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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Integrating Bronfenbrenner's Model in Enhancing Writing Skills of Attention Deficit Students

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Writing skills, character sketches, Attention Deficiency, Bronfenbrenner's model, Nature vs Nurture

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This study is aimed at investigating the writing skills of students with attention deficiency (attention deficit disorder). As a part of their assignments, middle school and high school students in India are required to write character sketches. In this study it was observed that students faced difficulties in imagining different aspects of the character. As a result, they wrote short, incomplete and poorly detailed character sketches. According to a study, the problems students face while writing in English include grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation and choice of vocabulary. This study is aimed at investigating the development of writing skills in students diagnosed with an attention deficit. Bronfenbrenner's 'Nature vs Nurture' model was used to create a template for writing character sketches. Character sketches written by 10 students with AD were examined before and after the introduction of Bronfenbrenner's model using a rubric. When Bronfenbrenner's model was introduced to them, their ability to write a character sketch increased by 50 to 70 percent. The incorporation of Bronfenbrenner's model helped the students form fuller character sketches by considering the different influencers in Bronfenbrenner's 'systems' and their interactions with them.

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Nurture

Writing is one of the important language skills. Teaching Writing to Attention Deficit Students is an art and a challenge. This study tries to explore how the writing skills of such students could be enriched by adopting proper methodology in the class.

Literature Review

An attempt has been made in this study to explore different views on how writing skills could be taught to Attention Deficit students, the kind of problems they face and how teachers need to handle such learners.

According to Rajesh (2017), teachers are not competent enough because they lack the drive to write impressively. Hence, they lack the motivation to teach. Godhaniya (2015) enumerated the problems that the undergraduate students in Engineering, Management, Technology, Science, Law, Humanities and Education in the north of Gujarat had to go through. The primary problem that these students face pertains to an educational background solely taught in the mother tongue, and the difficulty faced when the mode of instruction is switched to English. Students used to the traditional methods of learning such as rote memorization lack the inspiration to write and are not accustomed to getting feedback on their assignments. Another deep-seated problem is the profound lack of exposure to the English language. Vijayalakshmi (2013) highlighted that illiterate and economically regressive people display a negative attitude towards English. It is also noticed that the mistakes students make encompass various facets, such as the use of vocabulary (errors in usage of words, spellings and word division), tenses, concord, word order, articles, prepositions. Sujatha (2011) ventured to pinpoint the problems related to teaching and learning of writing skills at

the degree level. According to the teachers, students are not able to communicate skillfully with the present framework of teaching. Defective teaching methods, lack of clear-cut objectives, faulty methods of assessments and inadequate materials are the main reasons for unsuccessful writing endeavors. A loaded syllabus is also recognized as a problem, as it lends to the existence of a space between an anticipated result and attained competence. Nambiar (2006) conducted an empirical study to evolve the written English of elementary students in Kerala. The researcher conducted a relative study of the outcomes of boys versus girls as well as urban versus rural students. No notable difference was found between the boys and the girls in the pretest but after the intervention, the mean score of both the groups increased and it was seen that the boys scored better. A considerable distinction was found between the students of urban areas and rural areas as well with other findings concluding that higher rates of poverty corresponded with lower achievement. Ali & Ramana (2018) focused on the problems related to the teacher and the student. It is found that teachers usually face a level of uncertainty regarding the level of the students and their learning patterns when they join UG classes. Lack of vocabulary and grammatical competence are problems that occur during classroom activities. The results of this study expounded upon the fact that students in secluded areas are not given any support and therefore, teachers find it difficult to teach English to students in secluded areas where it is not granted any importance. Hidayati (2018) interviewed 10 English teachers who came from different parts of East Java, Indonesia to help decipher the difficulties teachers face in developing a writing technique for English. Results explicate that there are inherent and extraneous reasons that add to the difficulties the teachers face. Inherent reasons include linguistic ability, mother tongue interference, reading etiquette and the impetus provided to the

learners. Extraneous reasons include classroom situations, assistance granted for writing and the time available to teach such skills. Banda (2017) focused on a selected second year group of students in the university to explore the spoken and written English competence of the students as well as the strategies they adopted to improve their competencies. After defining their entry level competence, one-on-one interviews were performed based on their background with spoken and written English at home and, at primary and secondary schools. The first thing that the interviews revealed was that the students lacked training in the formal features of English writing. Their teachers at the primary and secondary level had turned a blind eye to the teaching of these formal characteristics. They also had fewer occasions to translate and interpret texts because it was done for them by their teacher. Although they were able to discourse properly in English, they were unable to adopt it in their writing. Almubarak and Ali [2016] have pointed out various obstacles that hinder the teachers of English as a Second Language in teaching writing skills to students in ordinary classrooms. In Jazan University, a questionnaire was used which contained 12 items studying the difficulties of the teachers. The most problematic area for the students was the obstacles in grammar. A second was vocabulary. The teachers also felt that the content taught in the textbooks for writing was not persuasive enough to encourage teachers also to effectively teach writing. A lack of desire among the students to improve their writing skills was another problematic area. Large class size and mother tongue interference were also disruptive factors in teaching English language writing skills. Fareed et.al. (2016) investigated the problems in Pakistani undergraduate ESL learners' writing skills and the factors that hinder their writing. Focus group interviews and writing samples were implemented to study the problems. In the analysis of thematic content, it was revealed that insufficient

linguistic proficiency (including grammar, syntax and vocabulary), writing anxiety, a lack of ideas, reliance on L1 and weak structure organization were problems that cropped up across the board. These are affected by various factors including untrained teachers, ineffective teaching methods, examination systems, a lack of reading and writing practice, large classrooms, low motivation and a lack of ideas. Anwar and Ahmed (2016) investigated the obstacles faced by second language learners in writing. According to the researchers, writing is more difficult than speaking because writing is a more formal skill. Writing skills cannot be developed without sufficient knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. One must be a good reader to become a good writer. Students' learning of the writing skills is dependent on the modes (product, process, eclectic and genre) their teachers implement to teach writing. Sahla (2015) implemented a study to identify and analyze the common errors that learners encounter when they start writing. A descriptive method was utilized in the research. 30 students' compositions were collected for error analysis and the outcome was that the targeted students struggled with writing due to the negative interference of their mother tongue, the intralingual errors and a deficiency of practice in English. Chowdhary (2015) made attempts to identify difficulties in writing at secondary level. The participants were a teacher and the students of class six and seven. Class observation, students' interviews and evaluation of students' writings were the tools used in the study. It was revealed after the analysis that grammatical errors were the major problem for most of the students. Structuring of information, translation of problems, spelling errors and use of inappropriate vocabulary were other problems that were identified. The students were unaware of these mistakes as the teachers did not provide proper feedback. Haider (2014) focused on the structural problems in writing among the students with learning

difficulties when they wrote an English essay. A questionnaire and a semi structured in-depth interview were utilized for comprehending the problems. Findings reveal that these students found difficulty in writing the introduction, the hypothesis, the topic sentence, the end sentence and the conclusion. The teachers of these students reported that beside these problems they also found problems in the transfer and organization of ideas. The reasons for these problems were recognized as a lack of subject-specific background knowledge that had an impact on the quality of writing. Secondly, the students' focus was on linguistic matters without considering the semantic dimensions it might imply. Thirdly it was identified that these students used a broad statement in the beginning sections without sufficiently introducing the topic sentence. Other reasons were the overuse of coordinate sentences and misapplication of topic sentences, degrading the standard of writing. Farooq et. al. (2012) explored hardships in English language writing faced by second language learners using a survey. A questionnaire based on a five-point scale was used as the tool. Data collected from 245 students showed that the students faced problems mainly in vocabulary, mother tongue interference, principles of grammar and irregular spellings. It was also found that female students face more difficulties in vocabulary, spellings, rhetoric, grammar and punctuation than male students. Other findings disclose that students who faced problems in vocabulary also had problems related to mother tongue interference and the students who had spelling difficulties also faced problems in grammar while writing in English as a second language. Abdallah [2011] attempted to find out the problems in students' abilities in writing in English and the difficulty faced by the teachers while teaching. It also examined whether the mother tongue interference affects writing negatively. Forty teachers and sixty basic school students from Karary, Sudan

participated in the study. Four tools such as a questionnaire for the teachers, two writing tests for the pupils, textbook analysis and classroom observations were used in the study. Findings of the study reflected that the bad writing skills of the pupils is due to poor and inadequate writing activities provided in the textbook, deficiency of vocabulary, a large class and little emphasis on the teaching the art of writing. Teachers did not have the drive to teach, and no effort was taken to encourage learners to write good topics. Nancy Nabiryo (2011) probed the factors that influence the basic writing skills of the students in English language in selected schools in Rubaga Division of Kampala District. The study also evaluated the teachers' views on the effect of the learners' first language, the status of their former primary schools, other factors on the learners' English writing skills and the instructional strategies used in teaching English writing skills. Eleven teachers and one hundred and thirty-six learners were interviewed. Questionnaires were also provided to the teachers to follow up on the answers given in their interviews and another one was provided to the students to collect their views on different issues. Findings show that though learners like writing, they do not practice enough to develop their writing skills. Very few students are armed with writing skills from their former schools. The teachers had never motivated the students to read a lot and practice writing. Windiyati (2010) examined the problems faced by English teachers in teaching writing. It also intended to find out how the teachers coped and dealt with their problems to help the students to write better. The candidates were two English teachers who taught for grade VIII at SMPN 1 Kasembon Malang. Questionnaires, observation sheets, interview guide and field notes were the tools used in the study. There were various drawbacks in the teaching methods of these teachers. They were related to teaching preparation, strategies and the textbooks used. They had

techniques to overcome it. They made arrangements before they taught. They had made only lesson plans and a semester program for one year in the previous semester. In the process of teaching writing, the strategies used by the teachers were almost the same for every meeting. They rarely used other methods due to their deficient knowledge on the techniques of teaching writing. They faced difficulties in using appropriate techniques for the students who had a low ability and interest in writing and in choosing an activity that could motivate the students to write better. Assefa (2007) probed the issues involved in the teaching of expository writing. The aim of the study is to examine the factors involved in the development of the necessary writing skills. The study centers on the adequacy of the syllabus, the nature of the teaching materials currently in use, the effectiveness of the writing tasks and the kind of problems encountered in implementing CLT methodology in the writing course. The subjects were 120 teacher apprentices of the department of English Language Education, Addis Ababa University and 15 writing instructors who taught the course in the same department. Questionnaires were used as the instrument for students and teachers. Interviews were also used to gather data from the students and teachers besides classroom observation. The study showed that there are limitations in the adoption of CLT principles and procedures. There are also several constraints in teaching expository writing. It was seen that the students lack the requisite skills and practice in writing expository compositions. Writing is one of fundamental skills in language learning besides reading, speaking, and listening. It is an important language skill and should be learnt properly by students of English as a foreign and second language. Weigle (2002) says that writing along with speaking has become a fundamental skill for educational, business, and personal reasons. It is implicit that acquiring writing skills has become a requirement. Writing is a form of communication

that enables students to jot down their feelings and ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments, and to convey meaning through well-constructed text. Composing written texts is an involved activity which needs full concentration and thorough knowledge about the subject. In other words, writing can be stated as a facility which allows students to express their thoughts into words in a meaningful form. However, writing skills can be acquired by everyone by practicing and reading books. An indispensable part of language learning, writing has its own definition and points of view differ across many language experts. Brown (2001) states that writing is the written result of thinking, drafting, and revising that need particular skills on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discussion markers and rhetorical conventions coherently into a written text, how to revise text for transparent meaning, how to edit text for appropriate grammar and how to produce a final product. In short, in producing a piece of written text, intelligence becomes an important requirement. Students are required to be able to produce good essays by mastering this skill. However, writing is considered as an arduous skill to be mastered as Chastain (1971) said that students should have a complete control of elements of language in writing which make it more difficult than other language skills. Meanwhile, Kennedy (1998) defined writing in two points of view; first, writing is an unclear work which needs inspiration to produce it, and second, writing is viewed as a boring task where language learners have to give more attention on elements in writing such as punctuation, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, placement of prepositional objects, and so forth. Furthermore, Iskandarwassid and Sunendar (2008) state that writing is the most challenging skill in language learning. In addition, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) said that a person who writes a written text has to be able to convey her/his ideas

in order to make the reader extract the writer's ideas and meanings. Moreover, Weigle (2002) explained that writing has more accepted norms than other skills like speaking. It means that accuracy in writing is viewed as more crucial than accuracy in speaking. There is always a face-to-face interaction among language users present in communicating, while in writing, the written text is used by writers to express and convey their ideas to the readers whenever and wherever, which makes the writers able to produce more lucid and more comprehensible writing. Thus, writing is a form of communication which enables language learners in conveying their ideas and thoughts into a written product. This skill is viewed as a challenging skill because it requires an ability to think, draft, and revise. Furthermore, the knowledge of comprehensible writing becomes a primary requirement as the writers should be able to create an acceptable text within the elements of writing such as proper grammar, correct placement of capitalization, proper sentence organization, and so on to evolve students' writing competencies. In addition, writing in school is analyzed as a skill which has the goal to enable the students to express their feelings, thoughts, imagination, knowledge and ideas on any topic given by the teacher. All the insights provided by these scholars reveal that though quite a lot of work has been carried out with respect to Attention Deficit students, a lot needs to be done. It is hoped that the present study would provide some insights on how the writing skills of such students could be enriched. At the same time, it will shed some light on how the teacher needs to play multiple roles effectively while handling such learners such as the role of a consultant/counselor, a friend, a decision maker, a motivator and a researcher.

Aspects of Good Writing:

In this section we discuss some of the important aspects for evaluating good writing.

1. Organization

The existence of organization in writing is viewed as important because it provides an outline to help the readers fulfill their expectations of the text. A piece of writing which is well constructed helps the readers to follow the text easily. If a writer does not adequately organize the text, the readers will face confusion. Shehadeh (2011, cited in Khatib and Meihami, 2015) mentioned organization as a fluidity of expression, lucidity in the statement of ideas, structuring of ideas and sequencing and development of ideas. In short, Nik, Sani, Chick, Jusoff, and Hasbollah (2010) simplified the definition of organization as the beginning, middle, and the end of a text. Moreover, Bruce (2008) stated the organization as an aspect of the linguistic element of discourse which is often known as cohesion. Furthermore, organization is noticed as a main component of communicative language which involves a number of elements, often classified as cohesion and coherence, reference and rhetorical organization, and all of which is related in order to create and interpret the connection, function, and extension of the units of language. To sum up, organization in writing is an important element which plays a crucial role in facilitating readers' ease in understanding a written text through the existence of cohesion and coherence.

2. Content

In composing a good paragraph, important criteria like content is obviously needed. According to Nik, Sani, Chick, Jusoff, and Hasbollah (2010), content is the understanding of events, actions, findings, and views which are presented undoubtedly. Similarly, Shehadeh, (2011, cited in Khatib and Meihami, 2015) notes content in

writing as knowledge of subject, development of thesis, coverage of topic, relevance of details, substance and quantity of details. To sum up content is an element in writing which is defined as knowledge on how to develop a thesis correctly and thoroughly. In other words, content is an aspect that a writer should master to create a good piece of writing which the readers can understand.

3. Grammar

Generally, Grammar has its own definition towards language learning. Subasini and Kokilavani (2013) defined grammar as the structure, sound, and meaning system of language. It means that grammar is a crucial part of a language which has a major function. People can understand what other people say because they understand the pattern of the language, and the principles of grammar in a certain language. In line with this Muhsin and Baker (2008), explained that grammar has a prime function in producing coherence and contextual meaningful discourse. Furthermore, Fulcher and Davidson (2007) discussed the importance of having competence in grammar as an important concern for any communicative approach which aims to provide learners with knowledge of how to determine and convey the literal meaning of utterances accurately. The importance of vocabulary is also supported by Igbaria (2013) which depicts that knowing words is not filling papers with new words and memorizing them, students need to understand the word's meaning in context and how words are used.

4. Vocabulary

Undeniably, vocabulary is a main concern in producing a piece of written text. Long and Richards (2001) stated that vocabulary has a primary role in writing because through vocabulary a writer can communicate the message he wanted to convey to the reader. The importance of vocabulary is also supported by Igbaria (2013) who argues that knowing words is not filling papers with new words and memorizing them, what students need to discern is the word's meaning in context and how words are used. Nation (2011) states that in situations where English is used as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) learning vocabulary items play a major role in all language skills i.e. listening, reading, speaking, writing. Ur (2012) defined vocabulary as the words of language. It means, in using a language, getting equipped with vocabulary is a main requirement for language users in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

5. Mechanics

In forming a paragraph, mechanics is an important thing that cannot be separated because it contributes to the specific judgment about the quality of certain writing. Kane (2000) mentioned that mechanics refers to the appearance of words, to how they are spelled or organized on paper. Furthermore, Mohammad and Meihami (2015), discuss works which divided mechanics into several parts namely spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph indentation, and so forth.

Based on the statements above, mechanics in writing is about how a written text is shaped.

Case Study

In this case study we elaborate on our attempt to guide attention deficit students to produce meaningful and content rich essays using a template derived from the Bronfenbrenner model.

Students' Profile

The case study was conducted on students of 8th and 9th grades from different schools in Pune. They belonged to the age group of thirteen or fourteen. The researchers have personally tutored them in reading and writing. All of them belonged to higher middle-class households.

The interactions with their teacher brought out the fact that they were “falling behind” in studies. Further discussions brought out several common behavioral patterns that were of concern to the teachers. They were not interested in studies, they did not know the importance of studies, there was a lack of focus as far as career was concerned and they were only interested in having fun. They were lazy and had a laid-back casual attitude. They were not able to manage their time effectively. The students were not able to work on tasks independently and follow instructions. They were inattentive during lessons, they did not show emotions or patience, they did not do well in academics, they demonstrated a lack of interpersonal skills, and they did not get along with each other. They used unacceptable language while interacting with peers. They had poor etiquette and behavior. There was a lack of participation in team activities including sports. They could not manage their anger tactfully and they could not express their emotions accurately. While some were overconfident and aggressive, some others had poor confidence

and low self-esteem. They did not submit their assignments on time. Students showed a downward trend in academics. They used inappropriate language and cuss words while interacting with peers. They showed poor comprehension skills. The students showed a preference towards certain peers and a reluctance to work with others. They did not maintain silence and showed disrespect towards facilitators. The students had poor time management skills. The students did not take feedback seriously. They showed low interest levels in specific subjects. The students showed poor resource management skills. The students were distracted during lessons and consequently distracted others.

Apart from discussing these general traits we also collected information on individual difficulties each student faced in English writing. In table 1, we summarize these along with examples.

Method

In discussion with the teachers, we decided to focus on character sketches as a form of writing since this is a mandatory topic in their syllabus. The students were asked to write character sketches on their own initially. To maintain uniformity in evaluating the writing outcomes and to keep the task interesting, we selected a single topic for all- A character sketch of an imaginary alien friend. The students needed different times to write the sketches. The researchers collected writing samples from the students and evaluated them keeping in mind the aspects of good writing described earlier. We refer to this set of writing samples as S1. The author recorded the deficits in each student's writing. Considering the deficits, we introduced a template for

developing a character sketch. This template (to be discussed in an independent section next) is based on the Bronfenbrenner's 'Nature vs Nurture' model. The authors discussed the template with the students. They also explained the template along with examples to the students and clarified their doubts in individual tutoring sessions. The students formed character sketches based on the template. They were assigned an hour to complete the character sketches. The resulting writing samples were again collected. We refer to this set as S2. The S2 set was evaluated using the same criteria employed before for S1. We also asked the students to share their writing experiences using the template and recorded their feedback.

In Table 1, we present the results of the case study.

Table 1 the results of the case study

Student No	Specific issues in writing character sketches with a sample of writing	Improvement highlights	Feedback from student	Benefit
S1	Could not describe an imaginary alien character beyond 3 lines. "His name was Mango. He was poor. He had no friends"	S1 wrote 2 to 3 lines for each point in the template. As a result, the essay was longer.	I had to think about writing something in each section. So I wrote more than usual.	Length of character sketch
S2	Limited grasp of grammar concepts.	The template gave a default sequence to the essay. Grammar	The template had examples.	Emulating academic writing

	<p>Sequencing of ideas often went wrong. Correct forms of verbs and connectives for forming complex sentences was a challenge. Therefore she could not write in academic English. Wrote informal sentences with a lot of cuss words at times</p> <p>“One day, he decided to quit school. no one will bother him now The alien was actually f***ing dumb. He was also slow. He had a boring lady as his class teacher. One day, he decided to quit school. no one will bother him now”</p>	<p>errors persisted. However, there were no cuss words in the essay written using the template.</p>	<p>I felt I had to follow that kind of writing. So I did not use my language.</p>	
S3	<p>Organizing ideas was a challenge. Does not consider English as a skill that needs to be learnt. “I know English</p>	<p>Because of the sequence of the template, ideas were organized systematically.</p>	<p>I used to go round and round writing the same things. Because of the template</p>	<p>Help in organizing thoughts around prompts in the template</p>

	<p>already” Could not write meaningfully about the daily life of the imaginary alien. “But school was there. So, He got up. looked out of the window. Slept again. He wanted to sleep only all day.”</p>		<p>and examples, I had to move on.</p>	
S4	<p>Completing work is a challenge. Fears evaluation. Does not submit completed work either. “It may be wrong” is his reason for not submitting. Could not write about the imaginary alien’s interactions with friends `` He bought chips, soda, candy. He ate it from morning to night. He did not go out. He did not meet anybody. He did not want</p>	<p>Submitted the character sketch in time. Wrote a description that had some dialogues with friends. They were not very meaningful and had grammar errors. Yet it was a start.</p>	<p>There were examples in the template. I wrote the same things. Not exactly, but similar. Therefore I cannot be wrong, because the teacher herself gave those examples. I don’t have friends, but I imagined what the alien</p>	<p>Helped in overcoming fear of failure. Courage to attempt something not tried before.</p>

	to go and play. Because he always lost”		would say looking at the examples.	
S5	Lack of interest in learning. Vocabulary is alright, still has problems penning down thoughts cohesively. Never completes any assignment. Her description of an imaginary alien was “ He did not like his dumb parents or siblings or other students. He kicked them good. He threw water on his Dad’s papers from office. That made him happy”	No change observed. Assignments were still incomplete.	I don’t want to read the template because I feel tired. It would be nice if I can listen to it and I will then speak about my character sketch.	Identification of a need for multimodal approach.
S6	Poor reading and writing for her grade. Lack of understanding of grammar. Cannot read and paraphrase easily. Not aware of phrases commonly in	Was able to write a longer character sketch. The sentence constructs showed some improvements. Grammar errors persisted.	I will write more because I have so many points. I followed examples to write better English.	Volume and emulation of academic English to some extent.

	<p>use. Her essay read as follows: " Rishi was an alien. He landed in my house one day. I gave milk and some biscuits. After happy, he play. "</p>			
S7	<p>He cannot write complete sentences. Concepts such as linguistic patterns, phrases are not up to his grade level. He has no confidence in speaking and reading. Sometimes he knows the words, but is afraid to say them out loud.</p> <p>" Alien was in school. He get friends. Happy. Lunch time he Sad no company. He stupid"</p>	<p>The length of the character sketch improved. There was some good content in terms of exchanges of the character with his classmates. Academic English was not attempted. Grammar errors persisted.</p>	<p>I will write more. There were good examples there. I got help. Ideas writing was better"</p>	<p>Help in developing ideas and expressing.</p>
S8	<p>Needs to work on her grammar and vocabulary. She seems to suffer a</p>	<p>The assignment was submitted in time. The character sketch was certainly fuller and richer. Several ideas</p>	<p>I had small bits. What to write next ? was the question.</p>	<p>Helped in sequencing of ideas. Breaking down a large essay into smaller assignments as</p>

	<p>block when it comes to expanding ideas. She starts off well and then leaves her writing under-developed.</p> <p>“ On a fine, sunny day, Krish started off to school. He was feeling drowsy because heavy breakfast. He wants to go back. He run.”</p>	<p>were well-expressed, though grammar errors persisted.</p>		<p>a result of prompts in the template</p>
S9	<p>Ideas are original, needs to use a more advanced vocabulary, and attempt complex sentences. She should read more actively and learn how to infer meaning and extract information from the passages in a book.</p> <p>“The alien and her pet landed in woods near a house. The pet named Freno was</p>	<p>The essay was completed in time. The character sketch showed improvement in terms of sentence construction, grammar. Punctuations.</p>	<p>It was easy to write looking at the examples and the points given in the template. My ideas were better than the examples. I wanted to write properly with commas and all, so I did a good job I think.</p>	<p>Helped in emulation of academic English. Helped in better presentation.</p>

	<p>hungry. The alien – his name was Dumbo – wanted to feed Freno. But not sure about food on earth. What can he eat? What can I eat was worry. “</p>			
S10	<p>Basic writing and grammar concepts are a challenge. Needs practice with verb forms. Needs to complete her homework and workbook. Manasvi needs to get used to producing an adequate quantity of writing around an idea.</p> <p>“ What can alien did on our world? He should go back his place. I think he died here!”</p>	<p>Length of the character sketch improved. Grammar and sentence construction was still a problem. However, many ideas were assembled into a composition which made sense as a “story”!</p>	<p>I look at each point and write. Not difficult. Only small small portions for each point. My sketch is big. I can do this.</p>	<p>Helped in building confidence to write. Helped in Organizing ideas into composition.</p>
S11	<p>Though enthusiastic in class, he does not complete assignments. He needs to practice</p>	<p>Half of the prompts were utilized in an attempt to write a sketch. Ideas were still</p>	<p>There was too much to write. So many points. I got tired.</p>	<p>Helped in getting started. Not very effective in developing the sketch fully.</p>

	<p>converting his brainstorming (mind-maps, notes) into a properly written up piece which is presentable. Should be more patient and give more time to his writing. He gives up easily.</p> <p>“Alien wanted a new cycle. He cannot walk so much. He steel cycle. Then flew to his planet”</p>	underdeveloped.		
S12	<p>Needs to contribute more and in general participate more in class. Does not complete work.</p> <p>Has a problem staying focused on a task. Finds it a challenge employing connectives. Has several conceptual gaps in his learning and needs</p>	<p>Assignment submitted in time. Had written only one line per prompt. Not a very cohesive essay.</p>	<p>I liked writing at the start. Then I got tired. Many points. Big template.</p>	Not effective

	<p>substantial practice in reading and writing to meet the grade's expectations.</p> <p>"Sunny, the alien was bore of his home and school. His parents pulled him out. Now mother home schooling. Sunny ran to new planet."</p>			
S13	<p>Organizing ideas is a challenge. Cannot sequence events correctly. His writing suffers from incorrect sequence or incoherent descriptions. Poor grammar</p> <p>"After coming to new palnet, alien was lonely. Before he play with sister, but fight. Now in new school also friends also hit. Now he go back quickly"</p>	<p>Improvement in the length of the character sketch. Ideas were sequenced correctly. Attempts were made to use vocabulary suitable to the topic. Grammar errors persisted.</p>	<p>I wanted to write about each point. So the sketch became big. I did not think about what to write next so much. It was there. Examples were there.</p>	<p>Helped in organizing the essay. Emulating academic English to some extent</p>

S14	<p>Challenges in organizing ideas into larger writing pieces. Needs help while sequencing events.</p> <p>“ Alien born in X planet. Went to Y planet. He got friends. He share dabba. On X planet also he play. He share. His mom feed him Then he sleeps.”</p>	<p>Length of the sketch improved. Ideas were coherent though grammar errors persisted.</p>	<p>I can write this way. Even in exams, it helps if we get prompts. I can not think. Here, one after the other I only write fast.</p>	<p>Identification of a need for accommodation in exams. Help in organizing thoughts</p>
S15	<p>Lacks focus. Cannot orient himself to a topic. Therefore finds it difficult to write cohesively</p> <p>“ Alient wants to play games. His favourite game was Pokemon. In that you have to catch the pokemon by finding. He is hiding and we have to catch. I catch all fast”</p>	<p>Character sketch was written on the given topic. It had some original ideas derived from the gaming world. But the focus was relatively better. Submission was done before the deadline.</p>	<p>I like to write this way. I was alerted to writing about the alien only in the next prompt. I wrote a lot. I want a template for the exam also.</p>	<p>Helped in staying focused on the topic. Identification of a need for accommodation in exams.</p>

Template based on Bronfenbrenner's Model:

The Bronfenbrenner model includes the nature and nurture aspects of a child's personality. As discussed above, our template is inspired by this model. Therefore, it takes into account the traits a person is born with and the factors that influence their personality. The model considers the interactions of the individual with the external world- microsystem, exosystem and macrosystem as represented by the concentric circles around the 'central character'

Fig1. is a model by Urie Bronfenbrenner. It is a Nature vs Nurture model. Essentially it conveys that we all possess traits at birth (Nature) and we acquire many more as a result of our ecosystem/environment (Nurture).

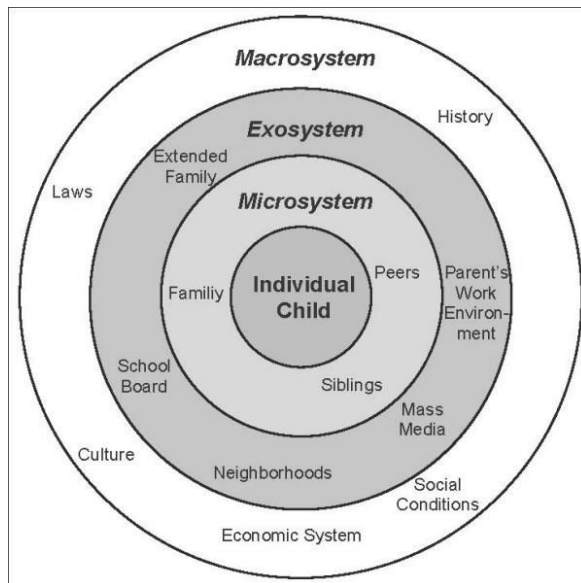


Figure 1: Nature and Nurture

Our template presented in Table2. is based on interactions of the individual in question, in the present case the alien friend, with individuals present in different spheres shown in figure above.

Table 2 Template with examples based on Bronfenbrenner's model

1. Individual (Nature -The innermost circle in Figure 1-): Write a few lines on each point and look for data /evidence from your interview transcripts when you are creating a character sketch. If you are creating an imaginary character for your story, you are creating data which you must adhere to in the story. For example, if you say your Hero is into classical Hindustani music, please don't enter him into a Rock music competition in the story unless you have a plan to show how disastrous the competition was!

Appearance: Neat? Dapper? Graceful? Shabby? Geeky?

Habits: bites nails? Raises eyebrows? Stutters when nervous?

Hobbies: Likes to dance? Read? Legos? Tennis? Painting? Flute? Singing?

Disposition: Is kind? Smart-alecky? Mean? Friendly? Uninhibited? Shy? Awkward? Confident?

2. Microsystem (Nurture – Circle outside of the 'Individual' circle): Write a few lines about what this circle of maximum influence does to the individual. For example,

Relations with parents, friends, peers, siblings:

- Does the individual seem to have a good rapport with parents? Does she enjoy being with peers/friends? Is he protective of his siblings?
- Are the parents too protective? Do friends treat her with respect? Do the siblings trust her enough to be friends?
- Are there any interactions between the parents and friends? Do the parents welcome his peers? Do the friends accommodate the siblings of the individual? Do the friends find it easy to interact with the parents and siblings

Reflect on how the above interactions (or lack of them) affect the character. Has he become despondent as a result of being criticized by parents? Or do they support him solidly and unconditionally? Are the parents constantly bickering and creating an unhealthy atmosphere for him? Or are they lively and playful partners in all the endeavors he takes up? You may not know this completely ever, but if you ask the right questions, you might get some insights!

3. Exosystem (Nurture: The circle outside of the microsystem): This circle has relatively less influence, than the microsystem. The factors such as school authorities, parents' bosses etc. do not directly interact with us, but their impact on our lives is undeniable. If a mom has an egoistic boss at work, she is most likely to be sad when she gets home and that affects the atmosphere and quality of time she spends with her children (one of which could be the individual you are writing about).

- What kind of jobs the parents hold? Demanding? Relaxed that leave a lot of time for family? Do they have balanced work and leisure?
- School authorities like the principal – does he seem approachable or does he expect to be feared and respected? What atmosphere does that create around him?
- What kind of a neighborhood does the individual live in? What seems to be the value system of a neighborhood? Does it have people who put education above all else? Do

the people party till late night? Do they easily help each other? Or prefer their space and privacy?

All these factors shape (Nurture) individuals and are important to be taken into account while writing about a real or imaginary character

4. Macrosystem (Nurture: The outermost circle): The history, culture, social norms and economy of the individual too percolate into us and shape our beliefs and behaviors. For example, a conservative society that does not view women's freedom positively will result into a girl left with very few options for education. On the other hand, a forward thinking liberal society will help a student believe that all doors of progress are open to her!

- What kind of "rules" are followed by the individual and why? If s/he does not know the answer to why, most likely it is a social norm! For example, why do we "show respect" to the elders even if they sometimes behave very childishly? Such rules are called social norms. Can you spot any in the narrative of the interviewee or in the imaginary character you would create?
- What are the qualifications of people in the community where the individual lives? This would give some hints about priorities of the people around her and the reasons why she values –say- attending classes as opposed to taking vacations during weekends.
- What kind of city/town/village does he live in? Rural- where there are many taboos around intermixing of boys and girls? Big city where nobody cares where you are going or where you are coming in from? Does she have to deal with "watchful citizens" in a semi-urban town who comment on everything from dress-code to time of returning home and make judgements based on these?

Results and Discussion

The students' character sketches were longer. S1, S6, S7, S10, S13 and S14 showed improvement in length of character sketch. The template gave a default order to the essay. It was observed that S2, S3 were able to organize their essays well. The pattern of the template led to well organized ideas. They wrote descriptions that contained dialogues. No difference was observed as assignments were still incomplete. The students who submitted on time were S4, S8, S9, and S12 and S15 and submitted before the deadline. S6 and

S9 showed improvement in sentence construction. Grammatical errors of S2, S4, S6, S7, S8, S10, S13, S14 persisted.

Length of Character Sketch:

S1 expressed that he had to think and write something in each section, so he wrote more than usual. S6 wrote more because of the points given in a template. She used examples to write better English. S7 wrote more. He found it useful that there were examples. It helped him get ideas and his writing was better. S10 looked at each point and wrote. It was not difficult for him. He wrote in small portions for each point, and he was able to write a lengthy character sketch. He got the confidence to write the character sketch. S13 could write for each point. He did not have to think much about what to write next because of the points in the template and the examples. S14 found it easier to write this way. According to him it will be a help for the students if they are given prompts in the exam because he cannot think. He is able to rapidly write the content required. Students should be given such templates in order to enhance their writing abilities because it introduces them to points to think on and expand on. It would not be a good practice to provide a template during exams because the students will not be able to write a character sketch on their own. However, while practicing to write character sketch such a template was useful in stimulating the students think about multiple aspects of the character sketch.

Organization of Character Sketch

S2 expressed that the template had examples therefore he followed that pattern of writing and did not use his own language. S3 conveyed that he used to go round and round writing the same thing however because of the template and examples he was able to write on different aspects. The template provides points to ponder on.

Submission before Deadline

S4 was able to refer to the examples and he was able to write on similar grounds. He did not feel the insecurity of failure because of the examples. The examples helped him write the dialogues although he himself had no friends and therefore he submitted the assignment before the deadline. S8 wrote in small bits and did not fumble over what to write next. For S9 it was easier to write because of the examples and points given in the template. She thought of better ideas than examples because the examples stimulated her thinking process. S15 liked to write using the template. He was able to adhere to the subject because of the prompts and was able to write a lot. He wanted the template in the exam as well.

Improvement in Sentence Construction

S6 showed improvements in sentence construction because of the points given in the template. She used examples to write better English. S9 found it easy to write because of the examples and points given in the template, the examples provided her with good sentence constructs. The template stimulated her thinking process further and gave her better ideas than examples. Because of the template, she was motivated to write with proper punctuations. Providing

examples in template certainly helps in sentence constructions because it allows students to emulate the writing.

Negative Feedback

S12 liked writing at the start however he later got tired because of the big template.

Conclusion

In conclusion we have demonstrated that the Bronfenbrenner model-based template accompanied by examples for writing a character sketch stimulates thinking among students with attention deficiency. In particular they found it useful for writing longer and fuller character sketches, organizing their writing activity, embedding dialogues in their character sketches, submitting assignments in a timely manner and improving sentence construction by following examples. The grammar errors were however, not impacted by the template.

This study demonstrates that Bronfenbrenner's Model has helped students in developing comprehensive character sketches. Since the model clearly demarcates the natural traits and the ones acquired through the interactions with the world, the template derived from the model also helped students in organizing their writing along these two streams. This accounts for the improvement of the organization of the writing activity. We expected that the improvement in the timeliness that some of the students have mentioned would have been a result of better organization of the activity; however, going by the feedback of students, we did not observe this causation. The students who mentioned improvement in organization were not the same who

mentioned improvement in timeliness.

This study demonstrates that teaching Attention Deficit students is indeed an art and a challenge. It is felt that with the right methods and techniques, a teacher can bring in a significant transformation in such students.

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Integrating Bronfenbrenners Model in Enhancing Writing Skills of Attention Deficit Students

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