Enhancing students' critical academic writing via "product and process approach"
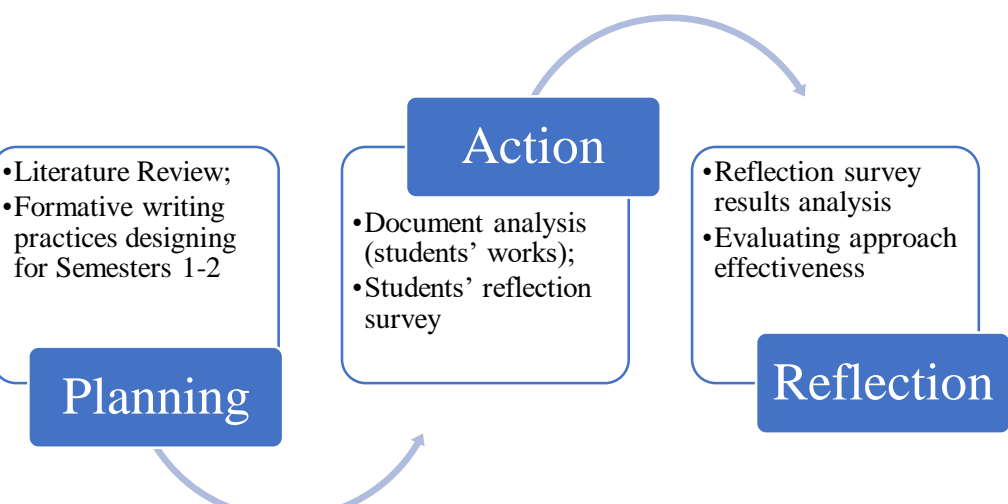
Action Research by Zarina Kalizhanova, English LA teacher, NIS IB in Nur-Sultan

Relevance: Interim formative results and academic achievements amongst 10 grade students in 2021 showed the critical writing as the most challenging skill in English classes

Purpose: To examine how effective is a "product and process" approach in improving students' critical writing in practicing academic English

RQ: To what extent the "process and product" approach is effective in improving the students' critical academic writing?

- Literature Review;
- Formative writing practices designing for Semesters 1-2

Planning

Action
- Document analysis (students' works);
- Students' reflection survey

Reflection
- Reflection survey results analysis
- Evaluating approach effectiveness

Common challenges (from most to less)

1. argumentation with supporting details for a critique

2. organizing and connection of ideas

3. drawing conclusions, summarizing of main points

4. lack of non-common words, limited range of vocabulary
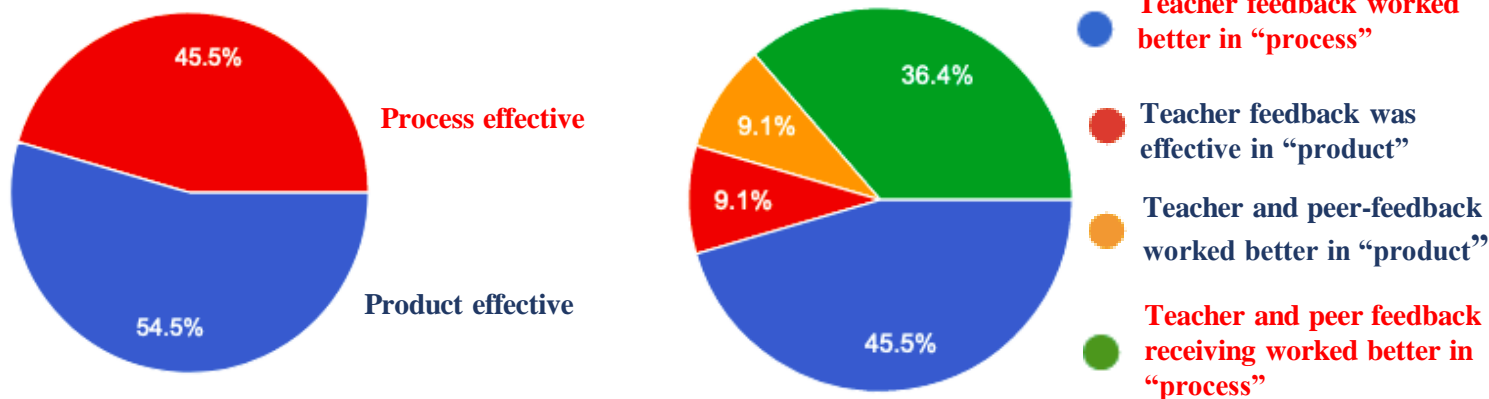
5. locating sources information

Results
- students rely on "product" approach mostly when begin writing a new unfamiliar text type;
- "process" approach worked better for students with most common challenges, those with less common felt comfortable during "product";
- students find feedback receiving effective during "process", but reference to prefer "teacher's feedback only" prevailed in 10 per cent

Conclusion
- "Product" approach was more effective when new text type was introduced;
- "Product" was also effective for a differentiation in guidance of struggling students;
- Document analysis showed that "process" worked better in mastering argumentation in writing critically, whilst over a half of students reflected the "product" as the most effective.
- "Process" is more effective in receiving/giving feedback;
- To meet all students' needs the use of mixed (both) approach is recommended

Survey results

45.5% Process effective
54.5% Product effective

36.4%
9.1%
9.1%
45.5%

- Teacher feedback worked better in "process"
- Teacher feedback was effective in "product"
- Teacher and peer-feedback worked better in "product"
- Teacher and peer feedback receiving worked better in "process"

Bibliography

Sheikhy Behdani, R., Rashtchi, M. (2019). Process writing and enhancement of critical thinking ability: Is writing a vehicle or an ingredient of critical thinking? *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 11(1), 181-200. 10.22111/ijals.2019.4937

White, R. (1998). Academic writing: process and product. In *Academic writing: product and process. Milestones in ELT. ELT 14*. pp. 4-16. British Council.