

**THE REALIZATION OF PROCESS APPROACH TO WRITING  
AT THE LEVEL OF GRADE 10**

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## **Abstract**

In this study, an attempt has been made to investigate the realization of the process approach to writing at the level of grade 10.

The inclusion of the writing tasks in high school English textbooks in general and grade 10 in particular has been a positive new step towards ELT in the local scene. In the former ENE series of textbooks, grammar was the focus of the syllabi. Hence, both the teaching and testing methodology seemed to be grammar-centered.

The transition from the old grammar-focused to the new instructional approach (Process Approach) did not seem to be smooth. In the pilot phase of this study, series of writing classes were observed and questionnaires were administered both to teachers and students in order to have a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the writing tasks in the new textbooks. The results indicated that *the teaching and testing approach did not seem to go in line with the instructional goals of writing in the new syllabi.*

Whether the new approach is employed to implement the writing tasks in the textbooks and to what extent these tasks are able to improve students' writing achievement needs to be thoroughly examined. This is the main objective of the study.

In order to achieve this purpose, a sample size of 147 students and 6 teachers were taken for the study. Two hypotheses were formulated and in order to test them, a pre- and a- posttest were administered to the experimental and control groups, before and after conducting a five-week session.

The results were calculated using the t-test at a significance level of 0.05. Moreover, questionnaires were designed and administered for both students and teachers so as to find out their perceptions about the teaching and learning of writing. The t-test statistic was computed to assess these survey responses.

The results of the study revealed that

- a) there was a positive correlation between the current grammar-focused teaching approach and students' low achievement in writing,
- b) the failure to use writing-sample tests had a negative impact on students' proficiency in writing.

Based on these findings, it was recommended that

- teachers should consistently employ the process approach while dealing with the tasks in the new textbooks,
- there should be an inclusion of writing-sample tests such as writing paragraphs/essays, writing short answers so as to achieve the learning objectives of the textbooks,

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a report of an experimental study on the teaching of writing in grade 10. The first chapter deals with the background of the study, specifies the problem, describes its significance and presents the scope of the study. The chapter concludes by an overview of the organization of the study.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

It is almost axiomatic that the teaching learning of writing was given little or no coverage in high school English textbooks for a long time. The integration of skills was not systematically treated in the former ENE series of textbooks. Thus, under these circumstances what teachers often used to do was to write out grammar exercises. In other words, the focus was primarily on language structure. As a result, the evidence gathered from successive research on students' skills and attitudes to reading and writing for a number of years has revealed that teaching writing was the most neglected aspect of English language classes. Attesting to this fact, many researchers have come up with the conclusions that there is no attempt made to incorporate sound learning strategies into the writing syllabus for Ethiopian students ranging from elementary to higher levels (Getnet, 1994; Yonas, 1996; Mulugeta, 1997) and "writing has not been adequately done in Ethiopian high schools" (Tesfaye, 1991).

In short, English classes that were devoted to the teaching of writing were concerned merely with correcting students' errors in grammar and vocabulary

exercises rather than dealing with the strategies and processes of composition, which are fundamental in improving students' proficiency in writing.

Moreover, among several factors that have aggravated the undesirable condition for the teaching of writing is the growing number of students per class (Kassie, 1995). It is obvious that such kind of classroom situation has not always been easy to create realistic environment for writing. It has been shown that the efficiency of teaching depends in part on appropriate class size (Crowford - Lange, cited in Long & Richards, 1987).

However, writing has been considered as crucial as the other skills in the new English syllabi/textbooks. This could be observed from the separate sections in each unit of high school English textbooks that are entirely devoted to the skills of writing. And this is an encouraging step mainly because the new emphasis on the writing skills is its integration with other skills and sub-skills. Besides, special focus is given to how writing operates with specific audience and purpose (Ministry of Education, ICDR, 1997).

The introduction of the new English textbooks, unlike the ENE series, follows a text-based integrated approach. The activities incorporated in the syllabi encourage group and pair work, such as thinking, planning, drafting, revising, editing, and the like. These, in turn, have necessitated the extension of teacher's roles. They have called for heavier demands on teacher's organizational abilities. Accordingly, teachers are expected to assist students in this time-consuming process of writing by teaching them strategies. These kinds of roles are not only new to the practicing teacher but also challenging, in contrast to the large classes we have now at most schools.

In parallel, students while using the new textbooks are supposed to express themselves in writing in different situations and for a number of realistic purposes. Instances of these are writing a letter to a friend, writing an application letter, composing a paragraph for a memo, and the like. For these kinds of activities, students should play an active role in assessing their own progress through the various strategies, such as discussion, drafting, preliminary self-evaluation, group evaluation and so on.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The shift from a purely grammar-oriented ENE series of textbooks to the new syllabi does not seem to be an easy transition for both teachers and students. The new textbook that has been implemented in grade 10 has called for a completely different methodology of teaching as well as testing, particularly that go with the writing skills.

Whether the change of the instructional approach has been effected in line with the context of the learning goals of the new textbooks, and to what extent it has been possible to bring about improvements in students' writing abilities need to be examined.

Furthermore, since students' achievements in language skills are often measured by means of tests, it seems cogent to find out the wash-back effect of the currently practiced tests and examinations on the instructional process with a specific focus on the writing skills.

The study that draws its origin from the above basic premise will attempt to test the following hypotheses:

### **Research hypotheses**

- There is no positive correlation between students' low achievement in writing and the failure to implement the process approach.
- The failure to employ writing-sample testing has a negative impact on students' proficiency in writing abilities.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The prevailing situations in secondary schools in general seem to have made the teaching-learning of writing more of a challenge than mere opportunity both for students and teachers to deal with the writing skills.

Here, the 10<sup>th</sup> grade level in particular should be viewed in a broader perspective. In accordance with the new educational policy, students at this stage are found to be at crossroads. That is to say while few who score top grades in the national school leaving examination would be able to join colleges and universities, the rest would either enroll in technical schools/ institutions or go straight to work. Therefore, grade 10 appears to have become a watershed where students need to exhibit a reasonable amount of writing skills.

This is because the writing skill appears to play a vital role in one's success: both in higher education and on the job. In the former, probably the only reliable basis of evaluating students' work is through writing. In the latter, an individual's advancement often depends on skills in writing letters, memos, proposals, reports, and the like. Thus, all these facts seem to reveal the centrality of the teaching of writing at this grade level.

Now that there has been a change of textbooks that has brought with it an alteration of pedagogical methods, it is high time to investigate its effectiveness, which is the main objective of the study. The specific objectives of the research are to (a) find out teachers' perceptions about the writing skills, (b) find out students' perceptions about the writing skills, (c) find out whether teachers employ appropriate techniques and strategies while teaching writing.

#### **1.4 Importance of the Study**

Unlike the previous syllabi, the new textbooks have dealt with the writing tasks alongside with other skills. This could imply that, today more than any other time, virtually all academic and occupational streams may require good competence in writing. In other words, the centrality of writing as a crucial skill in English language classes appears to be unquestionable.

The transformation from the earlier grammar-oriented and solitary method to the socially oriented approach of writing in Ethiopian high schools has only been a very recent phenomenon that came with the change of textbooks. And since research in this direction has been very limited, the teaching of writing as one aspect deserves a careful and well-thought out study.

Hence, the possible new insights that could be drawn from this study may

- be of some interest primarily to English teachers in high schools to have a better understanding of the teaching and testing of writing;
- also be utilized by syllabus writers and test specialists as possible feedback;
- be of some help to teacher trainers while dealing with the writing skills;

- be used as a springboard for those who aspire to undertake further investigations in the teaching of writing.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study has the following delimitation:

- 1) It did not take into account schools other than Addis Ketema Secondary School. The total size of the sample is 147 students and 6 teachers who were all from this school.
- 2) Due to shortage of time it did not incorporate interviews to support the results obtained from the questionnaire.

### **1.6 Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis comprises five chapters: the first chapter introduces the study by providing a background. The second chapter reviews the related literature upon which the study is built. The third chapter describes the methodology used in carrying out the study.

The fourth chapter deals with the analysis of the data, findings and discussions. Finally, a summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

In this section, the related literature pertaining to second language writing pedagogy has been reviewed. The first part deals with the nature and purpose of writing, writing in L<sub>1</sub> and in L<sub>2</sub> context, integration of skills and the centrality of writing in language classes. In this regard, it has been pointed out that writing is crucial both in academic and workplace contexts.

The second part of the review briefly assesses the four major approaches to writing: product, process, genre and process-genre approaches. Here, the various components of the approaches and their salient features of each model have been discussed and their pros and cons have been reviewed. Furthermore, summaries of research findings and new emphasis, feedback and measurement in writing have been reviewed.

#### **2.1 WRITING : INTRODUCTION**

Writing is among the basic communicative skills that are taught in language classes. But it should not be considered merely as one of the skills. Communication through the written medium involves a multitude of processes. It presupposes a

certain degree of finality and demands real proficiency from the writer if the message is to get across effectively (Byrne, 1988; Hedge, 1988)

White and Arndt (1991:1) have also pointed out the unique features of writing as follows: " Through writing, we are able to discover and articulate ideas in ways that only writing makes possible." But even a matter of high importance is its being a tool for thinking: " The close relationship between writing and thinking makes writing a valuable part of any language course," (Raimes, 1982:3) and Brannon further says:

**Writing offers the unique opportunity both to create experience and to reflect on it, to see and see again. Writing is a way of knowing, a process of discovering connections amid the chaos of sensation, shaping a coherence through acts of language. The value of writing lies principally in the meaning-making and reflecting activities that it makes possible.**  
(Brannon Cited in McClelland & Donovan, 1985:1)

Murray (1982:18) in this regard states, "Writing is a significant kind of thinking in which the symbols of language assume a purpose of their own and instruct the writer during the composing process." Similar notion is shared by Kroll quoted in Celce-Murcia (1991:241), " Writing in addition to being a communicative skill of vital importance, is a skill which enables the learner to plan and rethink the communicative process."

Furthermore, the skills of writing enhance language learning as students' practice with words, sentences and paragraphs to communicate their ideas. In other words, writing skills offer students opportunities to experiment with the language.

Apart from these, writing increases students' creativity and ability to solve problems (Hedge, 1988). Instance of this could be when a student realizes that his/her suggestion(s) makes a difference in his/her group while sharing ideas with them in

one of the stages of writing. By so doing, those who often shy away in speaking to the whole class would become courageous in their writing. Thus, it gives students the opportunity to develop their feelings of self-worth and self-image (Maxwell & Meiser, 1997).

In short, as Freedman et al (1983: xiii) put it, “ Learning to write is regarded as the acquiring of basic skills on which other, later, and probably more important skills can be built, and without which further education may be largely impossible.”

On the other hand, empirical research on workplace literacy reveals that the demands of the writing skills have greatly increased from time to time. In nearly every job category nowadays an individual is required to involve in writing activity of one sort or another, either in the first or second language (Garay & Bernhardt, 1998). The amount and types of writing activities, however, may be multifarious depending on the contexts.

Nevertheless, in spite of its vitality in many respects, learning to write has not always been easy and straightforward to deal with, like learning to speak. This could mainly be accounted for by the nature of writing itself (Hedge, 1988). So it seems plausible to look at the nature of writing at this juncture.

## **2.2 The Nature and Purpose of Writing**

### **2.2.1 The Nature of Writing**

Writers and speakers do not go in similar paths to get their meanings across. This is because the former could not use a considerable range of devices a speaker possesses at his/her disposal, such as gesture, facial expression, tone, pitch, etc. This puts him/her in a situation that is not as easy as the latter (Hedge, 1988). Thus, the

writer needs an additional conscious effort to impart effective message. The writing skills are considered to be extremely complex and difficult compared to all other macro-skills, be it in a first or second language context (White, 1981; Raimes 1982; Byrne, 1988; Nunan, 1989)

According to Byrne (1988), the difficulties caused by writing could be seen from three perspectives: psychological, linguistic and cognitive. In this regard, the fact that writing is a solitary activity, which is devoid of immediate feedback, and apparent interaction leaves a psychological strain on the part of a writer.

Secondly, with regard to the linguistic aspect, the absence of prosodic features in writing together with the multitude of devices available for a speaker, but not for a writer, would make the latter interpret the produced text on its own.

Finally, the time the writer takes to be familiar with certain structures that are typical to the written medium makes the act of writing more difficult.

On the whole, the involvement of these factors makes the learning as well as teaching writing a difficult task. The next question is then whether the writing skills that have been fostered in English classes would enable students to succeed in writing contexts outside those classes. This issue would call for the analysis of the purpose of writing.

### **2.2.2. The Purpose of Writing**

Writing as a language skill has certain useful purposes. Traditionally, however, the purpose of writing evolved just as one of the macro-skills to engage students with grammar, vocabulary and comprehension exercises as a means of

activating students' skills in these areas rather than developing the composition skills (Ur, 1996).

An instance of this could be the former ENE series of textbooks in Ethiopian high schools. Nonetheless, various researchers on composition studies have come up with several purposes for learning the writing skills. These could fall into two broad categories: general and pedagogical purposes.

#### **2.2.2.1 General Purposes**

Irmscher, cited in Hughey (1983), suggests the following general purposes of writing:

- Writing is used as a medium of communication
- Writing can bring forward what we have kept deep in our hearts but could not verbalize
- Writing is a means of shaping and organizing the multitude of our thoughts
- Writing helps us to judge our thoughts
- Writing is a means of inescapably mirroring the self

#### **2.2.2.2 Specific Purposes**

Byrne (1988) and White (1989) suggest the following specific pedagogical purposes:

- writing enables us to provide for different learning styles and needs
- written work serves to provide the learners with tangible feedback on what the students have learned.

- writing provides variety in classroom activities, serving as a break from oral work.
- writing has importance in occupational and academic purposes.
- writing lends itself to integration with other activities in the classroom; it is also used as an effective technique to inject interest in the lesson.
- writing is one means of testing
- writing requires thought, discipline and concentration and, hence, enables students to act accordingly.

Hedge (1988:8) broadly puts the purpose of writing in English language syllabus as making learners "write English in their social, educational or professional lives, ... build communicative potential." Ur (1996:162) also confirms what Hedge (1988) states as:

**the objective of the teaching of writing in a foreign language is to get learners to acquire the abilities and skills they need to produce a range of different kinds of written texts similar to those an educated person would be expected to be able to produce in their own language.**

These purposes, many as they are, could not be summarized just in one sentence. However, it can very broadly be stated that the objective of teaching writing is to make students write appropriately to their various needs outside the classroom.

Writing is used to meet certain needs of students and thus, it is rational to know the specific purposes in teaching it. In this regard, Lee and Lee (1997:75) mentioned three dimensions from which the purpose of writing could be viewed:

- i. Interpersonal Dimension - that is, to establish and maintain relationships; exchange ideas and to get things done. Instances could be writing to pen pal, writing to the newspaper and writing a letter of complaint.
- ii. Knowledge Dimension - that is, to find out, interpret and use information; to explore, express and apply ideas and to solve problems. Instances could be writing school regulations, writing a report and writing a piece of advice.
- iii) Experience Dimension - that is, to respond and give expression to real and imaginative experience. An instance of this is writing a poem.

In sum, having clear purposes of teaching writing in the classroom has major advantages both for students and teachers. For the former, the heightened awareness will motivate them and thus, they would be able to invest much time and energy in it (Maxwell and Meiser, 1997). For the latter, it would enable them to formulate the teaching strategies in tandem with the objectives of writing (McDonough & Shaw, 1993).

### **2.3 Writing in the Mother Tongue and in the ESL contexts**

There are certain distinctions that have to be drawn while dealing with teaching to write in the first and in the second language contexts. The research findings on the comparison between L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> would highlight the discussion.

#### **2.3.1 Research Findings**

The research conducted on writing instruction (Emig, 1971; Murray, 1978; Kroll, 1978; Perl, 1980, cited in Zamel (1982) indicated that there is, to a greater extent, more of similarities than differences in L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> contexts. Zamel (1982)

further pointed out that linguistic competence has not been found to be as important as competence in the composing process in order to write proficiently in English. She also discovered that the writing process of her L<sub>2</sub> subjects were similar to those of the subjects described in L<sub>1</sub> studies. Thus, it was concluded that L<sub>1</sub> process-oriented instruction may also be effective in teaching L<sub>2</sub> writing.

This was what seems to have been effected a couple of years back in the Ethiopian context. The new English syllabi seem to have incorporated the writing tasks in this way. Instead of playing the only role of supplementing the other skills, as was the case in the ENE series, it appears that the new syllabi were organized in such a way that students would primarily learn the composing skills.

### **2.3.2 Writing in the Mother Tongue context**

Many people start learning to write in their mother tongue early in life at the age of five and seven (Byrne, 1988). Nevertheless, their proficiency in writing is not totally comparable to other language skills like speaking. In the latter, people virtually always possess good commands, up to the level of their social needs, while in the former, the same people are most often found to be less proficient. One requires undergoing formal education in order to learn to write. In other words, writing is a totally new skill to be learned, just as the other subjects in school.

Nonetheless, what should be noted here is the level of expressiveness for most people in L<sub>1</sub> writing may not reach the highest level and this, in part, emanates from the nature of writing (Hedge, 1988).

### **2.3.3 Writing in ESL Context**

As mentioned in 2.3.1, in many respects, learning to write in L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> are comparable. This is because there is a global transference (Byrne, 1988). In other words, people who have a high level of expressiveness in their L<sub>1</sub> writing could easily learn to express themselves in the written medium of L<sub>2</sub> context. Nevertheless, on the contrary to the case of L<sub>1</sub>, the skills of writing in L<sub>2</sub> context are not new experiences. The learner has already got some conventions about writing in his/her own L<sub>1</sub>.

As a whole, learning to write in both L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> context is a complex process. It involves cognitive process of translating non-linear thought into linear written form (White & Arndt, 1991). In this light, they have more similarities than differences.

Another point worth noting in L<sub>2</sub> instruction in general which has a strong bearing on the effectiveness of teaching the various language aspects, is the *integration of skills*. The following part deals with this issue.

## **2.4 Integration of Writing to Other Skills**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

When one learns a language, he/she acquires the different skills. In other words, the individual will inevitably be familiar with four major skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills have also been categorized into productive and receptive skills: speaking and writing are productive for they make the language user produce while reading and listening are considered receptive since the language user receives written or spoken language (Harmer, 1983).

However, all these divisions and categories are superficial. In real life, a language user is involved in combination of skills, and it would be ridiculous to assume the existence of one skill in isolation from others (Rivers, 1981). The concept of integration of skills could be interpreted as “ the teaching of language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate to listening and speaking, or reading and writing ”(Richards, et. al, 1985: 14). In other words, in a teaching session, one skill may often be the focus of the lesson at one stage, yet the focus soon shifts to one or more of the other skills. Thus, the integration of skills is a feature that is inherent to natural languages.

To this end, it would be pertinent to see the integration of writing skills to others in designing and implementing a more effective writing syllabus. In the following section, the integration of writing to other skills is reviewed.

#### **2.4.1.1 Speaking and writing**

There are many instances where speech and writing are found integrated in language instruction. Brainstorming and interview sessions are typical ones. In a brainstorming session, for instance, one of the interlocutors speaks while the other(s) write(s) whatever essential to them for later reference. In an interview session, the interviewee(s) speaks while the interviewer(s) write(s) certain remarks. In fact, here another skill, listening, also naturally integrates with speaking in order for communication to occur.

#### **2.4.1.2 Listening and writing**

The most usual instances where listening and writing are found integrated are in dicto-comp, a combination of dictation and composition and note taking. This is a technique of teaching guided composition. Using this technique, a passage is read aloud at a normal speed. Key vocabulary items are to be written on the blackboard and students are supposed to write the text from memory using the vocabulary items (Kroll, 1991).

Note taking is also another useful and common instance where listening and writing are integrated. In lectures, conferences and interviews students need these skills and, hence, they should be given chances to practice and develop them in their classrooms.

#### **2.4.1.3. Reading and writing**

The integration of reading and writing should be seen with a special focus. This is because integration of these skills, more than any other kinds of integration, is found to have great impact on the development of writing abilities, particularly in the L<sub>2</sub> context where, in most cases, fluency is minimal. In the lower and intermediary levels, students may practice writing words and sentences during the reading class so as to facilitate their perception of the new vocabulary. In so doing, both writing and reading are enhanced. In other words, writing is learned by writing and reading (Hughey, et al 1983; Celce Murcia, 1993). To this effect, reading lessons provide adequate input in stylistic choices, grammatical features, methods of development and the like (Kroll, 1991). Besides, a great deal of reading can be incorporated in higher level writing classes for it helps students in academic writings that require

such skills as paraphrasing, summarizing, interpreting and analyzing concepts (Horwitz, 1986).

What is more, ESL students are mostly not highly skilled readers for they have very limited exposure to extensive reading. For this reason, they may be in short of precise word choices and suitable structures to frame their ideas. Thus an integrated inclusion of reading component into the writing lessons will ease the burden students face while composing.

In sum, teaching-learning languages necessarily call for integration of the different skills. The integration of writing with other language skills means to see writing in terms of purpose, audience, for real-world and educational setting (McDonough & Shaw, 1993).

## **2.5 APPROACHES TO ESL WRITING INSTRUCTION**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

A considerable number of applied linguists and educators in the field of ESL composition have proposed different classroom approaches/methods at different times. Each of these approaches has contributed a great deal to both L<sub>1</sub> as well as L<sub>2</sub> writing pedagogy. The emphases they laid have constantly been shifting from one feature to another. The major concerns have been accuracy, fluency, text, error correction, purpose, communication, process and register/genre (Kroll, 1990).

Nonetheless, the exerted efforts to come up with the best approach/ method have remained futile. The new insights over the past decade have shown that as one learns more about the composing process, shares experience and faces new challenges, one may need to change his/her technique in order to meet the demands of those contexts. The reason is that there is no one way to teach writing effectively (Murray, 1982; Raimes, 1982; Maxwell & Meiser, 1997).

In the following section only the major approaches to ESL writing instruction have been reviewed.

#### **2.5.1.1 PRODUCT APPROACH**

Product-oriented approach had its beginning in the behavioral psychology and structural linguistics. In these fields, learning was considered as habit formation while language learning was simply mastering the patterns of language through imitating models.

Accordingly, writing in this approach favors the analysis of students' texts after they are produced (Zamel, cited in Long & Richards, 1988). In this approach, the teacher breaks down the writing lessons into small parts so that they could be taught, re-taught, practiced and tested and the teacher concentrates on the writing that students produced and makes critical comments on it. He is the sole authority to correct errors of students' work, and the kind of correction is typically grammar-correction. In other words, the entire teaching-learning process is teacher-centered.

The students are expected to copy and imitate models usually at the level of sentence and create parallel text (Nunan, 1991). Here, one can see that writing activities, instead of indulging students in creative thinking and problem solving, they make them simply memorize facts. The model for teaching writing in the product approach follows four steps:

1. Familiarizing students in principles and rules for writing.
2. Providing students with reading models to be discussed analyzed and interpreted.
3. Offering a guided writing assignments
4. Reading and criticizing students' assignments prior to the next instance of the cycle

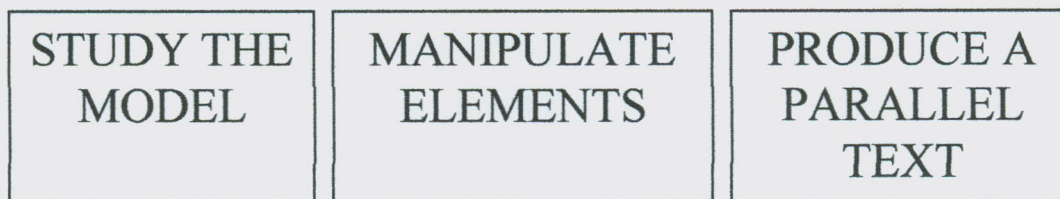
(Kroll, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991)

Pincas (1982) also explicitly describes learning in the product approach as having the following stages:

1. Familiarization
2. Controlled writing
3. Guided writing
4. Free writing

It can be inferred from the model that heavy emphasis is laid on control and guidance, and the whole undertaking of writing is characterized by being a solitary activity. Group work is considered cheating. The writing classroom is equated with a laboratory for the analysis of finished products (Horwitz, 1986), and students are supposed to "turn in a perfectly polished piece of work" (McDonough & Shaw, 1993:186).

In short, writing in the product paradigm is regarded as subservient to other skills and is not treated separately in the ESL syllabus. (Raimes, 1982; Hedge, 1988; Kroll, 1991). The product approach to writing has been briefly represented in the following model:



(White, 1989: 5)

The product approach to writing could be divided into the following three components: Guided or controlled composition, Current-traditional Rhetoric and English for Academic Purposes.

#### **2.5.1.1.1 Guided or Controlled Composition**

The underlying assumption of guided or controlled composition is based on the principles of structural linguistics that says, “language is primarily speech”(Stern, 1983: 158), and behavioral psychology that holds the notion that learning is habit formation. Thus, the major practices of guided composition are substitutions, transformations, fill-ins, and completions, which focus only on vocabulary and sentence construction. In other words, the learner is merely expected to manipulate the linguistic features he/she has learnt, and practically no attention was given to the complexity involved in composing.

#### **2.5.1.1.2 Current-Traditional Rhetoric**

The term, current-traditional rhetoric, is a combination of two different notions: native speakers’ composition and structure with the theory of contrastive rhetoric. The idea of contrastive rhetoric lies in that speakers of different languages

use different devices to present information, to establish relationships among ideas and to show the centrality of an idea as opposed to another.

Thus, under the circumstances, the reading of a text in one's mother tongue may become difficult. This is because the problem a language learner grapples with are not purely linguistic (Silva, 1993).

In short, the core idea is that foreign language writers often distort the syntactic structure and sequence of thought of the native speakers. Therefore, in this approach, the focus is on paragraph/essay development. At the paragraph level, heavy emphasis is laid upon topic sentences, concluding sentences, and the use of linking devices. Besides, techniques like illustration, comparison, contrast, and the like are taught. What it emphasizes is the accurate imitation of the model.

#### **2.5.1.1.3 English for Academic Purposes(EAP)**

This component is the extension of the guided composition and current-traditional rhetoric. The outstanding feature of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is that it views language teaching as socializing with the academic discourse community and their written work should be imitated correctly by the foreign language writer so as to produce a parallel text (Horwitz, 1986).

Hence, later, this traditional product-centered orientation to writing was found myopic mainly because the emphasis was merely on what the final work of students look-like, whether they are error-free or not. In other words, it hardly accounts for the process students undergo before they could come up with a final work (product). Brannon,

cited in McClelland & Donovan (1985:10) summarizes the result of new insight as follows: "What [researchers] soon discovered was the vast separation between actual composing activity and textbook statements about it, between what writers do and what teachers tells them they ought to do."

*In the following section, the underlying principles of the process approach and the corresponding research findings will be reviewed.*

### **2.5.1.2 PROCESS APPROACH**

#### **2.5.1.2.1 The Research Findings**

The product approach to writing has not gone beyond enabling students manipulate forms. In other words, the classroom practices have been carefully guided so that students avoid errors. Apart from being too mechanical, these kinds of practices do not enable students to discover new ideas and enrich their experience. *Since they largely focus on strict guidance and control, students would be devoid of their freedom to choose topics, styles, genres and the like (Clark, 1991).*

On the other hand, the process approach to writing bases itself on communicative language teaching (Flower & Hayes, 1982). Thus, its main focus is on generating ideas and meaning. Accordingly, learning to write involves distinctive processes that can be analyzed in visible forms: what occurs before writing occurs (prewriting phase); the composing phase - that which occurs during the actual

process of writing; and the after-writing or editing and publishing phase - that which occurs after writing has taken place.

The plethora of research undertaken both on L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> learners suggest that the essence of the problem of writing, by and large, lies on the lack of the basic skills of composing (Zamel, 1982).

In other words, a number of research imply that difficulties in writing are more often from lack of such skills as revising, organizing, editing etc. rather than linguistic competence such as grammar, and vocabulary (Widdowson as quoted in Freedman, et.al, 1983).

The process approach to writing, hence, presupposes the teaching of grammar and mechanics as part of, for instance, the revision or editing process, not in isolation. Thus, a process approach to teaching writing came into being out of this dissatisfaction. The process approach views writing as a highly complex process consisting of different sub-processes that occur not one after another but cyclically and in varying patterns (Murray, 1982; Graves, 1983; Horwitz, 1986; Block, 1997). Unlike the product-centered approach, here teachers aim at helping students write better by aiding them at each actual process of composing, and enabling them to overcome those difficulties. That is to say, students are taught strategies at each stage that could enable them create a good product in the final analysis. The act of teaching writing as a process has well been described as follows:

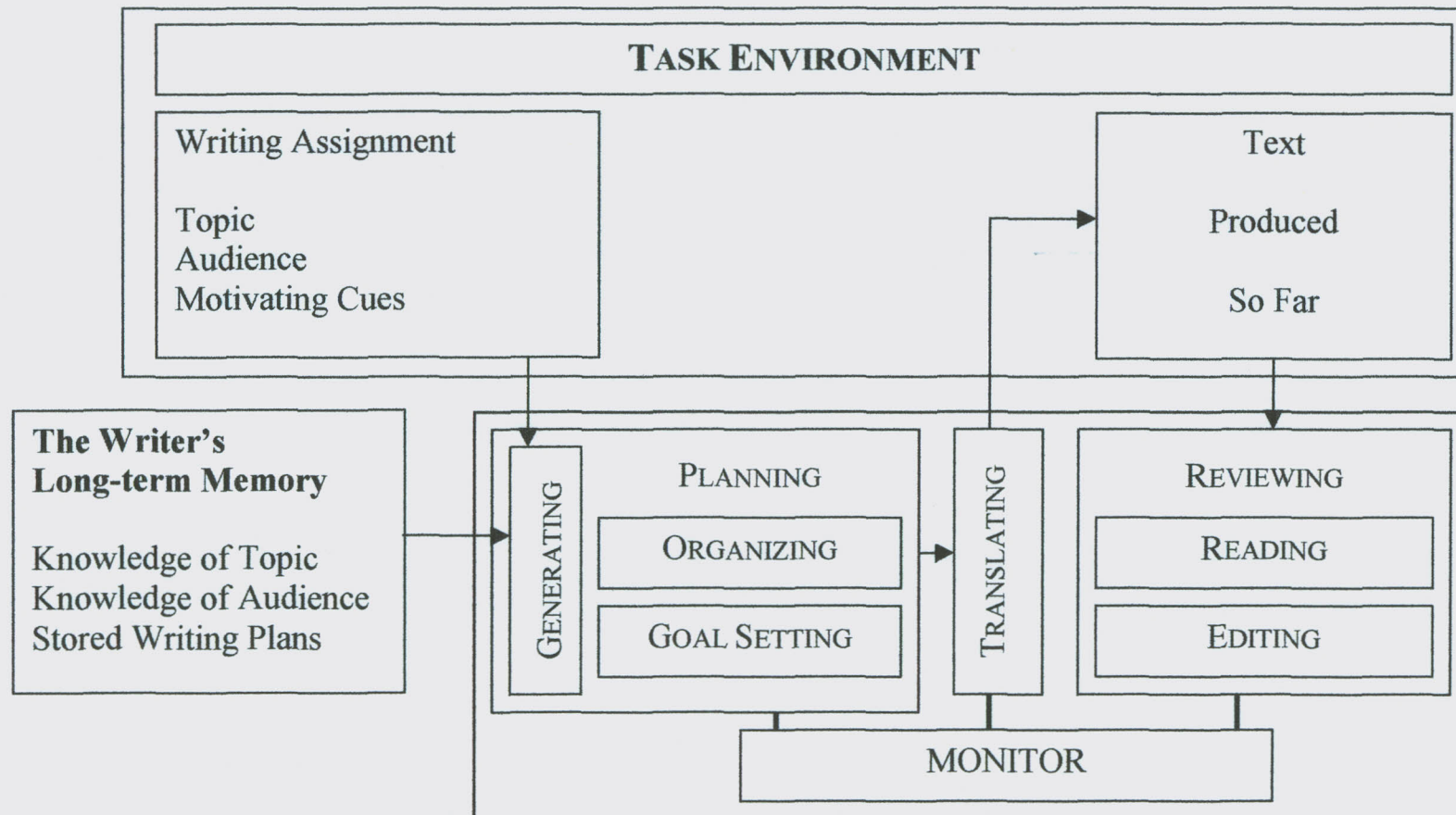
**Teaching writing as a process means that writers  
can improve their writing at any or all stages from**

**the first thoughts about a topic to the finished draft. The process is described as loosely fitting into stages: *prewriting or discovery, drafting, revising and editing.* However, the writing process is not made up of a series of discrete linear steps leading to a finished product: it is recursive.**  
(Maxwell & Meiser, 1997:139)

These different stages that are inherent in this approach, such as prewriting, drafting, and the like give way to important classroom techniques such as, 'conferencing', which allows student to work collaboratively by sharing their writing with each other (See the full lists of strategies on p.27). Besides, a teacher's involvement in all the phases enhances positive attitudes toward the skills of writing (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). The solitary environment of the classroom that used to cloud the writing process has now been changed into an atmosphere of a workshop for building up evolving texts (White and Arndt, 1991) (see the model of writing in the process approach on p 26).

# WRITING MODEL OF THE PROCESS APPROACH

(Flower and Hayes, 1982 : 370)



## Sample Listing of Specific Writing Strategies

### Prewriting

sketching  
brainstorming  
listing  
questioning  
modeling  
pair sharing  
teacher/student conferences  
timed writing/"wet ink writing"  
journaling  
clustering  
tagmemics

### Drafting

webbing  
"carding"  
writing in class  
teacher/student conferences  
modeling  
timed writing

### Revising

sketching  
developing three layers  
questioning  
peer response  
modeling  
boxing/blocking  
teacher/student conferences  
using rubric

### Editing

reading aloud  
using resource materials  
teacher/student conferences  
peer response  
using models

### Publishing

display board/publishing corner  
anthologies  
mailing  
newspapers/newsletters  
electronic bulletin board  
"matched" class

### 2.5.1.2.1 STAGES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

It might be quite difficult to enumerate exactly all the processes one may undergo while writing any piece of text, such as a letter, a memo or story. However, there are certain common phases to be followed before one produces the final copy of his/her piece of writing. McDonough and Shaw (1993: 185-186) suggest the following activities:

**they jot down ideas, put them in order, make a plan, reject it and start again, add more ideas as they go along, change words, rephrase bits, move sections around, review parts of what they have written, cross things out, check through the final version, write tidy notes, write on odd piece of paper as thoughts occur to them, write directly into the typewriter or a word processor ... look at the blank page for a long time, change pens, refer back to something they have read - many more things, some of them quite idiosyncratic.**

Byrne (1988) and Hedge (1988) also categorize the various stages of writing similarly as consisting of listing ideas-planning and outlining-writing a first draft-correct and improve (revise) the draft-editing-writing the final version.

Although these phases apparently seem to be linear progression from one stage to another, they are not so in the actual process of composing the text. There is always "going back and forth from one stage to another as the writing progresses" (Maxwell & Meiser, 1997:139); "...it is messy, recursive, convoluted and uneven" (Hairston, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991:247).

In this connection, most researchers agree that all these phases could be compressed into the following four phases:

1. Prewriting (Discovery) phase
2. Drafting Phase
3. Revising Phase
4. Editing and Publishing Phase

What should be clear here is that amount of time spent and the frequency of going back and forth in each of the phases may greatly vary from one writer to another. What is crucial, however, is the awareness of the different phases and compose accordingly.

#### **2.5.1.2.1.1 Prewriting**

The first and most important step of the writing cycle is the prewriting (discovery) phase, where students are given certain time to explore ideas, consider alternatives and mould their thoughts (Block, 1997). This stage of writing allows students to talk and exchange ideas, just as in real world, where people share their ideas before and after they have written them down. This group discussion is of paramount importance:

**Pupils are virtually unanimous in describing the major value of group work as being, like classroom discussion, that it widens the pool of available ideas, and through this, enables pupils to advance their thinking in ways which they could not achieve alone. (Cooper & McIntyre quoted in Huges, 1994:86)**

**... we must remember that our students are language learners rather than writers and it would not be particularly helpful to have them spend all their time writing alone. (McDonough & Shaw, 1993: 187-188)**

In order to achieve the teaching objectives, therefore, teachers should provide repertoire of strategies to their students (Kroll, 1990). As students may choose several ways to complete any written task, the teaching of appropriate strategies could

save them from employing those that have specific disadvantages. And as any learning activity, the average students do their tasks, the more they will be motivated to learn. Oxford cited in Huges (1994) puts the usefulness of learning strategies as follows: "Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable to new strategies."

Thus, in the prewriting phase, strategies, such as brainstorming, discussing vocabulary groups, sketching, taking notes about observations, interviewing are often used to get started with writings. Teachers can make students practice a combination of these discovery (prewriting) exercises [see the list on page 31 for specific writing strategies employed at each stage]

**The purpose ... of acquiring invention strategies is for students to feel that they have a variety of ways to begin an assigned writing task and that they do not always have to begin at the beginning and work through an evolving draft sequentially until they reach the end.**

(Kroll, quoted in Celce-Murcia, 1991:25)

#### **2.5.1.2.1.2 Drafting**

Drafting is the other major phase in this process of writing. After having assembled information and generated ideas, students need to put them down on paper. Since students delete, add new ideas and relate to one another messages at this phase, teachers are expected to help them realize that the aim is not producing error-free draft. The purpose here is to produce meaningful pieces instead. Students can use as many drafts as possible until they think they have made their messages across.

However, at times, students may not go straight to their papers and start writing. They may face a 'block' to get started. Here, the teacher could help students by asking them a number of questions that would enable them think about what they write; prompting with a starter sentence is also another strategy the teacher could use to overcome students' "block".

#### **2.5.1.2.1.3 Revising**

Revising is the next phase where students are supposed to work again on the multiple drafts they have been using. For most students, the task of revising (redrafting) is not an easy one. The main reason for this is the fact that they do not often easily spot where and how to make certain changes. In other words, it is time-consuming. Nevertheless, teachers could alleviate this by employing certain techniques such as making them read aloud so that they could hear redundancies, wrong wording or omissions (Maxwell & Meiser, 1997). The other strategy is writing some questions on the blackboard that could serve as checklists, such as the following:

1. Can I change a word so my ideas become clearer?
2. Does each paragraph contain clear details and a main idea?
3. Can I shorten any sentence to make ideas more to the point?
4. Can I use stronger connectives?
5. Can I include examples to make ideas understandable?

(Block, 1997)

#### **2.5.1.2.4 Editing and Publishing**

Editing is a phase just before publishing. It is a stage where students proofread each other's paper. Whereas guidelines or checklists might be helpful, they may not be

effective if students use them for their own work. Thus, multiple editors should involve at this stage so as to see what another has overlooked. If the objective emphasizes a specified area (or general) difficulties, giving the whole class a mini-lesson would be the most appropriate strategy.

To complete the process of the writing cycle, one thing remains- publishing.

Publishing takes different forms at different grade levels: from displaying papers on classroom (school) notice boards to publishing, say in the annual magazine of the school. Students should also be encouraged to write letters, short articles, and the like to local newspapers. But the most practical and perhaps simple form of 'publishing' is to select the best few papers and allow them to be read in the classroom. After all, "writing is designed to be a public act ... it is meant to be shared with others" (Block, 1997:261)

However, this approach, like the previous ones, has not escaped criticism. Most teachers claimed that it was found to be time-consuming. For instance, the use of multiple drafts, despite its usefulness for students to get more focused does not account for the existing instructional schedule. Furthermore, the heavy marking load makes this use of multiple drafts impracticable to the current large classroom situation. What is more, some teachers doubt its effectiveness for testing purposes, for there won't be time for prewriting in testing, where students share and brainstorm ideas in groups/pairs. (Horwitz, 1986).

In brief, the process-centered approach has offered a better understanding of the nature of writing. It has provided workable procedures for students to develop their skills of writing.

### **2.3.3 GENRE APPROACH**

Genre approach is an alternative writing pedagogy that has put forward the idea that writing is differently structured depending on the purpose and audience. For instance, business letters, research papers, and reports of different contexts (Flowerdew, 1993). In the classroom where genre approach is employed, students would be provided with examples or texts; the teacher would explain the different features. In contrast to the process approach, the teacher has a greater input at the beginning of a lesson. Later, students would research and draft a similar piece of writing in the chosen genre. Students are evaluated on the basis of their capabilities to reproduce the different genres. (see the writing model of genre approach on the next page.)

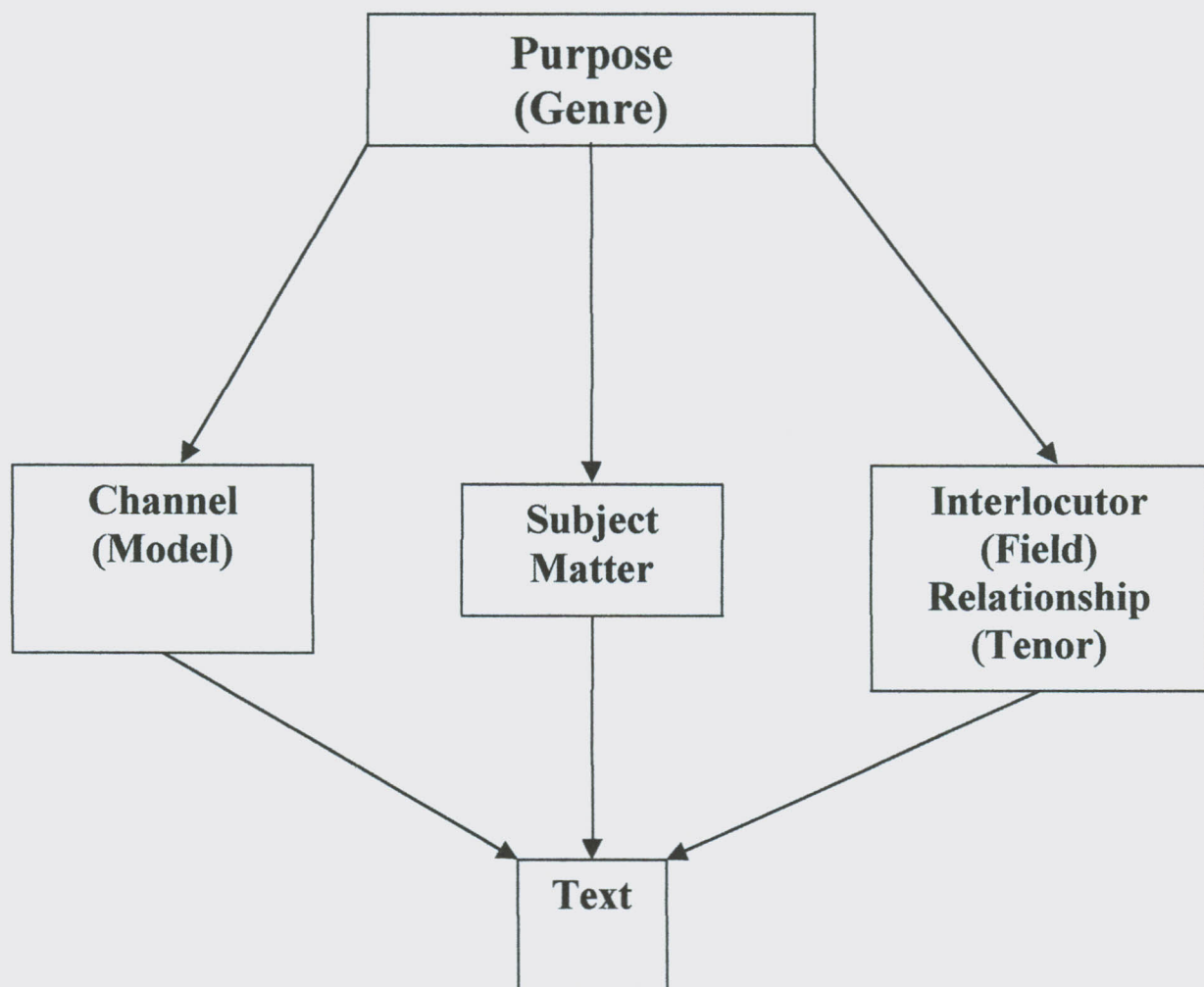
In sum, genre approach is considered to be the extension of the product approach for it regards writing as primarily linguistic knowledge such as grammar and text structure (Martin, 1993; Badger & White, 2000). Some researchers argue that genre approach serves best in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) setting where "... learning about a particular subject discipline, ... involves also learning about specific ways of using language" (Maybin, cited in Brindely, 1994:186).

However, it seems that one needs to strike a balance in classroom between process and representation (product) or genre. In other words, there is definitely a need to

teach strategies for developing students' writing skills at each phase of the composing process. In the same way, it has to be made certain that students could understand and employ the linguistic structures required for specific text (genre) (White and Arndt, 1991, Maybin, cited in Brindely, 1994).

In the following section, the literature reviews an alternative writing pedagogy that seem to have taken all the major approaches into consideration.

### **Writing Model of Genre Approach**



(Martin, 1993 : 120)

#### 2.5.1.4 PROCESS GENRE APPROACH

A number of ESL researchers and educators believe that the various approaches to the teaching of writing have come up with valuable insights (Maxwell & Meiser, 1997). As much as they contribute to the efficacy of the teaching of writing, all of them do not seem to be complete by themselves.

The product approach emphasized mainly on reinforcing the other skills, such as grammar, vocabulary, etc. The process approach, on the other hand, deals with the composing process, such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Thus, the process approach seems to give relatively little attention on linguistic skills, like grammar, punctuation, and the like. However, Raimes (1982: 11) has concluded that

**All of the approach overlap ... There is no one way to teach writing, but many ways... Writing means writing a connected text and not just single sentences, that writers write for a purpose and a reader, and that a process of writing is a valuable learning tool for all of our students.**

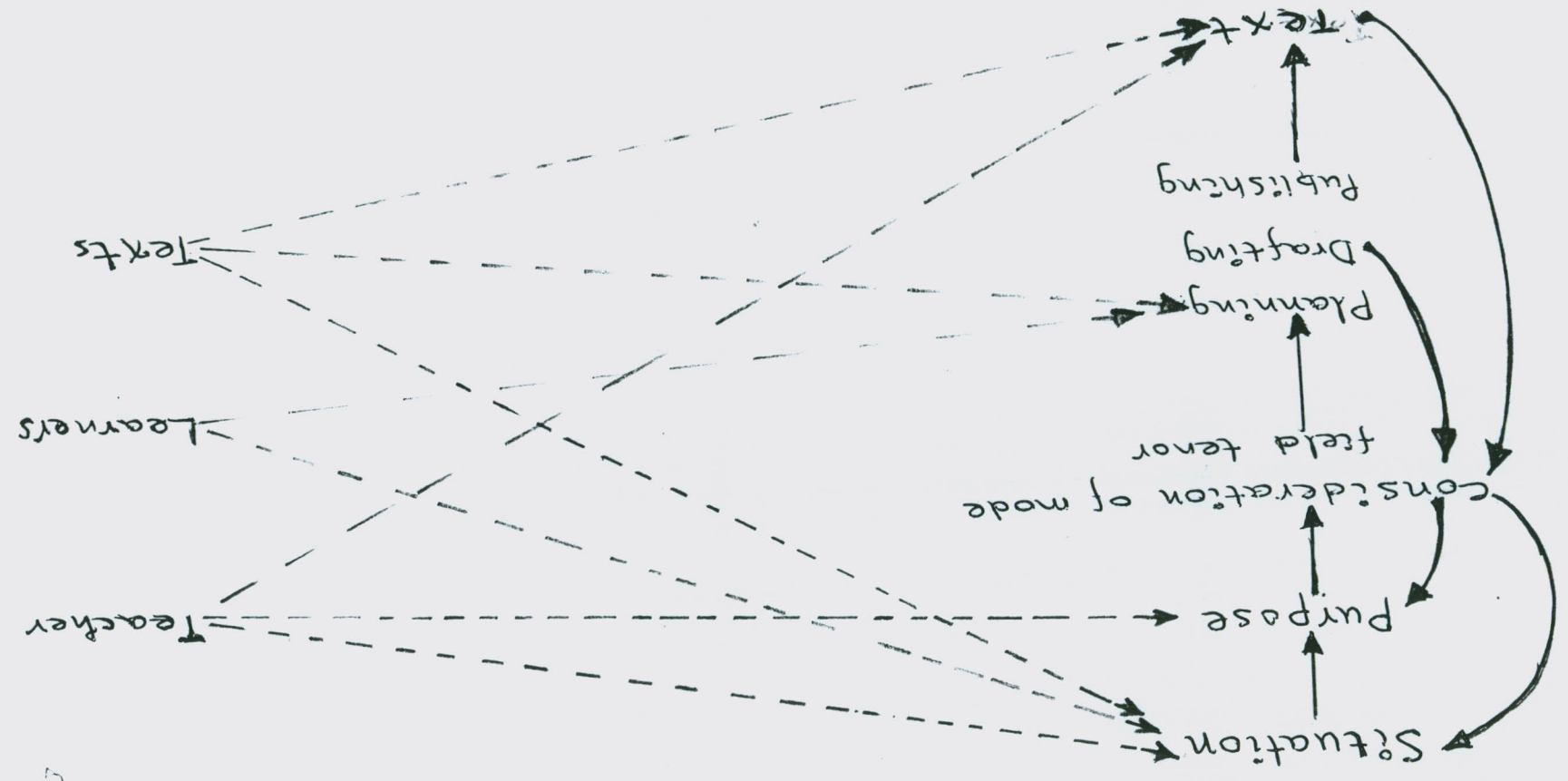
It is this deeper understanding of the previous approaches of teaching writing that has lately brought about the process genre approach - a synthesis of three approaches - product, process and genre (Badger & White, 2000)

[see the model on page 37]

They argue that a thorough analysis of all these three approaches to writing enables one to look into the different kinds of approaches to writing as complementary rather

# WRITING MODEL OF PROCESS GENRE APPROACH

Possible Input



(Badger and White, 2000)

than oppositional. The underlying principle in this newly proposed approach to writing is that

**Writing involves knowledge about language (as in product or genre approaches), knowledge of context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and skills in using language (as in process approaches). Writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential (as in process approaches) and by providing input to which the learners respond (as in product and genre approaches)**

(Badger & White, 2000:158)

## 2.6 Feedback

Providing feedback is an integral part of teaching. It serves both as an indicator of good or bad performances and a tool to increase motivation and creates supportive classroom atmosphere (Richard & Lockhart, 1995).

In this regard, responding to the written work is an important part of the writing process. Kel (1990) underscored that feedback is to be understood as input from the reader to a writer in a form of suggestions, comments, questions and the like. As a result, the writer would be able to produce a reader-based discourse, as opposed to a writer-based discourse. Responding to students' writing is therefore not only time-consuming but also a complex process that takes a lot of considerations. Kroll (1990), suggested that the following questions need to be addressed:

- What are the general goals within the writing course of providing feedback to student writers?
- What are the specific goals of providing feedback on a particular piece of writing?
- At what stage in the writing process should feedback be offered?
- What form should feedback take?

- Who should provide the feedback?
- What should students do with the feedback they receive?

As to what type of response will facilitate improved mastery of writing, most agree that the safest way is to implement a variety of response types. Taylor (1981), indicated that responding to students' writing should be directed toward two aspects: content (the ideas in the writing), with a specific emphasis on how students plan, draft, review and form (surface features of writing), with a specific emphasis on how students edit and proofread. Written feedback should also take into account the appropriacy of the text to its purpose and intended audience (McDonald & Shaw, 1993).

With regard to forms of feedback, there are two sources: peer response and teacher responses.

### **2.6.1 Peer Response**

Peer response is a term used to refer to an act of providing input or response from fellow students (Kel, 1990). This has not always been an easy practice particularly in an ESL context. The obvious reason is students' language competence often prevents them from reacting intuitively to their classmates' papers within a given time. This may hold true particularly to Ethiopian high school contexts where students' exposure to reading and writing in the target language has often been minimal, and the process-oriented textbooks do not seem to be treated well.

However, many educators believe that with a certain modeling, such as by providing a short list of directed questions which peers could address as they read their fellow papers, the practice could gradually develop. Thus, through teaching

and controlling this practice it would be possible to exploit it as a valuable activity in the ESL writing class (Kel, 1990).

Process approach to writing highly encourages peer response for several reasons: it motivates student writers since their written work is presented as a 'reading' for an audience other than their teacher; it serves to sharpen their skills in critically analyzing other and their own written works. Such practices also give students the opportunity to see how their fellow students compose on different topics. It is also up to the standard of students' level of development in writing. Finally, it eases the teacher's burden of marking all details.

### **2.6.2 Teacher Response**

Teacher's responses to students' work could be oral and/or written. Besides, individual conferences on students' papers and the use of tape cassettes are the two additional ways to structure teacher feedback (Kroll, 1990).

Conferencing has several benefits in the ESL context. As students have *communication problems*, individual conferences would encourage students to exchange ideas about their initial drafts, and learn more than they would when attempting to decipher teacher-written feedback on their own. It also gives the teacher the chance to clear away potential misunderstandings students might have prior to written feedback. Furthermore, it embodies an eminently purposeful instance of the reading-writing-speaking dynamics (Peyton, et al, 1994).

The other type of teacher feedback is the written feedback. This one has been a fairly traditional and time-consuming technique. Teacher feedback needs to be

done with care in order to bring about the intended results – improvement of students’ writing. To this effect, written feedback need to be clear and detailed attending to both surface level features as well as text organization and purpose (Zamel, 1982).

In sum, responding to the written work/text is always pivotal to any writing class. In this regard, both teachers and students need to become aware of feedback procedures and the latter should specifically be trained in strategies for effective utilization of feedback. What is more, the effective implementation of peer feedback along with teacher feedback is extremely useful not only to alleviate teachers’ load of marking, but also to help students develop critical evaluation in written work.

## **2.7 Measurement in Writing**

### **2.7.1 Introduction**

Where there is a teaching and learning activity, it is rational to expect assessment or measurement. The mating of teaching and assessment is not accidental merging (White, 1985). Similarly, an understanding of some of the best procedures in testing of writing will be of substantial value for teaching it. In other words, if there is an awareness of the core issues in the assessment /testing of writing, there is strong likelihood that it will be taught with such clarity and purpose. Teaching and testing cannot be viewed in isolation.

Nonetheless, as much as there are various approaches and techniques of teaching writing, there do not seem to be adequate literature on how to test effectively. The

usual practices in high schools indicated that there is a great gulf between the teaching and testing of writing. In the following section, some issues that lie behind the practice of teaching and testing writing will be reviewed.

### **2.7.2 Advances in the practice of Testing Writing**

Traditionally, testing had not taken account of the specific goals of writing in the teaching syllabi. Assessment in writing was simply the paper grading of individual teacher's or a supposedly objective compilation of statistics from multiple choice tests (Bretard & Gaynor, 1979, as quoted in White, 1985). Moreover, "... this widespread use of multiple choice mechanics and usage tests trivializes reading and writing from the earliest grades through many university programs"(White,1985:1).

However, the inadequacies of such measurement have recently begun to lead to much improved ways of evaluating writing. Researchers in the area of measurement have started considering the purposes of testing writing. As a result, several attempts have been made to create a strong link between teaching and testing writing (Hughes, 1989). Thus, a more subjective type of testing has gradually substantiated the multiple-choice usage testing which has become so predominant as a means of assessing writing.

The main reason for shifting to essay-type of testing is because the multiple-choice type is often employed to ask correct spelling, usage or grammar that is out of context (White, 1985). In other words, the lower the validity of such tests together with the damage they cause to the actual purpose of writing seem to prove their inefficiency in measuring the writing skills.

This is by no means to imply that multiple-choice test formats are totally out of the context for assessing language skills. On the contrary, since language skills are usually found integrated, the appropriate usage of such test formats and writing-sample testing would increase the validity and reliability of tests. To this end, White, (1985: 70) states that

**Different kinds of skills are most effectively measured by different kinds of tests. Writing as a whole is best dealt with by writing-sample testing; reading (which correlates highly with writing), sentence construction skills, ability to discern logical relationships, and the like seem best dealt with by multiple-choice testing. Where highly refined measurement is needed...the most responsible test will combine both kinds of measures.**

In sum, in order to evaluate students' abilities in writing and ensure the effectiveness of classroom instruction, there should be a clear connection between testing and teaching of writing. To this end, the writing-sample testing should be taken as a viable option to ensure reliability and validity as well as for the sake of its powerful beneficial effect on teaching writing (Hughes, 1989).

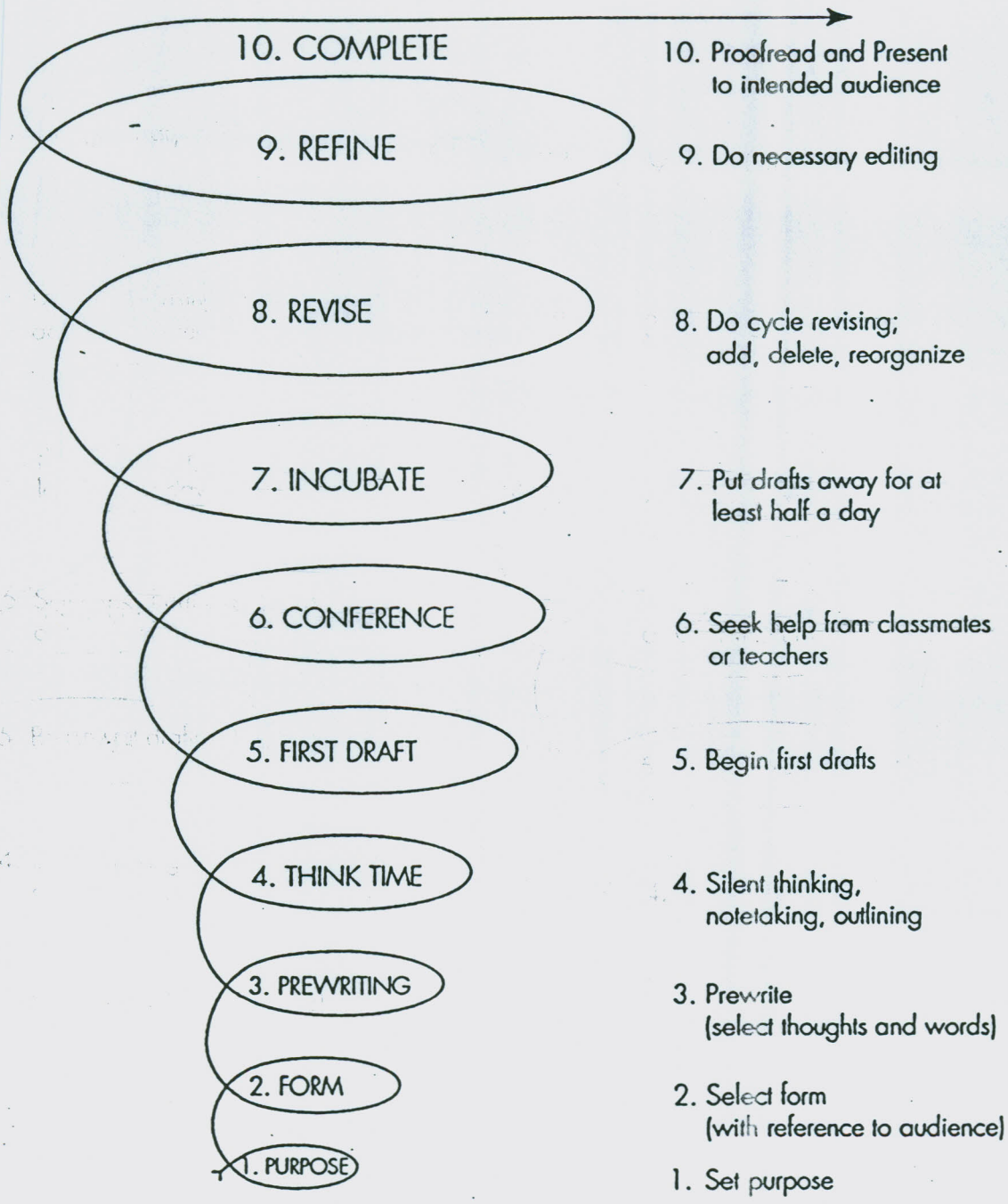
## 2.8 SUMMARY

In sum, the teaching of writing in the ESL context has never been found easier in spite of the plethora of research that has been conducted in this direction for a long period of time. Of course, each of the major approaches - product, process and genre- have contributed significantly for the betterment of the teaching of writing.

As much as they differ from one another in looking into the writing skills, they have all given emphasis on separate entities: the importance of linguistic elements (accuracy of form), fluency of text (process), register (genre). And all these features can be broadly viewed as complementary rather than diametrically oppositional (Badger & White, 2000). The entire picture of the process of writing has been pictorially presented on the page 45.

The recent process genre approach, which is the synthesis of the three approaches, appears to give a relative emphasis for all the core elements of the writing processes and, hence, attempts to strike a balance among product, process and genre. It is believed that teaching writing in the 2nd language context, (since it is coupled with lack of proficiency in the target language) calls for sufficient input on the one hand, and the need to give much opportunities for the learners to act creatively and independently on the other.

In short the very act of writing is a complex process that should be taken care of.



THE WRITING CYCLE

( Block, 1997 : 255 )

# CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the methods in carrying out the pilot and the main study giving special emphasis to the design and procedures of data collection and analysis. Before going through these, it would be worth noting the objectives of the research.

Thus, the general objective of the research was to investigate *implementation of the process approach to writing at the level of grade 10*. The specific objectives were to (a) find out students' perceptions about the writing skills in the textbooks; (b) find out teachers' perceptions about the writing skills, (c) find out to what extent teachers employ the appropriate writing strategies in the writing class.

### 3.2 Research Methods

In order to achieve the general and specific objectives of the study, the following research methods and procedures of sampling, data collection and analysis were used.

### **3.3 Pilot Study**

The pilot study had two major purposes: (a) to try-out the research tools selected to collect data for the main study, and (b) to utilize the information obtained from the results of the pilot study as a basis for conducting the main study. To this effect, a questionnaire for students was designed and administered. Besides, a couple of writing lessons was observed.

#### **3.3.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire designed for students was translated into Amharic. It consisted of 16 items out of which one was unstructured. Then it was administered to 90 students. All students completed the questionnaire.

The following were the main objectives of the questionnaire:

- (a) 2 items were designed to find out the degree of difficulty in writing and its possible causes
- (b) 4 items were on students' awareness of the purpose and learning outcomes of writing.
- (c) 2 items on the extent of the usefulness of the tasks in the new textbooks
- (d) 11 items on whether the teaching and testing approach currently practiced in the classroom were in tandem with the new textbooks.

The students reacted positively to almost all the questions. Nonetheless, some students were not able to do so to questions 5 and 15. It was found that 30% of the students failed to adequately respond to these questions – by opting for more than one choice for question 5 and by answering out of the context for question

15. Therefore, both questions were dropped in the main study. Besides, some of the questions were improved. The summary of the analysis and discussions of the results of the pilot study are presented in chapter 4.

### 3.4 The Main Study

This section discusses the research perspective, the design of the main study, procedures of data collection.

#### 3.4.1 The Research Perspective

The study was primarily experimental in nature. It was conducted in Addis Ketema Secondary School, but the focus of the study was a general one – it deals with the implementation of the process approach to writing at the level of grade 10.

#### 3.4.2 The Research Design

No	Objective ( Purpose )	Instrument	Number of subjects
1.	In order to find out the current students' achievement in writing before the process-oriented approach is implemented	Pretest	147 students
2	So as to see the effects of the process-oriented teaching and testing on students- achievement in writing	posttest	147 students

3	In order to find out students' perception of writing, the classroom approach and testing; to strengthen the hypotheses testing.	questionnaire	147 students
4	So as to find out teachers' perception of writing, the teaching and testing approach	Questionnaire	6 teachers

### 3.4.3 Sources of Data Instrument

A few of the attitude scales in Cheng, et. al (1999) and Doukas (1996) were slightly adapted and used to assess the perceptions of students and teachers about issues on writing. The rest were constructed by the researcher who largely depended on the basic issues of the research to deal with and the major themes of the reviewed literature.

### 3.4.4. Procedures of Data Collection

In carrying out the research design certain specific procedures were used. First, two sections of grade ten were randomly selected for the study. One section was taken as an experimental group while the other one was considered as a controlled group.

#### 3.4.4.1 Assessment Procedures for Tests

A pretest was first designed to assess the current level of students. But before it was given to both the controlled and experimental groups, it was administered to 20 other

students of grade 10. This was done in order to see that the test items have produced the intended kinds of responses and whether the marking guidelines (see Appendix G) are working satisfactorily. After seeing the result and making some changes, the pretest was administered to both groups at the same day and time. The results of the pretest revealed that the two groups were at similar level of proficiency.

Then, for a period of 5 weeks the two classes were taught two units from the students' textbook (II). The experimental group was taught with a strict adherence to process-oriented approach. The controlled group was taught without any treatment. By the end of the teaching of the two units, a posttest was given for both groups. This was administered similarly as the pretest.

The students' papers on the pretest and the posttest were marked by two raters. In order to control the inconsistency of the individual marker on students' papers, the marks given for a sample of papers by the same rater on two occasions were correlated. In addition, to see whether the two raters tried to match the marking guidelines and ensure reliability, the mean scores were compared and correlated. Alderson, (1995) were adapted to mark the tests (see Appendix G). The t-test statistics was used to determine the results of the hypotheses mentioned in chapter 1.

#### **3.4.4.2 Assessment Procedures for Questionnaires**

The items in the questionnaire designed for students were translated from English in to Amharic. This was done to minimize the difficulty of comprehending the items when responding, as the respondents were just 10<sup>th</sup> graders. They were administered at the end of the five weeks' sessions.

Then their responses were analyzed and interpreted. The open-ended items were separately analyzed (see Appendix B).

The teachers' questionnaire was in English and the open-ended items of all the teachers have been analyzed (see Appendix C). For both questionnaires, the Likert Scales were used. In order to measure the perceptions, t-test was employed.

### **3.4.5 Rationale for exploring teachers and students' Perceptions**

It would be necessary at this juncture to see why the analyses of teachers and students' perceptions were pertinent to a study such as this one.

Thus, the main purpose for designing the questionnaire for teachers and students was to supplement the results obtained from the hypotheses testing and, hence, ensure reliability.

To this end, attempting to understand and explain how teachers perceive the teaching process as a whole, and act accordingly will help foster students' achievement in their learning. More specifically, teachers' beliefs in selecting writing activities, providing opportunities of new items, assessing / testing writing skills and sub-skills, giving feedback on students' work, presenting writing activities, and the like, help to *advance students' competence and performance in writing (Kindsvatter, et al, 1988).*

Furthermore, although learning is the ultimate goal of teaching, it is not necessarily the mirror of teaching (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). In other words, it has been noted

that students, too, bring to learning their own attitudes and beliefs, which in turn have significant influence on how they approach their learning.

Hence, the attempt to fully grasp and explain how students get motivated, what their expectations are about language learning, what language skills and sub-skills they find easy or difficult, and so on, is vital to see the overall picture of the teaching-learning activity.

In sum, teaching, by and large, is a personal activity, and how one consistently tries to implement a certain approach largely depends on his/her perceptions. In the same way, students' perceptions do influence their approach to learning. Hence, in this study, it was found imperative to inquire students' and teachers' views and beliefs with regard to the teaching and learning of writing.

#### **3.4.6 Some Considerations in Methods of Analysis**

In order to explore the perceptions of the learners, two sections consisting of 147 students were asked to fill in a questionnaire. The questionnaire designed for and administered to students in the study sample comprised 18 items. The 18 items had 46 sub items and were divided into four categories: (a) writing and the other macro-skills compared, (b) learning preferences of students, (c) classroom implementation of the writing tasks, and (d) the nature of writing tasks in the textbooks.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

Before dealing with the discussion of the finding and analysis of the main study, it would be worth presenting the summary of the results of the pilot study.

#### 4.2 Summary of the analysis and discussions of the Results of the Pilot Study

It should be admitted that a few of the survey responses of the pilot and main studies appear similar.

- Students' attitude to writing revealed that a great majority (65%) of them considered writing an auxiliary skill and were not made to see the main purpose of the writing tasks in the new syllabi.
- Some teachers were found to practice the process approach to writing although it was not consistently. Nevertheless, neither writing assignments nor tests were given to assess students' performances. Besides, writing feedback strategies like peer editing were grossly neglected.
- The importance of reading lessons to the development of the writing skills has been neglected. In other words, the four teachers observed did not treat skills integratively, and hence, reading tasks were not adequately exploited. The majority of the students' input, (71%), was very minimal.

### **4.3 The Main Study**

The following section is the discussions of the major findings and their possible implications. They are divided into five parts:

The first part provides the rationale for exploring students' and teachers' perceptions in juxtaposition with the testing of the hypothesis. The second part deals with the assessment of students' perceptions about their learning preferences. The third part explores students' perceptions concerning the implementation of writing tasks in Books I and II with specific emphasis on methodology.

The fourth part treats the perceptions of students and teachers about the nature of the writing tasks in the textbooks. The fifth and final part focuses on the results of the hypotheses testing.

Out of the 147 students (100%), 132 (89.7%) filled in and returned the questionnaire. The study sample taken to assess teachers' perceptions were 6 who happened to teach in the same grade level since the new books have been implemented. The questionnaire designed for and administered to teachers consisted of 14 items and 26 sub-items. These 14 items were divided into 2 categories: (a) the nature of writing tasks in the textbooks and, (b) the classroom implementation of the writing tasks. All the 6 teachers (100%) filled in and returned the questionnaire.

To measure the perceptions of both students and teachers the Likert Scale was used. The Likert Scale used here was of “strongly agree/strongly disagree” and of the “always/not at all” types.

So as to show whether students and teachers have similar perceptions and whether these perceptions were positive or negative perceptions, the students’ and teacher’ perceptions were computed by comparing the means.

Then the statistical test, t – test, was used to determine whether the compared means of each categories were statistically significant or not.

#### **4.4 Findings and Discussions**

##### **4.4.1 Results of Students' Survey Responses**

As has been pointed out in 4.4, the first part of the discussions focused upon the results of students’ perceptions about learning to write in comparison to the other macro-skills.

##### **4.4.1.1 Writing and other Macro-skills Compared**

For quite majority of the students, learning to write was considered as important as learning to speak, but far more valuable than the other macro-skills. As can be seen from Table 1, Item 1(Appendix A, item 1), the mean score for learning to listen and learning to read, 3.75 and 3.26, respectively, were found statistically significant as

compared to the grand mean, which was 3.65. The score for speaking was not significant for it was only 2.62 (Item 1.2). In other words, in the perception of most students writing was regarded more important than the other skills except speaking (see Table 1, item 2).

The reason why students regarded writing as more important than the two other skills could be accounted for, as it will be discussed later in the chapter, partly due to the growing demands of academic writing skills, such as, summarizing and organizing ideas across the curriculum. In other words, writing skills, like summarizing appeared to be indispensable tools for other subjects of studies, such as history, and biology (see Appendix B, student 18).

**Table 1. Students' perception about learning to write in comparison to other skills**

	Item	Strongly Agree 5		Agree 4		No Opinion 3		Disagree 2		Strongly Disagree 1		Total	
		Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	X	
3.21	1.1	61	46.2	30	22.7	5	3.7	20	15.1	16	12.1	496	3.75
	1.2	12	9	31	23.4	20	15.1	34	25.7	35	26.5	347	2.62
	1.3	17	12.8	64	48.4	7	5.3	25	18.9	19	14.3	431	3.26
3.87	2.1	54	40.9	46	34.8	6	4.5	19	14.3	7	5.3	517	3.91
	2.2	43	32.5	44	33	12	9	18	13.6	15	11.3	478	3.62
	2.3	76	57.5	26	19.6	4	3	19	14.3	7	5.1	539	4.08
3.9	3.1	42	31.8	70	53	0	0	15	11.3	5	3.7	525	3.97
	3.2	86	65.1	18	13.6	8	6	17	12.8	3	2.2	563	4.26
	3.3	22	16.6	57	43.1	9	6.8	39	29.5	5	3.7	459	3.47
3.63	4.1	49	37.1	36	27.2	8	6	23	17.4	16	12.1	475	3.59
	4.2	43	32.5	33	25	15	11.3	31	23.4	10	7.5	464	3.51
	4.3	48	36.3	44	33.3	6	4.5	24	18.1	10	7.5	492	3.72
	4.4	58	43.9	31	23.4	10	7.5	16	11.9	17	12.8	493	3.73
<b>Grand Total</b>											4749	3.65	

Grand Mean 3.65

In response to which language skills they found difficult, the results of the focused perceptions indicated that learning to write was not found to be an easy skill. In fact, writing was labeled the most difficult of all macro-skills by virtually all students. This was so because, the mean score for the three skills as shown in items 2.1 - 2.3 was 3.87. This was statistically significant for it was greater than the grand mean score, 3.65 (see Table 1). The students' performances in the pre- and posttests also substantiated this result.

As indicated in Table 1, in the perception of most students, writing was not only considered difficult but also vital. Students seemed to feel more "guarded" in their writing for they can get relatively longer time to frame their thoughts than speaking. The mean score obtained for item 3.2 was 4.26, which was far greater than the grand mean score, 3.65. It implies that this was the most dominant belief among students. For considerable number of students, the more pragmatic, immediate goal of learning to write – recording on paper whatever they want to use for a longer period of time – was the other reason suggested for its vitality.

Furthermore, the results of the survey responses indicated that adequate input and organizational skills were regarded pivotal to improve students' writing abilities. On the other hand, as indicated in item 4.1 and 4.2, the mean scores obtained with regard to the degree of importance appropriate vocabulary and grammar have, i.e., 3.59 & 3.51, respectively, were not as strongly significant for they were found to be a bit less than the grand mean (3.65). This implies that the roles they play to promote students' writing were not totally underestimated by students.

The next section deals with students' attitudes about their learning preferences.

#### **4.4.1.2 Students' perceptions about their learning preferences**

The results of the learning preference of students (Table 2, Item 5.1-5.7) by and large revealed that most of them favored collaborative learning as against individualistic approach with regard to writing tasks. In other words, students believe that through personal feedback and interaction with their classmates they could delineate their ideas better and learn well. Since the mean score obtained for this perception was higher 3.89 than the score for the grand mean 3.41, it indicates that this attitude of students was found to be statistically significant. (see Table 2, item5.1).

On the other hand, the mean scores indicated that students prefer to spend little time on thinking and planning about writing tasks. In other words, they chose to start off their tasks without thorough planning and organizing strategies. This was shown in item 5.3 with a lower mean score 2.49 than the grand mean, which was 3.41.

This may imply that learning preference of most students seems to be categorized under unskilled writers. The practice of most unskilled writers is to focus on form rather than on content and, hence, they are least concerned about thinking and planning about the task. This may probably be due to the limited exposure/practice to the actual processes of composing they have had in the classroom.

**Table 2** Students' perceptions about their learning preferences

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	5		4		3		2		1		Σ	X
	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%		
5.1	65	49.2	33	25	5	3.7	13	9.8	16	12.1	514	3.89
5.2	37	28	10	7.5	4	3	4	3	77	58.3	322	2.44
5.3	10	7.5	34	25.7	6	4.5	43	32.5	39	29.5	329	2.49
5.4	39	29.5	65	49.2	10	7.5	13	9.8	5	3.7	516	3.90
5.5	34	25.7	61	46.2	4	3	21	15.9	12	9	480	3.63
5.6	34	25.7	41	31	11	8.3	34	25.7	12	9	447	3.38
5.7	71	53.7	32	24.2	16	12.1	11	8.3	2	1.5	555	4.20
											Total	23.93

Grand Mean 3.41

#### **4.4.1.3 Students' perceptions about the implementation of the writing tasks**

Students' attitudes towards the implementation of the writing tasks were examined in Table 3. The results of the study indicated that writing, in general, was not taught in a social context. In other words, prewriting strategies such as, pair sharing, conferencing and the like appeared to be grossly neglected (see Table 3). Thus, the entire processes of writing, as before, were carried out individually.

The series of observations made while writing was taught during the pilot study also confirmed this. It has been emphasized in the teacher's guide that pair/group works should be encouraged. This is because these activities could give students the opportunity to draw on their ideas in a non-threatening situation and use them to complete several kinds of tasks in the textbooks.

Rather than being engaged in these sorts of classroom activities, which were in tandem with the present syllabi, students felt that they spent most of their writing classes doing grammar and/or vocabulary exercises. Besides, there seemed to be hardly any other kind of feedback for their written work, perhaps, except the occasional teachers' written comments, which were very general, such as, 'very good', 'good' and so on. Such kinds of suggestions do not actually show students which areas to build on and improve.

Neither peer nor self-editing appeared to be common practices in the writing classes. The very low mean scores obtained, 1.28 and 1.73, were obvious indications for this. The results were far less than the grand mean(2.20) for the implementation of the writing tasks (see Table 3, item 10).

What is more, writing assignment and tests were rarely given and even for those limited practices the focus of correction was found to be utterly grammatical (see Table 3, item 11). Despite the changes made both in methodology and kinds of tasks in the textbooks, the type of questions in tests and semester finals have remained the most common multiple choice ones. Most students asserted that the types of questions both in progress tests as well as semester examinations did not seem to include writing-sample questions, such as, paragraph/essay writing, summarizing, and so on, which are in congruent with the tasks in the textbooks (see item 12). Moreover, the question banks the teachers kept for two years confirmed this.

The mean scores obtained for the frequency of multiple choice (item 12.2) and paragraph writing questions (item 12.1) in tests were 4.8 and 1.15, respectively. As compared to the grand mean, which was 2.20, the mean score for multiple choice questions was statistically significant. In other words, multiple choice questions were largely practiced, while subjective kinds of questions were not.

Furthermore, as Table 3, item 6 and 8 indicated, it was found out that the importance of reading to the writing class appeared to be underestimated. Students were not encouraged to read and reflect on supplementary readings. In short, skills such as reading and writing were taken separately rather than integratively.

On the other hand, the syllabi recommend that teachers should use different reading texts so that students would have ideas to explore and write about. Most scholars agree, too, that writing in ESL context presupposes a lot of reading as in-class and out-of-class activities because these would help students not only to see how the language functions but most importantly assist them to generate ideas (Raimes, 1982). Students' perceptions in this regard imply that there has been such a wide gap that needs to be filled in. The mean score obtained, 1.44, for items 8.1-8.4 with regard to the reading resources used in classes, was found very low as compared to the grand mean score for the implementation as a whole, which was 2.20.

As a whole, students' survey responses showed that the current practice of teaching-learning writing seemed to be in marked disparity with the objectives of the new textbooks.

**Table 3** Students' perception about the implementation of writing tasks

Item		Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Not at all		Total	
		4		3		2		1		Σ	X
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%		
2.37	6.1	0	0	17	12.80	5	3.7	110	83.30	171	1.29
	6.2	41	31.0	38	28.70	30	24.2	23	17.40	361	2.73
	6.3	64	48.4	40	30.30	28	21.2	0	0	432	3.27
	6.4	2	1.5	47	35.60	60	45.4	23	17.40	292	2.21
2.9	7	5	3.7	7	5.30	115	87.1	5	3.70	276	2.09
1.44	8.1	7	5.3	4	3.00	9	6.8	112	84.80	170	1.28
	8.2	3	2.2	12	9.00	10	7.5	107	81.00	175	1.32
	8.3	15	11.3	20	15.10	6	4.5	91	68.90	223	1.68
	8.4	6	4.5	11	8.30	28	21.2	87	65.90	200	1.51

1.34	9	1	0.7	13	9.80	16	12.1	102	77.20	178	1.34
1.76	10.1	18	13.6	28	21.20	58	43.9	28	21.20	300	2.27
	10.2	5	3.7	8	6.90	6	4.5	113	85.60	169	1.28
	10.3	14	10.6	19	14.30	17	12.8	82	62.10	229	1.73
2.59	11.1	66	50.0	51	38.60	10	7.5	5	3.70	442	3.34
	11.2	69	52.2	49	37.10	7	5.3	7	5.30	444	3.36
	11.3	11	8.3	13	9.80	34	25.7	74	56.00	225	1.70
	11.4	5	3.7	14	10.60	87	65.9	26	19.60	262	1.98
2.96	12.1	4	3.0	1	0.75	7	5.3	120	90.90	153	1.15
	12.2	124	93.9	2	1.50	5	3.7	1	0.75	637	4.80
	12.3	82	62.1	27	20.40	3	2.2	20	15.10	517	3.90
	12.4	12	9.0	30	22.70	36	27.2	54	40.90	264	2.00

46.23

Grand Mean 2.20

#### **4.4.1.4 Students' perceptions about the nature of the writing tasks in the textbooks**

The results of students' perceptions about the nature of the writing tasks (Table 4, item 13) show that while there are many who found the textbooks interesting and self-motivating, a considerable number of students found it to be the contrary. These two different results seemed to be indicative of certain facts:

- (a) Teachers, who started practicing the process approach, though not consistently, were to some extent able to instill in the minds of students a better understanding of the purpose of learning to write. As a result, students not only have become self-motivated and interested in those limited tasks they were exposed to, but also they seem to gradually exhibit certain progress in their writing abilities. The specific areas where they showed progress were also investigated (see the last part of the analysis of students papers in section 4.5 ).
- (b) On the other hand, teachers who still cling to the earlier grammar-centered approach, which was not in congruent with the objectives of the new syllabi, were unable to assist students by showing them to see the merits of the writing (and reading) tasks incorporated in the new textbooks. Consequently, students were not only unable to possess good proficiency in the skill, but also could not show high interest in writing.

**Table 4** Students' perceptions about the nature of the writing tasks of textbooks (Book I & II)

Item	Always 4		Sometimes 3		Rarely 2		Not at all 1		Total	
	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Σ	X
13	30	22.7	35	26.5	31	23.4	36	27.2	323	2.44
14	84	63.6	27	20.4	11	8.3	10	7.5	449	3.40
15	33	25.0	45	34.0	38	28.7	16	12.1	359	2.71
16	27	20.4	19	14.3	8	6.0	78	59.0	259	1.96
17	36	27.2	42	31.8	24	18.1	20	15.1	338	2.56

13.07

Grand Mean 2.61

writing ability. In other words, writing tests or exams were seldom given to them (see Appendix B).

In sum, the results of the study on students' perceptions unveil that writing did not seem to be a skill most students look forward to developing by attending their English classes. Even those who were exposed to some of the writing tasks in the textbooks with the process approach did them as occasional diversion from the routine grammar-oriented sessions. As a result, students did not seem to achieve the learning goals of the writing skills in the syllabi - being able to write free compositions.

#### **4.4.2 Teachers' Survey Responses**

The contents of the survey responses of the teachers were pertaining to two major issues; (a) the nature of the writing tasks in Book I and II and (b) the implementation of these writing tasks. The results were computed by comparing the mean scores with students' mean score. The difference has been calculated by using the T-test statistics. The scores of the statistical analysis are given in Table 7.

The results indicated that the differences in perceptions between students and teachers about the implementation and nature of the writing tasks were not statistically significant. Since the table values were less than the alpha value ( $\bar{\alpha}$ ), it can be said that the survey results regarding the implementation and the nature of the writing tasks in the textbooks were similar.

#### **4.4.1.5 Students' responses to the open-ended questions**

Students' attitudes about the extent of the usefulness of the textbooks were assessed. Accordingly, the majority of them tend to believe that they have exhibited some improvements in their writing abilities. As was noted during the pilot phase of this study, these signs of improvements seemed to have come as a result of the partial implementation of the process approach by certain teachers. However, the mounting evidence in this study revealed that the grade 10 English textbooks, by and large, did not seem to make most students adopt a critical attitude towards learning to write. The reason for this seemed to be the failure of teachers to implement the process approach in its entirety.

The teachers' guidebook stated from the outset that "... students will eventually be confident and competent enough to write short free compositions"(ICDR, 1997:47). Nevertheless, students contrary to the expected learning outcomes of the new syllabi, were found to be weak in their writing abilities. This was observed in their performances of the tests administered to them.

Among other things that transpired in students responses were, (a) the writing tasks in the textbooks encourage reading rather than writing; (b) the tasks were "tough". In other words, they were found to be way above students' level of linguistic proficiency and, hence, ultimately demotivating, (c) the classroom approach was not in line with the writing tasks in the textbooks, (d) there seems to be no way of evaluating students'

Accordingly, it was obvious from the teachers' responses to this survey (Table 5) that the writing tasks in the textbooks were largely regarded effective in promoting students' writing abilities. They were found to be challenging, self-motivating; encouraging students to think, plan drafts and revise their writing, and up to the level of students' linguistic proficiency. In short, the text-based integrated approach employed by the textbooks has been considered very useful for students in improving their abilities in writing.

Nonetheless, with regard to implementation of the writing tasks, there did not seem to be unanimity among teachers. Only 16.6% of them, however, seemed to adopt elements of the process approach, at least some of the time, though they did not embrace it in its entirety. The rest of them doubted the practicality of process approach in such classes that have in most cases, no less than 85 students (see Teachers' responses, (T<sub>1</sub>) in Appendix D).

Moreover, the present survey has revealed that among the main factors that have militated against developing writing abilities were the lack of grossly inadequate input and motivation to read appropriate materials in English from any available source (see Table 1 and Table 3). The survey also unveils that since teachers' experience in teaching writing has been very limited, it contributed negatively to its implementations in the classroom.

**Table 5 Teachers' perceptions about the nature of the writing tasks**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	Sub	%	Σ	X
1	2	33.3	3	50	1	16.6	0	0	19	3.16
2	2	33.3	3	50	1	16.6	0	0	19	3.16
3	3	50	2	33.3	1	16.6	0	0	20	3.3
4	4	66.6	1	16.6	1	16.6	1	16.6	22	3.66
5	2	33.3	3	50	1	16.6	1	16.6	20	3.3

Σ 16.58

Grand Mean 3.31

Furthermore, the findings of the survey responses indicated that although writing-sample tests were believed to go in line with the tasks in the textbooks, they were incorporated neither in progress tests nor in final examinations.

Teachers tend to believe that if writing, as one of the major skills, should be taught to make students achieve the learning goals of the new syllabi, they must be required to write paragraphs, and essays in examinations. According to them, students would only then start working hard to achieve high proficiency in writing as they do for other skills, such as grammar.

Similarly, teachers believe that they would treat the writing tasks, not just as activities that could help, but as diversion from the routine grammar and vocabulary exercises. Nor do they deal with them only because they are in the syllabi, but they would cautiously take them up with more realistic goals of achieving success in examinations (see Appendix D).

In sum, students and teachers' beliefs in the approaches currently employed and the nature of the writing tasks were similar (see Table 5 and Table 6).

**Table 6 Teachers' perception about the implementation of writing tasks**

Item		Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Not at all		Total	
		Fq	%	Fq	%	Fq	%	Fq	%	Σ	X
2.03	6.1	2	33.3	1	16.6	2	33.3	1	16.6	19	3.16
	6.2	0	0	0	0	3	50	3	50	9	1.5
	6.3	0	0	1	16.6	3	50	2	33.3	11	1.83
	6.4	0	0	0	0	1	16.6	5	83.3	7	1.66
1.33	7	0	0	0	0	2	33.3	4	66.6	8	1.33
2.24	8.1	0	0	2	33.3	3	50	1	16.6	13	2.16
	8.2	1	16.6	1	16.6	3	50	1	16.6	14	2.33
	8.3	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.6	1	16.6	17	2.83
	8.4	1	16.6	1	16.6	1	16.6	3	50	10	1.66
1.66	9	0	0	1	16.6	2	33.3	3	50	10	1.66

2.83	10.1	4	66.6	1	16.6	1	16.6	0	0	21	3.5
	10.2	0	0	2	33.3	3	50	1	16.6	13	2.16
	10.3	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.6	1	16.6	17	2.83
3.16	11.1	4	66.6	1	16.6	1	16.6	0	0	21	3.5
	11.2	6	24	0	0	0	0	1	16.6	24	4
	11.3	0	0	1	16.6	4	66.6	0	0	12	2
2.78	12.1	0	0	0	0	2	33.3	4	66.6	6	1
	12.2	6	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	4
	12.3	3	50	2	33.3	1	16.6	0	0	20	3.3
	12.4	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.6	1	16.6	17	2.83

$\Sigma$  49.24

Grand Mean 2.46

**Table 7 T-test Statistic for comparing the mean results of Students' and Teachers' Perceptions on implementation and nature of the Writing Tasks**

Type	Mean	Mean diff.	SD	Sig. 2-tailed
Implementation of the Writing Tasks				
Teachers	2.33	.147	.159	.154
Students	2.18	.301	.245	
Nature of the tasks in the textbooks				
Teachers	3.06		.854	.327
Students	2.76		.711	

*At 0.05 significance level*

*Thus, the critical value for implementation at 0.05 significance level is .3511 and, for the nature of tasks is .911. Hence, since these results are less than the calculated values, the differences in perceptions between teachers and students are not statistically significant.*

To determine whether the mean scores were statistically significant, and, hence, the difference in the mean scores were not attributed from sampling error, the calculated t-value must be greater than the table value.

As indicated in table 10, the calculated t- value (4.603) was found to be far greater than the critical t-value (1.960). Therefore, it can be concluded that the data provided sufficient evidence to claim that there was a strong correlation between the approach teachers currently employ and students' low achievement in writing abilities. In other words, the experimental group showed strong gains that were statistically significant. Hence, the null hypotheses that were stated in chapter 1 were rejected.

#### 4.5 Results of the pre- and posttests

The mean scores of the pre- and post-tests were compared and in order to determine whether the difference obtained in the mean scores were significant, a t-test statistic was computed. The research question was:

*Is the mean score of the writing posttest for the experimental group significantly different from that of the controlled group?*

And the possible hypotheses constructed out of this question are:

**H<sub>0</sub>**. *The mean score for the writing posttest of the experimental group is not significantly different from the mean score of the controlled group.*

Statistically written as, **H<sub>0</sub> :  $\mu_A$  posttest =  $\mu_B$  posttest**

And the alternative hypothesis was :

**H<sub>1</sub>** *The mean score for the writing posttest of the experimental group is significantly different from that of the controlled group. This is statistically written as:*

**H<sub>1</sub> :  $\mu_A$  posttest  $\neq$   $\mu_B$  posttest**

So, for this an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value (table value) was set at d.f. (73) for the two tailed hypotheses and the critical value was + 1.960.

**Table 8** Students' pre and post test results for the experimental group.

<b>Sub. Code</b>	<b>Pretest</b>	<b>Posttest</b>
01	5	8
02	9	12
03	9	11
04	10	10
05	14	17
06	8	14
07	15	19
08	10	16
09	8	12
10	8	13
11	10	12
12	11	11
13	5	12
14	7	13
15	15	19
16	15	19
17	5	11
18	4	9
19	11	16
20	7	8
21	5	10
22	5	12
23	7	15
24	8	12
25	11	15
26	10	16
27	11	15
28	12	17
29	11	18
30	7	10
31	10	10
32	10	7
33	11	16
34	13	17
35	10	15
36	10	14
37	9	13
38	5	11
39	5	11

40	7	7
41	7	11
42	7	14
43	14	15
44	13	17
45	9	13
46	5	7
47	5	11
48	5	12
49	15	16
50	10	12
51	7	15
52	8	11
53	11	16
54	7	12
55	9	7
56	9	14
57	11	16
58	14	19
59	11	16
60	5	13
61	15	14
62	5	12
63	10	14
64	10	13
65	12	16
66	9	14
67	8	12
68	10	15
69	10	13
70	9	9
71	5	8
72	6	14
73	9	15
74	10	14

**Table 9. Students' Pre and posttest Results for Controlled group**

<b>Sub Code</b>	<b>Pretest</b>	<b>Posttest</b>
01	11	12
02	12	10
03	7	8
04	7	6
05	8	9
06	15	13
07	9	13
08	8	12
09	6	4
10	10	10
11	7	8
12	4	5
13	4	6
14	11	10
15	10	13
16	9	6
17	6	6
18	6	5
19	13	10
20	12	11
21	13	13
22	11	9
23	10	15
24	11	8
25	8	9
26	7	8
27	6	7
28	12	14
29	8	5
30	7	5
31	6	5
32	5	9
33	8	10
34	8	10
35	9	9
36	12	14
37	11	12
38	8	6
39	7	5
40	10	7
41	12	10
42	8	10

43	10	10
44	10	9
45	11	8
46	12	9
47	10	12
48	11	12
49	14	14
50	10	9
51	6	9
52	8	7
53	15	12
54	9	10
55	5	7
56	6	7
57	9	7
58	15	13
59	5	4
60	6	4
61	10	9
62	9	4
63	5	5
64	7	4
65	9	6
66	11	14
67	6	4
68	7	8
69	8	7
70	10	7
71	7	7
72	9	10
73	9	11

**Table 10 T-test statistic for the pre- and post test results of the experimental group**

Tests	Mean	Subjects	SD	T-value
Posttest	13.14	74	3.059	4.603
Pretest	9.09	74	2.957	

*At 0.05 significance level*

*Calculated t-value(4.603) > critical value(1.960)*

*Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.*

**Table 11 T-test statistic for the pre- and post test results of the controlled group**

Tests	Mean	Subjects	SD	T-value
Posttest	8.78	73	2.983	0.134
Pretest	8.91	73	2.537	

*At 0.05 significance level*

Thus, based on these findings it can be stated that if students are taught in accordance with the process approach, the approach the textbook recommends, students' achievement in writing would be high.

Furthermore, the specific areas where students showed improvements have been investigated by means of error and content analysis technique. This parameter has been adapted from Alderson, et. al (1995) (see Appendix G).

To this end, so as to find out the progress students have made and, thus, compare the differences after they have been taught with the approach the textbooks recommend (process approach), 15 students' papers were selected on the basis of their performance in the posttest. They were labeled top (above the mean score), average (around the mean score), and below average (below the mean score), according to their results. Based on these respective categories, the similar groups were found to commonly share certain designating features.

The following were discovered as common features for the top students in their pretests: Although the contents were clear, there were obvious difficulties in planning before they wrote; grammar and vocabulary problems were also apparent. In the posttest, there were significant changes in planning and organizing. Substantial changes were not observed, however, in areas of grammar, spelling, and capitalization.

The common features of the average students in the pretest include a) weak planing and organization; b) low input; c) frequent grammar problems; d) some redundancy; e) lack of cohesion; f) less clarity and g) frequent spelling errors.

The performances in the posttest indicated remarkable improvement in organization (paragraphing) and less redundancy, although the improvements in spelling and grammar were minimal.

The common features observed for the below –average students in the pretest were as follows:

- a) No paragraphing (just outline form); b) lack of adequate input; c) deficiency of clarity of ideas; d) very frequent spelling and grammar difficulties (such as, tense, subject-verb agreement, third person singular).

The posttest of these students have shown significant changes in the following areas:

- a) No more outlining (the ideas were written in paragraph forms);
- b) There were some attempts to make ideas clear. Nonetheless, spelling and grammar errors were still frequent.

The fact that the results of the experimental group were statistically significant was indicative of a very important fact: the classroom approach used for implementing the writing tasks had greatly contributed to students' low achievement in writing.

Students and teachers' attitudes with regard to the implementation of the writing tasks were not dissimilar. This illustrated that the survey results substantiated the findings from the hypotheses testing.

Furthermore, a closer look at students' posttest papers seemed to reveal that despite substantial improvements by all groups, i.e., top, average, below average, there were still areas where all students needed to build on to enhance their proficiency in writing. Among these, the most important ones were the provision of adequate input and the practice of planning before writing. In short, students need to learn prewriting strategies in order to enable them improve their drafts.

The findings in this chapter need to be interpreted with caution. Firstly, as shown in the hypotheses testing, it can be boldly stated that the current grammar-centered teaching approach has greatly contributed to students' low achievement in writing. However, given a number of extraneous variables, a limited number of subjects and the subjectivity involved in students and teachers' survey responses, it would be appropriate to state that there may be a few other factors, though minor, that could account for students' low achievements in writing. Among these, the inefficient use of feedback techniques and reading-to write strategies could be mentioned.

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to test the hypotheses stated in chapter 1. Moreover, an effort has been exerted to assess students and teachers' perceptions about the implementation and nature of writing tasks. The findings have been summarized in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

As an aid to the understanding of the reader, this final chapter of the study briefly restates the research problem and hypotheses and reviews methods used in the study. The major sections of this chapter summarize the results, discuss their implications and put forward certain recommendations.

The introduction of the new English textbooks in high schools has been a great stride towards ELT in the local scene. Unlike the former ENE series of textbooks, in the new ones attempts have been made to provide adequate practices for students in all the language skills. The tasks seem to be more communicative and hence lend themselves to active participation of students in the form of group and pair work.

Thus, all these changes were directed towards making the tasks more relevant to the needs of the students as well as enabling them to develop their language skills in parallel. Nonetheless, the transition from the earlier classroom approach to the new one did not seem to be smooth. This was because the new methodology has demanded a lot of organizational skills on the part of teachers.

In particular, the implementation of the writing tasks has become a challenging undertaking. The recurrent complaints about students' low proficiency in writing skills at various levels such as colleges, universities and workplaces, seem to indicate that there is a great need to examine the implementation and the nature of the writing tasks in the new syllabi.

As explained in chapter 1, in order to find out the possible reasons for students' low achievement in writing abilities, two hypotheses were formulated:

- 1) There is no positive correlation between the current grammar-focused teaching approach and students' low proficiency in writing abilities, and
- 2) The failure to incorporate writing-sample tests has a negative impact on students' achievement on writing abilities.

Moreover, students and teachers' perceptions about the teaching-learning activities were investigated. So as to test the hypotheses and assess teachers and students' attitudes, the techniques of data collection devised were pre-and posttests for the hypotheses testing and questionnaires for the attitudes.

The Likert scale was used to measure students and teachers' perceptions. For both instruments, the t-test statistics was employed. The results were then computed, interpreted and analyzed.

## **5.2 Summary**

The summaries of the findings were as follows:

- 1) The pre- and posttest results indicated that students in the experimental group have exhibited substantial improvements in their writing skills. The major causes for these improvements were
  - a) the teaching and testing approach to writing and
  - b) the writing and reading tasks of the textbooks
- 2) The kinds of tasks in the syllabi did not go in line with the progress and achievement tests (Refer to Table3, item 12). There was hardly any attempt to evaluate (assess) students' writing abilities in class tests as well as semester finals. Moreover, despite a clear guide to implement the various tasks of the textbooks, most teachers regarded the writing tasks of the textbooks as side issues that were best taken care of as occasional homework activities (Refer to Table 3, item 11).

- 3) It was found out that students lack adequate input that could help them retrieve relevant contents while engaged in writing activities. Prewriting strategies were not employed at all before students are actually engaged in writing activities. On the other hand, heavy emphasis was laid on grammar and vocabulary (Refer to Table 3, item 6.1-6.4).
- 4) Students' learning preferences were, for the most part, in favor of group learning. Nevertheless, pair/group works were grossly neglected (Refer to Table 2, items 5.1-5.7).

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The findings illustrate that the main cause for the students' low achievement in writing abilities was the failure to implement the new approach (process approach) as it had been designed.

A previous study by Yonas (1996) on the effectiveness of the process approach at the level of freshman, Addis Ababa University, showed that the implementation of this approach was found to improve students' skills in writing.

On the other hand, the students and teachers' survey results of this study revealed that the failure to incorporate writing-sample tests was found to be the other factor contributing to students' low proficiency in writing skill. A number of educators in the field of evaluation also agree that the introduction of subjective types of questions in examinations, such as, paragraph/essay writing and writing short answers, etc., have great beneficial effect in promoting not only students' writing abilities, but also the quality of education. Hughes (1989), and White (1985) state that in comparison to the waste of efforts and time in activities that are in marked disparity with the appropriate learning goals, the cost incurred for such subjective examinations are worth spending.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

- In order to bring about substantial progress in students' writing abilities, teachers should consistently employ the process approach, the approach recommended in the teacher's guidebooks.
- Progress tests and final examinations should incorporate writing-sample questions, such as paragraph/essay writing, writing short answers, etc., to enhance students' writing abilities.
- Given our high school students' background and exposure, it would be useful to promote the extensive reading sections as in-class rather than out-of-class activities until they adopt good reading habits.
- Teaching workshops and training should be strengthened particularly in handling reading and writing lessons in the classroom.

## **5.5 Further Research**

There might be some aspects that were not yet adequately dealt within this study. In particular, additional research seems to be needed on

- The kinds of specific reading-to-write strategies that enhance students' writing abilities, and
- The kinds of feedback that can greatly contribute to students' achievements in writing skills

Although there have been a few studies on these issues, they were all done at tertiary levels. Thus, further research on secondary level would be beneficial.

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## Appendix A

### Questionnaire for Students

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to compile a data for research on the teaching of writing in English. The responses you give may be used to develop the English language learning teaching in Ethiopian high schools. You don't need to write your names. As your responses will be kept confidential, please be frank in answering the questions.

Thank you very much.

#### PART I

Instructions : Questions 1-4 are intended to investigate students' perceptions of learning to write as compared to learning to other skills. Tick ( ✓ ) under only one of the given choices. Remember that each choice has a specific value.

**Strongly agree - 5**

**Agree - 4**

**No opinion - 3**

**Disagree - 2**

**Strongly disagree -1**

1. Learning to write is more important than		5	4	3	2	1
1.1	Listening skills					
1.2	Speaking skills					
1.3	Reading skills					

2. Learning to write is more difficult than learning to		5	4	3	2	1
2.1	Speak					
2.2	read					
2.3	listen					

3. The writing skills are important to me because		5	4	3	2	1
3.1	They will enable me to take notes for reference					
3.2	It would give me ample time to express my ideas better than I could in speaking					
3.3	I have no fear of my English writing to be evaluated by classmates and my teacher					

4. The following are important to improve my writing abilities		5	4	3	2	1
4.1	Appropriate vocabulary					
4.2	Grammatical accuracy					
4.3	Ideas to explore and write about					
4.4	Organizing ideas clearly and logically					

## Part II

Instructions : Question 5 is intended to investigate students' learning preferences in relation to writing skills. Tick (✓) under only one of the given alternatives. Remember that each choice has a specific value:

**Strongly agree : 5**

**Agree : 4**

**Undecided : 3**

**Disagree : 2**

**Strongly disagree : 1**

5. How do you express your feelings regarding the following learning preferences?		5	4	3	2	1
5.1	I enjoy writing tasks while working with two or more classmates.					
5.2	I like to do all my writing by myself. Discussing with others often distract me.					
5.3	I like to spend more time thinking and planning how to approach a writing task.					
5.4	I like to use my written English even if I know I make some mistakes.					
5.5	I like my teacher to let me find my written mistakes.					
5.6	I like my teacher to tell me all my writing mistakes.					
5.7	I like to learn by reading newspapers or/and magazines					

### Part III

Instructions: Questions 6-12 are intended to investigate students' perceptions about the implementation of the writing tasks. Tick (✓) **under only one** of the given alternatives. Remember that each choice has a specific value.

**Always : 4**

**Sometimes : 3**

**Rarely : 2**

**Not at all : 1**

6. We learn writing in our English classes by		4	3	2	1
6.1	Composing ideas in paragraphs on issue raised in our textbooks.				
6.2	Copying exercises from blackboard and completing the tasks.				
6.3	Doing grammar exercises				
6.4	Practice note-taking from different sources				

7. How often do you involve in pair/group work in the writing class?		4	3	2	1

8. How often does your teacher use and/or encourage you to read the following materials?		4	3	2	1

8.1	Newspapers and magazines				
8.2	Supplementary readers				
8.3	Extensive reading parts of your text books				
8.4	Workplace letters, reports, etc.				

9. How often are you given writing assignments?

		4	3	2	1

10. How are your writings corrected?

		4	3	2	1
10.1	By the teacher himself/herself				
10.2	By other classmates				
10.3	By myself, through the checklists written on the blackboard.				

11. What have been the focus of your /your teacher's correction?		4	3	2	1
11.1	Spelling and punctuation				
11.2	Grammatical accuracy				
11.3	Word choice (diction)				
11.4	Organization of ideas				

12. How often are you given the following types of questions in your class tests and/or semester finals?		4	3	2	1
12.1	Paragraph writing				
12.2	Multiple choice				
12.3	Fill in the blanks				
12.4	Writing short answers				

#### Part IV

Instructions: Questions 13-17 are intended to investigate students' opinions on the nature of the writing tasks in the textbooks (Book I & Book II). Tick (✓) under only one of the given alternatives. Remember that each choice has a specific value.

**Strongly agree: 4**

**Agree : 3**

**Disagree : 2**

**Strongly disagree:1**

13. The writing tasks in the textbooks are self-motivating. They initiate us to do the tasks.

4	3	2	1

14. The writing tasks in the textbooks are challenging to me.

4	3	2	1

15. The textbooks encourage me to think, plan, draft and revise my writing.

4	3	2	1

16. The writing tasks in my English textbooks are up to the level of my linguistic proficiency.

4	3	2	1

17. The writing tasks in the textbooks promote my writing abilities.

4	3	2	1

## Part V

Instructions: Question 18 is an open-ended items intended to assess students' perception about the overall teaching learning of writing and the extent of the usefulness of the textbooks.

18. Say whether or not the writing tasks in your textbooks and the approach to teaching writing have improved your writing abilities.

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## Appendix B

### Students' Responses to the Open-ended Questions

**Purpose:** The students were asked to express their opinions whether the writing tasks in the new textbooks and the approach to teaching writing have improved their writing skills. The following were the responses of twenty randomly selected students:

**S<sub>1</sub>** : I would say that the writing tasks are quite good but the problem is that we are usually told to do the writing tasks at home but not in the class room. Besides, they are rarely corrected and, hence, we don't actually know whether we did right or wrong.

**S<sub>2</sub>** : I very much like the writing tasks, especially the parts that deal with writing letters. I like all these exercises but we don't often learn how to write. Instead, we mostly learn grammar and vocabulary.

**S<sub>3</sub>** : The textbooks in general are tough. I think it is beyond our level. I can't say more than that.

**S<sub>4</sub>** : This question should have been forwarded to those students who are learning to write in their classes. Let alone my writing, even my speech doesn't get any listener.

**S<sub>5</sub>** : The textbooks in general are tough. I think they are beyond our level. Probably if we learn all of them all the time (we don't usually learn all the sections of the books), it may become easier.

S<sub>6</sub> : The textbooks did not help me at all because most often teachers focus on grammar and vocabulary. They don't focus on writing. Besides, since writing is not included in our tests, it doesn't worry me.

S<sub>7</sub> : The textbook(s) haven't improved my writing. On the contrary, they have made me confused because the tasks are beyond my level. We don't have any basis.

S<sub>8</sub> : Mostly, the tasks in our textbooks encourage reading rather than writing. Therefore, it is up to the pertinent body to understand this and provide as many exercises as possible in writing.

S<sub>9</sub> : The textbooks have not been of help to me because my teacher always skips the writing tasks saying that we would do them after we completed all other units. So, we are looking forward to that.

S<sub>10</sub> : For me, composing ideas in Amharic is difficult let alone writing in English. That is my self-assessment.

S<sub>11</sub> : I think the textbooks in general have improved my writing abilities. However, our English teacher doesn't often deal with writing exercises. We need the writing skills for many purposes. For example, how to write letters to friends.

S<sub>12</sub> : The textbooks have very few writing exercises. My teacher is good at teaching grammar. She gives us grammar tests. I like the intensive (this is to mean "extensive") reading part which are to be read only by students. In general, the textbooks are interesting.

S<sub>13</sub> : The textbook(s) didn't help me at all.

S14 : I think we will improve our writing tasks if we are given the opportunity to perform all the writing tasks. We did certain tasks towards the beginning of the semester, but later we have totally abandoned the writing sections. Our teacher said that the grammar parts are very important for our examinations and mostly our class activities are dominated by grammar.

S15 : We don't usually learn the reading and the writing parts of the textbooks. However, from my personal reading, I can say that the tasks are very interesting. Since they are not relevant to our examination, we were told to deal with them later.

S16 : The books are so great to me, particularly those which are intended to be read by students only.

S17 : I believe the tasks in the textbooks have improved my writing abilities. I like writing letters to friends.

S18 : I found the writing skills very important. If we learn how to write paragraphs and essays, it will be easy for us to organize ideas, summarize them and so on. For example, we are often told to summarize the notes written in different units of subjects such as, history and biology. However, we don't often do all the exercises of the writing sections of the textbooks.

S19 : To some extent, the writing tasks have improved my writing abilities. I very much like to write letters, and some other pieces of writing.

S20 : I found all the tasks in the textbooks very tough.

- **An attempt has been made to retain the original meaning of the Amharic scripts of students' responses.**

## Appendix C

### Questionnaire for Teachers

The aim of this questionnaire is to compile data for research on the teaching of writing in English. The responses you give may be used to develop the English language learning teaching in Ethiopian high schools. You don't need to write your names. As your responses will be kept confidential, please be frank in answering the questions.

Thank you very much!

#### Part I

Instructions: Questions 1-5 are intended to investigate teachers' perceptions about the nature of the writing tasks in the new textbooks (Book I & Book II). Tick (✓) under only one of the given choices.

Remember that each choice has a specific value.

**Strongly agree : 4**

**Agree : 3**

**Disagree : 2**

**Strongly disagree : 1**

1. The writing tasks are self-motivating in that they initiate students to do the tasks.

4	3	2	1

2. The writing tasks in the textbooks are challenging to students.

4	3	2	1

3. The writing tasks in the textbooks encourage students to think, plan, draft and revise their writing.

4	3	2	1

4. The writing tasks are up to the level of the students' linguistic proficiency.

4	3	2	1

5. The writing tasks in the textbooks promote the students' writing abilities.

4	3	2	1

## Part II

Instructions: Questions 6-12 are intended to investigate teachers' perceptions about the implementation of the writing tasks in the textbooks (Book I & Book II). Tick (✓) under only one of the given alternatives.

Remember that each choice has a specific value.

**Always : 4**

**Sometimes : 3**

**Rarely : 2**

**Not at all : 1**

6. In the writing class, I		4	3	2	1
6.1	Explain how to do a task in the textbook and let the students complete it/them				
6.2	Give students different tasks on the blackboard so that they copy and complete them.				
6.3	Doing grammar exercises				
6.4	Let students practice note-taking from different sources				

7. How often do you let students work in pairs/groups?

4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---

8. How often do you use the following reading resources in your English classes?		4	3	2	1
8.1	Newspapers and magazines				
8.2	Supplementary readers				
8.3	Extensive reading parts of your textbooks				
8.4	Workplace letters, reports, etc.				

9. How often do you give writing assignments/tests?

4	3	2	1

10. How are students' writing corrected?

		4	3	2	1
10.1	I will correct them				
10.2	I will let students exchange their exercise books and correct each others' work.				
10.3	I will write them checklists on the blackboard so that each of them corrects his/her own work.				

11. What have been the focuses of the corrections made on students' exercise books?

		4	3	2	1
11.1	Spelling and punctuation				
11.2	Grammatical accuracy				
11.3	Word choice (diction)				
11.4	Organization of ideas				

12. How often do you include such kinds of questions in your class tests or / and semester finals?

		4	3	2	1
12.1	Paragraph writing				
12.2	Multiple choice				
12.3	Fill-in-the-blanks				
12.4	Writing short answers				

### Part III

Instructions: Questions 13 and 14 are open-ended items that are intended to assess teachers' perceptions about the overall teaching-learning of writing with specific emphasis on factors that negatively affect the implementation of the writing tasks.

13. How do you see teaching writing with the new textbooks? Are there any factors that you think negatively affect the teaching learning of writing with the new textbooks? If so, what are they?

14. What do you think should be done to overcome the difficulties of teaching writing at present?

## Appendix D

### Teachers' responses to open-ended questions

The teachers were asked two questions to express their feelings /attitudes: **Firstly**, about the teaching of writing with the new materials and factors that may negatively affect the teaching of writing; **Secondly**, about what they believe should be taken to overcome these difficulties.

All the responses of the six teachers were taken up here.

#### Part I

The responses given below are for the first question.

**T<sub>1</sub>**: Well, the new textbooks are quite good as compared to the previous ENE ones. This is because the new ones incorporate all the skills and they are somehow balanced. However, when we see the section that deals with writing skill, they are impractical. The writers of the textbooks did not take into account the number of students in a class. Can one teach composition in a class where we have an average of 85 students? I mean, how would the teacher be able to correct students' work? Suppose a teacher gives a test that consists of writing compositions, when will he/she finish correcting the 85 papers? It is just absurd. I do have one question myself. Why do we teach writing anyway? Particularly at this grade level, what we teachers are concerned about is how well our students are prepared for exams. Writing is not in the exams.

**T<sub>2</sub>**: Obviously, teaching writing is interesting, although it is not simple. I mean, correcting students' papers and so on. But we have to have practical purpose in

mind. What is its 'use-value' for our students at present? Are they required to write compositions in our school finals or national examination? A BIG NO! We are all working towards making our students successful in exams. So the main factors affecting the teaching of writing are two:

(a) large class size and (b) the tasks being irrelevant to exams.

**T<sub>3</sub>:** Everyone knows that teaching writing needs a lot of time. If I start doing one writing exercise, it may take the whole week to complete it. The 40 minutes class is not conducive to teach even one aspect of the entire lesson. I think what affects the teaching of writing negatively is the present time allotment for English class. It's too short for writing lessons.

**T<sub>4</sub>:** I personally feel that the new materials /textbooks, in general, are a little beyond the current level of the students' ability (linguistic proficiency). Students are expected to do too much within a period. Therefore, all English teachers of this grade level agreed to do all the writing activities after completing all the lessons in the books. This is to say we agreed to do writing lessons if, and only if, we get extra time. Last year, for example, we couldn't finish even the other parts of the new materials. Consequently, we didn't teach writing at all. I'm afraid, this might be the case this year, too.

**T<sub>5</sub>:** To be frank with you, I like the contents of the new textbooks. All of them. However, there are two things I wonder about those people who were the pioneers for the making of these English books. The first is whether they used the information we gave them before their ( the textbooks-mine ) publication? The second is whether they ever taught English in Ethiopian schools? I said this because of the exercises. Good as they are, do not at all go with the level of our students at present. They (students) don't have solid basis and exposure to use the language. So, I think without having a good basis of grammar

and vocabulary, how could they write compositions? And then if they write who is going to mark 6 x 80 students' compositions? In addition, students need to practice grammar exercises, which are more helpful for their exams.

**T<sub>6</sub>:** In my opinion, teaching as well as learning writing skill is difficult. That is why we don't have questions like writing compositions in national examinations such as, ESLCE or 8<sup>th</sup> grade national exam. I don't know why they include writing in the new books knowing that most teachers would deliberately skip it.

The factors that affect the teaching of writing are as follows:

- 1) Most of the writing activities are time-consuming. They do not accord with the 40 minutes' class.
- 2) The exercises are good but they do not help students to prepare them for examinations.
- 3) Teachers' lack of training in the area of writing.

## Part II

**The responses given below are for the second question:**

- T<sub>1</sub>:** Well, I suggest resizing the number of students in a class. This would ease the teaching of writing. Correcting papers become easier, testing will also be possible. So something has to be done with the students' number.
- T<sub>2</sub>:** I think the writing parts of the new materials should totally be abandoned at this grade level. The reason is our priority in grade 10 is to prepare our students for the national exam that doesn't include writing. Perhaps the writing parts could be included in grade 11.
- T<sub>3</sub>:** Increasing the number of English periods in a week so that we can have sufficient time to deal with the writing activities. In addition, the number of teachers should also rise to make it more practical.
- T<sub>4</sub>:** To put it briefly, the new textbooks need to be revised in such a way that they fit the level of students' abilities (linguistic proficiency).
- T<sub>5</sub>:** I recommend a serious revision of textbooks so as to meet the level of students' capability (linguistic proficiency). Moreover, students should be exposed to writing examinations as in the olden days. These practices would make them aware of the importance of writing for their higher education as well as on the job.
- T<sub>6</sub>:** Well, it would be useful to give training/workshop for teachers on teaching writing. It would also be useful considering the inclusion of questions such as writing compositions in ESLCE. Once this starts, the teaching of writing would be seriously done.

## Appendix E

### Pretest

**Purpose:** The objective of this test is to see the students' ability in writing before they were taught with a process approach.

**Instruction:** Write a composition describing about yourself. Include as many details as possible. Follow the recommended procedure for writing composition:

1. Think
2. Plan
3. Write
4. Check

**Remember to write in paragraphs**

**You can start the first paragraph as follows:**

My name is ..... I live in Addis Ababa at  
.....district (Woreda). .....

## **Appendix F**

### **Posttest**

**Purpose:** The aim of this posttest is to see whether students have improved their writing abilities after they were taught with process approach.

**Instructions:** Write a composition describing Merkato. Follow the recommended procedure for writing a composition:

1. Think
2. Plan
3. Write
4. Check

**Remember to write in paragraphs.**

**The first part of the composition has been done for you:**

#### **Merkato**

Merkato is the largest market place in Africa. It is found in the center of Addis Ababa.

## Appendix G

### Error and Content Analysis Technique

Adapted from Alderson, et al (1995)

#### Analytic Scale Marking

Area of Focus	Marks	Description
<i>Content adequacy (input), relevance</i>	0	<i>The answer bears no relation; inadequate response / incorrect choice of words</i>
	2	<i>Limited relevance to the task set; frequent inadequacies in vocabulary;</i>
	3	<i>pointless repetition</i>
	5	<i>For the most part answers the task set; there may be some gaps / repetitions but then the vocabulary items used are clear. Relevant and adequate to the task set; adequate vocabulary items</i>
<i>paragraphing</i>	0	<i>No apparent shape/organization. All the information have been mixed up.</i>
	1	<i>Very little shape</i>
	2	<i>Some organized skills in evidence but not adequately controlled</i>
	3	<i>Overall shape and internal pattern clear. Organizational skills sufficiently</i>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Cohesion</i> (with specific emphasis on conjunctions)</p>		<i>controlled</i>
	0	<i>Almost no use of conjunctions</i>
	1	<i>Unsatisfactory use of conjunctions</i>
	2	<i>For the most part satisfactory use of</i>
	3	<i>conjunctions.</i> <i>Satisfactory use of conjunctions.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Grammar</i></p>	0	<i>Almost all grammatical patterns</i> <i>inaccurate.</i>
	1	<i>Frequent grammatical inaccuracies.</i>
	2	<i>Some grammatical inaccuracies.</i>
	3	<i>Almost no grammatical inaccuracies.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mechanical</i> <i>Accuracy</i></p>	0	<i>Ignorance of conventions of punctuation( low standard of accuracy of punctuation)</i>
	2	<i>Some inaccuracies in punctuation.</i>
	3	<i>Almost no inaccuracies in punctuation</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Spelling</i></p>	0	<i>Almost all spelling inaccurate.</i>
	1	<i>Low standard of Accuracy.</i>
	2	<i>Some inaccuracies in spelling.</i>
	3	<i>Almost no inaccuracies in spelling.</i>

# Appendix H

## አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

### የውጪ ቋንቋዎችና ስነፅሁፍ ክፍል

#### መጠይቅ

ለአዲስ አበባ ከተማ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ት/ቤት የ10ኛ ክፍል ተማሪዎች የተዘጋጀ የዚህ መጠይቅ ዓላማ የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ የመጻፍ ክህሎትን ማስተማር በተመለከተ ከተለያዩ ጥናትና ምርምር መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው። የምትሰጡት ምላሽ ለኢትዮጵያ የሁለተኛ ደረጃ የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ መማር ማስተማር መጎልበት ሊያገለግል ይችላል። ስማችሁን መጻፍ አያስፈልግ ም። የምትሰጡት ምላሽ በሚስጥርነት የሚጠበቅ ስለሚሆን ጥያቄዎቹን በሙሉ በግልፅነት እንዲመልሱ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ።

አመሠግናለሁ !

#### ክፍል አንድ

መመሪያ : ከተራ ቁጥር 1-4 ያሉት ጥያቄዎች አላማ፡ተማሪዎች የመጻፍ ክህሎት ከሌሎቹ የቋንቋ ክህሎቶች ጋር በማወዳደር ስላላቸው አስተሳሰብ / እምነት ለመመርመር የታቀደ ነው ። ከተሰጡት የቁጥር አማራጮች አንድ ላይ ብቻ የ(✓)ምልክት ያድርጉበት። ለአያንዳንዱ ምርጫ የተለየ ነጥብ እንደተሰጠው ያስተውሉ ።

- አጥብቄ እስማማለሁ 5
- እስማማለሁ 4
- አስተያየት የለኝም 3
- አልስማማም 2
- በፍፁም አልስማማም 1

1	የመጻፍ ክህሎት መማር ከ -----ይበልጥ ጠቃሚ ነው ።	5	4	3	2	1
1.1	መስማት ክህሎት					
1.2	መናገር ክህሎት					
1.3	ማንበብ ክህሎት					

2	የመጻፍ ክህሎትን መማር ----- ን ክህሎት ከመማር ይልቅ አስቸጋሪ ነው።	5	4	3	2	1
2.1	የመናገር					
2.2	የማንበብ					
2.3	የማድመጥ					

3	የመጻፍ ክህሎት ለእኔ በጣም ጠቃሚ ነው ምክንያቱም	5	4	3	2	1
3.1	ለዋቢነት የሚያገለግሉ ፅሁፍችን ለመጻፍ ያስችለኛል					
3.2	ከመናገር ይልቅ አሳቤን በተሻለ ሁኔታ እንድንገልፅ ጊዜ ይሰጠኛል					
3.3	የእንግሊዝኛ ፅሁፌ በክፍል ጓደኞችም ሆነ በአስተማሪዬ ቢገመገም ምንም አያስፈራኝም።					

4	ከዚህ ቀጥለው የተዘረዘሩት ነገሮች የፅሁፍ ችሎታዬ እንዲጎለብት ስለሚረዱ ጠቃሚ ናቸው ።	5	4	3	2	1
4.1	ተገቢ ቃላቶች					
4.2	የስዋስው ትክክለኛነት					
4.3	ለመጻፍ የሚያስችሉ ፍሬ ሀሳቦች					
4.4	የሀሳብ በግልፅና በተገቢው ሁኔታ መጠናቀር					

### ክፍል ሁለት

መመሪያ : በተራ ቁጥራ 5 የተካተቱት ጥያቄዎች ዋናኛ ዓላማ ተማሪዎች ለመማር ስለሚመርጡት የተለያዩ ዘዴዎች ያላቸውን አስተሳሰብ ብ (እምነት) ለመመርመር የታቀደ ነው :: ከተሰጡት አማራጮች አንድ ላይ ብቻ የ (✓) ምልክት ያድርጉበት። እያንዳንዱ ምርጫ የተለየ ነጥብ እንዳለው ያስታውሱ ::

- አጥብቄ እስማማለሁ 5
- እስማማለሁ 4
- ለመወሰን አስቸጋሪ 3
- አልእስማማም 2
- በፍፁም አልእስማማም 1

5	የሚከተሉትን የመማር ዘዴ አማራጮች እንዴት ይመዘኑ ኑአቸዋል?	5	4	3	2	1
5.1	የማፍ ክህሎትን በተመለከተ የሚሰጡ መልመጃዎችን ከሁለት ወይም ከዚያ በላይ የክፍል ጓደኞች ጋር በመነጋገር መስራት እወዳለሁ					
5.2	የማፍ ክህሎት መልመጃዎችን ለብቻዬ ብሰራቸው እመርጣለሁ። ከሌሎች ጋር መወያየቱ ብዙውን ጊዜ ሀሳቤን ይበታተኑኛል።					
5.3	የማፍ ክህሎት መልመጃን እንዴት እንደምሰራ ማሰብና ማቀድ እወዳለሁ።					
5.4	አንዳንድ ስህተቶች እንደምሰራ ባውቅም በእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ መጻፍ እወዳለሁ።					
5.5	የሰራሷቸውን የፅሁፍ ስህተቶች ሁሉ እራሴ ለይቼ እንዳውቃቸው አስተማሪዬ ቢረዳኝ እወዳለሁ።					
5.6	የሰራሷቸውን የፅሁፍ ስህተቶች ሁሉ አስተማሪዬ ቢነግረኝ እወዳለሁ።					
5.7	ጋዜጦችንና መፅሔቶችን በማንበብ መማር እወዳለሁ።					

### ክፍል ሶስት

መመሪያ : ከተራ ቁጥር 6-12 ያሉት ጥያቄዎች ዋነኛ ዓላማ በአሁኑ ወቅት የመፀፍ ክህሎት መማር ማስተማር አንዴት አንደሚተገበር የሚመረምር ነው። ከተሰጡት አማራጮች አንድ ላይ ብቻ የ(✓) ምልክት ያድርጉበት። አያንዳንዱ ምርጫ የተለየ ነጥብ እንዳለው ያስታውሱ።

- ሁልጊዜ 4
- አንዳንድ ጊዜ 3
- አልፎ አልፎ 2
- በፍፁም 1

6	በእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ክፍለ ጊዜ የመፃፍ ክህሎትን የምንማረው	4	3	2	1
6.1	በመፅሀፍችን ላይ በሰፈሩት ሀሳቦች ላይ በመመስረት				
6.2	ከጥቁር ሰሌዳና ከሌላ ምንጮች በመገልበጥ				
6.3	የስዋሰው መልመጃዎችን በመስራት				
6.4	ለማስታወሻነት የሚያገለግል የመፀፍ ክህሎትን በመለማመድ				

7	በየሰንት ጊዜ በጥንድ /በቡድን ሆናችሁ የመፀፍ ክህሎት መልመጃዎችን ትሰራላችሁ ?	4	3	2	1

8	በምን ያህል ጊዜ የሚከተሉትን የፅሁፍ አማራጮች ወደ ክፍል ውስጥ በማምጣትም ሆነ አንድ ታነቡ በመገፋፋት አስተማሪያችሁ ያበረታታችኋል?	4	3	2	1
8.1	ጋዜጦችና መፅሔቶችን				
8.2	ድጋፍ ሰጪ የንባብ መፅሐፎችን				
8.3	የመማሪያ መፅሀፍቶች ላይ ያሉትን የኤክስቴንሲቭ ንባቦችን				
8.4	የመስሪያ ቤት ደብዳቤዎችን፣ ሪፖርቶችን ወዘተ				

### ክፍል አራት

መመሪያ : ከተራ ቁጥር 13-17 ያሉት ጥያቄዎች ዋና ዓላማ በሁለቱ የመማሪያ መፅሐፍት ላይ ስላሉት የመፃፍ ክህሎት መልመጃዎች ይዘት ላይ ተማሪዎች ያላቸውን አስተሳሰብ ለመመርመር ነው። ከተሰጡት አማራጮች አንድ ላይ ብቻ የ(✓) ምልክት ያድርጉበት። እያንዳንዱ አማራጭ የተለየ ነጥብ ያለው መሆኑን ያስታውሱ ።

- አጥብቂ ኢስማማለሁ                    4
- ኢስማማለሁ                                    3
- አልስማማም                                2
- በፍፁም አልስማማም                    1

		4	3	2	1
13	በመማሪያ መፅሐፍቶች ውስጥ የተካተቱት የፅሁፍ መልመጃዎች ራስ-አነሳሽ ናቸው ። የመልመጃዎቹ ይዘት ራሱ አንድንሰራቸው ይጋብዛሉ።				
14	በመማሪያ መፅሐፍቶቹ ውስጥ የተካተቱት የመፃፍ ክህሎት መልመጃዎች ለመስራት ተፈታታኝ ናቸው።				
15	በመማሪያ መፅሐፍቶች ውስጥ የተካተቱት መልመጃዎች ኢንዱስትሪ ፣ ኢንዱስትሪ ፣ ረቂቅ ፅሁፍ ኢንዱስትሪ ፣ ኢንዱስትሪና ኢንዱስትሪ ያበረታታሉ።				
16	በመማሪያ መፅሐፍቶች የተካተቱት የመፃፍ ክህሎት መልመጃዎች ከቋንቋ ችሎታዎ ጋር የተመጣጠኑ ናቸው።				
17	የመማሪያ መፅሐፍቶች የተካተቱት የመፃፍ ክህሎት መልመጃዎች የፅሁፍ ክህሎቱን ያሳድጋሉ / ያገለግላሉ ።				

9	በምን ያህል ጊዜ አንቀጽ የጸደቀና የመሳሰሉት የፅሁፍ የቤት ስራዎች ወይም / እና የክፍል ሙከራዎች ይሰጡአችኋል?	4	3	2	1

10	የፅሁፍ ስህተቶቻችሁ የሚታረሙት አንዴት ነው?	4	3	2	1
10.1	በአስተማሪው /ዋ ይታረማሉ				
10.2	እርስ በርሳችን እንድናርም ይደረጋል				
10.3	የምናርምበት የማስተካከያ ዝርዝሮች እየተሰጡን የየራሳችንን እናርማለን ::				

11	የፅሁፍ ስህተቶቻችሁ ማስተካከያ የሚያተኩሩት በየትኞቹ ነጥቦች ላይ ነው?	4	3	2	1
11.1	በአፃፃፍ እና የፅሁፍ ስርአተ-ነጥቦች ላይ				
11.2	በሰዎስው ተክክለኛነት ላይ				
11.3	በቃላት አመራረጥ ላይ				
11.4	በሀሳብ ጥንቅር ላይ				

12	በምን ያህል ጊዜ የሚከተሉት የፈተና ጥያቄዎች ዓይነት በክፍል ሙከራዎች ወይም /እና በሴሚስተር መጨረሻ ፈተናዎች ይሰጣችኋል?	4	3	2	1
12.1	አንቀጽ /አች የመፃፍ ጥያቄዎች				
12.2	የምርጫ ጥያቄዎች				
12.3	በክፍት ቦታ ሙሉ/ሙይ አይነት ጥያቄዎች				
12.4	አጠር ያሉ መልሶችን የመፃፍ ጥያቄዎች				

### ክፍል አምስት

መመሪያ : ተራ ቁጥር 18 በነፃ ሀሳብዎን የሚገልፁበት ጥያቄ ነው አላማውም ተማሪዎች የመፃፍ ክህሎትን በተመለከተ በመካሄድ ላይ ስላለው የመማር ማስተማር ሂደት ለአንቅስቃሴ እና የመማሪያ መፀሐፍቶችም ምን ያህል ጠቃሚ ሆነው እንዳገኙ አቸው ለመመርመር የሚያስችል ነው።

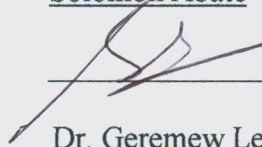
18. በአራት ወይም በአምስት መስመር የመፃፍ ክህሎት ትምህርት አሰጣጥንም ሆነ የመማሪያ መፀሐፍቶች የመፃፍ ክህሎታችሁን ከማጎልበት አንፃር ያላቸውን ጠቀሜታ ይፃፉ ።

## DECLARATION

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This thesis is my original work, and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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