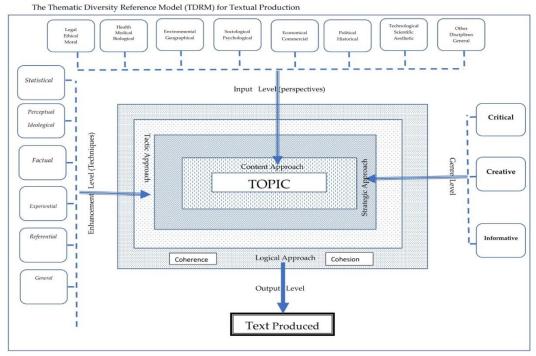
Figure 01 the Thematic Diversity Reference Model (TDRM) for textual production and evaluation
(Source: Gnanaseelan 2021)

Figure 01 shows that this rectangular-shaped Model is called the Thematic Diversity Reference Model (TDRM) for textual production and evaluation. The four sides represent the four approaches. On the top is the content approach; on the right, the strategic approach; on the left, the tactical approach; at the bottom, the logical approach. In the centre, smaller rectangles are embedded one within another and numbered accordingly in sequence. For practising these four approaches, the writer recalls or derives ideas, strategies, techniques, and logical properties from his or her existing schemas and social cognitive learning, as Higgins et al. (2002, pp. 53–64) recommended previous experiences' contributions. Content schema is used for diverse multidisciplinary ideas, both content and formal schemas for strategies and techniques; formal and linguistic schemas for logical organisation, coherence and cohesion. Therefore, while developing the essay, the writer can check for missing aspects and ideas and incorporate them into the intended reflective process, as pointed out by Brookhart (2001, pp. 153–169). Thus the essay can become diverse, systematic and relevant to the context it intends to address.

The schema theory of Piaget and TDRM

Piaget (1957) looks at schema as a mental representation of an action or perception. Assimilation makes the child adapt an existing schema to incorporate new experiences, encoding them as variations on the same general structure. He says that learning is a process of actively constructing knowledge, and schema is effective in education because the traditional teaching methods have been indifferent to the child's role as a learner.

Piaget (1957) developed this approach as pragmatic and automatic. It systematically explains how human cognition develops and reflects the ideas and activities of the past. The schema is an innate, natural and spontaneous process of the mind. A complex and remote process becomes simple and ordered principles of organisation within human cognition (Scott & Cogburn 2021).

His constructivism states that learning is a process of construction. "The child's internal Model of the world or 'reality' is constructed" (Gandhi & Mukherji 2021). According to his theory, "Learning is not a process of absorbing knowledge already out there in the world, but

rather a process of making knowledge from scratch". Thus, using cognitive tools, learners interpret incoming information and translate it into knowledge. "Teachers are not a source of knowledge but rather a source of information. Whether that information becomes knowledge or meaningless noise depends on the learner's experience" (Gandhi & Mukherji 2021).

Further, the framework of understanding the world at each stage of cognitive performance is facilitated by various methods of interpretation and learning. "This framework comprises distinct structures of knowledge called schemas, which are organised and generalisable sets of knowledge about certain concepts" (Scott & Cogburn 2021). The TDRM developed in this research addresses this thematic non-diversity in essay writing. This model facilitates the students in referring, following and applying the step-by-step process and procedure of the four levels of the proposed model during the pre-writing, writing and post-writing stages of their essay development. According to the schema theory, the students have prior knowledge constructed and accumulated in the cognition as scripts and frames as prior knowledge and a framework for future understanding (Kramsch 1993, pp. 43-51). When a new topic is given in an essay writing exercise, the students can expand the ideas related to the new topic using the existing schemas in their brain or cognition in diverse ways: religious or moral, health or environmental, psychological or sociological or biological, economic or political or historical, legal, technological, or aesthetic perspectives. In addition, the students can approach the given topic from personal, familial, professional, social, national, and international aspects. Thus, "learning could more precisely be described as the process of keeping schemas up to date and developing new schemas where necessary" (Scott & Cogburn 2021).

Scott & Cogburn (2021) explain that this schema process goes through four cognitive development stages: the sensorimotor stage, preoperational stage, concrete operational stage, and formal operational stage. Then, these processes update schemas with newly constructed knowledge. The tertiary level of learning is the formal operational period. Finally, mental operations occur automatically at the abstract or cognitive level, such as evaluating an idea or action and comparing one mental operation with another.

The adaptation uses abstract-level mental operations and cognitive tools to update schemas. Assimilation adapts new knowledge into existing schemas, whereas accommodation adjusts the cognitive organisation of schemas when the mental operation is exposed to new knowledge, maintaining balance and stability (Scott & Cogburn 2021).

It is about ideas and information gathering. The schema assimilation and accommodation process facilitates thematic diversity from several disciplines, and the schema theory has the potential for application and diversification. It paves the way for expansion, diversity, and depth. A given or selected topic can be approached or expanded by exploring it through these perspectives, such as how the topic is considered, evaluated, judged, respected, practised or rejected through these eight perspectives based on the three major classifications of schemas as described by Carrell (1984, pp. 87-112).

Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura and TDRM

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory, earlier called social learning theory, supports information processing at the cognitive level creating and expanding the new topic related to its social context, relations, and interactions. The SCLT buttresses the content approach of the Model mainly in this research. However, it also becomes the base for the Strategic, Tactic, and Logical Approaches.

According to Bandura (1965), direct reinforcement is not sufficient for all types of learning. Therefore, social observation and

learning can make people learn new information and behaviours. However, Social Cognitive Learning Theory is related to thought processes of psychological understanding and cognition (Bandura 1999). Human beings perform a cognitive operation on their social experiences, which influence behaviour and development. Thus individuals learn by social observation (Green & Peil 2009). New, assimilated, or accommodated ideas originate at the cognitive level when human cognition interacts with all the dimensions of the social environment. Social learning enhances cognition to enhance and expand the inputs of the content approach, the genre levels of the strategic approach, the enhancement levels of the tactical approach and the outputs of the logical approach.

Thematic Diversity Referance Model for Textual Production And Evaluation (TDRM) – A Simple Model
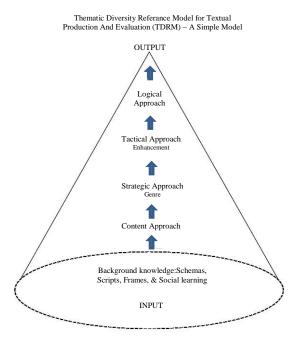

Figure 02. A Simplified Model for Thematic Diversity – Cone Model
Source: Primary Data, 2021

This cone-shaped model is a Simplified Model of the TDRM. The four approaches move upward from the bottom to the top. The cone shape or structure indicates a more significant portion of quantitative information processing at the bottom using schemas and social cognitive learning. Gradually, it becomes sharper and smaller on the top. However, information processing maintains its quality from the bottom to the top.
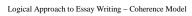
The first step in the process of writing is the Content Approach. It has to accommodate the sub-thematic level inputs containing 1.1) legal, ethical, and moral; 1.2) health, medical, and biological; 1.3) environmental, geographical and physical; 1.4) sociological and psychological; 1.5) economic and commercial; 1.6) political and historical, 1.7) technological, scientific and aesthetic, and 1.8) the other and general. In this approach, only ideas and information gathering is concerned. Thematic diversity from several disciplines is possible and has potential. It paves the way for expansion, diversity, and depth. A given or selected topic can be approached or expanded by exploring it through these perspectives, such as how the topic is considered, evaluated, judged, respected, practised or rejected through these eight perspectives. In brief, WHAT are the perspectives to be explored? However, some topics may not be relevant to some views due to specialisation. Therefore, exploring the topic from all eight perspectives is not compulsory.

The second step in the process of writing is the Strategic Approach. It will frame the whole writing moving towards a particular genre level. The writer can choose the levels: 2.1) critical, 2.2) creative, and 2.3) informative. There are four sub-levels under these three main levels: 2. a) Persuasive, 2. b) Descriptive, 2. c) Narrative and 2.d) Expository. It can be further expanded as 2.i) comparative, 2.ii) analytical, 2.iii) argumentative, 2.iv) humorous and satirical, 2.v) personal, 2.vi) prescriptive essay writing. Overall, a decision has to be taken to explore the topic. What type or genre will the three mentioned be followed throughout the essay? Whether to be chosen or more than one or mixed type (a critical or creative or informative essay, a critical-creative essay, a creative-informative essay, a critical-informative essay, *or a critical-creative-informative essay*) is to be decided. The writer can also determine the sub-level genres from

the four levels (alphabetical order) and the eight (roman number order). In this second step, the input or the information or the ideas derived from the eight perspectives of the first step can be modified or processed to suit the selected genre type or types.

The third step in the process of writing is the Tactical Approach. It is called the enhancement level, using many techniques to boost or standardise the final text production. The writer can choose some techniques such as 3.1) Statistical, 3.2) *Perceptual and Ideological,* 3.3) *Factual*, 3.4) *Experiential,* 3.5) Referential, and 3.6) *General.* Some or, if possible, the writer can use all seven techniques for enhancing the raw data derived from the eight perspectives of the first step and planned by the second step. Specific evidential information derived from applying these seven techniques will enhance and standardise the academic quality of the essay's textual output.

The fourth step in the process of writing is the Logical Approach. It is a fine-tuning and systematic text organisation as a product at the end of the process. It establishes readability, acceptability, appropriateness, and reliability, systematising and simplifying the text to be understandable and meaningful. The output level has 4.1) coherence and 4.2) cohesion. It establishes precision and conciseness. After processing the above three steps, the evolved text must undergo logical organisation at the sentence and paragraph levels. Coherence reorganises the paragraphs rationally and understandably in proper order according to these eleven phases of written presentation of the essay: 4.1.1) introducing, 4.1.2) defining, 4.1.3) explaining, 4.1.4) problematising, 4.1.5) exploring, 4.1.6) exemplifying, 4.1.7) analysing, 4.1.8) discussing, 4.1.9) solving, 4.1.10) recommending, and 4.1.11) synthesising. Cohesion improves the relationship between sentences within the paragraph. 4.2.1) Transition words or expressions are essential here. Further, 4.2.2) a diverse use of vocabulary within sentences needs to be considered. However, this Model is

for semantic components, functions and organisations, not for syntactic elements, functions and organisations. In brief, it does not recommend syntactic or grammatical organisations or processes. That is a separate central area to be explored.
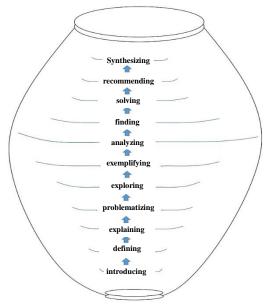

Figure 03. A Simplified Model for Thematic Diversity – Barrel Model
Source: Primary Data 2021

In Figure Three, this barrel-shaped model represents the essay's coherent or logical textual organisation - the Logical Approach – Coherence components. It shows that the components move upward from the bottom to the top. The barrel shape or structure indicates a more significant portion of quantitative information processing in the middle. However, the portions at the bottom and on the top are smaller. However, the information processing maintains comparable quality from the bottom to the top, like the wine stored in a barrel.

A Case Study on the application of the TDRM to a given essay topic

The Model was used to assess a student's performance in an essay on the topic: of Vegetarian versus Non –Vegetarian as it was a descriptive and narrative essay writing (Awasthi et al. 2009, pp. 6-11). It was a minor

writing assignment for half an hour. The student had to write the essay in not less than 350 words. The student was not guided using the Model. The text produced is given below, with the analysis and assessment based on the Model. The overall performance score is 45% which is a modest one. He wrote it in 267 words. This student has partial command of the written language. He copes well with the overall meaning in most written aspects, though many mistakes are likely. They can handle basic writing needs. Some grammatical errors were removed from the original text for readability and analysability, facilitating this research as grammar is not the focus.

3.1. The Content Approach

Wallace & Gray (2006) refers to diverse themes, relevance, and incorporation in essay writing. Since the topic is Vegetarian versus Non –Vegetarian, the health-oriented themes and sub-themes dominate the essay quantitatively (55%). The sociological and psychological information reaches 14%. The environmental-geographical-physical, the legal-ethical-moral, and the economic-commercial occupy around 10% each, totalling 31%. However, the political and historical, technological, scientific and aesthetic, and the other and general sub-themes were not part of the essay, though this topic has the potential for expansion on these lines connecting the specific, assigned topic to various disciplines and topic expansion levels (Cohen et al. 2010, pp. 87).

The essay reveals its shortcomings. White and Arndt (1991, pp. 11-37) state that writing is the outcome of the permanent record in the human mind. The potential recalling of the schemas did not take place in this essay. The writer can describe science and technology in food production, processing, and preservation, which differ in vegetarian and non-vegetarian food or food from plants or animals. They can develop the aesthetic side regarding food presentation, attraction, style, and colours. The politics of vegetarian versus non-vegetarian

food is susceptible in India. The election manifestoes are manipulated, and campaigns are made to support vegetarianism or non-vegetarianism to curry the support of different religious, cultural, and caste-based communities. The conflicts have been recorded. The historical site of the food dichotomy is traceable in depth. For example, a human civilisation evolved in its food habits: hunting, farming, storing, preserving, transporting, and eating. They differ significantly in terms of the food dichotomy.

According to Hargreaves et al. (2021, pp. 9), the Psychological Domain has not been probed satisfactorily concerning "positive or negative feelings, self-esteem and body image, appearance, thinking, learning, memory, and concentration. Different aspects of vegetarianism can be affected by psychological factors."

They continue to state that "the social domain includes personal relationships and social support. Good social connections are essential for mental health and well-being, positively influencing one's quality of life. In this case, analysing a vegetarian diet demands the social-cultural and religious community and individual attitudes towards vegetarianism" (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 12). Therefore, this dichotomy decides religious and caste discrimination, disrespect, and social and community relations. Another aspect is that vegetarianism is feminism, and non-vegetarianism is masculinism. Thus, this essay did not utilise Hartley's (2008) 'writer's block.

3.2. The Strategic Approach

In the core strategic approach, it is observable that most of the sentences and clauses in the essay are informative (69%). Critical writing occupies 31%. However, the text's analysis found that these clauses are considered 'critical'. However, they did not meet the standard of critical writing at the university level; for example, *we face more diseases if we eat fast food (2.8)*; *If we buy some vegetables in the*

market, we do not know how many days there are 3.3. However, another shortcoming is that this is non-healthy also 4.3. To be critical, the writer must counter-argue the available, existing or past norms, values, and ideas using statistical, attitudinal, referential, factual, and experiential information as writing is a highly complex cognitive activity (Nunan 1989, pp. 36).

The essay under analysis does not exploit Kamler & Thomson's (2006) focus on questioning and interrogation. Critical comments can be with temporal, spatial, and contextual variables. For example, this topic is something to do with 'quality of life.' An exemplary text on critical writing is that *"quality of life" and "well-being" often indicate how well an individual feels. There is, however, a problem of interpretation resulting from the subjectivity of these concepts, which may acquire a broader or more specific connotation depending on the context."* (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 4)

Another significant point is that this essay does not have texts on creative aspects, which means the writer's new suggestions, opinions, or ideas. For example, a creative direction is given to the critical comment on the definitions of quality of life and well-being: Quality of Life *"can be subdivided into: the quality of the environment in which one lives, involving the physical structure of the environment and people's integration in the society in which they live; physical and mental health, encompassing a wide range of individual capacities; usefulness, which involves the feeling of "being useful", contributing to the welfare of other people, society, and the environment; and the appreciation of life, which is associated with tangible (wealth, for example) and intangible (such as life satisfaction and happiness) aspects.*" (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 5)

"the researcher may analyse the connection between vegetarianism and Quality of Life through different perspectives. In the context of vegetarianism, each Quality of Life domain

proposed by the WHO (physical, psychological, social, and environmental) may be influenced by adopting a vegetarian diet." (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 5)

Under these three primary levels, there are four sub-levels: The essay reflected 55% on the descriptive aspect dominantly as expected generally. However, this is because the students' natural inclination is descriptive writing.

The persuasive aspect covers 31%. Considering the essay's size and objective, it would have been better if this aspect was increasingly focused on as consciousness-raising instructions for improving writing skill is essential 'to a higher standard and for learners to become more independent (Sa-ngiamwibool 2007). At the same time, the persuasive expressions in the essay are not explicit and active enough but implicit and passive: *These foods are very healthful (2.4). So these chemical and diseased vegetables are not suitable for the body (3.8).*

An explicit and active example is given: "*Bone health should also be addressed when considering the potential negative effects of a vegetarian diet. A systematic review published in 2019 showed that vegetarians and vegans had lower bone mineral density than omnivores, and vegans also had higher fracture rates. Such results were unlikely explained only by lower calcium intake, as bone health encompasses many complex mechanisms and depends on different nutrients*" (Iguacel et al. 2019, cited in Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 9).

Grammarly Blog defines expository writing as "writing that *exposes facts.* In other words, writing explains and educates its readers rather than entertaining or attempting to persuade them. When you read a scholarly article, a textbook page, a news report, or an instructional guide, you are reading expository writing." (Kramer 2021). For example, "V*egetarianism is currently being more widely studied, and a growing number of scientific papers about the*

topic have been published over the past few years" (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 2*).'* However, the expository writing gets 14% only in this student's essay: *For example, all foods taken from the plants are a hundred per cent vegetarian food (2.2).*

Moreover, milk is also vegetarian food. (2.3). Most of these (vegetarian) foods are non-fat foods (2.5). The minus side of these expository clauses is that 2.2 is self-explanatory, and 2.3 is written with the writer's perception as expository. However, it may not be factual. The third one is expository. Therefore, the learners have to fine-tune their expository writing skills. The writers should differentiate attitudinal, perceptive, opinionated, and subjective from factual statements.

Next is narrative writing. The possibility is there to narrate experiences or events of people consuming one or the other or both and the causes and consequences or impacts on their quality of life in all its dimensions: physical, psychological, social and environmental. However, this essay does not have any narratives. For example,

"My friend is a religious person. He says I adopt a vegetarian diet for spiritual or religious reasons" (Ruby 2012, cited in Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 13). *" I want to lead a spiritual life and search for the meaning in my life and my connection to a higher or sacred power. I am an individual following a religion that preaches abstinence from animal products. Therefore I feel encouraged to adopt a vegetarian diet. I am a good adherent to the diet, and I get positive psychological reinforcement as it aligns with my beliefs. I demonstrate high levels of spirituality and religiosity by being a vegetarian. This practice gives me better social, psychological, and environmental outcomes in the quality of my life"* (Vitorino 2018, cited in Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 13).

There is another set of sub-level genres of the strategic approach. The whole essay comes under the sub-genre of comparative, analytical

and argumentative nature (70%). The essay lacks humorous or satiric text. For example*, "the people fear that a vegetarian diet could make them physically and mentally weak. They fear that meat-eaters would tease them sexually weak and feminine!"* (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 10). Only 05% of the text bears satirical writing, but not in the stricter sense of the word: *If we buy some vegetables in the market, we do not know how many days there are 3.3.* "Satire is a type of social commentary. Writers use exaggeration, irony, and other devices to poke fun of a particular leader, a social custom or tradition, or any other prevalent social figure or practice that they want to comment on and call into question." (Masterclass staff 2021). For example, "*many of those who decide to adopt vegetarianism suffer from 'vegaphobia'."* (Hargreaves et al. 2021, pp. 12)

The following writing method is prescriptive. Collinsdictionary.com (2022) defines it as "an approach to telling people what they should do, rather than simply giving suggestions or describing what is done." (p.na). This essay has only 05% of the text prescriptive. For example, *(vegetables) are suitable for the human body 2.6.* Though prescriptive writing is not encouraged in academic writing, it is enabled in free writing or creative or critical writing. Therefore, an essay of this nature can attend to this prescriptive content.

The cause and effect aspect has been handled for 20%, which is moderate in the writing. For example, *We face more diseases if we eat fast food (2.8). If we buy some vegetables in the market (3.2), We do not know how many days these are (3.3).*

3.3 The Tactical Approach

Though there are five features such as 3.1) Statistical, 3.2) Perceptual and Ideological, 3.3) Factual, 3.4) Experiential, and 3.5) Referential, this writing reflects only three features: Perceptual and Ideological occupies 21%. *Moreover, milk is also vegetarian food (2.3).* Factual information is found in 45%. For

example, *Fat body, kidney problem, heart problem ... etc... We face this problem because of this fast food and non-healthy food (2.9 and 2.10)*. Experiential information is seen at 10%. For example, *Because they use chemicals in vegetables to keep these vegetables more days (3.4)*. The rest of the information belongs to the general or other categories (24%).

The writing lacks statistical and referential information, making it formal and objective and validating it academically and professionally so that the writer can control what he or she writes. (Elbow & Belanof 2003). An example of referential information is, "*According to Alsdorf's book, The History of Vegetarianism and Cow-Veneration in India, in India, another important cradle of vegetarianism, this practice was also associated with the fact that Hindus see cows as sacred and uphold nonviolence principles*" (Alsdorf 2010 cited in Hargreaves et al. 2021). An example of statistical information is, "*India, the single country with the highest prevalence in the world (almost 40 per cent of the population), contributes to the results of the Asian continent, according to M.B. Ruby's book on vegetarianism. A blossoming field of study*" (Ruby 2012, cited in Hargreaves et al. 2021).

However, incorporating these two aspects demand memory power or referential materials while writing the essay. Therefore, writing an essay for examination or assessment may be challenging. Moreover, the writers cannot access the materials or information other than stored and recovered from the brain in the closed examination context. However, the Model applies when the writer attends an open book examination or writes an essay for a magazine, journal, or other media.

3.4. The Logical Approach

The output level has 4.1) coherence and 4.2) cohesion. It establishes precision and conciseness. After processing the above three steps, the evolved text must undergo logical organisation at the sentence and paragraph levels. Coherence reorganises the paragraphs rationally and understandably in proper order according to these eleven phases of written presentation of the essay: Introducing is seen (3%). The introduction can cover two or three sentences for this type of writing, but the writing has only one sentence. Defining is seen at 7%. It is satisfactory. Explaining is at the acceptable level of 31%. Problematizing is also sufficient (14%). Exploring is lacking and seen at 7%. Exemplifying could have been given more (10%). Analyzing also lacks depth (14%). Recommending seems reasonable (14%). However, Discussing, Solving, and Synthesizing are not available. These three features are essential to essay writing.

Cohesion improves the relationship between sentences within the paragraph. Transition words or expressions are essential here. Unfortunately, only 4% occupies the essay, which is not sufficient. In addition, the diverse vocabulary within sentences needs to be considered, that is, 6%, which is also lacking.

4 FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Findings

The analysis, results and discussion have revealed the findings related to the Model and its application and the issues and solutions associated with Hartley's (2008) emphasis on the essential nature of 'planning or thinking at the start and editing and reviewing at the end.' Therefore, this essay needs guided writing (Basnet 2008).

According to the Content approach, the writers fail to holistically analyse the topic, instructions, and key terms in multidisciplinary ways. Instead, only one theme or discipline, which is dominant in the topic and key terms of the essay topic, is developed based on the topic given, though it can be approached multi-disciplinarily. However, most of the topics have the potential for expansion on these lines.

27

Another aspect of the content approach is a classification of Ideas, such as types of variety and selection of relevant ideas. This approach solves the problem of 'waffle' - lacking ideas. However, it leads to ineffective writing: filling the paper with empty, meaningless expressions or repeating the same idea. Another aspect guides to refrain from formulaic and thoughtless writing: using a basic structure and a few basic phrases in every essay in repetition, no matter the topic or the meaning. The essays analysed for this research show this deficiency.

An essay writer needs to understand the topic given or chosen, for example, the instructions and critical terms. Analysing the topic is the next step before writing. Finding the focus and understanding the context will stimulate covering the content approach recommended by the Model. Defining the terms comes within the logical approach specified in the Model. Finding, selecting, presenting, and brainstorming ideas fall within the purview of the content approach, as Kirkman & Turk (1989, pp. 25) stated that "thinking about writing can improve it, and everyone can learn to write well." Further, the writer must explore the content and tactical approaches for more ideas.

The Model insists on accommodating as many tactical approaches, such as Statistical, Perceptual and Ideological, Factual, Experiential, and Referential, as possible. Comparing and contrasting or looking at the Other Side demands the main strategic and sub-level strategic approaches. The strategic approach modifies generalisation and alerts over stereotypes and exaggeration. Comparisons, alternatives, and speculation are overseen in this approach. The style of writing is to be considered. The approach assists in avoiding overemphasis, understatement and confusion.

Under the strategic approach, the essay should avoid the dominance of the informative approach. Critical writing is insufficient, and the essential quality of writing is lacking at the university level. To be necessary, the writer must counter-argue the available, existing or past norms, values, and ideas using statistical, attitudinal, referential, factual, and experiential information. Craig (2013) states that citation gives recognition and maturity to academic writing. Therefore, the performance needs to contain critical, temporal, spatial, and contextual variables, as it should embrace a product and process approach (Hasan & Akhand 2010).

The essay must be creative, showing the writer's new suggestions, opinions, or ideas. Further, the students' essays mainly reflect on the descriptive aspect, as expected generally and again, is the student's natural inclination. The persuasive aspect does not fulfil the demands in this essay writing as Thompson and Kamler (2013) stress 'the ways of arguing and locating used in particular discourses' (pp. 13). At the same time, the persuasive expressions in the essay need to be explicit and active enough, not implicit and passive.

Another shortcoming is the less attempt at expository writing. Most expository statements are self-explanatory, with the writer's perception as an expository one. However, it may not be factual. Therefore, learners must fine-tune their expository writing skills. Crème & Lea (2003) state that academic writing needs reasons backed up with evidence and a critical approach. The writers should differentiate attitudinal, perceptive, opinionated, and subjective from factual statements. Another missing strategy is narrative writing. The possibility is there to narrate experiences or events of people consuming one or the other or both and the causes and consequences or impacts on their quality of life in all its dimensions: physical, psychological, social and environmental. However, many essays do not have any narratives. The essays lack humorous or satiric texts. Many essays do not have this interesting aspect. Though prescriptive writing is not encouraged in academic writing, humorous or satiric aspects are cultivated in free writing or creative or critical writing.

The cause-and-effect aspect is another positive trait missing in many essays. Using examples again is seen in the logical approach. Giving solutions to problems is aligned with recommending aspect of the logical approach. Evaluation is part of synthesising aspects of the same approach. The logical approach trains the writer in organising ideas, ranking ideas, and consequences. Another area is vocabulary and organising the essay sections like the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.

The output level has coherence and cohesion. Rivers (1968, pp. 243) reminds us about the systematic expression of ideas and 'the utilisation of a special vocabulary and certain refinement structure.' However, as part of coherence, the introduction was not sufficient. The opening can cover two or three sentences for this type of writing, but the students writing contain only one sentence. Defining, explaining, and problematising are sufficient, but exploring, exemplifying, and analysing are lacking. Recommending, discussing, solving, and synthesising are not usually available in university essay writing. These three features are essential to essay writing. As part of cohesion, transition words or expressions are crucial here, but the essays fail. The diverse vocabulary within sentences needs to be considered, but it lacks features.

The approaches help overcome immature writing due to the lack of vocabulary and limited knowledge of logical organisation. However, it leads to a wrong writing style. The writers may have many ideas, but these two negative characteristics will restrict a good performance in language communication. These flaws cause simply misusing vocabulary, and the texts become incomprehensible. As a result, they resort to a much simpler style than English for academic purposes.

Implications

Another area the learners tend to forget is cultural differences in style, as Braaksma et al. (2004, pp. 1–36) stated about the research in different cultural contexts. Their writing in their mother tongue will not challenge expressing a style based on their language and culture at the school level. Rarely do they adopt a foreign style or culture in their school writing. However, at the university level, they learn everything in English medium. The style expected in English is different because the English language inherently contains the English style and culture. Language determines thought. Language incompetence restricts textual performance. Therefore, the learners encounter a challenge at the university level to merge the indigenous language style and culture with their English counterparts. An essay should reflect cultural and stylistic diversity and variability in writing regarding information, searching approach, and reference (Friedrich 2008) because the language has inherited the status of internationality, nationality, multi-nationality, and transnationality.

Though there are components of the structure of an essay, they are not logically or coherently developed or organised according to the Cone and Barrel Models. The Schema Theory and SCLT enhance the Model development and application. Piaget's theory (1957) conflicts with Lev Vygotsky's: Knowledge is constructed in the individual's immediate social environment and shaped, mediated and interpreted by the individual's linguistic competence and use of language (Stewin & Martin 1974; Lourenço 2012). Further, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis proposes Linguistic Determinism, assuming that language incompetence restricts textual performance. Therefore, both theories of Sapir-Whorf (1952) and Lev Vygotsky (1962) pose challenges to academic essay writing skills using English as a second language.

Addressing the Research Questions

Thus under the results and discussion section, the text under analysis confirms a position. The students have average proficiency in English language competence and performance. But, it

was proved in the statistical information about the examination performance (discussed in the background of the study) that they need to master academic writing skills in diversifying—expanding, and organising-especially in their essay writing. The performance percentage and the absence of features missed in the text answer the first research question raised in the methodology section.

The second research question was about the feasibility of any solutions to improve their writing skills thematically diverse and the availability of a model to kindle their brain to exploit the thematic potential they already have as discourse scripts and frames. The four levels of approach in the proposed TDRM were applied to identify the problems in the Results and Discussion and solve them. Thus, the Model becomes an appropriate guide for identifying the gaps in essay writing and solving them. Furthermore, the discussion of the application of the ideas such as schemas, scripts and frames of the schema theory and social learning behaviour of the social cognitive learning theory to the TDRM and supportive supplementary Cone Model and Barrel Model demonstrates that this model can kindle the brain to exploit the thematic potential the students already have as discourse scripts and frames.

Conclusion

At the university level, learning and applying ideas are sophisticated and complex because they learn knowledge at the highest level. However, the essay writer chosen for the analysis does not express ideas at the university level. It looks like writing at the secondary level of education. It contained exaggeration and unsubstantiated generalisations, oversimplification, illogical presentation, absence of reference, emotional expressions, and outdated information (Leki 1998, pp. 258). Therefore, applying this model can facilitate academic essay writing at the university level.

Richards & Miller (2005) emphasises retaining a voice's unique and distinct quality in writing. The logical approach makes an academic essay well-structured, concise or organised. The content approach presents how the writer can deliver diverse ideas or existing facts and knowledge. The strategic approach allows students to demonstrate their understanding critically, creatively and informatively and encourages them to develop a clear central idea and support ideas for strategic communication. It fine-tunes the essay as narrative or descriptive, expository, persuasive or mixed. Finally, the tactical approach enhances the essay by stimulating the writer to seek and incorporate supporting facts, statistics, evidence, experience, examples, and personal beliefs.

Recommendations

This paper introduced the Model with helpful evidence for essay writing and assessment. In the future, it is recommended to test this Model's success by applying it to the training of the students and the staff. It should facilitate them to quickly access the required diversified information at the sub-thematic level within the stipulated or scheduled time to expand or enrich the main topics from different or multidisciplinary perspectives. Inefficient activities used in teaching essays are reported by Acharya (2011). The teachers can test the success by conducting training sessions with the students on the model guidelines, asking them to practice and produce the essay, and assessing their performance based on the model guidelines. "Extensive, thorough and focused instruction in L2 academic vocabulary, grammar and discourse are essential for developing L2 written proficiency in disciplines" (Hinkel 2004 cited in Gritharan 2012, pp. 4). Further, extensive quantitative research must be done applying this model at the broad level for writing and assessing essays incorporating scripts and texts in reasonable numbers from many disciplines and universities to evaluate and generalise its

usefulness in the national and international contexts.

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