

การสอนโดยใช้โครงงานด้วยเนื้อหาการท่องเที่ยวท้องถิ่นเพื่อพัฒนา  
ความสามารถในการเขียนของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 2

Using Project Work Focusing on Local Tourism to Develop English  
Writing Ability of 8<sup>th</sup> Graders

Supamast Dithamnart\*

supamast@hotmail.com

Waewwalee Waewchimplee\*\*

### Abstract

The purposes of the study were : 1) to examine the effects of project work focusing on local tourism on learners' English writing ability of 8th graders, 2) to compare learners' writing pretest and posttest mean score and 3) to explore the learners' opinion toward learning English through project work focusing on local tourism. Participants consisted of 25 learners studying in 8th grade, second academic year 2016 at the secondary school in Pakchong district, Nakhon Ratchasima Province They were selected by using cluster random sampling. The research instruments were lesson plans, English writing ability test, and a questionnaire. The statistics used were the mean score ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (S.D.) and t-test. The results were as follows: the posttest mean scores of 8<sup>th</sup> graders' English writing ability were higher than the pretest mean scores with statistically significant at  $< .05$  level, and learners had positive satisfaction towards learning English writing through project work focusing on local tourism. The results indicated that the samples' English writing ability had improved after learning through project work focusing on local tourism. In summary, using project work focusing on local tourism could effectively develop learners' English writing ability.

**Keyword:** Project work, Local tourism, Writing ability

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\*นิสิตระดับมหาบัณฑิต สาขาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา

\*\*อาจารย์ ภาควิชาภาษาอังกฤษ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา

## บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์หลัก 3 ประการ คือ 1) เพื่อศึกษา ผลของการสอนโดยใช้โครงงานด้วยเนื้อหาการท่องเทียวท้องถิ่นที่มีต่อการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 2, 2) เพื่อเปรียบเทียบคะแนนก่อนและหลังการสอน และ 3) เพื่อสำรวจความคิดเห็นของผู้เรียน ที่มีต่อการเรียนรู้โดยโครงงานด้วยเนื้อหาการท่องเทียวท้องถิ่น กลุ่มตัวอย่าง คือ ผู้เรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 2 จำนวน 25 คน ในโรงเรียนระดับมัธยมศึกษา อำเภอปากช่อง จังหวัดนครราชสีมา ภาคเรียนที่ 2 ปีการศึกษา 2559 โดยใช้การสุ่มผู้เรียนแบบกลุ่ม เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัย คือ แผนการสอน แบบทดสอบความสามารถด้านการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษ และแบบสอบถาม สถิติที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยนี้ประกอบด้วยค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐานและการทดสอบแบบ t-test ผลการวิจัยพบว่า คะแนนความสามารถด้านการเขียนของกลุ่มตัวอย่างหลังการสอนโดยใช้โครงงานด้วยเนื้อหาการท่องเทียวท้องถิ่นสูงกว่าผลก่อนการสอนอย่างมีนัยยะสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ .05 และผู้เรียนมีความคิดเห็นเชิงบวกต่อการเรียนการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษ โดยใช้โครงงานด้วยเนื้อหาการท่องเทียวท้องถิ่น กล่าวโดยสรุปจากผลการศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่าการสอนโดยโครงงานด้วยเนื้อหาการท่องเทียวท้องถิ่นสามารถพัฒนาความสามารถในการเขียนของผู้เรียนได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ

**คำสำคัญ:** การเรียนรู้แบบโครงงาน เนื้อหาการท่องเทียวแบบท้องถิ่น ความสามารถด้านการเขียน

## Introduction

Nowadays, the ASEAN community takes an important role in all countries of Southeast Asia. The central language this community using for communication is English. Communication in English is becoming more necessary. Writing is one of the communicative skills that are important in use. In Thailand, there are various writing problems which are very serious that happen in language teaching. Thai learners have learned English writing for a long time; however, their competent in English writing are not completed in use. English writing skill is difficult for Thai learners because English is not their mother tongue (Prabjandee, 2016). Moreover, they are often confused about the structures of their first language with English. Thai learners often makes mistake in order of words when creating sentences. They do not understand the

parts of speech, and they get confused and have many questions about grammatical rules. Some learners have not enough knowledge about vocabulary, sometime they write vocabulary with misspelling. These problems are some example problems that Thai learners have when learning English. These problems concern writing skills, which most learners consider to be the most difficult skill in English learning. Writing was mostly learned by educated people because it was available at schools and other learning institutes. It is also usefully connected with other communicative skills (Dickinson, 2010). Writing becomes more and more concentrated when learners are in the higher levels of learning (Putri, 2013). Most learners have negative feelings when they have to learn English writing because they consider writing in very difficult. Learners are afraid that they may make grammatical errors in

their written work. Therefore, the above reasons show writing is still the main problem for most learners in their language learning.

In the educational system of Thailand, the secondary level is the connector from the primary level of learners. So, the 8<sup>th</sup> level seems to be an important connector for learners from the primary level to the secondary level where writing becomes more concentrated. For 8<sup>th</sup> grade learners in Thailand, they consider writing to be difficult for them because they have just passed the primary level in the educational system, so their writing skills have not been used enough (Cooper, 2014). In addition, teaching English in Thailand mostly starts with writing that is considered to be the most difficult skill by most Thai learners; this can be reason that most Thai learners are still face with problems in English writing.

Linking with the nature of local area of learners in this study, Pakchong District is the one of the popular areas which contains many interesting tourist places. One of the favorite tourist areas is Khao Yai (Theparat, 2009). Khao Yai is the one of the National Parks of Thailand. Its location is near the capital city of Thailand. For this reason, it attracts many tourists both from Thailand and foreign countries because it is convenient to travel and visit. Moreover, there are many tour companies have services tourists to travel at Khao Yai. Most tourists use English to communicate with others. Connecting with this information, learners in this area have a chance to face with foreign tourists in their real lives

(Oura, 2001). Moreover, being able to provide information about tourist places is important, so tourists can have a successful trip (Enoch, 1996). Therefore, it is beneficial for learners to learn this content because it will help them write about the tourist attractions in their local area.

Learners can learn writing in the authentic issue which connects to their real lives. If learners had a chance to learn more in local tourism with project work as an effective learning approach, it would be an advantage for them to develop their writing skills and information knowledge of local tourism of their local areas. When learners produce their own writing, it means learners achieve a deeper understanding of English writing.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effects of project work focusing on local tourism on learners' English writing ability of 8th graders.
2. To compare learners' writing pretest and posttest mean score.
3. To explore the learners' opinion toward learning English through project work focusing on local tourism.

## Significance of the Study

In this study, the researcher thought of the importance of writing problems, and decided to use project work to solve the problems in English writing learning. Project work was selected because it could provide a chance for learners to practice English writing with an

authentic activity. It helped them to feel familiar with English writing; learners could be closed with this language through producing the end product following project work. (Corliss and Corliss, 2009).

Local tourism is one kind of motivation tool, which would help the learners in their future studies. In addition, local tourism was selected for this study because it provides a chance for learners to learn writing with the authentic issues that it affected on their real lives because Nakhon Ratchasima area is one destination for travellers, learners easily meet many travellers in the real-life situations. Moreover, local tourism encouraged learners to be more interested in writing.

## The Scope of the Study

1. Population of the study was 120 of 8<sup>th</sup> graders during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year 2016.

2. Participants were 25 of 8<sup>th</sup> graders by using the cluster random sampling during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year 2016.

3. The content in the study was local tourism.

4. The variables of the study were:

4.1 The independent variable was teaching English via project work focusing on local tourism.

4.2 The dependent variables were learners' writing ability and opinions towards learning English via project work focusing on local tourism.

## Research Hypothesis

The learners' English writing ability mean score of the posttest is significantly higher than the pretest mean score after learning through project work focusing on local tourism.

## Literature review

### Definition of project work

Project work is an effective learning approach, which is adapted in writing skill. It is used in various fields of teaching. Learners are developed to think for their work as a suitable step, and it connects the learners' environment (Stockton: 1920). Harris (2014) concluded that project work is the teaching method which lets learners as an autonomous learning. Teacher is just a facilitator for learners as needed. There are various sources for finding information both online materials and hard copied documents. He summarized that project work sparks learners by setting interesting questions to be challenge them to brainstorm to find the answers themselves. Moreover, he found that project work often begins with learner involvement in helping to choose the purpose, direction and guiding questions for the project. All members have a voice in these things depend upon many factors including the length and scope of the project, the learners' ages and the teacher's and students' past experiences with project work.

### The process of project work

Wrigley (1998) explained that there are 5 stages of project work, these are selecting

topics, planning, researching, developing the end product, and sharing results. In the similar way, Papandreou (1994) concluded that for teacher, there are 5 stages for preparing as a facilitator in project work as follows:

1. Setting the context for learners or called the preparation stage.
2. Outline of work for identifying the scope or called the planning stage.
3. Finding information for work or called the research stage.
4. Presentation activity of project work includes creative questions that are created while the presentation time.
5. Evaluation is designed for suitable with the content and skills that are used in each project.

### **Advantages of project work**

Velez (2011) concluded that project work inspired learners to work with collaborative skills. In the similar way, Pieratt (2011) summarized that project work increased learners motivation and encouragement. Moreover, Cooper (2014) stated that project work increased learner's motivation in learning. Project work was not only effective in language learning, but it was great with other branches of learning also. Project work motivated learners to be more encouraged in learning time. Learners had a chance to learn with project work steps, it was good for them to adapt their learning experience with other learning. Harris (2014) summarized that project work is suitable to adapt to use real life issues to be the content

in teaching because it is useful for learners to use their learned knowledge for their future careers. Engleberg and Wynn (2000) pointed out those advantages of cooperative learning concerned group performance through group discussion with member satisfaction learning. In the similar way, Fried-Booth (2002) stated that group working could be a useful teaching technique with social terms. Grouping could encourage learners in problem-solving experiences with self-esteem.

### **Local Tourism Content**

#### **The Definition of Tourism**

Aree Naipinit and Thirachaya Maneenets (2010) stated that tourism seemed to be important to all communities around the world. It should be promoted as an important role in the development of the quality of life in all regions of Thailand. So, tourism has become an important part of Thailand. They also stated that tourism in Thailand seemed to be growing fast.

Shaw and Williams (2002), Holden (2000) and Knox (2009) defined that tourism was to travel away from home, take a journey that far away from the normal place or stay overnight away from the common life. In addition, they defined that tourism involves a substantial journey of a minimum length, or implies an overnight stay away from home. In addition, Davidson (1998) defined that tourism included travelling for holidays, sports, cultural events, and visiting friends and relatives.

### **Adaptation of tourism**

Simion (2012) stated that English in the term of tourism content could bring real world to

the learners' classrooms. It took learners to the authentic situations through learning activities in the term of tourism content. He did this work with Romanian learners in Romania. In addition, Oura (2001) stated that tourist information was

the authentic materials that teacher could be used to teach in the real language classroom.

In this study used the scoring rubric adapted from expository writing: explaining and informing analytic evaluation rubric as showed in the following Table 1.

**Table 1:** Expository Writing: Explaining and Informing Analytic Evaluation Rubric

	3	2	1	0
Content and organization	- The writing fulfills a tourism purpose directly by presenting a clear explanation. - Steps of information are written in clear order that makes sense.	- The writing is in a tourism purpose with understandable explanation. - Steps of information are written with some mistakes.	- The writing makes confused about a tourism purpose with unclear explanation. - Steps of information are written unclearly with many mistakes.	- The writing consists of lists, notes, or drawings rather than sentences and paragraphs - The amount of writing is too minimal to be evaluated.
Vocabulary	- Suitable vocabulary are used with right spelling.	- Some concerned vocabulary are used with some misspellings.	- Concerned vocabulary limited used with many misspellings.	- All vocabulary are unclear in writing.
Grammar	• The capital words are used correctly. • Sentences are punctuated correctly.	- Some capital word are written with some errors - Sentences are punctuated with some errors.	- Capital words are written with many errors. - Sentences are punctuated with many mistakes	- Capital words are not used. - Sentences are not punctuated.

Source: Adapted from Expository Writing: Explaining and Informing Analytic Evaluation Rubric in Writer Choice: Grammar and Composition: Writing Assessment and Evaluation Rubrics Book: p. 39, Glencoe McGraw-Hill.

## Research Methodology

This research was pre-experimental; one group pretest and posttest design. It was conducted with 25 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year 2016. There were 2 categories of research instruments that were a research procedure and a data collection; 1) there were 4 lesson plans used in the research procedure. They were 4 periods in each lesson plan (16 hours) and 2) the instruments used for data collection were English writing ability test and a questionnaire of learners' opinion towards learning English through project work focusing on local tourism.

### Data Collection

The data was collected during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year, there was an orientation session for the learners in order to help them understand the learning objectives through project work focusing on local tourism. Before learning, participants were given a pretest to measure their prior knowledge related to English writing ability before using project work focusing on local tourism. Teaching English through project work focusing on local tourism consists of four lesson plans that were used in the 8-week experiment. After completing all four lesson plans, the participants took the posttest to examine the effect of teaching English through project work focusing on local tourism

on learners' English writing ability. Learners also had to answer a questionnaire to explore their opinions toward learning English through project work focusing on local tourism.

### Data Analysis

1. The data from the English writing ability pretest and posttest were analyzed using t-test.
2. The data from learners' opinion towards learning English through project work focusing on local tourism was analyzed by using mean () and standard deviation (S.D.).

### Results of the study

The results of this study were divided in 3 parts:

1. Results of English writing ability pretest and posttest
2. Results of comparison learners' English writing ability mean scores
3. Results of learners' opinion towards learning English through project work focusing on local tourism

### Results of English writing ability pretest and posttest

The writing ability of 25 learners of the samples was tested and scored by using writing pretest and posttest. The learners' average score increased from 0.48 in the pretest to 6.28 in the posttest. The difference between pretest and posttest scores was presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** The raw scores, the mean score ( $\bar{X}$ ) and the standard deviation (SD) of English writing ability pretest and posttest of learners

No.	Pretest				Posttest			
	Content (3)	Vocab (3)	Grammar (3)	Total (9)	Content (3)	Vocab (3)	Grammar (3)	Total (9)
1	0	0	0	0	3	3	1	7
2	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	5
3	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5
4	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	7
5	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
6	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	7
7	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
8	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
9	0	1	0	1	3	3	2	8
10	0	0	0	0	3	2	1	6
11	0	1	0	1	3	2	1	6
12	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	5
13	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
14	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	7
15	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	7
16	0	1	0	1	3	3	3	9
17	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	9
18	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
19	0	0	0	0	3	2	1	6
20	0	1	0	1	3	3	2	8
21	0	1	0	1	3	3	2	8
22	0	1	0	1	3	3	3	9
23	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
24	0	1	0	1	3	2	3	9
25	0	1	0	1	3	3	3	9
$\bar{X}$	0	0.48	0	0.48	2.88	2.00	1.40	6.28
<i>SD</i>	0.51				2.03			



As shown in table 2, the pretest mean score was at 0.48. It showed that learners had the less knowledge in writing to inform the information of tourist places in local tourism. When comparing with the posttest mean score was at 6.28, it showed learners were able to write the information of tourist places in local tourism better than the pretest score. In conclusion, the results showed that the learners' posttest mean score of English writing ability through project

work focusing on local tourism was significant higher than the learners' pretest mean score at the level of .05. This indicates that the learners' English writing ability had improved after learning through project work focusing on local tourism.

#### Results of comparison learners' English writing ability mean scores

The comparison of mean scores from the pretest and the posttest of learners' English writing ability were shown in Table 3

**Table 3:** The comparison the learners' pretest and posttest mean scores through using project work focusing on local tourism

Mode of assessment	<i>n</i>	$\bar{X}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Pretest	25	0.48	0.51		
Posttest	25	6.28	2.03	14.500 *	.000
Content (Pretest)	25	0.00	0.00		
Content (Posttest)	25	2.88	0.44	32.75 *	.000
Vocabulary (Pretest)	25	0.48	0.51		
Vocabulary (Posttest)	25	2.00	0.81	7.90 *	.000
Grammar (Pretest)	25	0.00	0.00		
Grammar (Posttest)	25	1.40	1.12	6.27 *	.000

\* < .05

From table 3, the learners' pretest scores were mostly at 0.00, there were some of them had the pretest score at 1.00. These scores showed that learners were not enough information and knowledge to write data for the pretest, but some learners tried to write some words for the pretest. From this reason, there were little bit scores found in the pretest as the total score at 12. However, when comparing with the learners' posttest scores, most learners were able to write more information about tourist places. The content mean scores were mostly full score because they were taught what they should write about the content. The learners' vocabulary mean scores were quite higher with some misspellings. The learners' grammar mean scores were pretty higher with some grammatical errors about the capitalization and punctuations.

**Results of the learners’ satisfaction towards learning English through project work focusing on local tourism**

The learners’ opinion towards learning English through project work focusing on local tourism using a questionnaire showed that learners with learning English writing with the prepared lessons, the results of their satisfaction was presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** The results of learners’ opinion towards learning through project work focusing on local tourism

No.	Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Meaning
1	Learners feel satisfied to receive more knowledge about grammar and English writing structure in the term of tourism.	4.36	0.76	Agree
2	Learners feel satisfied to receive more knowledge about tourist places of the local area.	4.72	0.54	Strongly agree
3	Learners feel satisfied to receive useful knowledge for English learning.	4.52	0.71	Strongly agree
4	Learners can use vocabularies in the term of tourism.	4.36	0.70	Agree
5	Learners were impressed and beloved their hometown after learning in local tourism.	4.56	0.65	Strongly agree
6	Learners brought the receive knowledge to develop in English learning.	4.44	0.77	Agree
7	Learners see an importance in learning writing with the local tourism.	4.40	0.76	Agree
8	Learners feel satisfied with knowledge about English writing focusing on local tourism.	4.40	0.71	Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>Agree</b>	
<b>SD</b>	<b>0.12</b>			

The results of learners’ opinion about teaching content showed that female learners were satisfier than male learners in a little bit difference. That meant all learners were satisfied with this teaching content. The result of learners’ opinion showed that female learners were satisfier than male learners in a little bit statistic number. In conclusion, the total result of questionnaire showed the positive result of learners’ satisfaction in learning in this study.

Results from open-ended question, learners had the opinion that they were satisfied to learn English writing through project work focusing on local tourism. That was because they have

the background knowledge in local tourism in their local area, and it was good to match local tourism with project work as the learning steps. Learners were satisfied when they had a chance to practice as group working. Moreover, learners were pleased to help each other to create their end products of project work. In conclusion, learners were fine to learn and practice English writing through project work focusing on local tourism.

## Discussion

The data from English writing pretest-posttest through learning through project work focusing on local tourism improved English writing ability of 8th grade learners who were the samples of this study. The posttest mean score increased to 0.48 from pretest to 6.28 from the posttest. This result was confirmed that project work with LTC was effective. In addition, the questionnaire of learners' satisfaction also showed that learners had the positive feeling to learn English writing through project work focusing on local tourism.

The following topics were discussed in this study

### 1. Project work

It was clear that project work provided a chance to learners. The posttest mean score (6.28) was higher than the pretest mean score (0.48). From this data, it was summarized that project work developed learners' writing ability as showed in the following discussing topics.

1.1 Project work focusing on LTC increased motivation and encouragement for learners in learning English writing. Group work following project work encouraged learners to do practice activities by choosing their own topics, planning their work following project work steps, and producing their end products of project work. From the result, the most learners were achieved in learning with project work because their English writing abilities were developed with a positive opinion (Cooper, 2014).

1.2 Project work supported learners' social interactive skills. Learners showed these skills by helping their group in language learning activities naturally. They shared their learned knowledge which was a benefit for their work both in their own group and other groups. Moreover, they tried to present their ideas for their group work as well as they could. It meant they gained other positive interactive skills by learning with project work (Harris, 2014, Woolever, 2008, and Stoller, 2006).

### 2. Local tourism

This study combined writing through project work focusing on local tourism to encourage learners in language learning. Learners learned writing more enjoyably and meaningfully for their real life because their area is familiar with tourism (Simpson, 2011). They were able to apply local tourism knowledge to use in real-life situations. Learning language with issues that they were familiar was beneficial for them because they had a chance to be in the authentic incidents of their local area.

3. Learners' opinion towards the learning through project work focusing on local tourism

During the project work, the teacher's roles were the facilitator and advisor as learners' need. The teacher suggested and informed data to learners. Then, teacher allowed learners to do their work by themselves as same as the steps they were taught before. The learners' developments were presented as follows:

3.1 Learners gain the social interaction skills, brainstorming, discussing, sharing information and responsibilities for their work. They could develop these beneficial skills by joining the group work following project work (Cohen, 2011).

3.2 Learners use the authentic information in local tourism if their real life to search for their written work. They were familiar with this content because they adapted this knowledge to use in their daily life. Moreover, they could develop their writing skill for the future language learning. Learning with project work provided the chance for them to be closer with writing skill by doing all practices. In addition, they gained making decision skills and problem-solving skills from learning through project work focusing on local tourism.

## Conclusion

The purposes of the study were: 1) to examine the effect of using project work focusing on local tourism on writing ability of 8th graders, 2) to compare the learners' English writing ability pretest and posttest

mean scores, and 3) to explore the learners' opinion towards using project work focusing on local tourism. Population of the study was the 120 of 8th graders during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year 2016. Participants were 25 of 8th graders by cluster random sampling. The content in the study was local tourism. The research instruments were lesson plans for the instruments used in research procedure and the English writing ability test and the questionnaire for instruments used in data collection. The data was analyzed using t-test, mean score and standard deviation.

The conclusion of the study showed the average pretest score was 0.48. It showed that learners had the less knowledge in writing to inform the information of tourist places in local tourism. When comparing with the average posttest score was 6.28, it showed learners could be able to write the information of tourist places in local tourism better than the pretest score. In summary, the learners' posttest mean score of English writing ability through project work focusing on local tourism was significant higher than the learners' pretest mean score at the level of .05. This indicates that the learners' English writing ability had improved after learning through project work focusing on local tourism.

The comparison of mean scores from the pretest and the posttest of learners' English writing ability, the learners' pretest scores were mostly at 0.00, there were some of them had the pretest score at 1.00. These scores showed that learners were not enough information

and knowledge to write data for the pretest, but some learners tried to write some words for the pretest. From this reason, there were little bit scores found in the pretest as the total score at 12. However, when comparing with the learners' posttest scores, most learners were able to write more information about tourist places. The content mean scores were mostly full score because they were taught what they should write about the content. For the learners' vocabulary mean scores, it was quite higher with some misspellings. The learners' grammar mean scores were pretty higher with some grammatical errors about the capitalization and punctuations.

The results of learners' opinion about teaching content showed that female learners were satisfier than male learners in a little bit difference. That meant all learners were satisfied with this teaching content. The result of learners' opinion showed that female learners were satisfier than male learners in a little bit statistic number. In conclusion, the total result of questionnaire showed the positive result of learners' satisfaction in learning in this study.

The results from open-ended question, learners had the opinion that they were satisfied to learn English writing through project work focusing on local tourism. That was because they have the background knowledge in local tourism in their local area, and it was good to match local tourism with project work as the learning steps. Learners were satisfied when they had a chance to practice as group working. Moreover, learners were pleased to help each other to create their end products of project work. In conclusion, learners were fine to learn and practice English writing through project work focusing on local tourism.

## Recommendations

1. Other researchers can continue to study based on the development of English writing ability through project work focusing on local tourism with other learners' grade level.

2. For further study, local tourism is available to change the content depends on the different areas of the study.

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