

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies

**An Exploratory Study on the Implementation of the Process
Approach to the Teaching/Learning of the Course Basic Writing
Skills: The Case of Hawassa University**

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Addis Ababa

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Abstract

The major purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which the process approach was being implemented in Basic Writing classes at Hawassa University. To achieve this, the researcher employed descriptive qualitative method of study. In analyzing the results of the questionnaires, however, he used qualitative method. The major research tool was observation conducted in two Basic Writing Skills classes. The second one was semi-structured interviews conducted with both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students who were taking the course in the university mentioned above. The third one was evaluation of the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Skills classes and the last one was questionnaire administered to both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students who were taking the course. In an attempt to investigate the perceptions of instructors and students about the method of teaching being used in conducting the course, the results from the classroom observations, interviews and questionnaires revealed that 50% of the respondents were of the perception that the process approach was being employed with the product approach side by side. Regarding the feasibility of the teaching materials in implementing the process approach, the data collected through all the research tools mentioned above similarly indicated that 50% of the materials were developed in conformity with the process approach. In an effort made to investigate the extent to which the process approach was implemented in conducting the course, the summary of the results pointed out that the process approach was implemented by and large, in conducting 50% of the writing lessons.

In investigating the factors which were responsible not to appropriately implement the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes, the following factors were identified as dominant constraints: less attention given to writing when students were at secondary school, the nature of examinations which were being administered both at school and national level, time constraints for continuous practices, students' shortcomings in their grammar skills, problems related to methods of teaching in conducting writing lessons, lack of refreshment trainings for instructors, limitations in the teaching materials, attitudinal differences among instructors were among others. In sum, though the process approach has been employed in conducting the lessons in Basic Writing Skills classes, it has not yet been given full attention at Hawassa University.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is one of the important language skills which have multidimensional advantages in different aspects of human life. Among its several contributions, the role it plays in promoting the academic performance of students is underscored by a large number of scholars repeatedly. As studies on writing instructions further indicate the major reasons for being concerned with written language is that improving written language is a vivid manifestation of the writer to establish organized thought patterns, powerful thinking capacity and efficiency to analyze and synthesize facts which are demanding and challenging in dealing with the academic world. This means, writing, which is an integral part of language teaching and learning process, is a language skill which needs a good deal of attention to succeed academically at any level of learning. In other words, the more students are efficient in written skills, the better they perform academically. This in turn takes us to the understanding that students at any level of learning can accomplish their academic tasks more successfully when they have reasonably acceptable competence in writing skills. In sum, writing ability has significant role on students' success.

Despite the fact that writing is an indispensable language skill before and after school life of students, studies conducted subsequently revealed that it is not easy to develop it as it is both demanding and challenging by its very nature. Studies so far conducted disclosed that learning and improving writing skills has to do with such factors as psychological, cognitive and linguistics. Furthermore, the difficulty of writing skills is attributed to such factors as the method of instruction, the kind of teaching materials, beliefs and perceptions of the instructors on the current theories and practices, the class-size, the interest of the learners to augment their writing proficiency, the time given for practicing, inter-alia.

As a number of writing researchers such as Wilson (2003) report, though writing is one of the four basic language skills which need goal-oriented instruction like other language skills, it has long been the most neglected skill. It has been considered either not important enough, compared to speaking to deserve any special treatment or simply too difficult a skill to teach. In the late 1970s

and early 1980s, when an increasing number of non-native English speaking students began to appear in institutions of higher education in North America and English speaking countries, the need to equip these students with good writing skills in order for them to succeed in their education became mandatory. Thus, as Degi (2005) remarked, the writing pedagogy of that day in EFL/ESL writing classes included reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right.

As a result of this, a new writing pedagogy that emphasizes teaching ESL/EFL writing beyond language skills began to develop, and writing courses that help develop writing as writing were introduced in universities through English language teaching movements that provided language training to non-native English speaking students. This new movement has generated new initiative and investigations through research on the part of the practitioners and researchers examining the nature of ESL/EFL writing and led to the development of a variety of action research to improve writing instructions. As a result, writing pedagogies have evolved plentifully due to various influences such as demographic and social changes, insights resulted from research, and several movements among teachers. Recognizing that writing is an essential language skill for various reasons, practitioners and researchers have continued to reduce the challenging nature of writing and make students competent in meeting the ever changing demands of private, academic, and professional life.

The first approach to writing instruction, that is, the product approach, geared towards almost exclusively on mechanics, commonly referred to today as conventions. The major emphasis was placed on handwriting, grammar, mechanics, capitalization and the like. Papers were more likely to be evaluated on the accuracy of grammar than on content, style or creative expression of ideas. The major purpose of writing was to enable learners produce error-free texts. During this period, the behaviorists' view of language teaching, which thought learning as an action of stimulus and response in the learner was influential. In their further explanation, the behaviorists argued that teachers could connect responses involving lower-level skills with that of higher-level skills. To achieve this, Edwards and Havriluk (1997) note that the teacher is responsible in determining all of the language skills that are needed to bring about the desired behaviors on the learners and thus he/she has to be sure that students learned them all in a step-by-step manner

When it is related to the teaching of writing , students are encouraged to imitate a model text, which is usually presented and analyzed at an early stage and then they are required to produce written texts replica of the model that they had already been provided with. In short, when the language teaching practices during this period are evaluated, it is possible to say that writing was subservient to speech.

The other pedagogical phase is characterized as a paradigm where the writer is at the center of attention in the teaching/learning process. The core idea of the philosophy of the school was that the only man who has brought behavioral change is the man who learned how to learn; the man who learned how to adapt and change; the man who realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives basis for security. This approach was for the first time introduced by Emig (1971).The main purpose of writing instruction during this period was to motivate learners to generate ideas, draft them into texts and discover meaning by themselves with less attention to linguistic accuracy. During this period, teachers began to allocate sufficient time for their students for selecting topics, generating ideas, writing drafts conducting revisions and writing the final draft of their paragraphs or essays.

Therefore, their role is to carefully follow up what writers do in the course of developing a given text and give them comments to write better. Where linguistic accuracy was previously emphasized from the outset, at this junction, it is down played until writers have generated ideas and structured their texts. In further investigation, we observe that some practitioners even entirely have omitted their attention to grammar as in some ESL/ESL writing textbooks that contain no grammar reference or instructional component. We can, thus, conclude that this period is characterized as a period of new movement when writing instruction was radically changed from the perspective of imitating a model to independent mode of learning. This independent mode of learning is the process approach. As a number of studies conducted relentlessly on composition instruction disclosed, employing the process approach in different contexts of ESL/EFL writing classes is more appropriate to make students successful in achieving good writing ability.

However challenging writing skill is to develop, as long as instructors are well aware of the notions of current theories and practices and are determined to implement them successfully, studies on composition writing revealed that improving the writing skills of students is not as such the most complicated issue of the ESL/ EFL practitioners.

When we associate the situation with realities in the School of Language and Communication Studies at Hawassa University, Basic Writing Skills is one of the courses which are being offered as a common course to all freshman students who have successfully passed the pre-requisite course entitled, Communicative English Skills. The major objective of the course is to enable students express themselves in written English where and when necessary spontaneously. As the curriculum committee of the school stated in the outline of the course, the course has to be conducted through learner-centered approach or the process approach.

Hawassa University previously, part of Debu University, is a university in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State of Ethiopia. It is located at 273 kms distance from the capital, Addis Ababa. The university was established as a body of Debu University on 22 December 1999 on the basis of the Council of Ministers' Regulation No. 62/1999, which ordered the unification of Awassa College of Agriculture, Dilla College of Teachers Education and Health, and Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources. Dilla College of Teachers Education and Health was later separated from Hawassa and now stands as a university independently by opening new faculties and schools. Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources and the Health Faculty, however, have still been under the administration of Hawassa University.

The School of Communication and Language Studies is one of the academic bodies in the university which offer service (common) courses, skill courses, linguistic courses, literature courses and journalism courses at BA degree level to the students of the non-teaching stream. It also gives training to English Education students at post graduate diploma level since last academic year. Moreover, it has begun launching TEFL and Communication and Journalism programmes at master's degree level since 2012.

As a staff member of the school, the researcher informally hears different views from both writing instructors and students and observes different practices with regard to the teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing Skills. Some instructors are heard saying that the course is one of the relevant courses which are being conducted through the process approach to help students express themselves successfully in written English. Others are contrarily heard complaining that though the course has significant contribution in improving the students' writing skills, it could not achieve its goal due to the conventional method of teaching some instructors frequently employ. The rationale of conducting this research is, thus, to investigate the extent to which the process approach is implemented in offering the course at Hawassa University.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Investigations on improving students' writing skills have been issues for long years. Writing researchers, in their attempt to search for more successful approach to writing instruction, they came up with a number of approaches which laid their philosophy on various theoretical foundations. Since the middle of the seventies, a large number of theories have been developed on the process of learning a second language. In the context of developing a model for second language learning, comprehensiveness or exhaustiveness should directly signify two important features of the process of learning. The first is the axiom that second language learning is a multifactor phenomena involving, for example, cognitive processes, social and cultural determinants as well as individual characteristics. The second feature is the fact that second language learning is multi-disciplinary in that several disciplines, some central and others peripheral contribute to the understanding of the process. A model of second language learning should, therefore, subsume within various domains of the process and accommodate the findings and contributions of other related disciplines towards the study and understanding of second language learning.

In connection to this, a plethora of research studies conducted into composition instruction (1945-1990), reveal that there are several methods and approaches developed to teach writing skills. To mention few: controlled or guided writing, writing for academic purposes, the product approach are among others. Language educators, such as (Flower and Hayes, 1982; Bereiter and Scardmala, 1989; Cooley, 1992;), however, argue that the approaches to the teaching of writing can be

classified broadly into two paradigms: namely, the process and the product approaches. These two paradigms could again be classified further into various other branches. The product paradigm, for example, can be classified into controlled or guided composition and English for academic purposes. Similarly, the process approach is categorized into cognitivists' approach and expressivists' approach to teaching writing. Regardless of the fact that each approach has its own strengths and weaknesses in handling writing skills, some have won acclaim depending on the contemporary demands of second language teaching and the context in which it is being taught.

These days, as most of the second language classrooms are highly influenced by the communicative approach to second language teaching, emphasizing the process approach to composition instruction is mandatory in writing classes. Experience and research results show that in the contemporary writing classes, emphasizing accuracy over communicative intent is likely self-defeating because the teaching of writing successfully achieves its goal when students work with their writing and the teachers with their students. In this regard, Bracewell (2001) remarks that it is unthinkable to marginalize the process approach to writing from the cognitive developmental psychology and the communicative approach to language teaching.

When we critically observe the theoretical foundations of the communicative approach to language teaching and the process approach to handle writing skills, they highly complement each other in many ways. According to the philosophy of the communicative language teaching, language is a system for expression of meaning. Its primary function is, thus, for interaction and communication. Consequently, the fundamental objective of the communicative approach is to enhance the functional and linguistic skills of the learner. The role of the learner is, hence, to involve in the process of communication by sharing information, negotiating meaning and interacting with peers. The role of the teacher is to facilitate the communication process, analyze the needs of the learners, counsel the learners about their performance and manage the process effectively.

By the same token, as White and Arndt (1995) explain that the process approach, which emanates from the cognitive developmental psychology, considers writing as a goal oriented and recursive

act where a writer discovers meaning and shapes it through the writing process. Yonas (1996) further explains that in the process writing classrooms, where writing is conceived as a creative thinking process within various contexts, students participate in discovering meaning through problem-solving approach. The other researcher Solomon (2004) discusses that students in process writing classes are often engaged in working out meanings, negotiating, idea sharing, reviewing their written work so that they demonstrate measurable and observable improvement on their writing rapidly.

On the basis of the experience of the researcher as a writing instructor at university level and the informal discussions that he held with a number of writing instructors, most of them are of the opinion that most freshman students produce written texts which do not meet the required standard when they develop term-papers, assignments, examinations and other discourses. Moreover, instructors from other departments, who are conducting courses other than English, are informally heard that they face so many serious challenges when they evaluate paragraphs or essays that students produce when they respond to different subjective items of examinations. As most of these instructors suggest, the major reason is the incomprehensible writing that most students produce as response to the exam items. Therefore, as the researcher informally discussed and practically observed, some instructors are in a position to refrain from setting up exam items which require the students' writing capacity for further analyses and explanations.

In addition to the researcher's personal experience and the informal discussions that he conducted with writing instructors at Hawassa University, there are a number of local research studies which confirm the low standard of most university students' and secondary school students' writing skills. Solomon (2004), for example, is of the view that these days most students at secondary school level do not produce written texts which meet the required standard. As he further explains, one of the reasons is the less attention given to the process approach in the teaching materials. This implies that in their approach to teaching writing, writing instructors could not help their students to practice writing independently due to the limitations in the teaching materials. Furthermore, Tsegaye (2006) reports in his study that most Grade Twelve students are unable to write a single meaningful sentence let alone large texts like paragraphs or essays.

Similarly, Yonas (1996) and Haregewoin (2008) corroborate that most students who join Addis Ababa University hardly produce paragraphs or essays which meet the required standard.

In spite of the fact that difficulties in writing are attributed to multifarious factors, the conspicuous ones are giving less attention to the implementation of more appropriate language teaching theories, using teaching materials which give less opportunity to students to practice writing meaningfully, the belief and perception of both writing instructors and students towards the nature of writing and its instruction and the like. Accordingly, a number of studies conducted on writing instruction reveal that the process approach to writing instruction is one of the appropriate model of writing instructions which bring about substantial progress on students' writing. Yonas (1996), for example, argues that the major cause for the low achievement of students in their writing is the failure of implementers to employ the process approach in their writing classes. Moreover, as Atkinson (2003) further explains, writing is a skill, which involves a conscious mental effort; the mental effort in turn, creates critical thinking and the critical thinking results in inspiration for writing. Thus, in implementing the process approach in writing classes, the writing activities need to be developed in such a way that they reflect the writing process in good writers. Hence, when students attempt to produce written texts such as paragraphs or essays, writing instructors need to encourage them to go through the phases of planning, organizing, composing, reviewing, revising and editing recursively.

The process approach to writing, as a complex process, is an integration of other processes. Thus, it is a holistic approach which includes other approaches to writing instruction. Therefore, writing instructors have wide opportunity to utilize a variety of other approaches such as text-oriented, purpose-oriented, English for academic purposes, etc., meaningfully and creatively. Haregewoin (2008:10) upholds the above view suggesting: "Students' achievement is higher when the teaching approach emphasizes writing as a process." According to this approach, the writers start off with an overall plan in their mind then think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. Therefore, as Cooley (1992) suggests, writers who have passed through this approach are characterized as writers who have a sense of purpose, a sense of meaning and a sense of direction.

When we examine the realities in our country in the light of the above views, the current Educational and Training Policy of Ethiopia encourages the application of the communicative approach to teaching English language skills at any level of learning (Yonas, 1996; Solomon, 2004; Girma, 2005), Yemane, 2007; Haregewoin, 2008), etc. The belief is that if students are frequently allowed to develop their communicative skills through constant practices, it is possible to gradually develop accuracy. If students, however, are highly engaged within the product approach, they learn more about writing rather than what writing is. In connection to this, scholars like Carroll and Wilson (1983) report that if composition instruction emphasizes the product approach, students will be less exposed to the environment of recursive and inductive nature of writing. In their further analysis they delineate that when students are exposed to product oriented writing, they fail to write coherent sentences, well developed paragraphs and meaningful essays because this kind of writing does not show the mind at work; except writing conventions at work.

Thirdly, the course outline designed for the course Basic Writing Skills by the School of Language and Communication Studies at Hawassa University states that the teaching/learning has to be conducted in line with the communicative approach to language teaching. In its further explanation, the document reveals that in conducting the course, classroom contact, like group/pair work discussions, independent learning and continuous assessments are suggested as a mode of course delivery. Thus, as long as there is such strong belief that the process approach is more successful in improving students' writing Skills at university level, the present researcher found it important to study the extent to which the approach is implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University.

There are a number of local research studies conducted on the teaching/learning of writing skills at various educational levels in Ethiopia. Since it is too difficult to deal with all of them in this study, some of them which the present researcher thought have close connection with this study are briefly discussed as follows: Yonas (1996) studied teaching writing as a process with special reference to College English at Addis Ababa University. In his finding, he reported that after using the materials designed in the light of the process approach, the students changed their perception about the process writing and they improved their skills.

Solomon (2004) is the other researcher who studied the realization of the process writing at Grade Ten level. Ultimately, he found out that there was less attempt made to incorporate sound process-oriented learning tasks into the writing section of Grade Ten Textbook. Tsegaye (2006) conducted his research study on the writing problems of preparatory II students with reference to Injibara Preparatory School. Finally, he came up with the conclusion that majority of the students in preparatory II (Grade Twelve) level committed errors in their writing which were not expected of students who were preparing themselves to join a university due to problems related to the teaching methods, large class-size, limitations of the textbooks, lack of reading habits, etc. Argaw (2006) conducted his research on the present practice vis-à-vis the process approach in writing classes at Grade Twelve level. In his conclusion, he stated that those students who were taught with the teaching materials designed in the light of the process approach achieved significantly better results.

Geremew (1999) studied the academic writing requirements of four selected departments at Addis Ababa University. In his finding, he suggested that there should be a writing course for academic purposes consisting of two main components: Writing for general academic purposes and writing for specific academic purposes. Italo (1999) conducted his research on the effectiveness of teacher versus peer correction on revision of students' writing. His finding suggested that both feedback provision approaches were equally important on students' writing. Dawit (2003) investigated the effect of training students in giving and receiving peer feedback on their revision types and writing quality. He found out that if students get proper training and continuous guidance in practicing and using peer feedback, they can be reliable reviewers of each other's drafts of their written compositions. Alamirew (2005) conducted his study on beliefs, perceptions and attitude of both teachers and students in teaching and learning of writing skills and on how writing is taught. He finally found out that both teachers and students had average efficacy. Haregewoin (2008) conducted her research on the effect of communicative grammar on the accuracy of students' academic writing. In her conclusion, she stated that when the teaching/learning of the writing skills was supported by communicative grammar activities, students produced more efficient and accurate writing.

The present study differs from all aforementioned in filling the gap that has not yet been filled. The study, for example, differs from Alamirew's in that his major objective was to investigate the perception and beliefs of writing instructors and students at 10^{+2c} (preparatory) level about writing and method of teaching. Secondly, if we look into the study conducted by Yonas (1996), his principal objective was mainly to compare the effectiveness of the materials that he set up for writing instruction pursuant to the principles of the process approach vis-a-vis the writing materials designed in College English at Addis Ababa University. Thirdly, when we see the study conducted by Solomon (2004), his major intention was to explore the feasibility of the writing teaching tasks set up in Grade Ten English Textbook whether they are suitable or not to implement the process approach.

The focus of this study is, however, to investigate the extent to which the process approach is implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes with reference to Hawassa University. Furthermore, the research setting and the context where this research is conducted is different. The assumption underlying this research is that most university students' writing skills improve when writing instructors at the university level give attention to the implementation of the process paradigm.

The other point, which makes this study different from other studies, is that it investigates the realities in writing classes at university level where writing courses are offered independently unlike in secondary schools. Furthermore, the role of writing is of greater significance at this level because most of the academic performances of the students have strong connection with writing skills. For instance, students are frequently asked to write essays, term-papers, assignments, examinations, etc. In sum, no one has so far conducted research on the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes specifically in the context of Hawassa University. As a result, this research is designed with the aim of solving one of the problems related to the teaching/learning of writing skills at university level. Accordingly, the research attempts to address the following basic questions:

1. What is the perception of both instructors and students about the methods of teaching/learning being employed in Basic Writing classes at Hawassa University?
2. To what extent the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach?

3. To what extent do Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University implement the process approach?
4. What are the most pressing factors, if any, which are attributed not to fully implement the process approach in Hawassa University?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Writing experts have been making effort constantly to provide writing teachers with the most effective approach which enables them to conduct the lesson effectively and successfully so as to improve the writing competence of their students. The methods or approaches by themselves, however, are not the end. They need practitioners who understand their theoretical foundation in-depth and implement them in harmony with the existing realities.

A large number of studies conducted subsequently indicated that too much reliance on the traditional method of teaching can seriously affect the goal of instruction in general, the writing instruction in particular as human beings' needs for education drastically change from time to time due to the rapid advancement in science and technology Felix (1990). When there is mismatch between the needs of the society and the existing theories of education, researchers and practitioners are urged to revise the existing theories or formulate new ones that suit the existing context. From the history of second/foreign language pedagogy we understand that newly formulated theories are mostly put into practice after long years of observations, investigation of various contexts, experimentation and wide discussions are held among scholars of the discipline with regard to their implementability. This, however, does not mean that all theories have equal benefit either to practitioners or learners at classroom level. In this regard, there is a belief among theoreticians and practitioners that one theory can have wider acceptance than the other on the basis of its suitability and effectiveness though the degree of its implementability varies from context to context Brumfit (1984).

A theory which achieved strong acclaim several years back cannot continue with its full acceptance up to the contemporary teaching/learning era as human progress is not static. Thus, it is mandatory to identify the latest theory which suits the objective realities and put it into practice. In like manners, a number of research studies such as Edwards and Havriluk (1997) confirmed

that in the contemporary second/foreign language classes writing instruction can be carried out successfully when the newly developed theory, that is, the process approach to writing instruction is largely implemented.

In the same way, when we see the realities at Hawassa University, the newly developed curriculum of the School of Language and Communication Studies states that each of the department course has to be conducted through the communicative approach. This implies that once the communicative approach is selected as a more appropriate approach in offering any of the courses of the department, the approach which enables to conduct writing courses communicatively is the process approach. Furthermore, as it is described in the course outline, instructors of the course were urged to frequently employ the process approach in order to help their students communicate their feelings meaningfully. It is with this understanding that the present researcher is determined to conduct this study with the major and specific objectives stipulated here below. The main objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which the process approach to the teaching/learning of writing is implemented in conducting the course Basic Writing Skills in Hawassa University and thus the study specifically aims at:

1. examining the perceptions of both instructors and students about the teaching/learning of writing in Basic Writing Skills classes in the university mentioned above
2. evaluating the extent to which the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach
- 3 investigating the extent to which Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University implement the process approach?
- 4 identifying the most pressing factors, if any, which are attributable not to fully implement the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes in the same university

1.4 Significance of the Study

Educational research findings must solve problems in a given discipline and contribute to the development of the teaching/learning activities at any level of learning. To this effect, this study is envisaged primarily to help writing instructors specifically at the university level to assess their

approach to writing instruction and identify their strong and weak sides in order to improve the standard of their teaching. Moreover, it may help them to reconsider their teaching materials that they are using in their Basic Writing Skills classes and make them more suitable to implement the process approach. The findings of this study may also give hint to material developers on the development of teaching materials especially for the purposes of teaching writing as a process. Finally, this study may serve as a spring board for other researchers in the field to examine the findings meticulously and conduct further investigations in other academic settings.

1.5 Scope of the Study

In order to achieve the aim of this study, out of twenty-three universities in the country, Hawassa University is selected from the Southern Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. The subjects of the research are 4 writing instructors and 8 students who gave responses to the interview items. Furthermore, 20 Basic Writing Skills instructors who were conducting the course Basic Writing Skills and 100 students taking the course responded to the questionnaire items. The main reasons for selecting the research subjects from Hawassa University are the following:

Firstly, since my work place is in this university, I have access to collect relevant data from each research subject as easily as possible. Secondly, I have served as a writing instructor in this university for about six years; consequently, I can easily associate some of the responses that I get from the respondents in line with my own experience. Further, conducting my study in this university would give me opportunity to approach different instructors who can help me when sometimes I face difficulties with my study.

The reason for limiting the number of research site to one university is that first the researcher believes that the realities in this university can represent the realities in other universities in the region and country, as well. In order to be more certain, I went to Wolaita Soddo University, which is about 200 kms away from Hawassa University and surveyed how the course Basic Writing Skills was conducted for about one week. According to my informal survey and discussion I held with some Basic Writing instructors, the instructions in both universities share a lot of commonalities. Secondly, as long as this research is largely a qualitative study, if the data

are selected from large sample size, it will be cumbersome to discuss them deeply and exhaustively. Thirdly, When I was defending my proposal and upgrading my research work, my examiners advised me to limit my study to one university in order to make the data collected manageable for analysis.

University level students writing instruction is selected due to the fact that a wide range of writing courses, by and large, are conducted at university level. Secondly, writing is offered as an independent course only at the university level. Thirdly, those students who are attending their education at university level can learn writing with less challenge through process approach as compared to secondary school Ethiopian students. Thus, the researcher believes that more reliable data pertaining to the teaching/learning of writing skills can be collected at this academic stratum.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

In conducting this study, as it is customary in any other research, the researcher has encountered various constraints. The first one is related to getting back the questionnaire items administered to both writing instructors and students. Some respondents were too reluctant to respond to the items of the questionnaires and give back to the researcher on time for various reasons. The commonly cited reasons were: time constraint, boredom in responding to a large number of researchers' questionnaires time and again and the last one might be giving it less attention. Though the researcher has attempted to explain the main purpose of the questionnaires on the top of the first page, some respondents assumed as if the purpose of the research was to search for weaknesses pertaining to the teaching/learning of writing instruction and put them into risky situations. Secondly, some respondents were so reluctant to give back the filled questionnaire items on time that the researcher spent longer time until all items were returned. The solution to the above problem was to distribute more copies of the questionnaire items than the number required for the study. Nevertheless, getting the required number was still not easy. Therefore, the only option was to entreat such respondents repeatedly until they gave back the filled items of the questionnaire to the researcher.

The second constraint was carelessness of some respondents to carefully read and respond especially to the open-ended items of the questionnaire properly. Some responses given to the

open-ended items were written with scribbled hand writing and consisted of lots of deletions and vaguely written words and sentences that the researcher could not easily figure out what they were meant to.

The third problem was related to the observation sessions. Some instructors cut classes due to their own different valid reasons. As a result, the time allotted for observation session needed to be extended. This in turn, resulted in delayance of distributing the questionnaires, conducting the interview and analyzing the whole raw data according to the schedule set earlier. In order to avoid this problem, the researcher attempted to extend the time for observation session from one month to one month and half and use only those data observed within one month. Furthermore, sometimes instructors used to change the classroom where they were assigned to conduct the course due to various reasons without informing the researcher anything about the change they made.

In addition to the above constraints, there were other drawbacks which troubled the researcher during the observation sessions. To begin with, the researcher encountered few writing instructors who were not willing to be observed while they were conducting writing classes. Some of the instructors were found to be resistant not to be observed even after expressing their agreement ahead of the observation time. The major reason might be, as the researcher assumes, lack of confidence while presenting the writing lessons. The other problem related to the observation session was change of writing instructor who was assigned to teach a particular section of students after the researcher had observed 50% of his/her classes.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

The process writing paradigm: is a model of writing in which learners develop writing skills through sustainable creativity, ever changing imagination and practice Fountain (2008).

The Product writing paradigm: is a model of writing instruction where students are guided to study a given model discretely and replicate the same model which is free from errors (ibid)

Cognitive learning: a type of learning model on which its theory lays its foundation on learning by doing. Ferris and Hedgcock (1998).

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study comprised seven chapters. The first chapter encompasses the introduction part of the study which includes such sub-titles as background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, organization of the study and definition of key terms. The second chapter discusses the historical development of education in Ethiopia and the history of teaching the English Language in Ethiopia.

The third chapter, review of related literature, discusses various views of scholars on the nature of writing, the significance of the teaching/learning of writing, different methods of teaching writing, the nature of teaching materials along with the teaching methods, the role of the teacher and the students in teaching and learning writing through various approaches and the like along with critical analyses. The major purpose of the literature review is to give further supporting evidences against/for the major arguments presented in the study by consulting various authorities. The topics treated in this chapter are, therefore, selected and orderly presented according to their connection to the rationale of the study.

The fourth chapter consists of the research design and methodology part. Under this section, how the research is designed, the type of research instruments used, how the data are sampled and analyzed, etc., are treated. In the fifth chapter, the major findings of the pilot study are presented by analyzing the data gathered through observations, interviews and questionnaires. The sixth chapter presents the description, interpretation and discussion of the results of the main study. The seventh chapter of this paper includes conclusions and recommendations where the whole discussions of the results of the study are wound up and recommendations are forwarded based on the findings of the study.

The last part of the paper includes the bibliography and the appendices of the study. In the bibliography part, the lists of references which have been used in the study are acknowledged.

Chapter Two: A Brief Overview of the History of Education in Ethiopia

Education is a dynamic and objective-oriented process which enables to acquire different skills that bring about the desirable change on the overall human activities. As we learn from history, both formal and informal education have grown in various forms, as a result, the life of several people across the world could drastically change. In broad terms, education is the process by which the society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. By the same token, the New Educational and Training Policy of Ethiopia (NETP) issued in 1994 defines education as: “Education is a process by which man transmits his experience, new findings and values accumulated over the years in his struggle for survival and development through generations” p 24. This definition delineates that education is a pre-condition for skills development, transmission of knowledge and technological enhancement.

In order to acquire knowledge and transfer it to the next generation, language is one of the tools which play an irreplaceable role. Ethiopia is a country which consists of over eighty nations and nationalities. These nationalities, may be if not all, have their own languages which are being used for every day communication. If all these languages are carefully studied and transformed into media of education in line with the economic development of the country, there is no doubt that the speakers of each language can have better access to formal education and can also easily promote their culture, history and heritages to others.

2.1 Traditional Education in Ethiopia

Several historians like (Pankhurst, 1970; Teshome, 1979; Last, 1980) etc, explain that Ethiopia is the only country in Africa with its own indigenous culture and history. It is a country which maintained a highly structured system of church education from at least the fourth century of the Christian era. Pankhurst (1970) believes that the present educational system by itself is moulded on the basis of church education system which was started during the Axumite period when Christianity was introduced to the country about the fourth century A.D. In his further explanation, he states:

Traditional schools which constitute one of the oldest continuous system of learning in the world, were until the beginning of the present century the sole instrument of education in Ethiopia and are probably still attended by well over a hundred thousand peoples in various part of the country. These schools provide education at all levels: elementary, secondary and higher and in a wider variety of fields, including reading and writing, theology, poetry and music and to a lesser extent, art , history, law and traditional medicine (pp 75-97).

Bender (1976) adds that Ethiopia is different from other African countries in the Sub-Sahara for having its own peculiar writing system and culture for a century. Researchers like Teklehaimanot (2001) believe that the purpose of the traditional Orthodox and quranic schools was to teach learners about religious issues and moral values. Both schools contributed significantly in extending education across the country at that time. Hailegebrael (1998) reinforces the above view remarking that the church school system established during the Axumite period was of paramount significance in advancing the literature of the country nation-wide. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that both schools were responsible institutions for inculcating knowledge into the mind of the young and enriching the heritages of the people for many years.

When traditional education was being disseminated during ancient Ethiopia, the medium of instruction for Orthodox Church education was Geez and for Quranic Education, Arabic. The quranic schools disseminated education to the muslim community in Arabic language, thus, they taught Arabic letters and reading skills through reading quran, isslamic cannon law (fiqh) and the Arabic Grammar. Teklehaimanot (2001) is of the belief that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was the only local education centre which provided education to learners through Geez language, which is currently serving as a language of High Mass ceremonies at church and medium of the classic literature of the religion. Teshome (1979) states that Geez was structurally a member of the semitic language group, which has close connection with Amharic and Hebrew. Furthermore, the alphabets which characterize Ethiopia as the only country which developed its own alphabet in Africa were adapted from Geez.

2.2 Modern Education in Ethiopia

Although the traditional schooling provided us with rich literary heritages like alphabet, useful historical references and relics, it could not satisfy the needs of the modern society.

Teklehaimanot (2001), for example, points out, the major deficiencies of the traditional education as follows.

Firstly, the schools were totally devoted to religious education which often does not give room for argument, analysis and synthesis. Secondly, the Ethiopian secular culture and spoken languages were not given appropriate emphasis. Thirdly, knowledge was considered inviolable and static to be accepted as it is. This belief about the nature of knowledge brought about the method of teaching which focused on rote learning and memorization. Fourthly, practical skills related to production and livelihood was disregarded. The impact of this trend is widely observed even on the contemporary education system of Ethiopia. Fifthly, the authoritarian nature of the teachers led students to be submissive and non-critic. As a result, creativity and autonomous learning did not have any room in the pedagogy. As a result, education could not solve the problem of the citizens and change their life. Sixthly, the emphasis of the education system was on oral skills so that students could not improve writing and other language skills. Because of this, students did not have opportunity to investigate, analyse and synthesize facts by themselves.

Having observed the pitfalls of the traditional education in Ethiopia, Emperor Menilik II, opened the first government school in his palace compound in 1908. The name of the school was MinilikII. According to Teklehaimanot (2001), this school was basically established to educate the children of higher officers of that time. Though the school was established to replace the then traditional education system in Ethiopia, its curriculum was not fully free from spiritual education in its entirety. Thus, it is possible to say that the curriculum was supplementary to the previous one which was totally spiritual. The aim of education in those schools was mainly to teach foreign languages and other related skills which were relevant to establish relationship with other countries. To achieve the above goals more successfully, other secular-oriented schools were opened in Addis Ababa and in different provinces of that time.

The other worth mentioning king who attempted to expand modern education in Ethiopia, according to Wondafrash (2002), was Emperor Hailesillssie. The first school that he established in Addis Ababa was Teferi Mekonnen Secondary school which was aimed at producing teachers and agricultural experts. As soon as he opened the school, he established Ministry of Education and Fine Arts in 1930. As Wondafrash (2002) further explains, the structure of the education

system of that day was organized as six years of primary, six years of secondary and four years of university education.

By the end of 1930, the number of modern schools increased to twenty. The expansion of such schools really marked the gradual growth of modern education in Ethiopia. Though there was an endeavour in expanding modern education during the 1930's, there was no locally developed curriculum which goes in conformity with realities in the country. The contents of the curriculum were fully adopted from western countries such as America, France, Italy, Sweden Canada and the like. Because of this, as studies disclosed, the policy of the education system and the needs of the people could not match for several years. Even the non-indigenous instructional system of that day could not proceed as it was due to the invasion of Italians in 1936. Since the situation was not convenient to run academic activities, most of the schools were closed and began to serve as military barracks. As a result, all efforts to expand modern education in the country were jeopardized (Ministry of Education (1986)).

After the country regained its independence in 1942, a lot of efforts were made to reinforce the collapsed educational system despite shortage of financial resources. As Teshome (1979) further explains, due to weak financial capacity and resources, the Ethiopian government recognized that it was not easy to bring back the collapsed educational system into revival. Therefore, it was compulsory for the Ethiopian government to ask for financial, human and technical supports from the British Government. After the government had succeeded in securing aid from the British Government, the responsibilities of managing the schools were provided to the British personnel. It was at this time, according to Teshome (1979), the monarchical government adopted English as a second language for its bureaucracy and instructional purposes.

During the monarchical government, there were 620 government owned and four academic secondary schools until 1962. In addition to this, the first University College of Addis Ababa was also established during the Imperial period of Hailesillassie. During this period, Americans and Canadians have great influence on the educational system of Ethiopia. According to the Ministry of Education (1996), the structure of the education system of that day was designed as six years of primary, two years of junior secondary and four years of senior secondary. The other effort of that day was to change the medium of instruction. Accordingly, in 1962, English was replaced by

Amharic to serve as a medium of instruction up to Grade Six. Ministry of Education, (1996). Generally, in spite of the strong criticism against the educational system of that day from various scholars, many researchers remark that the foundation for modern educational system was laid at that time.

In 1974, the Derg Military Force overthrew the system of Emperor Hailesillassie and took power. According to Last, (1980), the primary objective of education during that regime was to expand education in the rural areas of the country. In 1980, the Ministry of Education developed a five-volume education policy, named The General Directive of the Ethiopian Education. According to this document, the policy of the government was to expand education and implement the strategies stipulated in the then general directive of the country called, National Democratic Revolution of Ethiopia which was declared in 1976.

According to Ministry of Education (1986:23) the educational policies stated in the document were the following:

1. equal right of education for all members of the society
2. education for all-sided personality
3. general and compulsory education for all children of the society.

Similarly, the objectives were:

1. education for increasing production
2. education for scientific enquiry
3. education for socialist consciousness

The educational system of the Military Regime was highly criticized for its emphasis on quantity and its devotion to the implementation of Marxist-Leninist political ideology within the educational system.

In 1991, the Military Government was overthrown by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). After the EPRDF had come to power, it developed the New

Educational and Training Policy (NETP) in 1994. As experts in the field witness, this educational system is radically different from that of Emperor Hailesillassie's and the Military Government's Regimes. According to this policy, the educational system has been structured as eight years of primary education, that is, the first cycle comprises Grades One-Four, second cycle, (Grades Five-Eight). The secondary education also consists of two cycles that is, the first cycle from (Grade Nine-Ten), is designed to enable students to develop their academic knowledge and identify their area of interest either to join vocational education training or preparatory programmes. The second cycle (Grade Eleven-Twelve) is intended to help students get further academic training and identify their area of interest and prepare themselves for tertiary education where they are exposed to research-oriented type of education at diploma, first degree and graduate level.

The other fundamental issue which makes this policy different from all other educational policies in Ethiopia is that it provides nations and nationalities with right to use their mother-tongue as a medium of instruction at primary school level. As article,39/2 states:“Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother-tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their language, primary education will be given in nationality languages.” This is really a new educational trend which paved the way to nations and nationalities of Ethiopia for the first time to learn through their own language in the history of Ethiopian education. The constitution of Ethiopia (Article 39/2) further mandates each federal government that it shall produce national educational standards and basic policy criteria and implement them. Thus, these days, deciding the content of their curricula and developing textbooks of primary education is mainly the responsibility of respective regional state governments along with technical assistance they get from the Federal Ministry of Education Teklehaimanot (2002). According to Ministry of Education (2001), currently, about twenty nationalities' languages are used as media of instruction at primary school level. As the NETP further declares, primary education in mother-tongue is permitted not only for the sake of its pedagogical advantage but also it is the right of nationalities to use their languages and promote their cultures.

2.3 The Role of the English Language in Ethiopia

English is by far the most important foreign language in the Ethiopian society and its position is prominent especially in the field of education. Not only is it officially being used as a medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary levels, with the dramatic increase in student population and the number of secondary and university graduates, in recent years it has also thrived in use and function beyond the confines of the education system to a broader function in diplomacy, business, commercial and industrial affairs. Higher officials of the country, for example, use English in various international conferences and summits. In addition, we know that Addis Ababa is a city where the African Union headquartered its office. As a result of this, a large number of African officers come to Addis Ababa continuously for various purposes. The officers, thus, in order to accomplish their tasks successfully, under most circumstances, it is mandatory for them to communicate in English with those Ethiopians who have affiliation with them.

The other advantage is that it is a language of lingua-franca in the current global village. We all know that the English language is frequently used as a language of internet and global communication. In order to be aware of the major events taking place in the world and keep oneself abreast of current thinking, adequate knowledge of the English language is of paramount significance in many contexts of Ethiopia. On top of this, there are daily English newspapers published here in Ethiopia such as the Ethiopian Herald, the Reporter, the Capital, the Monitor, etc., which disseminate current information to the people all over the world and to the people of Ethiopia, as well. Hence, in order to receive a variety of information from the above newspapers and weeklies and extend one's scope of thinking, it is imperative to attain a good proficiency of the English Language. In sum, it is appropriate to argue that the English language is of multifarious contributions to the overall economic, social and cultural progress of Ethiopia.

2.3.1 History of Teaching the English Language in Ethiopia

The English language has prominent role and long history in the Ethiopian educational system. It has been taught as a subject and served as a medium of instruction along with the introduction of modern education during the reign of Emperor Minilik II. As Daniel (1998) further explains the Emperor officially declared the expansion of modern education and instruction of European

languages like French and Italian along with the English language having the view that modernization in the country is achieved through the use of these languages. Researchers note that it was one of the remarkable decisions of the emperor which accelerated the teaching /learning of the English language in the country.

After the death of Minilik II, the reign of Emperor Hailesillassie gave further attention to the English language instruction both at elementary and secondary school level. During this period, several elementary schools were opened and the media of instruction of these schools were English and French Daniel (1998). This expansion of modern education in Ethiopia gave opportunity to the English language to gain impetus in the history of Ethiopian education. The second factor which helped the English language get supremacy over other European languages in Ethiopia was the military support that the British Government gave to the country in removing the Italian army from the country. In order to respond to the favour the British Government did for Ethiopia, the Ethiopian people and the government gave priority to English language to be taught as a subject and serve as a medium of instruction. The third factor which fostered the use of the English Language in Ethiopia is the increment of Ethiopian students educated in English speaking countries. Therefore, to get better job opportunity and acquire good modern knowledge, they developed positive attitude to learn the English language. The fourth factor is all teachers of that day speak English and textbooks for all subjects except Amharic were in English.

Though the use of the English language got acceptance by the people of Ethiopia and the government during Emperor Hailesillassie's regime, teaching the language encountered various problems subsequently. One of the problems was financial shortage to conduct the instructions. The second problem is lack of appropriate teaching materials and limited context to learn and use the language, that is, learning the language and using it for various purposes is merely limited to school environment Daniel (1998). As a result of this, teachers and other people concerned began to complain of the low level of students' competence in the language. The most serious problem was students' failure to express themselves in written English. In order to solve the problems, the imperial government requested aid from the British Council to set up institutes for teaching English, get reference books and periodicals which help learners improve their English Language skills Teshome (1979). The British Government, on the basis of the request, provided teaching

materials and opened evening classes to teach English. The teaching was mostly handled by Indian teachers and later for some years by the volunteers of American Peace Corps.

After making all these efforts, as Teshome (1979) notes, there were several problems that affected the English language instruction. The first one was the focus given to the teaching of loud reading in each grade. Secondly, Indian teachers were not well oriented about modern English language teaching especially in the context of Ethiopia. Thirdly, there was no consensus among scholars when to introduce the English language teaching. In spite of the fact that the English language instruction suffered from various setbacks from its very outset, it has continued to be the second official language of the country until the present time Tesfaye and Taylor (1976).

In May 1961, Ethiopia hosted the United Nations-sponsored Conference of African States on the Development of Education. Among other things, the conference highlighted Ethiopia's educational deficiencies. The Ethiopian education system, especially in primary and secondary education, was given the lowest rank of all African countries Damtew (2003). There were schools and teachers shortage, a high dropout rate, and low overall attendance rates; especially among females, non Christians and rural children. Embarrassed by this record, the Ministry of Education developed a new education policy, which was in effect until 1974. It was designed in conjunction with the objectives of the government's five year development plans, which ran from 1962 to 1967. The policy gave priority to the establishment of technical training schools although academic education was also expanded widely side by side. The Curriculum revision introduced a mixture of academic and nonacademic subjects. It was at this junction that Amharic became the language of instruction for the entire primary cycle. Though converting the medium of the curricula into Amharic at primary cycle level was advantage for those students whose mother-tongue was Amharic, in contrast, it was possible to say that other children whose mother-tongue was different from Amharic were not considered.

When we see the states of the English language during the Military Regime, the teaching system and the states of the English language declined alarmingly. As Stoddart (1986) is cited in Haregewoin (2008), the English language competence of most students at that time was below the mark because of the mistaken policy of the government and the hastily developed textbooks both at elementary and secondary school levels. The report issued by the British Council, (1986:23),

furthermore, explains the situation as follows: “After 1974, the state of education in general, and that of the English language in particular, worsened during the Military Regime due to mistaken policies that ignored the educational realities coupled with inadequate investment on education and lack of reform of education system of the country.” This implies that the dominant problem of the English language instruction during the Military Regime was the little attention paid to learners’ needs and the development of their communicative abilities as the focus of the instruction was on teaching the form of the language. Generally it can be argued that the policy of the then government on the teaching/learning of the English language, the curriculum, the teaching method that teachers employ could not bring substantial progress on the students’ English language competence.

After the EPDRF had come to power, the New Education and Training Policy (NETP) was designed in 1994. The policy recognizes the relevant role the English language plays in the educational system of Ethiopia. The policy further states that it is mandatory to develop the English language skills of students ranging from primary school level. The assumption is that if students develop their English language competence at this level, they can pursue their secondary and tertiary education with fewer challenges when their mother-tongue as a medium of instruction is replaced by the English language. To this effect, new textbooks have been developed which centered their philosophy on the communicative approach to language teaching. Furthermore, the government recognized that English teachers at all level can teach better when they upgrade themselves academically and are introduced with new developments and practices in harmony with the demand of English language in the country. As a result, those English teachers who were trained several years back are made to get refreshing workshops and seminars and those who were teaching with lower qualification were allowed to upgrade their academic status through in-service trainings. Nevertheless, researchers report that still there are problems connected to teachers training, ,supportive facilities, large class-sizes and teachers’ command of the language which have negative impact on the teaching/learning of the language.

2.3.2 Teaching the English Language in the Ethiopian Elementary Schools

As has been mentioned earlier, recognizing the contribution of the English language in the Ethiopian context, there is an aspiration to lay foundation for elementary level learners to be competent in the language. With regard to this, the document issued by Ministry of Education (2001: V) explains:

English has been retained in the educational system because it is vital to/ for the economic development of Ethiopia. English is the language of wider communication across the globe in international relations, science and technology, commerce and trade. It is also the medium of instruction for secondary and higher education in Ethiopia.

This signifies that the English language has been given serious attention right from the elementary level thinking that it is a language of global communication, the second official language of communication and the medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary level education in the country.

As it is repeatedly suggested by language teaching experts, to improve the English language competence of students, one of the significant inputs is developing a textbook which consists of materials of high quality. Accordingly, as it is stated in the document of Ministry of Education (2001: V) there is an indication that maximum effort has been made to make the learning meaningful, purposeful and holistic. In this regard, the curriculum developers note:

The approach to the English language teaching is communicative and skills based: students learn and practise language which is meaningful to them and which has a real purpose and context. For this reason the focus is on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Grammar and vocabulary items are integrated into practice of these skills... learners are encouraged to interact with each other in a variety of patterns: pairs, groups and whole class. The activities are also designed to encourage students' natural curiosity and appetite for discovery together with enjoyment of learning through games, songs and stories.

This reveals that the new English language curriculum is designed with the aim of improving the overall English language capacity of students through meaningful practices. To achieve this, the

English teachers are made to get continuous in-service trainings and the teaching materials have been developed in such a way that students can learn the language communicatively. When we observe the objectives, English curriculum for the first cycle is developed aiming at achieving the goals stated here below:

1. motivating children to learn English by using interesting and enjoyable methods
2. learning geared to: communicating in English, using the language creatively, taking delight in talk
3. building on young learners' instinct for play and fun
4. taking account of their capacity for imagination and creativity
5. developing in young learners sensitivity to foreign languages and cultures
6. raising their awareness of the mother tongue and English
7. developing in them a positive attitude to language learning (Ibid: I).

Thus, the goal encourages learners to learn the English language meaningfully and use it for their in their day-to-day communication effectively. When students are exposed to such kind of teaching/learning, they anticipate or predict what comes next and develop a habit of solving problems independently. They should not be afraid of taking risks or making mistakes because there is a belief that if the primary focus is on fluency, the students can achieve accuracy in the course of time. Finally they should reflect on their actions and learn from them. Regarding the content, it is both topic-based and linguistic. According to the designers of the curriculum, lesson topics have been chosen that are interesting, authentic and enjoyable to young learners.

According to the designers of the new English Language curriculum, the major changes made are several. In this study, however, the most important ones are discussed as follows. The first one is reducing the content and structure in line with students' age and grade level so that teachers may be able to cover the content in the allotted time. Secondly, there is spiral progression throughout the four grades. This is to say that all macro and micro language skills and other language components are taught at increasing levels of difficulty and sophistication within the topic areas. This spiral progression is demonstrated in the minimum learning competences and the topic flow chart. The third change is regarding authenticity. As the writers of the text book explain the content is relevant to all children whether they are progressing to secondary school, technical or

vocational college or leaving school and contributing to the development of the community. The other change is on the method of teaching to be employed in presenting the language items. The syllabus demonstrates practical implementation of active learning and learner-centeredness. It is designed in such a way that teachers can have confidence to amend it with their own broader range of supplementary materials and various methodologies that they think are appropriate.

2.3.3 Teaching the English Language in the Ethiopian Secondary Schools

The present educational system of Ethiopia has given due attention to the teaching/learning of the English Language at secondary school level. The major reason is that the language serves as a medium of instruction at secondary school and tertiary education level. Moreover, under some circumstances, the language plays crucial role in the world of work when students join the community.

Grade 9 and 10, will be the last stage of formal education for many students. Some will continue to Grades 11 and 12, where they prepare themselves for tertiary level education. Others will join technical and vocational schools but few will join the world of work. Some will receive on- job training through continuing education. It is important, therefore, that the English syllabus for Grades 9 and 10 should cater for the immediate and future needs of all these groups. The syllabus provides learners with continued training in language development including basic language and study skills which enable students communicate effectively in English at school and in their real life. Furthermore, an attempt was made in creating conducive situations in which students' English language skills would be developed through problem solving activities. Over and above, almost all language skills are treated in each unit using an integrated approach.

Thus, in developing the new English language textbooks for grade 9 and 10, the writers of the new English textbooks have stated the following objectives to be achieved by the end of the instruction:

1. enabling students to understand spoken instructions, information and explanations given in English on a range of topics from the other subject areas.

2. helping students ask and talk about topics related to both their everyday lives and other subject areas.
3. enabling students read and understand written materials silently and independently including those related to other subjects and other appropriate short texts for enjoyment.
4. writing short controlled compositions or letters on topics related to issues in the textbook.

As has been further explained in the document, one of the aims of the textbook of Grade 9 and 10 is to help students become autonomous learners. The belief is that if the whole effort is to cover the content of the syllabus, it does not mean that the ultimate objective of the teaching/learning of the English Language has achieved its goal. Thus, in order to encourage autonomous learning, the teaching of the English language should not be confined to classroom instruction. In implementing learning autonomy, the widely established practice is arranging homework activities in the form of reading exercises, written exercises or tasks for oral exercises. There are also other mechanisms such as pair and group work activities which encourage students to take charge of their own learning in the classroom. The other important consideration in the curriculum is the incorporation of problem solving techniques where students can look at their own situations and share their experience to suggest solutions. The assumption is that when students are motivated to learn and use the English language through problem-solving approach, they can ultimately develop a sense of confidence to learn independently. The preamble of the curriculum states that the problem solving approach can be successfully implemented when techniques such as sharing of knowledge, planning, gathering information from other sources, processing it and reporting back to the group, categorizing findings, analyzing and presenting them, working together effectively through discussion and idea sharing.

The other big issue on which the curriculum focuses is active learning in the classroom. The assumption is that those students who are much more effective as autonomous learners can easily be engaged in active learning. The teacher can use a variety of techniques which stimulate active learning. The first one is brainstorming, where students quickly pool their immediate ideas on a particular topic. The second one is interviewing, where students understand how to use open and close-ended questions to interview their friends, family and members of the community. The third

one is inviting guest speakers to talk on a particular topic, where the object is to encourage students to listen, take notes, ask questions and report. If the guest speaker is not an English speaker, the exercise can be useful for starting to develop interpreting skills. The fourth one is preparing quizzes, which can be used for revising language patterns, vocabulary, general knowledge or specific knowledge on a topic. And the last one is role-play and drama which are powerful tools for enabling students to explore problem situations without personal involvement that could inhibit open discussion.

The second cycle of secondary school (Grades 11 and 12), the English language syllabus was designed basically to enable students to use the English language spontaneously and flexibly in both spoken and written form especially for academic purposes both at secondary and tertiary education level confidently and clearly. The curriculum developers write:

One of the main purposes of the second cycle of secondary education (Grades 11 and 12) is to cater for the academic needs of those students who intend to proceed to tertiary education. The English syllabus for grades 11 and 12 will, therefore, whilst consolidating and extending the work done so far with regard to listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary, now focus on developing further the study skills required for success in education both at school and particularly at the tertiary level MOE (2001:25).

Basic study skills which are included in the English syllabus for grades 9 and 10 are consolidated in Grade 11 and 12. The syllabus provides continued training in language development and aims at developing students who can communicate effectively in educational and non-educational settings. As it is stated in the curriculum, whenever possible, the students' English language skills should be developed through problem solving and posing skills. Students need to be involved in such activities as: critical reading and listening, discussion, debate and a variety of individual and group writing tasks.

As can be seen from the above discussions, the English language syllabus designers are of the understanding that the text books are well developed and the Ministry of Education has devised various training and refreshment programmes in which English teachers can upgrade their professional competence. Some researchers like (Girma, 2005; Tsegaye, 2006; Solomon 2004, etc), however, remark that several of the students who are currently joining various colleges and

universities are still found weaker in their command of English than those who used to join universities after taking College English I and II.

2.3.4 Teaching the English Language at Tertiary Level in Ethiopia

In universities, the English language plays a prominent role as it is a medium of instruction in many of the departments except in some whose aims are to train students in local languages. Secondly, the Higher Education proclamation issued in 2009 declares that the work language of higher learning institutions shall be the English language. Moreover, it is offered as a common course throughout colleges and universities in the country. Some years back university students used to take English service courses such as College English I and II and Sophomore English. Since 2003, however, due to the belief that the previous College English I and II can be fully handled at preparatory level (Grade 11 and 12), the New Education and Training Policy included only Sophomore English in the curriculum to be offered as a service course at university level except for those students who used to join College of Education and the Institute of Language Studies. A number of local research studies, nevertheless, indicated that still the English language command of most preparatory origin students was below the expected standard. As a result, most university instructors are heard complaining that due to their low proficiency of the English language, most students were incapable of coping with the academic challenges.

As it is understood, college or university education requires a lot of writing because students at this academic level are required to produce a large number of written works for various purposes. Thus, writing is part and parcel of every student's academic performance. Hence, students who join higher learning institutions need courses which enable them develop their writing abilities. Due to this reason, the New Educational and Training Policy (NETP) has realized the problems and revised the English language service-course offerings. Accordingly, in the revised policy, those students who join universities are required to take two service courses: namely, Communicative English Skills in which writing is emphasized as one macro skill and Basic Writing Skills (Sophomore English) which is fully devoted to practicing a variety of writing genres. If these two courses are properly handled, there is a belief that the writing deficiency of students can be alleviated to some degrees.

Chapter Three: Review of Related Literature

As has already been mentioned in the earlier chapter of this study, the major aim of this research is to investigate the extent to which the process approach to the teaching/learning of writing is implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University. In order to attain this objective, the researcher explored various literatures which were significant to present the major arguments with substantive evidences. As a result, an attempt was made to critically review such issues as the nature of writing, the significance of teaching writing, the various contending views on the teaching/learning of writing, approaches to teaching writing, the nature of writing lessons for process-oriented writing instruction, developing teaching materials for process-oriented writing classes, the role of teachers in process-oriented writing classes, the role of students in process-oriented writing classes, inter-alia.

3.1 The Challenging Nature of Writing

In spite of its crucial role in all walks of life, writing is not an easy skill that can be achieved without experiencing lots of ups and downs. As Conrad puts it:

I sit down religiously every morning. I sit down for eight hours every day-and the sitting down is all In the course of that working day of 8 hours, I write three sentences which I erase before leaving the table in despair... sometimes it takes all my resolution and power of self control to refrain from butting my head against the wall (1965:1).

The above complaints point out that writing is a challenging skill which requires controlling a number of factors such as physical, cognitive, psychological, and social and so forth. As writing experts like Hodges (1991) suggest, for writers, in order to be effective in their writing, they often need a conducive, encouraging and interactive working environment in which they compose their written texts so that they can achieve their goal. White (1995) further elaborates that writing is extremely a complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate his/her ability to control a number of variables simultaneously. These variables could emanate from the cognitive, linguistic, and psychological makeup of the writer. In general terms, regardless of the fact that writing is a language skill which plays a crucial role in the overall human interactions

and progress, it is a very complex language skill which calls for strong patience of the learner in order to become a competent and proficient writer.

3.2 The Importance of Teaching Writing Skills

In spite of the fact that the contribution of writing in all walks of life is immense, the remarkable ones elaborated by (Charles,1990; Pincas, 1991; Hedge, 1991 Rivers, 1999) are briefly discussed as follows. Primarily, writing is one of the most prominent tools of communication both in the academic environment and outside in the real relief of the students. At schools, if students aspire to be academically successful, written communicative ability is inevitably the basic requirement. In addition, outside the school, written communication has tremendous roles in several contexts across the world. When we examine the role of writing in the context of language learning, it is one of the powerful tools which help learners monitor their language performance to a greater extent than other language skills as it is the most conscious and creative process Tribble (1996). Even if there are different mechanisms by which learners control their language performance while speaking, listening or reading, writing provides the best opportunity to the writer in employing the most appropriate language that fits the purpose and the target group because it is not an ephemeral mode of communication like that of speaking. Thus, writers have better chance to look into their language use by moving backward and forward at sentence, paragraph or essay level time and again and make the necessary changes or amendments for a better written product.

The second major reason for a concern with written language is that it serves as a break from oral language. Those learners who have engaged themselves in oral language practices for longer time can avoid their boredom when they plunge themselves into the written mode of learning. In other words, writing serves as a means of relief to those learners who do not learn easily through oral practices alone. When they are allowed to shift from the oral language practice to the written one, they feel more secure so that they struggle to produce a meaningful text as best as they can Silva (1993). Thirdly, writing is a tool which enables to conduct either formal or informal testing. It is obvious that there are various types of tests which would be designed with various purposes. Hence, in order to conduct such tests conveniently and confidentially, the most preferable medium is writing though some exams can be conducted orally. In addition to this, conducting the

items of the test in written form helps to test a large number of candidates at the same time so that time, finance and energy can be saved.

The fourth advantage of writing is that it is a means of organizing thoughts and ideas of the writer. Writing is a complex set of language skills, which involve a multitude of thinking processes by providing writers with a means of gaining control over their thought. According to Ellis (2003), writing by its own nature, involves selecting ideas, organizing them and establishing relationships so as to produce a meaningful written text. In the process of composing, the writers not only generate ideas and organize them into a coherent text but also they gain knowledge which then they make part of their already existing knowledge through assimilation and accommodation Zamel (1983) and Raimes (1991). This implies that though writers have their own background knowledge and experience that they manifest during their writing, they also acquire new knowledge when they engage themselves into writing activities which ultimately become part of their existing scope of knowledge. Consequently, writing is not only a process of generating ideas but also it is a means to extend the magnitude of thinking. In connection to this, Beckon (1630), the pioneering English essayist acknowledged the benefit of writing, saying: 'Reading makes a full man; writing an exact man and conferencing i.e. speaking, a ready man.' This implies that the skill of writing makes a man high thinker. In other words, a person's knowledge, ideas and experience are consolidated and concretized in the process of writing. As a result of the above reasons and others, writing is a language skill which is worth teaching and practicing.

In his deep and detailed analysis Chappel (2007) elucidates further the benefits of writing. In his view, writing is the primary basis upon which learners work, learn, and their intellect will be judged in academic institutions, in the work place, and in the community. Secondly, he believes that writing expresses who the writer is as a person. According to Chappel (2007) the written texts that the writer produces visualize his/her potential, ways of perceiving things, style of expression, experience and other inherent behaviors. Thirdly, he states that writing is portable and permanent. Through writing, the ideas of the writer can reach a great many audiences; moreover, since writing is not evanescent, ideas can be reserved for long time by means of various publications.

The other worth mentioning advantage of writing is to help students move easily among facts, inferences, and opinions without getting confused and without confusing their reader. As Myles

(2002) and Carol and Wilson (20030) note, writing is a language skill which requires the writer to creatively think, organize ideas, use the appropriate diction and the like. In his further analysis, Chappel (2007), points out that writing is a means through which learners' abilities are promoted to pose worthwhile questions. Studies show that writers often ask various questions such as whom I write to?, why I write? How I write? What precautions should I take when I write? and the like while developing their written texts. In addition, writing is a tool which fosters the writers' ability to explain a complex position to readers and to oneself, as well. If writers once develop writing skills, they can be ready to overcome psychological, linguistic and cognitive obstacles that novice writer face and can easily make complicated issues simple and readable.

The other crucial advantage of writing is to help others give feedback to the writer. According to the social constructivists' perspective, writing is not necessarily a solitary activity. It involves idea sharing with peers, collecting feedback from audience and consulting various related references and utilizing them accordingly. In this regard, Rubbin (1996) remarks that one dimension in which writing assumes to be a social act is in that many of the written discourse productions take place in such a way that both writer and reader influence each other. This implies that one's writing and written products influence the audience and the vice-versa. The other related advantage of writing is to help writers refine their ideas when they give feedback to others. Writing unlike speaking, needs the optimal thinking of the writer in drafting and redrafting ideas before it reaches its audience. This is because readers have sufficient time to read and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the writer and arrive at conclusions. Hence, the writer thinks repeatedly about the subject that he/she discusses and makes several changes in order to come up with relatively perfect and readable text.

3.3 The Belief and Perception of Teachers and Students on Writing and Its Instruction

Writing experts report that the beliefs of both teachers and students can have a serious impact on the teaching/learning of writing skills. Brookhart and Freeman (1992), for example, explain that writing teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing lesson, method of teaching and their students can affect either positively or negatively the writing instruction. Entwistle (1998) upholds the

above view stating that there is a strong relationship between the students' beliefs and their writing status whether they are poor, average or good writers. The central idea of the discussion is that if writing teachers, for example, are proponents of the behaviorists' model of learning, all efforts that they make is to enable their students construct error-free sentence, paragraph or essay. If their belief is, contrarily, on the implementation of meaning discovery approach, their entire endeavour is to encourage creativity and help students produce meaningful writing which ultimately leads to accuracy.

The other relevant component of writing pedagogy is the perception of both instructors and students. Williams and Burden (1997) report that investigating the perception of both teachers and students about writing and the method of writing instruction can help take rectifying measures. They further remark that when learners are convinced that the writing practice that they do in the classroom is significant for their academic performance and the world of work, they develop positive perception about writing and writing instruction so that they can gather all their strengths and strive towards their goal vigorously. When learners do not have positive perception on the given writing activity, on the other hand, their inner motive will be below the mark, thus, it is difficult to bring about substantial progress on their writing.

Studies show that perceptions have close relationship with peers, teachers and present or past experience. As Canale (1980) and Ridley (1997) elaborate, some features of perception can be changed through instruction so that negative perceptions can be changed into positive and vice-versa. Of course, under some circumstances, perceptions may not have direct relationship with reality. On the basis of the explanation given by Ridley (1997) learners may develop perceptions that do not have relationship with the present reality. Thus, what learners or instructors perceive to be true is true only in line with their own way of perception. Thus, it is difficult to say that perception is always right as it is not always wrong since it can have strong link with one's own current feeling or situation. Thus, as Ridley (1997) recommends in his study, an effort to change perception requires a careful and a long time of investigation.

When we relate the issue of perception with teaching/learning, the way students are taught influences their positive or negative perceptions towards the subject. The belief is that teaching influences learners' thinking; their thinking in turn improves/deteriorates learning and their

achievement. Sometimes there would be misunderstanding between the teacher and the learners. What the teacher thinks about the progress of students in their writing, for example, can be positive but students may perceive it as negative and the vice-versa. This thinking gap can affect, according to Ridley (1997), the interaction between the writing instructor and the learner.

The other point that has to be underscored in relation to the role of perception is that learners' perception about their ability can influence the improvement of their writing. Studies reveal that those learners who perceive themselves as competent writers are likely to improve their writing ability and succeed and the vice-versa. The other worth mentioning point is that the way feedback is provided to the written work of students can also affect the writing performance of students. In sum, in order to make writing instruction successful changing the perceptions of both writing instructors and students about traditional way of teaching is one of the focal areas of the writing pedagogy. In their conclusion, Brookhart and Freeman (1992) note that the changes that so far have been made on the teaching/learning of writing skills are mainly attributed to the changes made on the beliefs and perceptions of both writing instructors and students.

The other factor which influences writing instruction either positively or negatively is behavior. This implies that the behavior of the teacher affects students' behavior and the vice-versa. Hence, the kind of behavior which has been established between the teacher and the students can ultimately influence the standard of the final product of writing. In connection to this, Pica (1994) forwards : "Classrooms are complicated social communities ; individual learners come to them with their own constellation of native language, culture, proficiency level, learning style motivation and behavior toward language learning (P:59)." Consequently, it is possible to understand that learners' behavior can affect their learning because it could be related to their teachers, the content of the lesson, the school environment and the future benefit of what they learn. Finally Pica, (1994) suggests that lack of self-confidence is associated not only with lack of ability but also with the kind of behavior developed towards the content of the lesson, method of instruction and its ultimate benefit which give rise to poor motivation and low level of effort. Generally, learners' behavior about their ability, the type of tasks, their teacher, their peers, the method of teaching can help them develop interest and self-confidence for writing.

3.4 Approaches to Teaching Writing

In order to be effective in teaching writing in EFL classes, writing instructors need an understanding of what is involved in second/foreign language writing. They need coherent perspectives, model tools for thinking, analyzing and evaluating competing theories of second/foreign language skills in general and the teaching of writing skills as a second/foreign language in particular Murphy (1986). As several writing researchers disclose, in teaching writing skills in EFL classes successfully, there is no exactly hard and fast consensus among them. It could vary on the basis of the attitude of the teacher, his/her style, the type of learners, the purposes, the target group, the context in which the skill is taught. Nevertheless, there are approaches, which won more acclaim than others comparatively. The process approach is the case in point. According to Byrne (1990), the teaching of writing can be approached from four different perspectives. These are: accuracy, fluency, text and purpose oriented approaches.

3.4.1 Accuracy- oriented Approach

As the name by itself indicates an accuracy-oriented approach is an approach which gives more attention to producing grammatically correct written texts. In connection to this, Byrne (1990) and Batram and Walton (1991) further explain that the accuracy- oriented approach (Controlled-to-free approach) is an approach which has been derived from the teaching principles of the Audio-lingual methods which encourage a step-by-step and accuracy oriented language learning protocol. The fundamental aim of this approach is to teach how to write; not to teach writing. The basic assumption of this approach is that when there is a strict control on the usage of the language of the writers, they can produce error- free sentences. According to this school of thought, in order to help students produce better written texts, they need to be taught the mechanism of writing, the ways of combining sentences and manipulating exercises like substitution drills, which are thought helpful for students to develop the experience of connecting sentences. One of the limitations of this approach is that it does not expose writers for creativity and problem solving activities in order to come up with their own meaningful written work. Therefore, the focus is to learn more about writing grammatically accurate written texts rather

than producing meaningful writing. Though this approach has its own limitations, it has a considerable contribution in guiding students to produce a variety of accurate pieces of writing.

3.4.2 Fluency-Oriented Approach

Contrary to accuracy oriented approach, the fluency-focused approach encourages students to write out as much texts as possible and as quickly as possible with less attention to mistakes in their written work. The focus of this approach is to facilitate situations in which students get their ideas down on the sheet of paper so that they feel that they are directly involving in the writing activity. In other words, when students are left free to select their own title and write what they want, they will have an exciting impression into their writing experience. Furthermore, when students are given such autonomy, it is understandable that they can develop confidence and draw their attention to generate ideas and organize them into a coherent text. The assumption is that in order to improve writing skills, the remedial solution is not necessarily listening to lecture on writing, doing linguistic exercises or discussing readings. Hence, the more appropriate decision is to immerse themselves into the actual writing practice. In sum, the perception of the proponents of fluency-oriented approach is that the more students are allowed to engage themselves into writing, the more they will be motivated to produce various pieces of writing and develop the standard of their writing from time to time.

Accordingly, in order to expose students to a wide range of writing practices, as to NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English) (2004), the writing instruction must include a large number of in-class and out-of-class activities for continuous and meaningful practices. In connection to this, NCTE (2004) is of the opinion: “Writing instruction should be geared toward making sense in a life outside of the school so that writing will have ample room to grow in individual’s life.” From this opinion, we perceive that practising writing should not be merely limited to classroom practices. The other important point that has to be capitalized here is that it is essential to orient students how they consider the purposes of their writing and varied audiences while developing their written texts.

On the basis of the above remark, it is possible to deduce that teaching materials for writing courses need to incorporate tasks that help students practise writing outside the classrooms, as

well. Regardless of the fact that this approach is the most appropriate one to improve students' writing skills, it has also its own limitations as in other approaches. One of its serious pitfalls is that the approach does not solve the specific problems of each writer as it is autonomous and holistic in dealing with writing.

3.4.3 Text-oriented Approach

This approach prominently focuses on the paragraph as a basic unit of writing instruction. As a result, its main concern is to teach students how to build and organize a paragraph. In implementing this approach in writing classes, the writing instructors can use such techniques as constructing a paragraph out of jumbled sentences, writing parallel paragraphs, developing paragraphs from a given topic sentence (sometimes with clues or without clues). In implementing this approach in writing classes, teachers can use each technique separately or collectively. The major limitation of this approach is that it is not holistic which encourages learners to plan, structure and review their writing by passing through the divergent process. Moreover, its emphasis is on paragraph level writing then gradually to move to essay level. As a result of this, learners cannot have opportunity to consider writing as an overall creative and recursive activity.

3.4.4 Purpose-oriented Approach

Normally when one plans writing, there is a rationale in his/her mind which helps as a steering-wheel to direct the flow of ideas. Writing is not just a single unit of thinking process. It varies in form, structure and process of development in the light of its audience and purposes. Accordingly, the purposes for writing include developing social networks which consider personal and spiritual growth reflecting personal experience, communicating professionally and academically, building relationships with others including friends, family, like-minded individuals and engaging in aesthetic and artistic experiences. Hughey and Jacobs (1983). Therefore, in order to develop skills for excellence about purposes in writing, NCTE (2004) suggests the tips given below:

1. understanding the ways readers perceive writing: as a personal growth, self expression, or reflection.

2. identifying the aesthetic and artistic forms of writing and studying and examining carefully the nature of creative and literary texts produced for the purposes of entertainment, pleasure or exploration.
3. identifying the appropriate direction and style which suit either academic purposes or others and their relationships, as well
4. examining the way various writings with multiple purposes are organized and developed

Thus, taking the above tips into consideration, the writing instructors are responsible to create conducive situations in which students write purposefully so that they can produce pieces of writing which take into account purposes and targeted audiences. Though this approach plays a significant role in motivating student writers to be well aware of their purposes and audience, the process writing experts contend that the focus of especially the first draft of any writing need to be on generating ideas and problem solving, thus, they further argue that purpose-oriented approach makes students give more attention to the rationale of their writing rather than the value of ideas that they develop.

3.4.5 The Product Writing Approach

The Philosophical foundation of this approach is the behavioral psychology and the structural linguistics. According to the proponents of this approach, learning in general, language learning in particular, is considered as a habit formation. In the context of learning writing, thus, students are expected to imitate the model so as to comprehend the pattern of the language. Hillocks,(1987) notes the theoretical underpinnings of the product approach stating that it is a traditional approach which encourages students to mimic a model text, which is usually presented and analyzed at an early stage. This implies that the product approach focuses on presenting writing lessons in which learners imitate copy and transform teacher supplied models which emphasize the steps involved in creating of written work.

According to Richard (1990) and Rivers (1996), the commonly known steps that are implemented in the product writing classroom are the following. In the first stage, model texts are read, and then features of the genre are highlighted. If the purpose of the lesson is, for example, to study a formal

letter, students' attention may be drawn to the importance of paragraphing, that is, the language used to make formal requests. If the purpose of the lesson is to study a story, the focus may be on the techniques used to make the story interesting, and thus students study and imitate carefully where and how the writer has employed important techniques in order to make the story enjoyable.

The second step consists of controlled practice of the highlighted features, mostly in isolation. If students, for example, are studying a formal letter, they may be asked to practise the language structure which is often used to make formal requests, such as: "I would be grateful, if you would, Can I get your responses" and the like. Under step three the task of the writer is organizing ideas. According to the proponents of this approach this step is very important because organization of ideas is more important than the ideas themselves and as important as controlling the language. Step four is the end result of the learning process. Students choose one of the writing exercises individually and then use the structures and vocabularies they have been taught in developing paragraphs or essays to demonstrate what they can do with the newly learnt structure as a competent users of the language.

The center of attention of this school is teaching the language items discretely and sequentially. The belief is that students become effective in any language skills if the language components are presented to them sequentially, for example, sentences before paragraphs and paragraphs before essays Cooley (1992). Therefore, the role of the students is to strictly study the patterns of the language by imitating the models they have been provided by the teacher and ultimately to produce parallel texts. When we come to the teacher, his/her role is to set up writing lessons which are divided into small parts discretely and present them sequentially to students. As group or pair works are highly discouraged in this paradigm, the students are passive receivers of information and the teacher is the only authority as a resource of knowledge.

In reality, when the principles of the product paradigm to teaching/learning writing are closely examined, they have not helped learners beyond enabling them manipulate forms of the language. A number of researchers such as Byrne (1990) contend that such kind of ability does not encourage writers to generate new ideas and enrich experience of writing for fluency. As the approach emphasizes strict guidance and control, students are devoid of their freedom to select their own topics, write in their own styles.

Even though this school of thought has several limitations, it has also its own merits. One of the outstanding contributions of the model is that it helps learners in improving their linguistic competence so that they can edit their written work by themselves. The product approach, according to some researchers like Silva (1993), is divided into two components. These are: controlled or guided writing and English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

3.4. 5.1 Controlled or Guided Writing

As the 1950s and early 1960s, are dominated by the audio-lingual method of second-language learning, Controlled or guided writing which is derived from the behavioral psychology is the dominant approach to second language teaching. This method emphasized speech and writing which were thought helpful to master grammatical and syntactic forms Ghaiz (2002). Hence, teachers developed and used this technique to enable student to achieve linguistic and syntactic mastery. The controlled writing approach is sequential. First, students are given sentence level exercises and then paragraph level and finally essay level. Most of the exercises are transformational drills such as changing active voices to passive voices, direct speeches into indirect speeches, questions into statements, present to past, or plural to singular. They might also change words to clauses or combine sentences.

The basic purpose of controlled writing or composition is to enable students write and thereby avoid errors. After the teacher has realized that students have reached an intermediate level of proficiency, he/she allows them to try some free composition. As the central aim of this approach is to develop the grammatical, syntactic, and mechanical skills of the students, it emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency or originality. As Raimes (1983) argues controlled or guided writing

is a valuable approach to the teaching/learning of writing because it transforms the writing ability of the students from controlled to free writing stage.

As Janet (2007) further clarifies, according to this school of thought, the basic requirement for composition skill is control of sentence structure and accuracy in mechanics. She further remarks that the purpose of writing instruction, according to this approach, is to developing control over patterns in writing through transformational grammar activities. Moreover, she observes that this method of writing instruction has several pedagogical advantages. Primarily, it provides a systematic method of constructing sentences. This means students will familiarize themselves with various linguistic and syntactic patterns of the language so that they can express themselves with accurate language. Secondly, it enables to know and identify faulty constructions and thirdly it helps students understand how structures which seem similar on the surface may have quite different meanings in their deep structure. In her detailed analysis, she is of the view that if once students have mastered the skill of combining simple statements into more complex sentences, they can easily build paragraphs or essays. Thus, she is of the understanding that the more students practice and master the rules of transformation, the more they become mature and skillful writers. Generally, according to her view, if students first express their feelings in short and simple sentences, they may then move on to combining adverb clauses, passive forms, and relative and noun clauses to express more complicated ideas.

3.4. 5.2 English for Academic Purposes

English for academic purposes has strong connection with controlled or guided writing. According to the underlying theoretical assumption of this approach, writing lessons are aimed at enabling the writers to produce pieces of writing that suit the academic discourse community Hedge (1991). Broadly speaking, the model for academic writing presents writing lessons sequentially. This means, in advance, the learners are provided with a model. Then they are allowed to study and analyze the content, the language form, organization of the text. Finally they are allowed to write a parallel text depending on the new input that they got from the model and the teacher.

Academic writing has its own nature by which it is identified from other genres. Gocsik (2005) notes three important characteristics of academic writing. The first one is it is a kind of writing which is basically produced by scholars for scholars. Anyone who is part of the scholars' community can be engaged in activities that scholars have been engaged in for centuries. It is a common practice to read, think critically, argue reasonably, and write lots of papers. Thus, it is the educational status and experience of the writer which helps him/her to understand the expectations, conventions, and requirements of the academic paper. When a writer decides to produce an academic writing as to Gocsik (2005), it is important to look for answers to the following basic questions:

1. Can I answer the questions who, what, when, where, why, how?
2. What do I know about the context of my topic?
3. What historical or cultural influences do I know that might be important to my topic?
4. Does my topic belong to any particular genre or category of topics?
5. What do I know about this genre?

Secondly, academic writing is devoted to topics and questions that are of interest to the academic community. When one writes an academic paper, he/she must first try to identify the major and sub-topics and the questions that would be addressed through the discourse. In order to know whether the topics are relevant and appropriate, first of all, it is compulsory to pay attention to the perceptions and beliefs of the writers' instructor on the topic. The prior investigation and identification of topics, which should be conducted before the commencement of the writing, will give the writer a context into which he/she can place his/her questions and observations. Furthermore, it is necessary to understand that the paper should be of interest to other students and scholars because academic writing must be more than personal response. Thus, anyone who produces an academic writing must be sure that he/she has said something that the academia will read and find it relevant.

The third point is that academic writing should often leave room for argument. To construct an argument, the writer must first try to sort out what he/she well knows about the subject. In this regard, Gocsik (2005) further advises:

When you sit down to write an academic paper, you'll first want to consider what you know about your topic. Different writing assignments require different degrees of knowing. A short paper written in response to a viewing of Alfred Hitchcock's Rear Window, for example, may not require you to be familiar with Hitchcock's other works. It may not even require you to have mastered the terms important to film criticism - though clearly any knowledge you bring to the film might help you to make a thoughtful response to it. However, if you are asked to write an academic paper on the film, then you will want to know more. You will want to have certain terms in hand so that you can explain what Hitchcock is doing in key moments (p36).

From this view, we understand that academic writing alike other genres requires deep background knowledge about the subject being discussed. In addition, academic writing succeeds when the writer is capable of presenting his/her argument in such a way that readers find it relevant. In other words, an academic writer need to consider what is known about a subject and then he/she should be able to predict the major arguments that are likely to be raised by the readers. In conclusion, if an academic paper fails to inform, give opportunity for further argument or if it fails to argue reasonably, then it will fail to meet the expectations of the academic reader.

As has already been noted academic writing requires not only being analytical and critical but also it calls for thinking about the appropriate tone and style. The tone and style of academic writing might at first seem intimidating to several students. But when we observe their practical benefits they are essential components which have great influence either on the success or failure of the paper. Because evaluators of an academic writing often require their students to write clearly, courteously and intelligently on matters that students talk about. If students are not careful when they produce their academic paper, evaluators (instructors) in turn will not read it carefully and give it the credit it deserves. As a result, if students want to be successful in their academic writing, its tone and style must be inviting and appealing to the interest of the reader. Gocsik (2005) further explains that since evaluators of an academic writing are human beings, who can be bored, laugh, irritate, and awe, writers should understand that they are writing to a person who can be delighted when writers present their points clearly, concisely, and persuasively. Studies conducted by Berlin(2000) on this issue confirm that evaluators often give less credit to an academic paper which deviates from the conventionally accepted styles and tones, inflated with

dead-woods, pumped up with huge number of pages beyond the limit, and loaded with hard words. In brief, good academic writing follows the rules of good writing.

When one plans to write an academic paper, Gocsik (2005) advises to consider the tips given below which are helpful in making the process of writing more successful: the first one is keeping the personal in check. In some assignments, for example, an instructor might require the writer to describe his/her experience in comparison to the text that he/she was made to read, or to talk about personal experiences that are relevant to the topic at hand. Thus, in writing an academic writing, merely explaining facts is not sufficient, in addition, it is essential to reflect personal views by arguing for or against the subject under discussion. The second one is relying on evidence over feeling. Writers may sometimes be very passionate about a subject, but the way they explain their position may not be sound reasoning to the evaluator. Even if writers have constructed some very pretty phrases to argue, for example, against genetic engineering, it does not mean so much to the evaluator unless the writer has backed those pretty phrases with facts.

Thirdly, an academic writer should be careful in avoiding sexist terms to control a long-standing exclusion of women from the texts. To alleviate such problem, Jupp (1998) suggests three mechanisms as solutions: the first one is neutralizing, that is, using personal pronouns which represent each sex by separating them with a stroke. Using the form “he/she” could be the case in point. The second one is changing singular forms into plural forms and thirdly avoiding a sexist term from the text as much as possible. Moreover, students often wonder if it is appropriate to use the pronouns "I" and "you" in an academic paper. In fact, as Coinam (2004) notes there is nothing wrong in using the above pronouns as long as writers use them with care. Overusing, however, might make the reader feel that the paper was overly subjective. In fact, when a writer too often invokes himself in the first person, he/she may be doing so to avoid offering proof.

The fourth one is being aware of discipline-specific differences. Each of the academic discipline has its own conventions when it comes to matters of tone and style. Lastly, he advises that an academic writer should minimize mechanical errors as best as he/she can. No matter what audience he/she is writing to, the text should be free from global errors. As Gocsik (2005) goes on explaining, he suggests that serious errors in grammar and style slow readers down. Sometimes

they even obscure meaning. Thus, he advises always to proofread and carry out peer-editing as best as possible before passing the text to a reader.

When the students learn writing skills pursuant to this paradigm, they are trapped with a number of challenges. For example, (Yonas, 1996 ; Johns, 1997 and Goodall, 2000), etc., argue that when students are engaged in academic writing, they are deprived of their freedom to selecting their own titles, generating ideas in their own ways, drafting their paper in their own style. As a result of this, the focus of the students is on the surface structure of the language rather than writing a meaningfully developed text; moreover, the focus is on the final product, viz, it does not give attention to each stage of writing. This in turn, makes students give less attention to the creative and recursive nature of writing. In sum, the model disregards the discovery and creative way of learning writing skills. Regarding this Nash (2004) states the weak sides of academic writing commenting that like any other writing genre, studies of academic writing in university settings show that students were seldom allowed for free choice of topics nor did decide on the style of their writing by themselves. Instead, students had to write to meet the expectation of the academic community where it was their writing product, not their writing process that was evaluated.

Despite the above limitations, the model also has its own incontestable contributions. One of its merits is, for example, helping the learners to identify their audience and purposes for writing so that they can decide on the kind of language that they use, that is, either formal or informal. Furthermore, the model helps the learners to improve their linguistic competence so that they often take maximum cares in producing grammatically accurate sentences while writing paragraphs or essays.

3.4. 6 The Process Writing Approach

The process movement originally came into view aiming at improving teaching composition to native English speaking students. The model advocates an approach to composition teaching that emphasizes students' writing process rather than the product. Assuming that the ESL/EFL writing process is similar to that of the first language, early ESL/EFL process enthusiasts borrowed methods and techniques from the English language class to be used in an EFL/ESL writing class that allow students ample time and freedom to write in the real sense. John (1990:25) goes on

explaining: “the process approach in teaching composition to native English speakers, which began in the early years of the nineteenth century and reached its zenith in the 1960s and 1970s in North America.” With regard to the degree of significance of the process approach, Matsuda (2003) notes that the process movement over the past few decades has been considered the most successful paradigm in the history of pedagogical reform in the teaching of writing. It has a major impact on the development of second language writing theory, research agenda and instructional practices. It is mainly because of the process approach, that is, writing in the real sense, writing as creation of meaning and writing as a means of communication, has gained its multidimensional status in the second/foreign language classes Kroll (1990) and Bizzell (1992).

In their detailed explanation and analysis, Flower and Hayes,(1982)describe that the process paradigm perceives writing as a creative thinking process which involves generating idea, organizing, drafting, revising and editing before and after writing the final copy of the written work in a recursive manner. Furthermore, White and Arndt (1995) remark:

The goal of the process approach is to nurture the skills with which writers work out their own solutions to the Problems they set themselves, with which they shape their raw materials into a coherent message, and with which they work towards an acceptable and appropriate form for expressing it (P.5).

As a result of this, the proponents of the paradigm believe that learning to write involves creative thinking so as to discover meaning which could be polished and republished in the course of the hierarchical movement. Accordingly, the role of the students is to take the responsibility of learning writing by writing relentlessly. The role of the teacher is, similarly, to create flexible, smooth, positive and non-threatening environment in which the student writers experience the different stages of process writing: planning, generating ideas, structuring, drafting, reviewing and editing. Consequently, the learning process is eclectic, that is, it can accommodate learner-centered, teacher-centered, task-centered, etc., techniques of learning writing. In the same way, the feedback provision mechanism includes: teacher evaluation, self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, conferencing, commenting and so on (Hedge, 1991). However widely accepted model it is, it has also its own weaknesses. One of them is that the model keeps both instructors and students under heavy work; consequently, it is difficult for learners to write on several topics. In addition,

whether both slow-learners and fast-learners gain equal benefit from the model or not is an issue kept pending.

3.4.6.1 The Basic Principle of the Process Approach to Teaching Writing

The basic Principle developed by the theorists of the process approach is that knowledge in each discipline is interconnected with each other. Thus, when this principle is applied to writing instruction, students become more effective in their writing when they are made to learn writing through continuous and meaningful practices without giving emphasis to a single sentence or paragraph. The assumption is that students achieve substantial progress in their writing, when they deal with writing holistically. In other words, when students are given sufficient time to practice writing various texts through their own creativity and effort, they develop confidence which lead them to build their own style of writing.

As a result, the primary focus of this approach is to enhance students' fluency in writing. This, however, does not mean that other approaches are entirely marginalized. As Leki (1992) remarks, the process approach is not framed as a single approach to the teaching/learning of writing. It is, rather an approach which amalgamates a number of other approaches such as the expersivists' approach, the cognitive approach, the social constructivists' approach and the product approach. The major point of argument is that, in order to attain good writing skills, students should think creatively and discover meaning by themselves as they strive to pass through the various hierarchical stages in the course of meaning discovery. In general, writing is a complex set of skills which requires several levels of thinking and discovering meanings. Thus, the perception is that it has to be dealt with hierarchically.

3.4.6.2 Classification of the Process Approach

When conceived broadly, the process approach to composition instruction is divided into two categories: the cognitive or classical approach and expressive or romantic approach Flower and Hayes (1982).

3.4.6.2.1 The Cognitive Approach

The cognitive approach is a branch of learning theory concerned with how and why learning takes place. Thus, it argues that thinking is central to the learning process. Cognitivists argue that learning is not, as behaviorists claim, simply a matter of behavior imitation or modification, but involves the student gaining knowledge not only through the acquisition of new learning, but also through a process of adapting or discarding old constructs or ideas which no longer fit their developing insight into the world Brand (1987). Cognitivists' learning theory argues for a learner-centered approach to teaching and learning where the structuring and sequencing of learning is of key importance to the success of the learning experience. It suggests that knowledge is not an object to be dispensed or acquired, but a process.

When it comes to writing, this approach considers writing as a means of problem solving instrument. The belief is that the students are first requested to plan their writing and the planning need to focus on defining, enlarging, into longer text, examining each parts, generating alternative solutions and coming up with a conclusion. White and Arndt (1995) further explain that writing is a problem solving activity, which involves such process as planning, goal-setting evaluating what has been written and finally expressing the meaning. This implies that the students will first identify the problems, plan how to express them in their writing and then they engage themselves in the process of writing and finally review their work by evaluating, revising and editing.

Researchers, like Flower and Hayes (1982), who conducted their study on the cognitive process theory of writing reported their findings after observing the performance of writers in processes writing classes. In their findings, they reported that writers use a combination of cognitive processes, which come to the foreground as they need. Furthermore, they suggested that there is a hierarchical structure to these varied processes; thus, changing levels of goals are key aspects of the writing process. The other point that they demonstrated is that the act of creativity vanishes and sustains by the ever-changing imagination, skill, and goals of the writer.

In conducting their second study on the cognitive theory of learning, they used a new method of research known as "protocol analysis. To create a protocol, writers were assigned to write an

interesting short composition for a magazine. The important stipulation was the requirement to think aloud as they proceed with their writing. A tape- recorder captured their spoken thoughts. The recording and the writer's written material, rough notes and the article, were combined to create a single protocol. Finally, the researchers reported that the protocols provided a number of valuable data on the factors that affect a writer's processes.

3.4. 6.2.2 The Expressive Approach

As has already been discussed, a number of methodologies and approaches to writing instruction have been developed and passed through continuous experimentations and appraisals in the hands of both methodologists and practitioners for several years. Consequently, nowadays writing instructors have plenty of options to select and apply a method or approach of their own preference in their classrooms. A close look at the expressivists' writing process reveals that it is as unique as the writer himself as every writer's process is as complex and distinct as his/her own finger prints. As a result, it is not currently feasible for writers to develop their ideas by following rigidly established guidelines in a given writing pedagogy.

Expressivism, with its foundations upon Plato's philosophy, suggests that since the world is in a constant state of change, it is therefore unreliable to take observations and sensory experiences for granted in the material world as there are no basis on which to build our truths Berlin (1982). He further clarifies the point saying: "Aside from lack of faith in the existence of empirical knowledge, expressivists claim that there is no way of teaching truth. Instead, truth must be learned as a product of examining errors and by removing those things that are in the way of personal apprehension." Berlin (1982: 560). When this view is associated with the nature of writing, the process of writing is an essential way of learning in which one can discover new ideas and explores them. That is why the expressivists conclude that writing is a search for insight. As Wilson (2003) sees it in detail, writing does not only give birth to knowledge, it also creates a desire to learn by eliciting investigation and inquiry.

As subsequently conducted studies reveal, Expressivism is one of the recent approaches to writing instruction which basically views writing as personal expression. When the axioms are examined

broadly, expressivists view writing in the light of the writer, the process, the product, the attainment of knowledge and the communication of truth Wilson (2003).

According to this school of thought, in order to come up with effective written work, students must be given freedom to think freely. As research studies show, when students are given freedom to think freely, they will develop a sense of independence so that they can be inspired to creativity and further idea generation without limits. The student writer, who follows the expressivists model is, therefore, capable of malleable thoughts and ideas that are worth nurturing Rhodes and Andrew (2005). Among the highest priorities in the principle of the expressivists' writing process, individual's discovery is central. As Rhodes and Andrew (2005) further explain, expressivism encourages writers to use inductive reasoning, to search within his/her creative selves and to discover his/her personal and most suiting writing process.

Those writers who apply the expressivists' principle in developing their writing, the effort they exerted in the process outweighs the final product. The argument of the expressivists is that a significant amount of valuable learning takes place during the process of writing Berlin (1982). As studies further show the process of writing is especially important to student writers because most of them believe that writing is unteachable Berlin (1982). This does not mean that writing cannot be improved through instruction. There is understanding among writing scholars that anyone who is capable of writing can improve his/her writing competence as long as sufficient practice is carried out though there are personalizing strategies which can determine the level of competency among learners. Personalizing strategy that expressivism firmly encourages is the use of analogy and metaphor to convey truth to a reader.

The expressivists' pedagogy argues that truth cannot be conveyed through language. However, when readers are allowed to draw their own conclusions through the use of analogy, they develop mental pictures of the concepts and expression of the truth Berlin, (1982).

In conclusion, according to this approach, all good writing is personal whatever purpose it serves. Consequently, writing is understood as a creative process in which the writer discovers him/herself. In like manner, the writing tasks are designed in such a way that fluency is at the center of attention. Thus, the writing tasks mostly incorporate such items as diary, journal entry,

and personal essays and so on. Though there are slight differences between the cognitivists' and the expressivists' approaches to the teaching/learning of writing, both of them share some common features. Producing journals or clustering can, for example, be done within the context of both approaches. When we associate it with the Ethiopian context, in particular, both cluster writing and journal writing can be implemented in writing classes. For example, the students can sit down into various groups and discuss various issues. Those ideas on which the group members have agreed can be taken as an input by each group member and a larger meaningful written text can be developed. With regard to the journal writing, similarly, students can be provided with various situations on which they produce journal entries or the teacher can request them to think of any unforgettable events or characters from their reading background, etc., and then they can be asked to further explain and produce comprehensive written texts.

3.4.6.3 Writing Lessons Presentation under the Process Paradigm

As has been attempted to discuss above, fundamentally, the underlying philosophical foundation of the school is perceiving writing as a thinking process in its own right which could be sustained over a long period of time. In like manners, the process of composition is not a linear activity where learners are moving in a straight path starting from the stage of planning, to producing the final copy; rather, it is a recursive activity which requires the writer to move backwards and forwards in the process. That is why Shaughnessy (1977) describes the process as messy but effective. Consequently, in presenting writing lessons in process writing class, it is appropriate to pass through the steps discussed here below.

3.4.6.3.1 Planning (Pre-Writing)

The planning phase, according to White and Arndt (1995) includes generating ideas, goal setting and organizing. Generating ideas is meant to gathering information which would enable to solve the problems in accordance with the goal set ahead of the writing task. Generating idea is not merely a simple matter of putting ideas onto a white sheet of paper. Rather, it is a challenging and a matter of serious concern. In this regard, White and Arndt (1995) remark: 'Since writing is primarily about organizing information and communicating meaning, generating ideas is clearly a crucial part of the writing process. Because actually getting started is one of the

most difficult and inhibiting steps in writing, idea generating is particularly important as an initiating process'' (p.17).

As we understand from the above opinion, idea generating is a mechanism of activating the existing experience of the writer which has already been stored in the long-term memory. Therefore, idea generating is a stage in the process of writing which requires the writer to judge the quality of ideas, their relevance, practicality, etc., before they are developed into a full text. In sum, they are blue-prints which guide the writer to define writing problems in the light of the content and the purpose of the writing scheme and discover the goal set for the ultimate product of the writing.

A number of research studies confirm that idea generating is almost the same as brainstorming. Brainstorming involves thinking quickly so as to produce as many ideas as possible on a given topic or problem. Thus, process theorists believe that brainstorming is remarkably a fertile means of idea generating which can be carried out individually, in group or by the teacher. Thus, idea generating and brainstorming are interdependent. Generating idea has a strong link with a long-term memory which imbeds three main kinds of memory store. The first one is episodic memory which is concerned with events, experiences and auditory image. The second one is semantic memory, which stores information, ideas, attitudes and the last one is unconscious memory which is connected to emotions, feelings and values of the writer Flower and Hayes (1982).

The other relevant issue under planning is the task of organizing or structuring ideas. Since writers often communicate with readers at distant in time and space, they should give attention to coherency of ideas in order to get readers understand the flow of ideas with fewer challenges. To achieve this, the ability of the writer in selecting the super ordinate and the subordinate ideas and ordering them according to their occurrence or relevance is another crucial writing skill. Structuring information for a given written text involves various organizational processes of arranging ideas together and deciding up on how to put them sequentially.

In order to structure or organize any writing in such a way that it increases its readership, the process writing experts suggest the precepts given below:

1. understanding the rationale of the writing thoroughly whether it is for persuasion, criticism, entertainment or information
2. identifying the relevant or interesting idea that the writer need to get across the expectation of the reader
3. examining and convincing oneself if all other ideas are strongly related to the key idea under discussion
4. deciding whether readers are worth expecting the well sequenced ideas in the text or not
5. deciding on the most effective approach that the reader requires: complying with the expectation of the reader or deviating from the accepted norm.

In order to implement the above precepts in the actual writing classroom settings, the process writing experts exhort writing instructors that since almost every act of writing involves categorizing ideas for better understandability; writers need to be given sufficient time to ordering their mass of information.

3.4.6.3.2 Drafting (Composing)

This stage is a phase where the writer moves from the pre-writing stage to the actual writing of the first draft. At this junction, writers are making the transition from idea-generating or theme-identifying phase to the reader- based writing, which will constitute the final piece of writing. At this stage, writers utilize the ideas generated and structured during the planning stage and write them out depending on their own experience and the input they acquired during the pre-writing and while writing stages.

When writers set off with the writing task, they think of how to restructure their writing, meet the expectation of their readers and evaluate the validity of the content whether it is appealing to the interest of their readers. The other most important point is that, at this stage, writers are expected to stop and make such rearrangements as deleting, adding ideas, amending, editing the language, the diction, etc., in person, in pair or in group. For this undertaking, Ohmann (1992) recommends the “write- revise-rewrite” cycle at least to be reviewed once for most writing activities. However, when both the teacher and the students desire to have the final product, editing twice through the

cycle is recommended. In other words, students are required to write three drafts of which the third one is the final copy or product.

3.4.6.3.3 Reviewing

Having shaped and reshaped their ideas within their written text through various processes, to the end, the students will come up with the reviewing stage. Reviewing entails deleting, reformulating, cutting, moving different parts of writing to different positions, adding new ones and even sometimes going back and revising, etc. In the process of reviewing, evaluation is the most significant activity which enables to judge the extent to which the whole writing is successful in achieving the goal. In other words, it appraises the validity of the written text, its structure, language use, style, the diction and so on. That is why some writing experts view that the evaluation process is the other decisive activity which determines the quality of the students' writing. Trimbur (1994).

3.4.6.4 The Task of Teachers in the Process Writing Class

Those teachers who implement the process approach to writing instruction are mostly expected to facilitate their students' learning by giving them ample time to plan, think and discover meaning through their writing. In more general terms, the teachers' role is to organize and facilitate situations for learners to write continuously and abundantly. Moreover, instructors in process-oriented writing classes are required to continuously examine the successful flow of the process of writing and search for more appropriate technique which suits the particular writing activity that students are doing in the classroom. In connection to this, Richards (1988) further suggests that the teacher is a facilitator of the writing process employed by the students, using observation and discussion mechanisms to identify more successful techniques that help students pass through the process more successfully.

Similarly, Zamel (1983) notes that the teacher of writing has the responsibility of making students undergo the process of writing that will enable them make a text out of scrambled ideas. Furthermore, NCTE (2004:4) advises a writing instructor to consider the points mentioned below while conducting writing classes within the context of the process approach.

1. understanding clearly the relationships and differences between the finished writing and the unfinished ones that were attempted at various stages
2. collecting information about the impression the writers have about their own particular genre
3. Making notes when the students give information about their particular experience that they gained at different stage.
4. understanding the multiple strategies the students used in approaching writing at each stage of development
5. identifying the multiple models of the writing process, the varied ways individuals approach writing tasks and the ways that writing situations and genres inform the process.
6. having as much access as possible to published texts, immediately available, that demonstrate a wide range of writing strategies and elements of crafting.
7. dully understanding and examining the relationships among the writing process, about the curriculum, the learning and the pedagogy
8. thinking critically how to allocate time for students to do the writing task as best as they can.
9. taking notes while the students are using tools including word processor, designing software and computer-based resources.
10. arranging flexible environment for editing and evaluating the students' piece of writing

3.4.6.5 The Process versus the Product Approach

According to the product paradigm, writing was something that teachers expect learners to do in class without giving any prior thought to the meaning of the finished product. As a consequence, Jordan (1997) remarks that learners' perception about writing was almost negative. This was compounded by the fact that this skill was often relegated to the status of homework due to pressures of time and phobia to involve in it. Hence, this approach has almost nullified the possibility of discovery learning. Furthermore, writing was viewed primarily as a tool for the practice and reinforcement of specific grammatical and lexical patterns; accuracy being the ultimate goal of the writers whereas content and self expression given little priority, if any.

The current trend, the process approach, whereas, largely encourages students to write to learn not to learn to write. This is a trend that has been widely used almost in recent EFL writing classes

across the world Harrowitz (1993). In their report, Belcher & Hirvela (200) further corroborate that these days there is a widely spread recognition that writing is a process which involves several recursive steps. The basic steps are prewriting (selecting a topic and planning what to say) drafting (putting a rough version on paper) revising (making changes to improve the writing) evaluation (assessment of the written work). Nunan (1999) further states how very different the process approach is from the traditional product-oriented approach remarking that the product approach focuses on writing tasks in which the learner imitates, copies and transforms teacher supplied models. The process approach, on the other hand, focuses on the steps involved in creating a piece of written work. The primary goal of product writing is an error-free coherent text. Process writing, in contrary, believes the fact that no text can be perfect, but that a writer will get closer to perfection by producing, reflecting on, discussing and reworking successive drafts of a text.

Jordan (1997) acknowledges that process writing evolves as a reaction to the product approach, in that it satisfied the need to match the writing processes common in writing in one's mother tongue, and consequently allowed learners to express themselves better as individuals. This is not to say, however, that the product approach no longer exists, nor that it has no practical applications. Indeed, the process approach still contains elements of product-based writing. Nunan (1999) reaffirms the above understanding by stating that there is no reason why the process writing program should not contain elements of both approaches.

3.4.6.6 Criticism against the Process Approach to Writing

Like any other approaches, the process approach to writing has its own limitations. One of the shortcomings is that the proponents of the approach often regard all writing as being produced by the same set of processes. This means, they give insufficient importance to the kind of texts writers produce and why such texts are produced. Moreover, they offer learners insufficient input, particularly in terms of linguistic knowledge to write successfully Kent (1999). The other major criticism against the process view is that writing is pre-occupied with the writer and the writer's cognitive process, as a result, it disregards social factors which have strong connection to any written text. Thus, Kent (1999) concludes that the process is in a cultural vacuum because it fails

to take into account the external factors which are outside the writer but which are relevant in assisting the writer to define, shape, and ultimately evaluate a piece of writing.

The other argument against the process approach is that content determines form and language. The language is the writer's own tool and originated from the writer's experience and urge for creativity. Other writing researchers like Williams and Burden (1996), however, believe that form is determined by the social contexts in which the writing is built. As Williams and Burden (1996) further elaborate: "The very form our writing takes can link us to a social and cultural heritages that go back to centuries p10" . Thus, according to the above scholars' perspective, writing is not the only product of the writer's creative effort.

The other contentious view emerged as a reaction against the process approach is Bruffee's (2001). He claims that thought is actually internalized conversation, thus he argues that people learn to think by learning to talk, and thus improved conversation is imperative to improved thought. For Bruffee, then, writing is a displaced form of conversation. In other words, thought is internalized conversation, while writing is thought re-externalized. Consequently, writers should be encouraged to engage themselves in conversation during the writing process as much as possible. If they are involved in conversation, Bruffee (2001) argues that writers will be able to master normal discourse and thus participate to understand and be understood in the conversation of particular knowledge communities in both the academic and professional worlds. These knowledge communities are groups of peers who have code of values and philosophies either to accept or reject what has been communicated through writing.

The other writing theorist who recognizes the social nature of writing is Kent (1999). He specifically claims that writing is a public, interpretive, and situated process. In his further analysis, Kent (1999) notes that though writing is social, it cannot be reduced to a generalizable process. In his argument, he criticizes Bruffee (2001)'s assertion which says that cooperation in oral interaction is a necessity to help students master academic discourse conventions. As Kent (1999) further comments, Bruffee (2001)'s conviction about process writing is erroneous. One of the reasons that he presents is that conventions cannot be universally defined or mastered. In his further argument, Kent (1990) illustrates that academic discourse, for example, requires data

gathering and presenting strong reasons supported with ample evidences mostly without the involvement in any sort of conversations.

The other strong criticism against Bruffee(2001) 's thought is the current perspective of process writing experts' view of audience on the central tenets of "writing to learn." The concept of writing to learn, with its emphasis on writing as a tool for learning and problem solving, has its basis in early cognitive process models. Susan and Maimon (2000) explain the function of the writing-to-learn approach and its limited conception of audience. The purpose of writing to learn activities is to use writing as a tool for learning rather than a test of that learning. According to the explanation of the above scholars, when writers are engaged in writing activities, their major concern is to explain ideas to themselves, to ask questions, to make connections, to predict, to engage in critical thinking and problem solving. The audience for this kind of writing is the student him/herself; it is, therefore, the final product is writer- based text. This approach, however, may be incompatible with learning to write in multiple disciplinary contexts and for multiple audiences. In this regard, Susan and Maimon (2000) remark that writing across the curriculum, for example, includes both writing to learn and learning to write in various disciplines and such written texts encourage students to learn disciplinary discourse which can expand their perception of audience.

3.4.6.7 Post-process Writing and Audience

Audience analysis is primarily concerned with the co-constructive role of the reader which involves collecting evidences about the potential audience assumed by the writer often following heuristic models. Writers are responsible to make use of strategies for identifying audience_ based background information, analysis of perceptions, beliefs, values Kent (1999). To this effect, writers are first required to define audience in response to questions such as, what the audience's physical, social, economic and academic status is and then trying to harmonize the discourse through organization, stylistic devices and tone to the audience.

A leading proponent of the post-process movement, Kent (1999) identifies the following three main axioms of post-process perspectives: public, interpretive, and situated. Communicative interactions, according to post-process theory, are dynamic, interdependent and situational in

shifting contexts; as a result, they cannot be reduced to a generalizable process. As Kent (1999:3) briefly states, “writing requires interpretation, and interpretation cannot be reduced to a process.” This means the writing-to-learn approach which emphasizes the production of a variety of discourses needs to establish a balance between the production and reception of a discourse. In sum, as Munter (1999) summarizes, the main intension of the post-process approach proponents is to shift from the writer’s process of analyzing audiences to the roles of readers who participate along with a writer in constructing meaning.

As we go deeper into the argument, Kent (1999) is of the assumption that the process writing perspectives what he calls “Big Theories” could not capture the complex and shifting roles of readers who meet writers halfway and involve in these processes of communication. These “Big Theories,” such as cognitive process perspectives, consider the audience as a mental construct of the writer or an amalgamated image of readers that exists in the writer’s head before the discourse is developed. This mental picture of audience is often described as the writer’s sense of audience. For example, Berkenkotter (1981:396) notes : “The internal representation or mental sketch a writer makes of audience is an essential part of the writing process”. To make the point more clear, the emphasis of the writing-to-learn movement is on the writer’s control over the text, that is, it is the writer alone who imagines an audience and sketches the reader in his mind. As, post-process proponents think, however, this assumption ignores the public and interpretive nature of communication in the post-process perspective.

The post-process acknowledges that the writer participates in communication with heterogeneous groups of audiences so that his/her internal representation of those readers may match explicably the actual roles that multiple readers play Connor (1996). When we see the perception of the process movement, it privileges the individual writer over the interactions between writers and readers which are especially pertinent to the expressivist process theories where the audience is imagined as a heuristic component of writing. Elbow (1981), for example, advises writers to push audience into the background during the composing process so as not to impede the creative act. As a result, in the process movement, whether cognitive or expressivist perspectives, the audience is an imagined reader created by the writer, that is, a unified component of communication that can be isolated and even put aside when it is not conducive to writing.

From the point of view of the post-process moments, however, communication cannot be codified and communicative interactions shift relentlessly and are predictable. What matters is not the writer's consideration of audience prior to writing or the writer's guesses about what textual conventions will best appeal to the interest of the readers. In connection to this, Kent (1999) came up with two theories what he calls "prior theories", that is, interpretive strategies like analyzing the audience's background or guessing their general background makeup and "passing theories" or strategies that writers and readers employ in the actual moment of interaction. In his detailed explanation, he suggests that all readers and writers, in order to communicate effectively, need shortcuts that confirm with their knowledge of the text or disciplinary conventions. Thus, according to the post-process theoreticians, "one-size-fits-all-readers" approach to audience hardly helps writers to reach out their audience effectively. Thus, writers are expected to explore the multiple reading roles that they will likely encounter as communicators in various disciplinary and professional contexts.

3.4.7 The Genre Approach to Writing Instruction

The social turn observed in the current effort of reconceptualizing writing and writing instruction has given rise to a renowned interest in the study of genres. Genre is defined as socially recognized way of writing language, Hayland (2003). Geremew (1998) adds that genre refers to any culturally recognized type of activity such as lecture, seminar, service encounter, news broadcast, poem and narrative that is realized in the social or cultural context.

A good command of genre knowledge is viewed essential in order to produce effective writing as writing is often purposeful, social and cultural practice which is connected with contexts and purposes. Thus, it is possible to deduce that genre knowledge is important not only for L2 writers but also for L1 writers in a sense that learning the genre of one's culture is one way of investigating its nature and developing ability to change it Christine (1987). The other worth mentioning relevance of genre writing is its contributions in various academic settings. One of its advantages is that it enables learners to comprehend various concepts and familiarize themselves with various models of texts and ultimately produce similar texts of their own.

As a result, in the contemporary foreign language teaching paradigms, the genre approach to writing is becoming the attention area of language educators. The argument is that the genre approach to composition instruction is of high significance in helping students learn a particular component of writing such as grammatical, organizational, mechanical, etc., by studying a particular model of genre. Devit (2003:17) explains the significance of genre pedagogy in writing classes stating:

Genre pedagogies enable teachers to ground their courses in the texts that students will have to write in their target contexts, thereby supporting learners to participate effectively in the world outside the ESL classroom. Genre theory and research thus give teacher educators a more central role in preparing individuals to teach second language writing and to confidently advise them on the development of curriculum materials and activities for writing classes.

He further clarifies that the genre approach to writing instruction can foster teachers' awareness of expectations on the writings that their students produce and that such awareness can help them decide on the area that they should focus in evaluating a particular written text that their students write.

The other advantage of developing genre writing ability is to study the language practice of a given discourse community. In this connection, Bawarshi (2003) notes: "Genre analysis can enable learners to reach out the discourse community and explore what community members know and do with what they say and how they say it and more comprehensively their language practices" (P 542). This implies that genre analysis certainly facilitates the understanding of how actual language use connects with underlying ideas, values, and beliefs of the discourse community. This takes us to the understanding that genre writing offers insight into the complex interdependence between language and the speakers.

The other writing expert, Swales (1990) points out that the genre approach offers a large number of communicative events that occur in the contemporary English speaking discourse community to learners; moreover, it is relevant to those concerned with devising English course and to those who are participating in learning a variety of language skills. In language classes, when the focus of writing instruction is on interpretive, analytic, argumentative, etc., essays, first students are

allowed to study and analyze a genre that they follow as a model. They, then, are requested to write their own copy by taking into account the specific language use employed within the genre Devit (1993). Hence, in order to write an effective essay, the students are allowed to study a self-suitable genre and familiarize themselves with the particular language item or style and then they produce their own text by considering the specifically learnt item in the genre.

In order to implement the genre approach in writing classes, Christine (1987) advises writing teachers to take into account the tips given here below. Primarily, the genre should be considered in the light of the context of the academic setting in which it is written, analyzed and adapted. Secondly, a genre should be examined linguistically, lexically and textually. At linguistic analysis level, learners can analyze the features of language used in the text in line with their communicative purposes. In analyzing the textual nature, learners need to consider how members of the discourse community confine meaning to components of language including lexis, syntax, discourse, and the like.

3.4.7.1 Genre Writing and Role Playing

Although writing teachers vary in their expectations of students' roles, experienced writers understand that genre writing usually involves an element of role playing. Less experienced writers, on the other hand, emphasize explaining their everyday selves and attempt to directly address the prompt in their essay. For further understanding, Simpson (1997) further explain by giving the following example: In a writing about literature course, students might be assigned to write an essay in which they agree or disagree on a particular critical issue .In interpreting the prompt literally, novice writers who chose to disagree might begin their essays directly with a statement such as "I don't agree" without setting a context for their disagreement or establishing their own connection to the topic. Similarly, students who chose to "agree" might write a statement such as "I agree." merely by observing the surface feature of the premise without thinking the deep inside of the issue. Here, the point that has to be made clear, as Simpson states is that less experienced writers might prefer the straightforward response in which they remain in their everyday selves. Those who have better experience of writing, however, attempt to see the issue from various vantage angles.

In her further explanation, Bawarishi (2003) suggests that in order for students to play roles in their writing, they must practice to explain their own concerns. In other words, an effective response to a genre writing assignment requires students to create ideas and think how to present them in various ways. Presenting ideas in different ways may sometimes be insufficient. Thus, role playing in genre writing requires further ability to interpret and explain ideas from their own point of view. Under some circumstances, for example, the writing prompt may require the student to be concerned with the role of thoughtfulness. The resulting essays then need to give impression that it was generated from the student's own concerns.

3.4.7.2 The Role of the Teacher in Genre Writing Class

Genre analysis can enable writing instructors to become aware of the hidden assumptions within the writing prompts. Thus, they can help their students understand that genres do not consist of necessarily simple and straightforward shades of meanings. If teachers are aware that writing assignments constitute a genre that presumes understanding of implicit assumptions, they can make them explicit by helping students understand implied requirements. Since one of the contributions of genre analysis is raising the thinking capacity of students, genre analysis can enable them generate sensible ideas and views Bawarshi (2003). Teachers, for example, might spend time defining terms such as “discuss,” “analyze,” “address,” “argue” or “compare and contrast,” discretely for students may be by giving them some illustrative sentences. In genre writing, however, students will have more opportunity to learn both underlined and surface meanings based on their use in the actual text. Furthermore, they can associate or look for meaning differences with other terms such as “critique,” “construct,” “define,” “evaluate,” “identify,” “review,” “trace.”, etc.

Teachers can also draw the attention of their students to use technical languages that may seem familiar but which have special meanings within the genre. For example, a genre assignment that asks students to evaluate whether a particular law or movement is “beneficial” to society requires them to define what is meant by beneficial, but students may not be aware of this requirement by their own. Therefore, to help students write an appropriate response to genre writing assignments, teachers can ask their students such questions as:

What purpose does this genre serve?

What are the features of this genre?

How do its particular generic features serve its purpose?

For whom is this genre written?

What role must the writer assume in writing this genre?

Whose interests does this genre serve? Bawarshi (2003:14).

In her further suggestion Bawarshi (2003) states that such kind of questions can help students understand the genre in the context of discourse community as a form of rhetorical etiquette aimed at achieving a particular purpose. It is also useful for teachers to compare the essay genre they are expecting with other genres with which students might be more familiar. Comparing an essay with an advertisement, for example, can help students become aware of connotative meanings such as the necessity of defining a topic, establishing a context for analysis, interpreting and formulating a thesis that unifies the text and making the text meaningful which is supported with evidence and logic.

Another useful strategy which enables teachers present genre writing successfully, according to Connors (1997), is to discuss the importance of role-playing, both in terms of constructing a character and fictionalizing an audience. She goes on discussing that approaching writing in the context of performance can help students become aware that any rhetorically based discourse written in a cultural context involves a particular role which then determines other elements of the text, such as tone, form, and style. Finally, a genre approach to writing assignments will help teachers construct their own genre more consciously and purposely by defining the requirements and determining the expected contents in terms of situation, context and motive.

The weak side of the genre approach to teaching writing is that they undervalue the skills needed to produce a text and see learners mostly as passive receivers of information. Moreover, they have the perception that writing takes place in a social situation, and is a reflection of a particular purpose, so that learning can happen consciously through imitation, interpretation and analysis.

The other weak side of this approach is that students often need a model written text on which they rely and thus they cannot freely think of the development of their own writing.

3.4.8 The Social Constructivists' Perspective to Writing and Its Instruction

This school of thought views writing from the point of view of its social relevance. The underlying belief is that writing, as a mode of language use, is basically social in its nature. The argument is that writing is a social act and is done within the constraints of specific social context Rubin (1998). The philosophy of the school is that lots of written texts are produced as a result of the interaction between the writer and the reader. Thus, the proponents of the school argue that during writing instruction, emphasis should be placed on developing understanding about the community and the social collaborative nature of writing Williams and Burden (1996). In principle, though writing is produced for an intended target group, it is mostly done lonely in the absence of the audience. This, however, does not mean that the text produced is not influenced by other social factors. When we examine the point with some details, writing is a social act which requires the involvement of others. Producing advertisement copies, drafting legislations and issuing corporate reports is the case in point Rubin (1988).

Under most circumstances, it is obvious that the product of any written work is directly or indirectly influenced by others and in turn the written product itself can influence others. One of the widely practiced conventions especially in the context of the academic world is citation of others' thought to substantiate one's argument with tangible evidences. This implies that writers develop their ideas in their written work by utilizing others' ideas and perspectives. Studies disclose that this interactive performance which is used in producing written texts, does not only ensure the social behavior of writing but also it indicates the significance of sharing of knowledge Glasersfeld (1995). In connection to this, John (1990) remarks that "knowledge itself is a joint construction of communities of like-minded peers."

The writer is a member of the community like anyone else who collaboratively works, evaluates decisions, appreciates, loves, hates, worries and passes judgment pertaining to knowledge, nature of language, discourse and other issues. This interactive life in the community enables

him/her to conceptualize the discourse community. Discourse community refers to the audience, the writer, the text through which the feelings of the writer are accommodated. According to Crombie (1985) the discourse community's norms influence the content, style and form of written texts which are the reflection of the ways in which a particular discourse community creates, perceives and organizes knowledge. This view takes us to the conclusion that the way constructivists' perceive audience is to some extent different from the process writing experts.

As has been repeatedly explained in this study earlier, the process writing experts, especially the expressivists, perceive writing as a creative thinking tool to express personal thoughts. Accordingly, their conviction about audience is that writing is part of the discourse community if only it could back up the purpose of the written text. In relation to this, Ede (1995) comments that the major concern of the expressivists' approach to writing is creating a situation in which audience is given less attention in producing a variety of written texts. In other words, the process writing school of thought gives major emphasis to the writer and the writer's cognitive thinking process. In line with the social constructivists view, however, writing instruction should not only focus on the writer but also on the context of the writing and its nature.

With regard to writing instruction, the social constructivists recommend that writing is best taught when it is handled collaboratively in a classroom where students are provided with a social context in which they come together to think about their writing collaboratively. This model argues that a writer actually immerse him/herself into the whole social contexts when he/she begins to develop any written text. The social nature of writing is often manifested when he/she is responding to a multitude of issues and other texts. In short, this school of thought considers writing as part of a wider dialogue. A piece of writing is then produced, according to Ede (ibid), as a result of the writers' social communication. When writing teachers have the perception that writing is a social act, they need to look at a student's paper as part of scholarly commentary on a particular topic. This means, in evaluating the students' papers, considering the components of the writing is not sufficient; furthermore, attention should be given to the social contexts in which the paper is written. This includes the topic of the class, the sequence of writing assignments, the instructions and expectations of the instructor, etc.

In the collaborative writing classroom the teacher is a facilitator, setting up an environment for students to work together on all stages of the writing process. Conversation is encouraged, because writing is viewed as internalized talk. Social constructionism states that meaning is not privately constructed, but is generated by social interaction. Advocators of the social constructionism perspective like Ede (1995) believe that the goal of education is to engage the human community in problem-solving and in an ongoing conversation of humankind. Therefore, the school perceives both thinking and writing as outcomes of social constructionism. Lastly, in implementing the social constructionism in writing classes, several teaching techniques such as encouraging group/pair discussions, giving writing exercises for critical analysis to various genres, peer-evaluations, and redefining the teacher's role can be employed.

3.5 Developing Teaching Materials for Process Writing Classes

In order to implement the process approach in writing classes successfully, one of the important requirements is the availability of task-based teaching materials that guide learners as to how they proceed with their writing creatively and meaningfully. A task is a piece of material or activity usually designed for instructional purposes for specific group of learners based on specific input, procedures and principles. Ellis (2003) further clarifies that a task is a work plan which engages learners in processing language skills practically to achieve the competence expected at the end of the instruction. This implies that tasks, like other language activities, can encompass either productive or receptive language skills that can be learnt verbally or orally. A number of research studies conducted by language teaching experts like Long (1981) reveal that meaningful writing tasks, among other things, subsume a variety of activities which motivate learners to develop interest for learning. Moreover, they enable learners to understand better about what they learn. This in turn helps them experience problem-solving mode of learning which creates conducive situations for language skills integration.

As research on second language indicate various language learning theories such as the Input Hypothesis developed by Krashen (1982) and the Interaction Hypothesis developed by Long (1981) laid foundation for the emergence of task-based learning in almost all areas of a foreign language instruction with the aim of carrying out students' needs identification, syllabus

designing, methodology designing, materials writing, testing, programme evaluation, etc. By the same token, Rooney (2002) lists the benefits of tasks as follows:

1. They are immense sources of action research for language teachers so that they can increase the magnitude of second language acquisition research.
2. They promote learner-centered method of instruction where there is a balance between theory and practice in the teaching learning environment where theory is thought as a derivation of practice.
3. They promote reflective methodology in teacher development programmes as opposed to traditional language learning exercises.

Process writing proponents believe that writing is a developmental process which can be better learnt through teaching materials which are developed holistically and meaningfully. In connection to this Kumara (1993) elaborates:

A learning-centered task-based pedagogy enjoys comprehensiveness, because, its theoretical principles and classroom procedures, unlike that of language and learner-centered pedagogies, are basically grounded in currently available insights derived from psycholinguistic research on L₂ development. As such the designing of tasks has to take into consideration, minimally, the following psycholinguistic principles: language learning as developmental process is a decision making process; it is a process of negotiation; it is not linear and additive; it is primarily incidental; it is largely subconscious activity, and it is a meaning-focused activity (p81).

One can understand from the above explanation that the relevance of communicative tasks in second language class is so multi-dimensional that writing instructors who conduct writing courses in the light of the process approach need to consider them as effective tools to negotiate meaning among interactants and deal with writing creatively.

As mentioned earlier in chapter one of this study, it is difficult to marginalize the communicative approach to language teaching and the process approach to writing instruction. As a result, implementing the process approach to writing instruction can successfully achieve its goal when writing instructors design task-based teaching materials and get their students use them in their

writing classes. To achieve this, when writing instructors design tasks they must be concerned with the selection, sequencing and justification of the content of the curriculum Nunan (1999). In addition, before beginning the development tasks, as Altman and James (1980) suggest, the following seven steps need to be taken into account. They are: needs analysis, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organization of content, selection of learning activities, organization of learning activities and decisions about what and how to evaluate.

Although much has been said about the essential components of pragmatic instructional materials, Nunan (1999) remarks that any approach to language pedagogy will need to concern itself with three essential elements: language data, information, and opportunities for practice. By language data, he means samples of spoken and written language. He notes that it is axiomatic that without access to data, it is impossible to learn or teach language. Thus, he is of the belief that minimally all that is needed to develop any language skills is access to appropriate samples of language items in contexts that enable students bring about a substantial progress on the language skills that are aimed to be learnt and used.

In teaching writing, a contrast is drawn between authentic and non-authentic language data. Authentic data are samples of spoken or written language that have not been specifically written for the purposes of language teaching. According to Nunan (1999), “non-authentic data” are dialogues and reading passages that were specially written for the purpose of instructing a particular language skill. Proponents of task-based language teaching have argued for the importance of incorporating authentic data into the classroom. Authenticity is a relative matter, because as soon as one extracts a piece of language data from the communicative context and uses it into the classroom, then it will be converted into non-authenticated language data to a certain degree. Therefore, if learners only ever encounter contrived dialogues and listening texts, the task of learning the language will become boring Nunan (1999). The reality is that in EFL contexts, learners need both authentic and non-authentic data because both provide learners with different aspects of the language.

In addition to language data, learners need information. They need essential information about the target culture, that is, linguistic information about target language systems and process

information about how to go about learning the language. They can get this information either deductively when a teacher or a textbook provides an explicit explanation, or they can get it inductively when students work with a piece of language or study examples of language and then formulate the rule by themselves.

In communicative language classes where process writing is vastly practised, the teaching materials designed need to be formulated in such a way that learners nurture the language skills with which they work out solutions to the problems they set themselves. Regarding this, Hedge (1991) suggests that those writing tasks which focus on meaning, their outcome should relate appropriately to the ultimate goal of those learners who need to develop and use their writing abilities in their social, educational or professional lives.

In her further analysis, Hedge (1991) recommends that well developed writing tasks need to reflect the ultimate goal which aims at enabling students to write whole texts form connected, contextualized, and appropriate piece of communication. To achieve this, as she further suggests, it is possible to build up a checklist of the forms such as letters, essays, reports and their functions, that is, narrative, description, comparison and contrast so that students would investigate how the features and organization of these different written products differ from one another.

The other nature of process-oriented writing tasks is that they reflect the writing process in competent writers. This means, they should encourage students to go through a process of planning, organizing, composing and revising. As a result, most of the writings that students do in their real life are the result of various efforts that they exert at various recursive hierarchies of their writing. This implies that learners need teaching materials which guide them what and how they do at each step of their writing.

When writing tasks are set, the background of various audience need to be taken into account. In other words, when the writer is able to identify who the reader is, he/she manages to make every piece of writing achieve some kind of communicative purposes. Thus, if students understand the context in which they write, it is believed that they write to achieve a certain purpose. The other worth mentioning point with regard to communicative writing tasks is time allocation for each

writing activity. There is a consensus among writing experts that in order to be a good writer, a student needs to read abundantly and critically because reading enables students to be exposed to various genres with various purposes and a variety of expressions so that they can develop awareness about the most relevant constituents incorporated within well developed written texts. Hence, in developing writing tasks, writing instructors are advised to take into account incorporating materials which expose students to read critically and integrate them with writing skills.

The other point to be considered in developing process-oriented (fluency-oriented) writing tasks is that the materials should give room to collaborative writing. Although the aim of writing instructors is to develop the writing skills of individual students, group discussions have their own contributions in enhancing individual students writing abilities. Regarding this, Hedge (1991) further suggests that group discussion is a good example of an activity in which the classroom becomes a writing workshop where students make collaborative effort to produce more valid written texts. The major reason is that at each stage of the activity, the group interaction contributes in useful ways to the writing process. This implies that collaborative writing gives students an opportunity to learn from academically better students. In sum, group writing in the classroom leads students to discussions and idea sharing that result in ultimately effective writing. This argument takes us to the conclusion that the teaching materials that are designed for process-oriented writing classes must include activities which are convenient for group discussions and group writing.

The other instructional materials expert Tomlinson (2001) suggests the following qualities to be manifested in well developed task-based writing teaching materials:

1. They should bring on learners' interest, curiosity and attention. To this effect, well developed writing teaching material should incorporate novelty, variety, attractive presentation and appealing content.
2. They enable learners to develop confidence by engaging their minds in problem-solving environment and utilizing their existing skills (keeping the learners at ease in the teaching/learning process).

3. They should be materials that tend to teach rather than test (relevance to the real-life of the learners).
4. They expose learners to authentic use of language skills addressing learners' learning style.

3.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Since 1960's a great deal of attention has been given to providing a unified theory of second language teaching/learning. As a result of this, nowadays there are over a dozen of theories/paradigms designed to handle second language teaching/learning issues in general, and writing instruction in particular. The availability of several theories and models, nevertheless, should not, in principle, be interpreted as excess or superfluous because a good deal still remains to be known about the learner, the learning process and the influence in language learning so that the task of model building and theory development must continue. As Schouten (1974) explains, in second language learning, too many models have been built and none of them could adequately satisfy learners in various contexts, thus, language teachers often expect anxiously an efficient and full-fledged language teaching model which could make their teaching more effective and successful. This view takes us to the conclusion that theory development in second language teaching/learning should not remain static rather it is a dynamic process which requires subsequent investigations and rectifications.

By the same token, the conceptual framework of this research lays its foundation on developmental psychology and communicative language teaching which have close connection with the perspectives of the process writing model though it does not totally marginalize *per se* from the social constructivists' and the productivists' view on writing instruction. The basic principle of the model is that learning in general, writing in particular, is a holistic creative thinking process where the writer discovers meaning and solves problems. According to this model, then, learning to write becomes more effective when students are engaged in distinctive thinking process to generate ideas, draft and review their writing in line with the audience and the purpose of a particular written text. The framework of the process is organized in such hierarchical protocol that it is inevitable to pass through certain stages which are recursive and

goal-oriented where writers discover meaning and modify their writing while the process perpetuates.

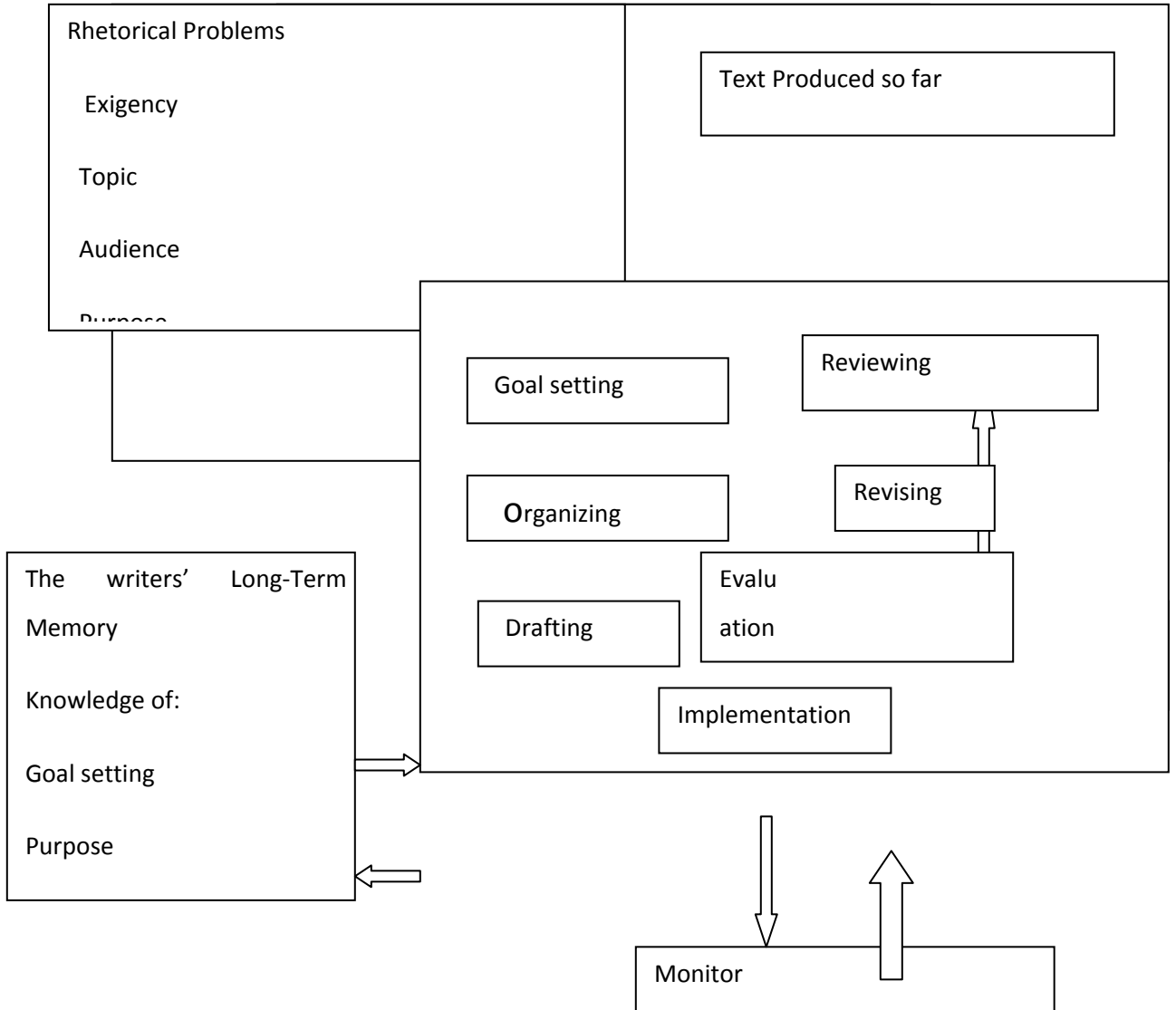
This model radically differs from the product model which believes that students can improve their writing more promptly when they have adequate knowledge of surface structures (grammar, vocabulary, etc.) rather than writing competence. According to the process paradigm, however, the more serious difficulty in writing is lack of writing experience and competence rather than linguistic competence.

In connection to this, Zamel (1983) made subsequent and in-depth investigations to give justification whether grammatical competence is decisive or not in determining the quality of students' second language writing. In her research, she attempted to create feasible environment in which the students can write freely, confidently and repeatedly rather than focusing on the teaching of grammar, vocabulary, and other mechanical items. In her conclusion, she reported that in spite of certain individual differences in spelling and other expressions, none of her students showed grammar and other mechanical constraints which impeded meaning. In her further analysis, she explained that teaching writing as a process requires feeding the brain with rich experience in authentic and meaningful contexts rather than concentrating on discrete and non-contextualized grammar exercises. This is to mean that those students who are engaged in writing activity within the context of the process paradigm are encouraged largely to produce the whole piece of discourse; not few lines of the text, listing unrelated words or sentences or building a single paragraph.

This implies that the process writing experts are of the view that since knowledge in general, writing skills in particular, are interconnected with other parts and wholes, the students need to be encouraged to write freely, confidently, extensively and coherently. The belief is that all learners become whole-brained with writing capacities that have not yet been utilized. This in turn takes us to the conclusion that writing is a complicated thinking process and social act which requires several levels of thinking (planning, drafting and reviewing) through which meaning is discovered and problems are solved.

In general terms, writing is of paramount significance for human progress in education and civilization. Thus, writing instructors at university level need to thoroughly understand the notions of modern and popular theories and be committed to implement them in line with the existing realities in the learning institutions. Secondly though each approach to writing instruction has its own advantage in promoting the writing skills of students, they need to focus on the process approach, which is comprehensive and creative to enhance the writing skills of the students quickly and qualitatively. The belief is that if students are first encouraged to improve their writing fluency, it is easy to develop accuracy step by step. In implementing the process approach to writing, the role of the instructor is to support and guide learners at each stage of writing rather than evaluating the final product that they have produced. For the sake of more clarity, the conceptual framework of this research is presented diagrammatically here below.

The Process Writing Model



Developed Based on Flower and Hayes (1982:370)

The above diagram succinctly portrays that writing is a highly multifaceted language skill which requires various thinking phases i.e. writing takes place within meaningful situations where writers transform or interpret a given task into another phase. In connection to this, cognitive writing theoreticians like Flower and Hayes (1982) recommend that writing activities need to be linked with day-to-day life, experience, culture and background of the students.

According to the above diagram, the rhetorical problem, the audience, and the writer's goals all together constitute motivation. The belief is that if writers are motivated, they can react to the rhetorical problems by writing and re-writing. In reacting to the problem, one of the basic activities which is expected from the writer is to define the problem clearly. As Flower and Hayes (1982) point out an individual's success in this process depends upon the writer's ability to define the problem. The belief is that if writers are well aware of the subject on which they write, developing the idea and coming up with the final text is a less challenging task. The understanding is that if once writers start writing, the text itself exerts influence upon them to proceed with the written work until they achieve the final product. Another important point in the diagram is the writer's long-term memory, which refers to experience of the writer in combination with the writer's external sources. Writing is a creative act, which involves inspiration and discovering meaning. As a result, writers need to think of their topic and audience and develop their written text recursively. The other important point is that at this stage of writing, a writer plans how to go about the writing activity by creating an internal representation. That representation is in turn the spark that feeds the creation and organization of ideas.

The other process is translation (implementation) which is meant converting ideas into words on paper. This process requires taking abstract thoughts and putting them through the technical aspects of writing such as grammar, punctuation, diction and the like. Reviewing is a factor in the process. Writers review and evaluate what they have written and then changed the text to suit their developing concept of the text. Flower and Hayes (1982) observed that writers monitor their process of development and its progress as they write. To achieve this, writers at this stage improve their writing by deleting unwanted ideas, adding missing ideas, even sometimes changing the whole idea, etc. At this stage, the commonly observed problem is connected to

monitoring because it can sometimes be affected by changing goals and the writer's method of writing.

The second key point is that the cognitive processes in writing are hierarchical. This means the processes can encompass other more specific sub-processes. A hierarchical structure is so flexible that the writer can go forward and reward while shaping ideas.

The third and most important key point in the model is indicating that writing is goal-directed. Goals have a hierarchical structure like all other processes involved in writing. According to the model, writers create goals as they are engaged in writing. Goals evolve during the writing process and they guide the writer in choosing which process to use at any given moment. This implies that all the other processes are put into practice by the writer's high, middle, and low-level goals. The belief is that good writers generate easily achievable mid-level goals which enable them to produce a large number of written texts which meet the required standard. Poor writers, as Flower and Hayes (1982) suggest, are categorized under low-level goal as they have greater difficulty in advancing the process of writing. Flower and Hayes suggest that, in the act of writing, people regenerate or recreate their own goals in the light of what they learn.

In their further analysis, Flower and Hayes (1982) provide readers with detailed explanation on the flow of information in the model. Accordingly, the arrows in the model depict that information flows from one box or process to another in a recursive manner. Knowledge of writing on a given topic, for example, can be transferred or activated at planning stage. Similarly, information from planning can flow to different directions. As Flower and Hayes (1982) further argue, the flow of information in the diagram cannot be predicted since it can take various directions.

The other relevant point that we observe in the model is that, as cognitive theorists explain, writers generate, structure, and review their ideas relentlessly since writing is not a linear activity which follows a straight path. If we further look at the model we uptake that the process of writing that writers undergo when they produce a variety of written texts can differ from writer to writer i.e. each writer has his/her own unique writing process which can be manifested at each

stage of writing. According to Jacob (1982), for instance, good writers make various changes by using their revision skills after completing each stage of their writing.

Moreover, Beach (1999) explains that in the first draft, good writers are so self-centered that they organize their idea on the basis of their own personal experience and background knowledge rather than worrying about the expectation of their readers and surface features of their writing. Such writers alter writer-based writing into reader-based writing when they read and proof-read their writing. Because of this, they turn to the editing task of surface features (grammar, diction, punctuation, spelling, etc.) at the end of their writing. Weak writers, contrarily, focus on the surface structure of their writing process. They resume revising their writing during the early stage of their writing process as soon as they get down their idea on a white sheet of paper. Due to this, they spend a long period of time in editing their language use, spelling, word choice, etc., rather than discovering meaning.

The other worth mentioning point that can be observed from the model is that there are a number of process approaches to writing. This implies that writing is a highly interconnected process with the cognitive skills of the writer which emanate from the emotional, intellectual and social aspect of the writer. Thus, according to this model, writing is believed to be a means of self expressing, a means of problem solving and social activity. When the above views about writing are examined externally, they have their own point of argument. If they are examined closely, however, they complement each other in several ways. When students, for example, manage to express their inner feelings through writing, they solve the problems being under the influence of the discourse community directly or indirectly.

The core point of this research is, thus, when students are provided with autonomy during the process of generating ideas, drafting and reviewing recursively, they can bring about a substantial progress in their writing ability rapidly. When students pass through this process in the course of producing a variety of written texts, the task of the teacher is to support, manage and facilitate the process and provide the students with constant feedback which will enable them advance their writing competence.

Like any other models, this model of writing processes has been subjected to many criticisms. Bruffee (2001), for example, argues that emotional and social influences on writers need to be recognized as essential elements in how they write. If the cognitive process writing model is carefully studied, however, the task environment sub-box, located in the left-hand box, leads the writer to consider ethical judgments and social contexts which can emanate from the writer's interaction along with the writer's internal and external experiential world. This in turn can shape the cognitive process writing in harmony with the axioms of social constructivism.

Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Research Paradigms

As theoretical questions in education emerge from different conceptions and interpretations of social reality, different paradigms have been evolved to determine the criteria in which one can select the research tools that go in line with the theories and the problems for inquiry. Selecting the appropriate research paradigm is one of the significant research procedures which often help a researcher as a springboard to determine the direction of the research study. The belief is that once the researcher has decided on the research paradigm that he/she follows, it will be then easy for him/her to determine the research instruments that will be used to collect data and the way the data will be interpreted and discussed Norman and Yuvona (1994).

There are different research paradigms which were designed by different scholars. The major ones are, however, two: positivism and anti-positivism. Positivism is a paradigm which was designed laying its foundation on observation and reason as a means of understanding human behavior. According to this paradigm, true knowledge derives from experience of senses and can be obtained through observation and experiment. Although positivistic paradigm continued to influence educational research for a long time in the late half of the twentieth century, it was criticized due to its failure to consider the subjective nature of individuals because it regards human behavior as passive, controlled and determined by external environment Cohn and Robins (2000).

The second paradigm, anti-positivism, regards social reality as the view and interpretation of an individual him/herself depending on the perceptions and attitudes she/he has developed towards various phenomena in his/her surroundings. Therefore, according to this school of thought, knowledge is personal experience rather than something to be acquired from outside. As Denzin and Lincoln (2000) further explain, anti-positivists believe that reality is multilayered and complex. This means a single phenomenon can have multiple interpretations. The belief is that the verification of a phenomenon is adapted when the level of understanding of a phenomenon is the concern of unexplored dimensions of a phenomenon rather than establishing specific relationship among the components.

When the assumptions of the two paradigms are examined thoroughly, positivists consider social reality as objective, measurable, predictable, and controllable in constructing rules of human behavior. Anti-positivists, on the other hand, believe that understanding and interpreting phenomena leads to making meaning out of the process. Each of the paradigms discussed above has influenced scientific research. Positivism, for example, gives importance to research methods focusing on quantitative analysis depending on the data which are secured through questionnaires, experimenting, testing, etc. Contrarily, anti-positivists stress on subjectivity to investigating social phenomena which have attachment with a range of qualitative analysis depending on the data that are obtained through personal interviews, observations, questionnaires, personal contacts, etc.

In connection to this, Charmaz (2003) and Holliday (2007) remark: all research ultimately has a qualitative grounding. This, however, does not mean that the quantitative method will be marginalized entirely. As several research experts like Miles and Haberman (1994) suggest, in most contexts, both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms supplement each other in a number of ways as we are living in a world of numbers and words. As a result of this, though this research followed, by and large, the qualitative paradigm which utilized observation, interviews, evaluation of the teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills as research instruments, it did not entirely ignore employing statistical data especially in analyzing and interpreting the data that were collected through questionnaires. The quantification is applied in computing the number of responses given to each item of the questionnaire in terms of percentage, modal value, maximum value and minimum value. The purpose of explaining the responses from the questionnaires through statistical data was to give further and deep explanation about the data. Thus, in conclusion, it is possible to say that though the largest part of the data were analysed qualitatively, the data from the questionnaire required explanation through descriptive statistics.

4.2 Research Design

Classical rationalists have ignored any sort of knowledge beyond pure mathematics and formal logic for long years. In the contemporary world, however, a large number of researchers are turning their face to qualitative paradigm due to the ever fast growing complexity of social phenomena and human behaviors. Consequently, it is becoming one branch of scientific inquiry

which accommodates different disciplines, fields, and subject matters holistically. Patton (2002) is of the view that qualitative research paradigm is especially more preferred when the rationale of the research is to deal with processes, meanings, and behaviors. Furthermore, Loseke and Cahil (2007) confirm that qualitative research is sufficiently capable of providing adequate evidences especially when the research issue aims at getting rich insight into human behavior, meaning and experience. Bogdan and Biklen (1992), similarly, further discuss that these days there is a growing tendency to depend on qualitative approach while investigating classroom behaviors, meanings and experiences especially in the area of general education and applied linguistics.

According to Doukas (1996), qualitative method is preferred when the researcher intends to investigate the complex social processes, when he/she wants to capture essential aspects of a phenomenon from the perspective of study participants and when the rationale of the study focuses on understanding the beliefs values and motivations that underlie individuals' overall behaviors. Denzin (1989) further elaborates that qualitative methods would be selected if the following requirements were fulfilled. These are: when the research aim is mainly to study complex phenomena which are difficult to be measured quantitatively, when the type of data to be collected are relevant for comprehensive understanding of a problem and when the researcher aims at gaining insights into potential meanings to experience, values and beliefs of the targeted group of the study.

In order to deal with the research problems in this study holistically, thus, the research is designed qualitatively which is known by other names (interpretive, soft, holistic, descriptive phenomenological, naturalistic, illuminative). It is non- experimental, which attempts to describe the data collected about the subjects' perceptions, beliefs, classroom behaviours, phenomena, processes etc., largely non-statically giving more attention to processes, implementations and inductive reasonings.

Furthermore, when the research is designed non-experimentally, the researcher could carry out in-depth investigations on research issues aiming at answering the questions, what is happening, why is it happening and how is it happening Eisnerand and Peshkin (1990) and Peters (1999). The other reason for designing the research non-experimentally was that the researcher's

understanding about the nature of knowledge and practices would be best represented, analyzed and explained as deeply as possible Dey (1993) and Taylor and Bogdan (1998).

4.3 Research Data Sampling

Several qualitative researchers remark that there is no fixed way to determine the sample size of the population in qualitative study. These days, however, most qualitative researchers follow the widely accepted model of data sampling known as data saturation Saumur and Given (2008). In the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State, when this research began, there were five universities which had already resumed their academic duties excluding those whose construction was under way. Thus, before the research began, the researcher collected data through observations, interviews and questionnaires regarding the teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing Skills from two universities, that is, Hawassa and Wolaita Soddo Universities. When the data, which were collected through each instrument, were analyzed, the researcher could not find significant differences. Thus, depending on the results of the analyzed data, the researcher selected Hawassa University as his research site having the understanding that this university could represent realities in other universities.

The second reason is that, as qualitative researchers such as Sherman and Webb (1988) suggest, when the research site and subjects are of manageable size, the collected qualitative data will be analyzed and described as deeply and thoroughly as possible. Furthermore, since Hawassa University is my work place, I could conduct the research without several challenges. In connection to this, Williams (2008) suggests that when the research site is convenient for the researcher, it has its own effect in determining the quality of the final findings.

For the purpose of this qualitative (non-experimental) study, data were collected from both Basic Writing Skills instructors who were conducting the course at Hawassa University and students who were taking the course in the same university. When the researcher was conducting the pilot study, there were 6 writing instructors, who were offering the course Basic Writing Skills to students who belonged to four different colleges. They were: College of Social Sciences and Humanities, College of Natural Sciences, College of Business and Economics and College of Agriculture. Under the colleges mentioned above, there were 8 groups of students from different

departments who were taking the course as a common (service) course. Totally, their number was four-hundred. The reason for having only this number of students was due to the fact that some groups took the course last semester, others were made to take Sophomore English and few departments want their students to take only Communicative English Skills.

Following the same sample size determining model, that is, data saturation model, the researcher selected two instructors' classes to conduct observations for one month. The selection was one class from the Department of Computer Science and the second one from the Department of Accounting. The above departments were selected for observations using simple random sampling technique. Furthermore, four Basic Writing Skills instructors were selected for interviewing among the 6 instructors conducting the course in the above departments using the data saturation model.

In addition, the researcher selected eight students using purposive sampling technique, that is, one student from each department in consultation with the respective writing instructors about their academic competence and their English language fluency. The reason for selecting such type of students was that sufficient and more or less appropriate data would be secured as long as the interviewees had good command of the English language which enabled them express themselves adequately. Moreover, when the respondents were academically outstanding, they could critically think and provide the researcher with valid data. The major reason for selecting 1 respondent from each classroom is to further investigate each classroom behaviors in each of the Basic Writing classes. In addition, such kind of selection helped the researcher to check the extent to which each of the activities accomplished in each Basic Writing Skills classes share commonalities.

In addition to the observations and interviews conducted, this research required twenty Basic Writing Skills instructors who would respond to the questionnaires. The data from the questionnaires were required for quantitative analysis. Therefore, twenty Basic Writing Skills instructors were made to respond to the questionnaires. The reason for limiting their number to twenty was that the data from the Head of the Department of Language Studies, (presently, renamed as School of Language and Communication Studies) revealed that the total number of instructors who had experience of conducting the course Basic Writing Skills was twenty in

number. The researcher, therefore, decided to involve each instructor as their number was not too large to handle the data that would be collected from them.

Moreover, among the four-hundred students who were taking the course in the university, those students whose classes were observed, that is, one hundred of them were made to respond to the questionnaires. The main reason of selecting the above students was that since the researcher had already observed their Basic Writing Skills classes, they might be free from bias in responding to each item of the questionnaire. The reasons for selecting 400 respondents were, firstly, according to the information received from the Head of the School of Language and Communication Studies, the number of students in each English Language classrooms was limited to fifty. Hence, based on the understanding of the researcher, the responses from the above respondents was capable of providing sufficient data to this study. Secondly, as the researcher could understand from personal readings, most local researchers who conducted qualitative study on writing skills at the same level, have not so far used research subjects more than the above number. Thirdly, the following sample-size determining formulae suggested by Israel (2009), forces the present researcher to use 100 respondents.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad \text{where,} \quad n = \text{sample size}$$

N= total population

e =the level of precision

$$\text{Therefore, } n = \frac{400}{1+400(0.05)^2} \approx 100$$

4.4 Research Instruments

For the purpose of this study, the major research tool used to gather data was observation conducted in two Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University. The second tool was semi-structured interviews conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors and students taking the course in the university mentioned above. The third one was evaluation of the teaching materials which have been used currently in Basic Writing Skills classes. The fourth one was questionnaires

administered to both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students who were taking the course in the same university.

4.4.1 Observation

Observation was selected as a major research instrument for this study for the following reasons. Firstly, observation is the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study. As a result, it enabled the researcher to describe the existing situations in Basic Writing Skills classes using the five senses, providing a “written photograph” of the situations under study. This means, it is a research tool which enabled the researcher to capture each and every event that is happening in the classroom. Secondly, it provided him with ways to check for nonverbal expressions of feelings, determine who interacted with whom, get insight how participants communicated with each other, and checked for how much time was spent on various activities. This in turn led him to strong attention and prolonged involvement in the setting.

Thirdly, the researcher has the belief that observation fosters his in-depth understanding of the phenomena, situations and the behaviors of the participants in the classroom. In connection to this, Lofland and Lofland (1995) are of the view that through observation it is possible to be certain about what people say and what they do in reality. Fourthly, as Dewalt, & Dewalt, (2002) recommend, in qualitative research, observational data, more than interview data, are subjected to wider interpretations and discussions by the researcher. Fifthly, when the purpose of the research questions aimed at answering questions that began with what or how, more sufficient answers were obtained through observation. Sixthly, according to Bryman (2004), observation is the more preferable tool to collect data which would give detailed information about implementations and processes in a particular setting. Seventhly, observation is an ongoing dynamic activity more likely than an interview to provide evidence for the development of events which are relentlessly moving and growing.(Silverman, 1993; Savage, 2000). This implied that observation has the advantage of capturing the whole settings in which people behaved by recording the context in which they worked.

Observations were carried out before administering questionnaires and conducting interviews. The reason was that if the writing instructions in both instructors' classes were observed prior to the distribution of the questionnaires or conducting the interviews, there might not be more opportunity to observe the actual practices taking place in the classrooms. The belief was that if the instructor was made to respond to the interview and questionnaires prior to the observation sessions, he might attempt to associate what he was teaching with the responses that he had already given to the interview or questionnaires. As a result, the researcher would not have opportunity to observe the real happenings that took place in both Basic Writing Skills classes. This again would become a factor not to get reliable information for the study. Furthermore, the observation was conducted after the instructors had started teaching paragraph level writing for the fact that the major purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation of the process approach mainly when students write paragraphs or essays.

As a result, having identified the major attention areas of the observation scheme, the researcher developed eighteen observation check-list items which helped him as guiding framework while he was following each of the activities taking place in classrooms where Basic Writing Skills classes were being conducted. He then randomly selected two Basic Writing Skills instructors' classes at Hawassa University and observed when the teaching/learning practices were going on for one month. During the observation sessions, each of the activity was tape-recorded. Furthermore, when it was convenient, the activities were video-recorded, as well.

During the observation sessions, the researcher observed how students were learning writing skills, how the instructor monitored the teaching/learning, the type of teaching materials being used, how students were supporting each other so as to alleviate their personal shortcomings, how they evaluated their writing progress, the factors that impeded the writing instruction, and the like.

4.4.2 Interviews

The second research tool the researcher selected for data gathering in this study was semi-structured interview conducted with both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students taking the course. One of the major reasons was that it is one of the widely used research tools in qualitative

(descriptive) research study to access people's experiences, their inner perceptions, attitudes, and feelings of reality. Secondly, interviews are highly interactive and responsive to the language and concepts used by the interviewee Fontana and Frey (2005). Thirdly, as qualitative researchers, like Franklin (2012) believe, the responses to the interview items would help to secure data that could not be secured through questionnaires and observations otherwise.

Among various types of interviews, for the purpose of this study, the researcher decided to use semi-structured interview because semi-structured interview was flexible during the interviewing sessions so that the respondents could have more opportunity for free thinking and reacting to the items in a more relaxed way. Moreover, as the present researcher did not use predefined questions unlike in structured interview, he had wider opportunity to generate various items that emanated from the responses in the conversation. This in turn helped him to get the deep inside insights of the interviewees.

When the interview was going on, though moving to and fro was possible, the researcher used interview guide which could help him as compendium or topical trajectories in collecting the required qualitative data. The interview guides (frameworks of the theme) were usually more open-ended than questions prepared in a structured interview. However, in the course of interviewing, the researcher was rearranging the sequence of the items of the interview by rejecting or adding more questions based on the context of the conversations. Before starting the actual interviews, the researcher outlined a set of issues (aid-memoire) that would help him explore various issues which would help him investigate the extent to which the process approach was being implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes.

In order to improve the quality of the interview, one of the recommendations was conducting pre-interview assessments with the respondents. Accordingly, the interview guide was pre-tested based on the recommendations of Cohn and Robins, (2000) and Gough and Scott (2000). This pre-testing aimed at checking the flaws in the items and their reliability. Having been certain that the interview guide covered all most relevant issues, the researcher went on presenting the impromptu items in order to follow up the leads that would emerge during the interview. In most cases, the role of the researcher was to encourage the interviewees to talk about their views and

experiences in depth but with limited reciprocal engagement or disclosure. In order to transcribe and analyze the data, the whole conversations during the interview were tape-recorded.

4.4.2.1 Interview with Writing Instructors

In making the teaching/learning more effective in any context, instructors have their own irreplaceable role to play. Even if there is an entirely conducive environment to teach or learn any language skill in any academic setting, the role instructors play in enhancing the skills of students is at the center of the instruction. They have their own training, experience, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs which could have influence on the overall academic progress of their students. Having this understanding, the researcher decided to capture detailed information about their perceptions on the nature of writing, the methods of teaching being used in Basic Writing Skills classes, the role of good command of grammar in learning and improving writing skills, the role of group/pair discussions in enhancing personal writings, the nature of teaching materials being used in Basic Writing Skills classes, the major factors that impeded, if any, the implementation of the process approach and the like.

4.4.2.2 Interview with Students

Conducting an interview with students aimed at serving the following major purposes. Firstly, students have their own experiences and insights into the teaching/learning of writing skills like writing instructors. Consequently, conducting an interview with students selected from the eight departments helped the researcher get further information that would not have been easily secured through questionnaires and observations otherwise. The second reason was that, as most of the issues raised in the interview with students were similar with that of the instructors', the responses helped the researcher to verify whether there were differences or not in responding to them. Finally, the selected students were invited to the interview room, interviewed and their responses were tape-recorded.

4.4.3 Evaluation of the Teaching Materials for the Course Basic Writing Skills

In investigating the implementation of the process approach in writing classes, one of the research tools was evaluating the teaching materials which were being used for the teaching purposes in

Basic Writing Skills classes. The main reason was that teaching materials are seen as resource in achieving the objectives stipulated in the course out line. This means though teaching materials are not ends by themselves, they serve as important resources in guiding both instructors and students to work in line with the goal expected to be achieved. In connection to this, Cunningsworth (1995) remarks that the major role of teaching materials is to serve both teachers and students as tools but not to be their masters. Thus, their major role is to facilitate the teaching/learning in accordance with the objectives or rationales which have already been set up by the developers of the course or the syllabus.

When we further investigate the roles of teaching materials in line with the process of teaching/learning, we observe that they can exert considerable influence over what instructors teach and how they teach. As a result, it is extremely relevant to carefully think in developing effective teaching materials which reflect the aims, methods and values of the teaching programme. In this regard, Cunningsworth (1995) further remarks that the relationship between the method of teaching and the teaching material is an important consideration and is at its best when it is a partnership and shares common goals to which each side brings its special contribution. In sum, teaching materials have close connection in determining the methodology and aim of a given course.

Course materials developing experts like Clarke (1994) suggest that there are no perfectly developed teaching materials for any course in any context. This means, each material has its own strengths and weaknesses. However, teaching materials can be judged as effective or less effective on the basis of certain criteria that they meet. Having this in mind, the present researcher decided to evaluate the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University.

Before the teaching materials had been developed, the curriculum committee of the school set up the course out line which comprised the general and specific objectives of the course, descriptions of the course, mode of delivery and assessment. The school head then invited some veteran instructors of the course to develop teaching materials which could meet the requirements of the newly developed curricula of the school which began functioning in 2009. Thus, as the materials have been used formally for the last five years across the board in the university, the present

researcher decided to evaluate them whether they are suitable to implement the process approach or not.

In evaluating any teaching materials, the first step is to prepare guiding frame-works which enable the evaluator to examine their different components. Accordingly, in evaluating the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills, the present researcher decided to summarize and adapt the following guiding frame-works suggested by Long (1981) and Cunningsworth (1995).

1. Are the materials contextualized and consist of problem solving activities?
2. Does the degree of complexity of the course materials go in conformity with the academic standard of students?
3. Is there enough variety?
4. Do the contents of the materials relate to the real life of the students?

4.4.4 Questionnaire

As this study required quantitative data in order to triangulate the results of the qualitative data, the researcher designed two types of questionnaires: one of the varieties was designed for students and the other variety for Basic Writing Skills instructors.

Though this study was designed qualitatively, it required quantitative data that would be collected through questionnaires. The first reason was that using questionnaires for this study was of its own contribution especially in collecting information from a wider sample than can be reached by personal interviews or observations. The second reason was that questionnaires are among the most prominent methods in quantitative research because they commonly require subjects to respond to a stimulus and thus they act naturally. Thus, they helped the researcher to investigate the subjects' perceptions on issues related to the implementation of the process approach. The third reason was that the quantitative results that were obtained from the responses to the questionnaires helped the researcher to triangulate the qualitative results that were secured through other research tools mentioned above so that the reliability of the findings was reinforced.

4.4.4.1 Questionnaire for Writing Instructors

The questionnaires were designed and distributed to Basic Writing Skills instructors having the following two major purposes in mind. Firstly, most instructors of the course Basic Writing Skills had got training in higher institutions at various academic levels before they began their teaching career. Hence, each of them has his/her own insight about various theories and their implementations pertaining to writing instruction. Secondly, under most circumstances, writing instructors had experienced various realities taking place in writing classes and had their own better academic maturity level than their students. Consequently, the researcher was of the understanding that writing instructors would provide him with reasonable and genuine responses to each questionnaire items.

The nature of the questionnaires focused on checking their perceptions about the methodology they employed in their writing classes, the role of good command of grammar in learning and improving writing skills, the role of group work in enhancing the students' personal writing, the teaching materials which were being used for the purpose of teaching Basic Writing Skills and the major problems, if any, that constrained the successful implementation of the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes and finally examining the extent to which Basic Writing Skills instructors attempted to implement the process approach in their Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University.

4.4. 4.2 Questionnaires for Students

The items of the questionnaires designed for students aimed at serving the following major purposes: Primarily, as writing experts like Ziman (2000) explain, whatever approach instructors employ in their writing classes, the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes their students have had towards the content of the course and method of instruction, has serious impact in determining the goal expected to be achieved by the end of the day. On account of this, administering questionnaires helped the researcher to investigate their perceptions about the nature of writing and the methodology being employed and other related issues pertinent to the teaching/learning of Basic Writing Skills. Furthermore, as some items of the questionnaires were similar with those distributed to writing instructors, the responses that students provided helped the researcher

check whether both writing instructors and their students had common understanding on them or not.

4.5 Method of Data Analysis

Since this study is largely qualitative, most of the data were analyzed in accordance with the principles of qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis requires coding the responses, identifying categories or themes and explaining their meanings. The reliability of the findings, however, depends on the critical thinking of the researcher. As Patton (1990) remarks, this dependence on human decision can be the greatest strength or the greatest weakness of a qualitative research study. The main reason is that the responsibility is fully in the hands of the researcher to explain and report his or her analytic processes, procedures and findings fully and truthfully.

4.5.1 Discussing the Observation Data

Discussing qualitative observational data is a systematic and sequential activity which requires continuous revision and analysis. Observational qualitative data analysis is a process of systematically arranging transcripts, studying them as deeply as possible, interpreting them, discussing results and reporting what was discovered to others Bogdan and Biklen (1992). Accordingly, in analyzing the observation data for this study, the researcher first transcribed the data recorded into the audio-tape-recorder onto blank sheets of papers. The transcribed data were then checked and rechecked by listening to the tape-recorder repeatedly. At the third stage, the lessons conducted in each period were divided into different extracts following the qualitative description model of Berkowitz (1997). In the extracts, each of the activities which had been performed by both the instructors and the students in the classroom were directly presented as they were. Finally, the researcher described, interpreted and discussed the data obtained based on 'activity type' and 'mode of delivery'. 'Activity type' refers to the tasks and instructional procedures instructors employed in writing classes. 'Mode of delivery' is meant to the methodology the instructors used while conducting the lessons.

4.5.2 Discussing the Interview Data

In discussing the interview data for this study, the first step was transcribing the responses from the tape-recorder onto blank sheets of paper. After the data had been properly transcribed, the next step was coding the responses to identify categories of major and sub-themes. In this regard, Bowling (1997) and Dornei (2007) suggest that in analyzing qualitative interview, data coding and categorizing themes are inevitable activities. The purpose of coding was to make categories of themes and sub-themes clear and more consistent to readers so that ambiguities can be resolved from the data. Coffey and Atkinson (1996), further explain that coding qualitative interview data appropriately and consistently would enable researchers improve considerably the speed and efficiency with which they can categorize the data. Seidel and Kelle, (1995), similarly, explain that coding the transcriptions in qualitative interview data is significant in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns and structures in the data to be analyzed. This indicates that all responses that are coded the same way, that is, given the same label, are simple for investigation and explanation. Thus, the researcher was of the opinion that coding the qualitative interview data (transcriptions) made easier to examine the data, identify categories of major and sub-themes and to make comparison to identify any patterns that required further investigations.

In like manners, after the researcher had coded all the interview data (transcriptions) from Basic Writing Skills instructors and studied them very thoroughly, he identified four categories of major themes and twenty-one sub-themes. Having done this, he explained the responses given under each theme along with the research questions presented in this study. Likewise, the responses from students' interview were classified into three major themes and fourteen sub-themes. As was done with instructors' interviews, each major and sub-theme was thoroughly investigated, interpreted and discussed by citing substantive evidences from the actual responses of the interviewees.

4.5.3 Evaluating the Teaching Materials

In evaluating the teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills, the first step was studying the evaluation criteria listed above very carefully. The second step was studying the general nature of the course outline sketched by the school. This helped the present researcher to

investigate whether the course objectives and descriptions designed by the school for the course Basic Writing Skills were convenient to develop teaching materials which enabled instructors to implement the process approach or not. The third step was going through the whole teaching materials and studying each component whether it was developed in line with the course objectives of the school or not. The understanding was that when the researcher had clear understanding about the development of the materials, he then would get a picture whether they were convenient to implement the process approach or not. The fourth step was citing some examples from the materials and giving explanations on the basis of the four guiding frameworks suggested above. The results of the evaluation of the teaching materials helped the researcher to examine the extent to which the teaching materials were feasible to implement the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes. Furthermore, the results were significant to compare and contrast the responses given to the interviews conducted with both writing instructors and students.

4.5.4 Discussing the Results of the Questionnaires

Two types of questionnaire were designed. One type was distributed to Basic Writing Skills instructors and the other type to students taking the course. The questionnaires for instructors were again further subdivided into close-ended and open-ended type and that of students, similarly, were subdivided in the same way. Against each item, there were five different alternative responses given in the grids. These are: ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree, Disagree’, ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Not Decided’. If a respondent responded ‘Strongly Agree’ to the item, for example, he/she would mark a tick under number 4, if responded, ‘Agree’, he/she would mark a tick under number 3, if responded ‘Disagree’, he/she would mark a tick under number 2, if responded ‘Strongly Disagree’, he/she would mark a tick under number 1 and if he/she responded ‘Not Decided’, he/she would mark a tick under number 0.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the most important descriptive statistics like mode, percentage values, minimum and maximum values. Mode means the most frequently observed value from the total number of responses. The reason for using modal value was that since the data were categorical, explaining the modal value made the explanation clearer and deeper. The

percentage value was also the other way of explaining the meaning of the responses as it was very important to describe the results out of hundred. Maximum value was the other means of explaining the meaning of responses because it indicated the most repeatedly responded answers for each item of the questionnaire. Minimum value was used because it helped to describe the extent to which the respondents were varying in their responses. As a result of this, the researcher decided to use descriptive measures which had categorical behavior. In analyzing the responses, the following codes were used: Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1 and Not Decided=0.

Chapter Five: Major Findings of the Pilot Study

Conducting the pilot study aimed at serving two purposes. The first one was to test the strengths and weakness of the research instruments. Thus, the strengths and limitations of each instrument were examined and the necessary amendments were made while gathering data for the main study. The second one was to use the findings as a stepping -stone to pursue the main study. The pilot study is a trial research stage which is often designed with the view that the possible shortcomings that would disturb the progress of the main study could be alleviated as early as possible. Accordingly, first the major findings achieved through each research tool are presented and then the major lessons obtained from the pilot study are discussed.

5.1 Data Reliability

As Smith (1993) remarks, checking the reliability of the qualitative research data is largely left to the critical thinking of the researcher. This implies that there are no fixed patterns which can be taken for granted. Accordingly, in order to check the reliability of the observation data, the researcher used two techniques. The first one was selecting any two Basic Writing Skills classes and conducting observation for two weeks prior to the undertaking of the pilot study. The collected data were then transcribed and categorized into various lesson extracts. Ultimately, the activities in each of the extracts were evaluated whether they were practiced in harmony with the process approach or not. Accordingly, the results indicated that, by and large, 50% of the lessons in Basic Writing Skills classes were conducted through the process approach. The second technique was triangulating the responses obtained through observation with those secured through interviews and questionnaires. The results still did not indicate significant differences.

In order to check the reliability of the interviews conducted with both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students, the researcher employed focused group-discussions. Before conducting the actual interviews for the pilot study, the researcher selected 4 instructors who were offering the course and held discussions regarding their perceptions about the nature of writing, the methodology they were employing, the feasibility of teaching materials in handling the course through the process approach and the factors which obstructed the students' performance in writing. Their responses were then categorized into major themes and sub-themes. Finally, when

the results were compared with that of the results of the pilot study, there were no as such wider variations. The second one was changing some of the interview items into questionnaires and distributing them to 10 Basic Writing Skills instructors and 50 students in order to get reflections. Accordingly, the results that were obtained from the tentatively designed questionnaires and from the actual interviews conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors did not show significant differences.

Regarding the reliability of the criteria used to evaluate the teaching materials, their reliability was checked by conducting few interview items that focused on the four parameters set for evaluation of the materials with instructors of the course and students taking the course (see the criteria on page 96). When the results of the evaluation of the teaching materials and temporarily designed interview items were compared, there were no still significant differences which lead to changing the contents of the criteria stipulated to evaluate the teaching materials.

The last data for this study were collected through questionnaires administered to both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students who were taking the course. In order to check their reliability, first the items were converted into structured interview items and then were conducted with both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students. The results were then categorized and analyzed. When the results of the temporarily designed structured interviews and the results from the questionnaires were assessed, the researcher did not find out wide gap except on few items such as the role of grammar and group study in process-writing classes.

5.2 Discussions of the Results of the observations Sessions

The researcher had employed all the data analysis procedures mentioned in this study and explained each result as deeply as possible. In this section, however, he presented only the highlights of the findings in order to be brief and selective:

Correspondingly, on the basis of the observation that was carried out for one month at Hawassa University, the researcher came up with the following major findings. In examining each of the activities accomplished during the observation sessions, the researcher found out that there were activities that would go in conformity with the process approach. Contrarily, there were activities

which were compatible with the framework of the product approach. Examining the following major activities, for example, indicated the implementation of the process approach.

Firstly, when both instructors began new lessons, they first elicited background information from their students in the form of questioning and answering. According to the belief of the process approach experts, this kind of activity encourages students to think about the title by themselves rather than receiving information from the instructor. Moreover, they develop confidence to learn the lesson by themselves. Secondly, students were being provided with different opportunities to participate in pair or group discussions. Though some writing researchers have the perception that writing is personal which often results from individual thinking, there is also a contending view which advocates that students would get different benefits for the development of their personal writing development when they are allowed to discuss either in pair or group.

The other process-oriented activity observed was that mostly the class time was busy by making students work on different writing activities. After explanations were given by the instructor or discussions were carried out in groups, different exercises were given to students for further practices. When students were provided with such kind of meaningful practices, whether they were mechanical or communicative, students could get opportunity to enhance both their communicative and linguistic competences.

The other worth mentioning point was providing students with opportunities to write their own paragraphs either by selecting their own titles or using one of the titles given by the instructor. When they wrote their own paragraph, they generated ideas, developed the first draft of their paragraph and structured ideas to make them give coherent meaning. In so doing, students learnt writing through writing. As discussed earlier in this study, the major concern of the process approach is to present writing lessons in such a way that students can solve problems and think by themselves by processing information.

The other activity observed was giving an assignment which requested students to produce their own paragraph outside the classroom though the titles were sometimes selected by the instructor. This implied that when students were exposed to such kind of writing activity, they could get opportunity to write freely and come up with their own final copy.

The other remarkable activity observed during observation was the way feedback was being provided. As could be observed, sometimes the instructors collected the students' paragraphs, corrected them at home and brought them back to students as quickly as possible. This was one of the strong sides of the instruction which helped students to examine their strengths and weaknesses on time and improve their writing from time to time. Furthermore, the instructor was moving around the classroom and supervising each student's activity and helping those students who faced difficulties.

In contrary, when the observation data were examined further, the following activities were not compatible with the principles of the process approach. Firstly, the class-time given to students' individual, group discussion or individual writing was limited. In other words, most of the class time was devoted to the instructors' talk. This implied that students were not given sufficient time to generate ideas and think creatively. The second limitation was that some lessons were presented non-contextually. This means, the lessons were presented discretely and thus they lacked holistic nature; as a result, students were focusing more on the components of writing rather than thinking the ideas to be communicated. This in turn led students to learn about writing rather than learning writing itself.

The third limitation was that though giving feedback to students' writing was unquestionably indispensable, sometimes the feedback was given on the final copy of students' writing. The process writing experts believe that students bring about substantial progress on their writing when feedback is provided to them not at the end of their writing but at each stage of their writing. Furthermore, according to the perspectives of the process writing experts, heavy correction is hardly effective in improving students' writing.

The fourth limitation was that most of the time the instructor was writing notes and practice exercises on the blackboard. As a result of this, the students could not get sufficient time for discussions and practicing writing various paragraphs or essays. Furthermore, as this kind of presentation is traditional, it does not encourage creative and autonomous learning.

The other pitfall was that when students were given different writing activities, they were not oriented how to pass through different stages of writing. According to the belief of the process

writing experts' perception, when students are aware of passing through different stages of writing, they get chance to reduce their limitations at each stage of writing.

Thus, on the basis of the results of the observations, it is possible to suggest that though the process approach was implemented in conducting some of the writing lessons, the product approach had also its own role.

5.3 Discussions of the Results of Instructors' Interviews

Key: Resp₁_____Respondent one, Resp₂_____Respondent two, etc.

As was explained in the methodology part of this study, when the pilot study was being conducted, there were 6 instructors who were conducting the course Basic Writing Skills. Among them, the researcher conducted interviews with four of them. The results of the interview were then categorized into major and sub-themes and then interpretations and discussions followed. In like manners, first the major findings obtained from the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors are presented and then the results obtained from the interview conducted with students are presented.

The discussion in the interview with Basic Writing Skills instructors began by asking them whether students need good command of grammar or average command of grammar in learning and improving their writing skills. Accordingly, on the basis of the results obtained from the responses, two of the respondents perceived that students necessarily need to have good command of grammar to learn and improve their writing skills successfully. Their argument was that grammar is one of the important tools to make communication in writing more successful. In their further analysis, the respondents stated that unless students have good command of grammar, it is difficult to learn writing as grammar and good writing are inseparable. One of the respondents, for example, explained his opinion saying:

I believe that grammar is the way any language is structured. Therefore, if the structure of any language is deformed, no meaning is conveyed successfully to the receivers of the information. When I associate this opinion with writing, it is one way of expressing oneself to others. Thus, if a writer does not use the

language clearly, how can the intended meanings reach the reader? Generally, for me, students need to have good command of grammar before they begin to express their ideas in writing, that is, either at paragraph or essay level.

Two of the respondents, contrary to the above view, strongly contended that students do not necessarily need good command of grammar in order to learn writing and improve their skills. They were of the opinion that grammar was at the centre of attention for several years in the context of English language teaching in Ethiopia before 1990's both at secondary school and tertiary level learning. Even at that time a number of instructors were seriously complaining of the problem of most students to communicate in grammatically correct sentences. Thus, they further argued that as long as students had average skills of grammar, they could learn writing more successfully through meaningful practices Resp 2, in his further explanation remarks:

You know that before the communicative approach has not been introduced to the Ethiopian English language teaching context, several instructors were heard complaining of the grammatical deficiency of their students. So, what is the importance of managing to bring back the approach which used to be regarded as less effective to enhance the communicative capacity of students? Thus, for me, the better option is to learn grammar as a result of repetitive practices.

As we can see from the argument, students could improve their writing skills when they vastly engaged themselves in meaningful writing practices. This indicated that attempting to boost the grammar skills of students separately prior to beginning to write different discourses such as paragraphs or essays does not help them significantly to improve their writing skills in EFL classes.

Regarding the more appropriate method of teaching writing, two of the respondents perceived that successful writing instruction is the one which gives emphasis to teacher-fronted presentations (the product approach) which often focuses on learning to write through strict control of the instructor. In their further explanation, the respondents suggested that currently students at

university level have difficulties in producing their own well written texts; thus, leaving them to learn independently without close follow up of the writing instructor is leading them to further learn wrong language. One of the respondents presented his argument in a more comprehensive way saying:

According to my experience, leaving students to work by themselves in Basic Writing Skills classes is pretending that modern teaching approach is being used. The reality shows that many of the students need continuous help from the instructor. To your surprise, I sometimes find students who cannot write a single grammatically correct sentence within their paragraphs. Having this kind of reality in Basic Writing Skills classes, how do you dare to say that students should be left free to work by themselves? It could be self-cheating.

Two of the respondents, however, had the perception that presenting writing lessons sequentially and getting students imitate a model reduces their creative and independent thinking in the course of meaning discovery. When the lessons are presented sequentially, as they further explain, there would be less advantage to promote students' writing performance because students pay attention to each discrete item of the writing lessons rather than considering writing as a holistic activity which can be achieved as a result of continuous and meaningful practices. Lastly, the respondents suggested that writing, especially at university level, is better taught when students are encouraged how to learn writing rather than learning about writing. One of the respondents, for example, forwarded his opinion saying:

As far as I am concerned, writing is highly related to the effort of the students. Therefore, students must be given sufficient time to try writing again and again. Of course, academically weak students may face problem to practice individually and finally come up with well built paragraphs or essays. As I think, even such kinds of students improve their writing from time to time when they are allowed to write. If, however, the instructor attempts to help them, what they learn is about writing but not writing itself. In order to solve such kind of problem, it is possible to arrange tutorial classes and find out

situations in which they can be supported by discussing the problem with people in charge. Thus, I have the feeling that working with writing skill is better than learning about writing skill.

The above data further suggested that half of the respondents were of the perception that students learn writing in a better way when the method of instruction is more of instructor-led. The other half, however, were of the perception that writing instruction becomes more successful when students are encouraged to write various paragraphs and essays time and again by passing through various stages such as planning, drafting, editing, reviewing and writing the final draft.

The next point of discussion in the interview was about the contribution of group work in improving students' writing skills in process-oriented writing classes. In their response to the item of the interview, three of the respondents had the perception that group discussions had significant contributions in helping students generate ideas collectively which would later be used for paragraph or essay development. One of the respondents, contrarily, thought that group work had no direct contribution in developing the individual student writing ability. His major argument was that writing is the result of personal effort. Therefore, students are often asked to express themselves in written English personally. Thus, if they are accustomed to discussing ideas in pairs or groups, they face difficulties when they are expected to produce impromptu writings.

The other major point of discussion in the interview was about the instructors' effort to implement the process approach in their Basic Writing Skills classes. In their responses, two of the respondents disclosed that they could not implement the process approach as they wished in their Basic Writing Skills classes. The major reasons they suggested were the following: The first one was time pressure to practice writing activities in the classroom. The second one was lack of common understanding among instructors about the benefits of the process approach when implemented in Basic Writing classes. The third one was the nature of questions which were asked either on the mid-semester or final semester examinations. Fourthly, in their opinion, the materials being used in Basic Writing classes had their own shortcomings to implement the process approach fully in their writing classes.

The other two, nevertheless, confirmed that they gave much emphasis to process-oriented writing paradigm for several reasons. The first one was, as they further explained, these days following the communicative approach in EFL classes is more appropriate as it is an approach which has won acclaim across the world. Therefore, in order to implement the communicative approach, the writing lessons need to be presented in harmony with the process approach. The second one was their belief that writing is a language skill which is often achieved as a result of continuous and meaningful practices. Thus, unless students are exposed to a great deal of writing practices, they cannot improve their writing ability simply by following instruction given from the instructor. In his detailed clarification, one of the respondents stated:

These days, taking much time for explanation to teach about any language skills is archaic. The task of teachers in foreign language classes is to facilitate discovery learning. Thus, most of the period should be used for idea generation, idea organization, editing, reviewing and re-writing. Because I have the belief that writing is better taught through writing a lot of texts. This, however, does not mean that the whole period needs to be used by the students. What I am saying is that the role of the instructor is mainly for purposeful interruption.

From the above responses we understand that the respondent was of the perception that students can improve their writing when the instructor creates favorable situations for them in order to practice writing a variety of written texts by passing through various stages of writing. At this time, the role of the instructor is to approach each student as best as possible and give support if he/she requires.

To the item of the interview which requested instructors about characters good writers and poor writers manifest on the first draft of their writing in Basic Writing classes, four of the respondents had different responses. According to the experts of the process writing experts, good writers who have experienced passing through different phases of the process approach manifest three major characteristics: the first one is that they are ego-centric, that is, they produce writer-focused written text. This means, they consider their audience and purpose after they have completed writing the first draft. Secondly, their major concern is to produce crude ideas giving less attention to accuracy. In other words, they review and rectify their written text after they have

completed getting down their ideas on a sheet of paper. The third one is that they are more concerned about the content of their message rather than surface features of the language.

The other point discussed in the interview aimed at investigating whether they had got opportunities to attend workshops, seminars or other trainings after they graduated from universities or not. As could be understood from their responses, two of them disclosed that they have not yet attended any workshops and seminars organized for English Language instructors either at regional or national level. The other two, however, witnessed that they got different in-service trainings especially when they were coordinators of the English Language Improvement Center.

According to the interview held with writing instructors, there were constraints and difficulties which influenced the successful implementation of the process approach. Among the constraints the respondents pointed out as challenges, the major ones were: time constraint, students' poor background in writing, large class-size, lack of consensus among writing instructors with regard to the benefits of the process approach, lack of discussion forum among writing instructors, shortage of latest reference materials, cultural Influence, and the like.

According to the responses obtained from the interview, two of the respondents confirmed that writing teaching materials that they were using for the teaching purposes in their Basic Writing Skills classes were developed sequentially thinking that materials designed from simple to complex were more effective in improving students' writing skills. Their argument was that when writing materials were developed from sentence to essay level, they could be learnt with fewer challenges. Secondly, they would be easy to evaluate the progress of students. Contrarily, two of them had the perception that the teaching materials that they were using in their Basic Writing Skills classes were by and large developed communicatively. In presenting their reasons, they explained that these days learner-centered approach is the most influential second language teaching approach in most second language classes. Thus, in order to make the teaching/learning more of student-oriented, the teaching materials should normally be developed in conformity with the philosophy of the communicative approach to second language teaching.

When the interviewees were asked to suggest the possible remedial solutions which could help to implement the process approach more successfully at Hawassa University, the most frequently suggested remedial solutions are the following: making the teaching materials more communicative as much as possible, incorporating functional grammar lessons along with writing activities, arranging tutorial classes for further practices by the school, familiarizing students with genre process writing approach, facilitating situations for writing instructors to participate in different workshops which can help them upgrade their professional status and refresh their past insights, creating affiliations with secondary school English teachers and holding discussions in searching of solutions which enable them to teach writing more effectively at secondary school level and the like.

When the results of the interview were summarized, it is possible to understand that the process approach and the product approach were being implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes side by side. This understanding further signified that the process approach was not being fully implemented.

5.4 Discussions of the Results of the Students' Interviews

The interview began by asking them the extent to which writing is a relevant language skill in their academic life at university level. All of the respondents were of the perception that writing is one of the important language skills which have so many contributions to their academic success when they are in the university and join the community for professional services, as well. In their further explanation, they stated that though speaking is one of the important language skills to express themselves, writing is the most widely used medium through which their competence is assessed. This means, it is through writing that mostly they can demonstrate the knowledge that they acquired throughout their training.

In order to check the extent to which the process approach was being implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes, one of the mechanisms was to ask them about their role when they were learning writing and the role of their instructor in the course of conducting the lessons. Accordingly, four respondents stated that their role was to listen to the lectures that their instructor delivered, take notes, do the exercises which were designed in the teaching materials,

read the paragraphs selected as model repeatedly and write similar paragraphs. When it came to their writing instructor, his role was to deliver lectures on the important lessons, give them short notes followed by practice exercises and then get them write paragraphs or essays following the models given. The other four, however, explained that their role was to listen to the most important lessons that the instructor explained and then engage themselves continuously in the writing tasks and then get correction either from their instructor or peers. The role of their writing instructor, similarly, was to give them guiding information and then arrange conducive situations for them in which they practise writing different paragraphs or essays.

As could be understood from the above responses, the methodology which was being employed in Basic Writing Skills classes was partially product-oriented and partially process-oriented. This response suggested that the class time was not fully occupied by the instructors' talk alone.

The other focal area of the discussion in the interview was about the role of group discussions in improving students' writing ability in writing classes. All of them suggested that they could get different advantages which helped them develop their individual writing skills when they learnt writing in groups/pairs.

The other major point in the interview conducted with students was to capture their suggestions about the teaching materials being used in their Basic Writing Skills classes. Accordingly, all of the respondents witnessed that though there were teaching materials that they used in the classroom, they were not reserved in the library to be used as common reference for all students taking the course. In their further explanation they stated that after they had finished the first unit, their instructor used to bring to them the next unit.

Regarding the nature and organization of the teaching materials, five of the respondents had the perception that the materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were developed in such a way that they could learn writing through writing. As they further explained, they confirmed that the teaching materials were comprehensive in which different language skills were integrated and presented meaningfully. The other three respondents, however, were of the perception that the teaching materials were not interesting for them due to the following reasons. Firstly, the lessons were difficult to understand. Secondly, the materials did not consist of short

notes that would help them get basic ideas as to how they write well developed paragraphs or essays.

When we examine the whole responses, we understand that the respondents had different perceptions regarding the implementation of the process approach in their Basic Writing Skills classes. Almost more than half of the respondents disclosed that the teaching/learning in their Basic Writing Skills classes was student-oriented. This means, the students had got chance to learn by themselves. This implied that the process approach was being implemented. In further investigations, however, we see from the data that the product approach also had its own room in conducting the writing lessons. Therefore, in sum, it is possible to reach a conclusion that the process approach was not being fully implemented.

In responding to the item of the interview which requested them to suggest the solutions that help them as remedies to improve their writing skills, the respondents suggested various solutions. These were: developing reading habit, learning writing as an independent course at preparatory level, raising the number of credit hours attached to Basic Writing Skills course from 3 to 4, controlling class-sizes and the like.

5.5 Discussions of the Results of Instructors' Questionnaires

The questionnaire items mainly focused on investigating their perceptions about the nature of writing, the method of teaching being employed in their writing classes, the necessity of having good command of grammar knowledge versus having good ability to write in learning and improving writing skills, the role of group/pair work in writing classes and the feasibility of the teaching materials which were being used for the instructional purposes. In responding to the items, the respondents were asked to respond saying “agree” or “disagree” on the basis of the qualitative research design suggested by Dukass (1996). Regarding the sample size, all of them were made to respond to the questionnaires.

The purpose of studying the perceptions of writing instructors on the above focal areas was that all of them have strong connection with the implementation of the process approach in writing

classes. In other words, when the perceptions of the respondents on the above areas of investigation are in line with the principles of the process approach, it is easy to implement the process approach and the vice-versa. Correspondingly, the data obtained from the questionnaires distributed to writing instructors along with their interpretations and discussions are presented as follows.

The first item of the questionnaire was about their perceptions on the nature of writing. In their response, 18 (90%) of the respondents had the perception that writing was the most difficult language skill which was demanding and challenging for most students as compared to other language skills.

The second item of the questionnaire aimed at getting their perception about the appropriateness of the process approach in improving the students' writing ability. Based on the responses given, 12 (60%) of the respondents agreed that students could bring about substantial progress in their writing when the process approach was frequently employed. The other 8(40%), however, remarked that students would achieve better in their writing when the product approach was implemented. Based on the data given above, it is possible to understand that most of the Basic Writing Skills classes were being conducted through the process approach.

Regarding their perception about the instruction taking place in Basic Writing Skills classes, 16 (80%) of the respondents confirmed that the teaching/learning was not going on successfully. From the above response, thus, we can conclude that in conducting the course Basic Writing Skills, there were different challenges that need further investigations.

The other area of investigation was concerning the necessity of having ability to write as compared to having good command of grammar in learning and improving writing skills. According to the responses given to the item, 11(55%) of the respondents agreed that students could learn more and improve their writing skills sustainably when they had good command of grammar than they had ability to write. This implied that the perception of majority of the respondents was similar to that of the product writing experts. In responding to the appropriateness of the process approach in improving students' writing skills, however, majority of them agreed that implementing the process approach was more successful in making students

achieve better writing skills. Thus, the reason for giving such contradictory responses might be due to their deep-rooted understanding about the magnificent role grammar used to have in writing classes.

With regard to the contribution of group/pair work, all respondents except one of them had the perception that learning in group/pair had its own contribution let the approach be product-oriented or process-oriented.

Regarding the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes, 11 (55%) of the respondents perceived that the teaching materials were holistic, contextualized and meaningful. This implied that the narrow majority of the respondents were of the perception that the teaching materials being used in their Basic Writing Skills classes were suitable to implement the process approach. The rest 9(45%) of the respondents, however, had the perception that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were suitable to learn writing as a product.

5.6 Discussion of the Results of Students' Questionnaires

When we examine the perception of students about the nature of writing, their responses showed that 98 (98 %) of the respondents had the perception that writing was the most difficult language skill which was demanding and challenging. This response suggested that there were various factors which impeded the successful teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing skills and thus taking different remedial solutions is mandatory to make the instruction as effective as possible.

Regarding the methodology which was being used in Basic Writing Skills classes, 52 (52.%) of the respondents disclosed that mostly the instructor gave them detailed explanation on each lessons and got them produce written texts which were similar to the model they learnt. The other 48(48 %) of them, however, witnessed that the teaching/learning was participatory, which gave opportunity to self-learning. When we look into the above data we understand that the methodology which was being employed in Basic Writing Skills classes was largely product-oriented though the process approach had its own place.

When they respond to the item which requested them to give standard to their writing ability, (55%) of them had the perception that the standard of their present writing skill was below average. This data take us to the understanding that students themselves were aware that the standard of their writing is not up to the mark. Therefore, coordinated effort is required to change this adverse condition.

In responding to their perception about the necessity of having good command of grammar versus having ability to write in learning and improving their writing skills, majority of the respondents 56 (56 %) of them had the perception that in order to become a successful writer, having good command of grammar is more helpful than having ability to write. The rest 44 (44%), however, perceived that in order to write better, the most important requirement was having ability to write than having good command of grammar. When we see the above responses from the point of view of the process approach, students achieve better writing skills when they give priority in developing their ability to write.

Generally, based on the above discussion of results, it is possible to suggest that half of the teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes were carried out through the process approach. This implied that the process approach and the product approach were being used side by side.

5.6 Insights Drawn from the Pilot Study

In conducting the pilot study, the present researcher obtained different lessons that helped him conduct the main study in a better way.

In conducting observations in two Basic Writing Skills Instructors' classes for the pilot study, the researcher used only one tape-recorder to capture the activities which were taking place in the classroom. Due to this, it was sometimes difficult to record different activities taking place simultaneously in the classroom. Thus, during his observation sessions for the main study, he used two new tape-recorders which produced very clear voice. When one of them was being used to record the instructors' talk, the second one was immediately given to students who were asking questions, answering questions, giving comments or discussing in groups. This helped the researcher to record each and every activity accomplished in the classroom. Secondly, when one

of the tape-recorders became weak to give clear voice, the researcher used the other one until the first one got service by the authorized technician. Thirdly, using two tape-recorders made the classroom environment smooth as the researcher was not moving here and there.

The second insight that the researcher drew from the pilot study was connected to conducting interviews. Even if he attempted his level best in giving necessary clarification on any point that the respondents thought unclear prior to conducting the interview, some respondents were reserved to genuinely respond to some items of the interview after the tape-recorder had been tuned on for recording. As some of the respondents explained their reasons informally, the major factor was lack of experience. Hence, during the main study, before directly entering into the interview sessions, the researcher had to hold some informal discussions with the respondents in order to motivate them to explain their ideas freely and confidently.

The third insight that the researcher drawn from the pilot study was including another research tool, that is, evaluation of teaching materials in addition to observation, interview and questionnaires. The major purpose of conducting the evaluation was to check the extent to which the teaching materials were feasible in implementing the process approach in conducting the course. The perception was that in studying the implementation of any programme, evaluating the teaching materials is one of the important requirements especially in qualitative study. This amendment proposal had also been accepted by the examiners of my pilot study.

The fourth lesson that the researcher learnt from the pilot study was pertinent to administering questionnaires to both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students taking the course. As the researcher practically observed, some respondents faced difficulties in understanding the meaning of some theoretical-concepts in the items of the questionnaire which were especially related to different models of writing instruction. The terms, 'paradigm', 'conferencing method of feedback provision', 'exigencies', 'surface features' etc., were the case in point. Thus, in the main study, the researcher attempted to simplify them as best as possible without distorting the intended meaning of the item. For example, the word, 'paradigm' was simplified as 'model', conferencing method of feedback was simplified as 'feedback through discussions', etc

The next lesson obtained from the questionnaires distributed to Basic Writing Skills instructors and students was increasing the number of the items by focusing on more general issues that required instructors and students to explain their perceptions. Accordingly, the number of questionnaire items distributed to Basic Writing Skills instructors was increased from ten to eighteen. This means, item number 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 15&16 were added for the main study (see appendix P). Similarly, the questionnaire items distributed to students were increased from nine to thirteen. For example, item number 9, 10, 11&12 were added to collect data during the main study (see appendix R). The other lesson acquired from the questionnaires was pertinent to redundancy of some items. For example, the items requested about the method of teaching had relationship with those items asked about the teaching materials. Hence, the whole items were revised and only major issues were included in both types of the questionnaires. Lastly, the responses to the questionnaires during the pilot study were analyzed only in terms of percentage values. In order to give further analysis and interpretations, the analysis during the main study included modal values, maximum values, minimum values and pie-chart explanations. The pie-chart explanation, however, was not included in the paper for fear that it would increase the size of the paper beyond the limit.

Chapter 6: Results of the Main Study

6.1 Discussions of the Results of the Observations Sessions

As was discussed in the methodology part of this study, the major purpose of conducting observations in two Basic Writing Skills instructors' classes mainly aimed at finding out answers to research question number 3: *“To what extent do Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University implement the process approach?”* In the same way, as was done in the pilot study, the researcher observed two Basic Writing Skills classes for the main study, as well. Accordingly, the descriptions, interpretations and discussions of the observation sessions are presented as follows.

6.1.1 Discussions of the results of the observations in Instructor 1'S Classes

Ins₁ (instructor 1) has been conducting Basic writing course at Hawassa University since he graduated from Addis Ababa University with MA degree in TEFL. He has taught the course Basic Writing Skills for the last three years. Before he joined his MA program, he taught Sophomore English at Hawassa University for two years. Totally, he has a five__ year of teaching experience. The present researcher observed his Basic Writing classes for 12 hours (one month).

The first week of the writing lesson was on the nature of paragraph. In conducting the lesson, first the instructor wrote the title on the blackboard and then discussions were conducted in the form of questioning and answering on such topics as what is a paragraph? what is a title?, what is a topic ?, what is a topic sentence ? and the like. After the discussions had been held for fifteen minutes, the instructor gave students his own definitions orally by substantiating them with examples.

He then, he wrote the title, *Essentials of a Good paragraph* on the Blackboard and asked students to list down some of the relevant components of a well written paragraph. Correspondingly, few students answered the question saying coherency, unity, adequacy, etc. Having expressed his appreciation for all students' responses, he re-enforced the students' answers by giving further explanation and illustrations. He then distributed sheets of papers which consisted of different paragraphs. Next to the paragraphs were different questions. The first paragraph did not have title. It discusses *Thomas Edison's Inventions*. At the end of the paragraph were questions on topic

sentences, coherency of ideas, the concluding sentence, the topic reminders, the transitional devices and the like. The second paragraph talks about '*mosquitoes*'. At the end of the paragraph, there were five questions on unity of ideas, coherence, the concluding sentence, writer's reflection on the subject under discussion and the linking words. The third, the fourth, and the fifth paragraphs were also designed to achieve the same purposes. After the instructor had distributed the exercises, he ordered students to do each of them individually.

In examining the above lessons, we see that their major purpose was to give students input which would help them as a springboard to produce well-developed paragraphs. It is evident that according to the theoretical frame-work of the process approach, giving input to students before they involve in the actual writing practices is very significant as long as it is conducted by giving attention to their participation.

In further investigations, we observe that the instructor was attempting to elicit different answers from the students' background knowledge before giving his own explanation on a given lesson topic. Secondly, he was giving students practice exercises that would help them understand the lesson further. Thus, on the basis of the activities performed above, it is possible to suggest that the instructor had a tendency to conduct process-oriented writing lessons. However, when we examine the whole activity broadly, we perceive that the larger portions of the lesson presentations were in conformity with the product approach. For example, the instructor used more than half of the period for explanation and giving substantive evidences. This implied that students were given less opportunity to solve problems individually, in pair or in group. Furthermore, the lessons were presented discretely. This means, they lacked holistic nature, as a result, students focused more on learning the components of writing rather than thinking the ideas to be included in their writing.

The focus of the next day class was on methods of paragraph development. Before giving deep explanations on the lesson, as usual, he presented questions to students in order to elicit answers from their background. Most of the students, attempted to answer the question based on their background information. After the oral discussions had continued for fifteen minutes, the instructor summarized the whole discussion by focusing on the major points. After he had finished his explanation, he wrote different paired sentences on the blackboard and asked students

to be in pair and connect them using any appropriate transitional device. He then moved through each row and checked what each pair of students was doing. After ten minutes, he asked volunteer students to tell the class how they joined each pair of sentences. Having finished the discussions on sentence connections, he asked the whole class to write their own paragraph on one of the following titles individually: *Benefits of Television, Dormitory Life, My Village*, etc. In his further instruction, he informed them to prepare an outline, write the first draft of their paragraph, carry out editing, and then write the final draft of their paragraph considering the improvement they made on the first draft.

When we examine the above data with some details, we observe that the instructor was using his full energy and time to help students improve their writing skills. As we can observe from the lesson further, students were given opportunities to discuss in pair and learn from each other. When students involve in such activities, there is a belief that they can think independently and freely.

In the second exercise we observe that students were allowed to produce their own paragraph after the instructor had given them guiding ideas. Furthermore, he mentioned in the instruction that students had their own right to select their own title as long as they found it convenient for their successful writing. Secondly, students were provided with clear instruction what to do under each step of writing orally.

As we can see from the above lessons, they were conducted through both the process and the product approaches. For example, getting students write their own paragraph by passing through different stages is a typical characteristic of the process approach. Asking students to submit the final draft of their paragraph, without giving them any support at each stage of their writing, on the other hand, is a practice which largely suits the principle of the product approach.

After finishing the discussion on the above exercises, the instructor distributed copies of a paragraph entitled *empathy*. The paragraph was followed by different questions related to method of paragraph development. He then told students to read the paragraph at home and do the questions that follow it. He then wrote the following titles on the blackboard and told students to select one of them and develop a definition paragraph being in pair: *Love, Poverty, Peace and*

Democracy. The instructor then moved around each pair of students and supervised what each student was doing. At this time, some students were asking him questions and he was answering their questions appropriately. At the end of the class, he collected the paragraphs to evaluate them by himself.

On the next day class, he first revised the last period's lesson briefly. In winding up his revision, he stated that every paragraph may not be developed exclusively by one method; thus, a variety of methods can be used together in a single paragraph. The focus should be, therefore, as he said, on the method, which is used dominantly.

The above lesson presentations showed that the instructor largely followed the principles of the process approach. Students, for example, were given opportunity to write their own paragraphs either by selecting their own titles or using one of the titles given by the instructor. Secondly, the instructor was encouraging students to generate ideas and forward them to the group members during the discussion sessions. Thirdly, moving around the classroom and supervising each student's activity is one of the roles expected from process-oriented writing instructor. Nevertheless, we observe from the data that the instructor gave students a model paragraph and encouraged them to study how it was built. In so doing, he encouraged students to imitate the model and strive to produce a paragraph which followed almost the same style of expressions. This type of presentation is, thus, more of product-oriented.

Generally, as could be seen from the above lesson presentations, there were writing lessons, which were conducted in line with the process approach though the product approach had also its own place.

The next day class began by giving out the paragraphs that students wrote last time. As the researcher could see few students' paragraphs, the instructor corrected each error on each paragraph with a red pen and then based on the number of errors each student committed, he gave value to each paragraph out of five. After he had distributed the corrected papers, he gave general comments on the major errors that he observed during his correction. Then, he continued presenting the lesson entitled "**Modes of Paragraph Development**" The lesson was fully on discussing modes of paragraphs such as descriptive paragraph, narrative paragraph, expository

paragraph and argumentative paragraph. First he wrote the title *Descriptive Paragraph* on the blackboard and then asked the whole class what a descriptive paragraph is. Having listened to all attempts made by students, finally he himself gave them orally his own definition, the nature of descriptive paragraph, the basic requirements that help to write a descriptive paragraph and the like.

Then, asking students to remain silent, he read out a model descriptive paragraph entitled '*the man in the street*' to the whole class. After reading the paragraph three times with an average speed, he asked the whole class to draw the picture of the man individually into their notebooks. Having given this instruction to students, he began to move through each row of students and evaluated how they were drawing the man. After about ten minutes, he ordered all students to come in front of the class and show his/her picture to the whole class. Three of the students came out in front of the class and showed their pictures to the whole class one by one.

When the class looked at the pictures each student drew, they burst into laughter due to the huge distance between the description they heard and the picture that the students drew. The instructor himself chuckled as he saw some of the pictures. After three of the students had shown their pictures to the whole class, the instructor wound up the discussion saying that a very good description is equal to looking at the picture of a person or a thing with one's own eyes.

The instructor then wrote the following instruction on the blackboard. "*Describe one of your friends or someone you know well in one paragraph or you can use your own title.*" In his further instruction, he informed them to follow the different stages of writing i.e. preparing an outline, writing the first draft, editing the content, coherency of ideas, language use, mechanics, etc.

Accordingly, most students began to think a person that they knew well and went on describing him/her. Having given the above instruction, the instructor was moving through each row of students and observing what each student was doing. After ten minutes, the class time came to end so he ordered the students to think over the activity very well and write a sensible descriptive paragraph at home and bring it with them for next class.

During the next day class, the instructor invited volunteer students to read out their descriptive paragraph that they wrote outside the classroom to the class. In like manners, five students were given opportunity to do so. After they had read their individual paragraph to the class, the instructor asked the whole class to give comments. After the class had given comments on each paragraph, the instructor himself provided his own concluding comments on the strengths and weakness of each paragraph, which was read out to the class.

When the whole activities accomplished last week were examined, the instructor employed both the process and the product approaches. Firstly, giving students opportunity to select their own title on which they develop their paragraph is one way of giving them freedom to think about their writing by themselves. Secondly, going through each row of students and giving comments at each stage of writing is a process-oriented activity which can help students to see their strengths and weaknesses right from the outset of their writing. Thirdly, students were oriented what to do at each stage of their paragraph development.

Some of the activities, however, were conducted in conformity with the product approach. For example, only five students' descriptions were read to the class. This means, the rest of the students did not get any opportunity to get comments on their writing through any of the feedback provision techniques. In other words, majority of the students did not get opportunity to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their writing. Moreover, each of the descriptions was read orally to the whole class. As the major purpose of the course is to enhance the writing skills of students, one of the appropriate ways of evaluating their paragraphs was distributing them to students and getting them evaluate each others' weaknesses. Finally, we see that students were not provided with sufficient comments either from the instructor or peers while doing the second and the third stage of writing. Of course, this could be because of time pressure to complete the portion on time.

Thus, based on the activities observed above, it is possible to come up with the conclusion that the process and the product approaches were being employed side by side.

The next writing lesson presentation was on writing a narrative paragraph. The lesson began by eliciting some information about narrative writing from students' background. Then the instructor

gave explanation accompanied by short notes on the nature of narrative writing. He then asked the class to tell him any story which emanates from their own experience. He gave them about five minutes to think. Then, one student raised up his hand and narrated a story on his encounter while he was travelling with a beautiful girl to Bahir Dar during the semester break. After the student finished his narration, the instructor appreciated him and asked the whole class about the setting of the story, its moral lesson, etc. After the discussions were over, he wrote another lesson entitled *Direct and indirect speeches* on the blackboard.

The next day writing lesson began by distributing copies of a paragraph entitled, *The Wise Judge*. Next to the title was an instruction which requested students to change the direct speech sentences in the paragraph into reported speech form. The paragraph consisted of ten sentences out of which five of them were written in direct speech form and the rest in indirect speeches. Having been certain that each student had got a copy of the paragraph, the instructor asked students to change each direct speech into reported speech and make the whole paragraph a text of reported speech. To do the above exercises, he gave them fifteen minutes.

Having done all the questions, the instructor asked students to write a narrative paragraph of maximum ten sentences which emanated from their own personal experiences being in pair. After giving the instruction to students, he reminded them to include a clear topic sentence, make ideas coherent, display the setting clearly and use clear language. Having given the instruction to students, he was moving through each group and evaluating what they were doing. When the time for class was to end, he told students to do the classwork exercise as homework and come up with their completed paragraphs for next class.

On the next day, after he had collected the narrative paragraphs written as assignment, he distributed them to students to carry out peer correction being in pair. In his further instruction, he informed the whole class to show each writer the mistake that he/she did by underlining and writing the kind of mistake committed in abbreviation. For example: 'tn' for tense, 'wo' for word order, 'sp' for spelling, 'ag' for agreement 'art' for article and 'pr' for preposition. He gave them ten minutes to carry out the correction and give back the paragraphs to the writers.

As we can understand from the above lessons, most of them indicated that there were activities that went in harmony with the philosophy of the process approach to writing instruction. To cite one example, the instructor gave students contextualized exercises on transformation of direct speech sentences into reported speech. When students are provided with such kind of lesson, they can associate the grammar lesson with story learning. As a result, the learning would become more meaningful.

Process writing experts are of the view that grammar lessons should not be relegated to lower rank when students practise writing skills. In order to enhance the students' linguistic competence which help them express their ideas intelligibly, communicative grammar lessons are repetitively recommended by both local and international writing researchers as it is one aspect of the process approach to writing instruction. The other process-oriented activity which took place during the observation session was that students were organized into pairs to evaluate each others' paragraphs though the correction was not in the form of comments or discussions. The main point is when students are provided with such kind of collaborative work, they can develop a sense of freedom and responsibility for their own learning.

When we investigate the rest of the activities in the light of the process approach to writing instruction, the following limitations were observed. Firstly, students were not given full freedom to select their own titles; therefore, they were dependent on the titles that their instructor had selected for them. This in turn might lead them to think that their writing was to some extent under the control of the instructor. Secondly, according to the criteria set by the writing instructor, meaning (content of the paragraph) was often given less attention. As observed during the class time, the instructor had given second or third rank to content in evaluating his students' narrative paragraph. This implied that on some parts of the lessons, the focus of the instruction was to enable students produce accurately written texts. Thirdly, the students were not oriented what errors were meant to while they were producing a variety of paragraphs. As the researcher discussed with some them informally, a great many students had the perception that the major purpose of learning writing was to avoid errors and finally come up with accurately written work.

Thus, as the observation results from the above lessons demonstrate, the process approach was being employed along with the product approach.

The next lesson was on writing an '*Expository Paragraph*'. After the instructor had given his own definition, he called up on volunteer students to define what an expository paragraph is. Having listened to each student's answers, he gave them his own definition saying: "*An expository paragraph is a paragraph which gives an account of explanation on a given subject.*" Then he gave out to each student a model paragraph entitled '*Dream*' which was followed by five questions which focused on identifying the topic sentence of the paragraph, the linking devices used in the paragraph, the technique the writer used to develop ideas, the introduction, the body, the conclusion and the like. Then the instructor gave students ten minutes to answer each question accordingly.

After discussing each question appropriately, the instructor wrote five short paragraphs on the blackboard which required students to identify the technique the writer used in developing ideas. After the students had attempted to answer each of the questions individually, he gave his own final answers to each question by writing on the blackboard and the students copied the answers into their notebooks. He then asked students to write an expository paragraph individually on one of the titles listed below: *Learning in Group, The Advantage of Reading, and Oral Communication versus Written Communication, Vitamins, and Endemic Wild Animals in Ethiopia*. He then, was moving through each row of students and helping those students who needed his support.

The next lesson aimed at discussing transitional devices used to connect ideas in developing an expository paragraph. He began the discussion by asking students to tell him the most important transitional devices which are used to compare, contrast, etc., ideas in an expository paragraph, Then he went on writing short notes on transitional devices that are used to join different ideas in expository paragraph on the blackboard . After few minutes, he went on explaining each point by giving supportive examples. After he had finished the discussion, he asked the students to use the transitional devices discussed above in their own sentences as classwork.

In examining the above lessons on expository paragraph writing, we observe that the dominantly used approach is the product approach. As could be seen from the lessons, students were provided with a model paragraph that they imitate and then were asked to write their own paragraph in the same way. Moreover, the way the lessons on transitional devices were conducted was in line with

the product approach. We understand that transitional devices are relevant either in spoken or written English in order to produce meaningful discourses. The main reason is that unless students familiarize themselves with different types linking devices, it is difficult to convey their ideas either at paragraph or essay level. The most important point is, however, such kinds of practices would have become more meaningful when they had been presented contextually.

The next day class was on '*Argumentative Paragraph*'. First, oral discussions were conducted on its nature. Then, he gave students short notes on the development of ideas in an argumentative paragraph. After he had explained the most important points in the note, he gave them out various model argumentative paragraphs which would help them as model. Each of the paragraphs were followed by different questions. After discussion was held on the first paragraph, he asked students to select any title that they think is suitable for argument and write an argumentative paragraph of maximum ten sentences. Next to the instruction were some tips that would help them develop ideas logically in an argumentative paragraph.

As could be understood from the above activities, the instructor largely used the product approach in conducting the lessons. In further investigations we see that the instructor himself gave students wider explanation on the development of an argumentative paragraph orally. Moreover, they were provided with various argumentative paragraphs which would serve them as model. Then students were asked to write their own argumentative paragraph following the model that they were given. Furthermore, they were not informed the different stages that they had to follow in developing their paragraph.

The last part of the discussion was on '*Essay Writing*'. After introducing the title orally, the instructor asked the whole class to tell him the major differences between an essay and a paragraph, the most essential components of a well developed essay, the nature of a narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative essays, etc. He then gave detailed explanation on each of the above sub-topics. Finally, he asked students to write an essay of three paragraphs on any title they like outside the classroom and submit it to him after a week. In his final instruction, he informed them to pass through the different stages of writing which were discussed during paragraph development.

As the researcher discussed with the instructor, because of two reasons, he did not give much attention to essay writing. The first one was because of the assumption that as long as the lessons on paragraph writing were clear to students, they would easily associate them with essay writing. The second reason was the ending of the semester; as a result, the instructor was very busy with different academic duties. Therefore, he discussed the points that he thought relevant on essay writing and wound up the semester's class by giving students an assignment to write an essay of three paragraphs by selecting their own title and following the steps that they were using in developing different paragraphs.

When we examine the lessons on essay writing, we understand that the lessons were presented hurriedly and were more of teacher-fronted. Thus, in presenting the lessons, the instructor had hardly attempted to implement the process approach. Nevertheless, when we see the instruction the instructor gave to students by the end of the class, he wanted them to produce their essays by passing through the steps that were frequently being used in developing various paragraphs. Thus, it is possible to suggest that both the process and the product approaches had their own room in conducting the lessons on essay writing.

6.1.2 Discussions of the results of the observations in Instructor 2'S Classrooms

Ins 2 graduated from Hawassa University with BA Degree in Foreign Language and Literature (from the non-teaching stream) in 2011. He did not take any English education course. He has been serving in the late Department of Language Studies, currently known by the name School of Language and Communication Studies, as a graduate assistant lecturer of service courses such as Communicative English Language Skills and Basic Writing Skills. Currently, he has resumed his second degree education in the same department in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language. His class was observed for 12 hours, that is, for one month.

As the data from the observation sessions in instructor 2's classes revealed, most of the teaching procedures and approaches he followed were generally the same as instructor 1. Thus, the focus of the data analyses would be on differences observed during the teaching/learning.

One of the differences observed in instructor 2's classes was that he was frequently giving notes to students on various lessons by writing on the blackboard. Of course, notes can help students understand the basic ideas which help them understand how to develop paragraphs. They may also help students as reference when they face trouble in understanding complex concepts. As the researcher observed practically there were some problems in connection to jotting down notes from the blackboard. Firstly, considerable amount of time was used up in writing notes and exercises on the blackboard. This kind of presentation was so traditional that it encroached upon the time that should have been used for practicing writing. Secondly, when students are accustomed to copying notes from the blackboard and using them as reference, they do not struggle to make their own notes from various source and improve their study skills. Thirdly, the researcher observed that some students were in trouble to finish writing the notes on time because not all students had equal speed to copy down notes and exercises from the blackboard and solve them according to the instruction. Furthermore, as students had not been provided with the whole material in written form, they did not have opportunity to read ahead of the presentation of the lesson and prepare themselves for active participation during class discussions. When we see it in the light of the process approach, the most important role of the instructor was to encourage

students to read, make their own notes, understand the main ideas and use them as one means of enhancing their ability to express themselves in writing.

The other point observed as limitation in instructor 2's classes was giving very short time to students for discussions especially when the instructor wanted to elicit information from their background.

After the discussions on paragraph development were over, the instructor wrote the following titles on the blackboard. *My Family, My Favorite Dish, Living with HIV/AIDS, A Friend in Deed*, etc. He then ordered them to develop a paragraph individually which meets the requirements discussed above as homework and come up with their paragraphs for next class. He further informed students that they can select their own title if they wish. In his detailed explanation, he informed students to think of the most important points that they include in their paragraph, to arrange ideas chronologically according to their degree of significance, to write the first draft of their paragraph focusing on the flow of ideas, to carry out editing, and write the final draft of their paragraphs considering the improvements made on the first draft.

When we examine the above activities, though the commonly known stages of writing that need to be practised in passing through the process approach were not mentioned explicitly, the guidelines listed above by the instructor were indicators of his desire to implement the process approach. Nevertheless, when we examine the rest of the activities, their major purpose was to teach students how to write a well-developed paragraph. Therefore, based on the above data, it is possible to conclude that the lessons were conducted through the process and the product approach alternatively.

The next writing lesson fully focused on discussing modes of paragraphs development, that is, descriptive paragraph, narrative paragraph, expository paragraph and argumentative paragraph. First the instructor asked students to tell him the modes of paragraphs development that they know from their background knowledge.

Discussions were held for few minutes in the form of questioning and answering.

He then distributed copies of a descriptive paragraph entitled, '*The Old Man in the Street*'. Next to the paragraph were five questions which focused on the adjectives used to describe the man's face, physical appearance, clothing, personality, etc.

After discussions were carried out on the above exercises, he wrote the following incomplete information on the blackboard. For example, *weight*____56 kg , *height*____1.65m, *Clothing* ____old and tattered, *behavior* ____lonely and aggressive, *favorite dish* ____bread with milk, *hobbies* _____reading old literature, etc.

He then asked the students to use the information given above and write a full description of the old man being in a group of four. Then he was walking around each group and supervising what was going on. Some groups were calling and asking him questions and he was doing his best in solving their problems. Finally, he collected the paragraphs and left the room.

In the above lesson, we see that students were allowed to form a group and write a descriptive paragraph. Getting students into groups and encouraging them to write a paragraph jointly is one aspect of process-oriented writing instruction. Nevertheless, it would have become more appropriate if the students had been provided with full freedom to decide on their descriptive paragraph by themselves. The second point was that the instructor was walking around each group or individual students and giving them comments which would help them write their paragraph more effectively. Therefore, in presenting the above lessons, the instructor gave attention to both the product and the process approaches.

The next day class began by giving out the corrected descriptive paragraphs to each group. After appreciating the effort of some groups, he went on presenting some review questions orally to the whole class on the descriptive paragraph that they learnt last time. The revision was carried out in the form of questioning and answering for few minutes. Then he gave the following instruction to the whole class: ***“Describe one of your friends or someone you know well in one paragraph or you can use your own title. In your description, do not forget to follow the steps listed below.”***

Step 1: prepare an outline on the physical appearance of the person, the inner personalities, hobbies, clothing styles and the like.

Step 2: Write the first draft of your paragraph without giving much emphasis to grammatical or other errors

Step 3: edit your paragraph by yourself considering the essential requirements discussed in the previous writing classes.

Step 4: Exchange your paragraph with your friend and correct each other's errors.

Step 5: Write the final draft of your paragraph.

He gave them about twenty minutes and then moved around each row of students to observe what each student was doing. In the mean time, some students were raising up their hands to get his help. He was also extremely willing to help each student who faced a problem in the course of developing his/her descriptive paragraph. Finally, he collected each paragraph to evaluate them by himself.

On the next day class, as soon as the instructor entered the classroom, he immediately started giving out the corrected descriptive paragraphs to students. He wrote the mistakes that he observed repetitively when he was correcting their paragraphs on the blackboard. The major mistakes that he had identified were: appropriate use of adjectives and pronouns, choice of words, tenses, word order, etc.

In order to see the extent to which the process approach is implemented while presenting the above lessons, it is appropriate to examine the following activities. Firstly, the students were provided with an activity which required them to develop a paragraph by passing through different stages of the process approach. In further investigations, we observe that students were given guidelines that helped them decide what they needed to do at each stage of their writing. The second one was that the instructor was going through each row of students and commenting on each phase of the students' writing.

On the other hand, there were activities that go in harmony with the principles of the product approach. The first one was that though giving feedback to students' writing is unquestionably indispensable, correcting the errors on the final copy of students' writing with a red pen does not go with the principles of the process approach. According to the observation made on few corrected papers, the researcher could recognize that students' grammar errors, word selection

problems, sentence construction problems, lack of coherency of ideas and other mechanical problems were corrected with a red pen and each of the errors students made were substituted by better options which the instructor thought were more appropriate. Furthermore, he did not jot down some of the common errors students committed and gave comments using any of the techniques.

According to the process writing experts' view students bring about substantial progress on their writing when feedback is provided to them not at the end of their writing but at each stage of their writing. Furthermore, as they repeatedly disclose, heavy correction is hardly effective in improving students' writing. The major reason is that when each and every error students committed on their writing are corrected, they will consider themselves as if they were entirely incompetent to express their ideas through writing. As a result, such type of corrections results in disappointment rather than encouraging them to further practising by focusing on meaning.

As could be seen from the above lessons presentations, it is possible to come up with the conclusion that though there were practices, which go in harmony with the product approach, there is an attempt to implement the process approach, as well.

On the basis of the results of the data from the observation sessions in instructor 2's classes, the researcher could not find out as such serious differences while the lessons on narrative paragraph writing and expository paragraph were being conducted. In other words, the lessons were partially conducted through the process approach and partially through the product approach. Hence it was not relevant to present the data and explain the results.

In conducting the lessons on an argumentative paragraph, however, he used some new procedures. As the instructor entered the classroom, without introducing the title and giving students input, he asked them to select their own title and write an argumentative paragraph of maximum one-hundred words in any way they like. Then he went around each student as much as he could and was evaluating what majority of the students were doing. After twenty minutes, he collected the paragraphs and distributed them to the class for peer-feedback. Before the students began to comment on their friend's paragraph, he gave them some guide-lines as to how they

could give feedback on their friend's paragraph. Finally, he informed them to give it value out of 10%. After collecting the corrected paragraphs, he went on explaining the nature of an argumentative paragraph by raising various divisive issues, giving tips which would help them to develop an argumentative paragraph, discussing the commonly known fallacies which destruct the development of ideas, etc.

As could be observed from the above extracts, it is possible to conclude that the lessons on argumentative paragraph writing were conducted largely through the process approach. However, we see that there were activities, which matched the principles of the product approach. For example, under most circumstances, students were not oriented how to pass through each stages of writing. Secondly, according to the precepts of the process approach, feedback is given at each stage of writing. As was observed during the lessons presentations, however, the peer-feedback was given on the final draft of the students' paragraphs. This signifies that the product approach had their own room in conducting the argumentative paragraph.

6.2 Discussions of the results of the Interviews

Having collected the interview data from both writing instructors and students, the researcher followed the step-by-step procedure suggested by Eisenhardt (2001) to analyze the data. Since the process is malleable, moving back and forth between steps was possible. The first step was to review research questions and what to find out. To do this, first the researcher identified the question that he wanted his analysis to answer. He wrote this down on a separate sheet of paper. This helped him decide how to begin his analysis. This question might change as he was working with the data but helped him to get started. The dominant approach that the researcher employed in his further analysis was known as focus by question or topic. In this approach, he focused the analysis to look at how all respondents to each question or topic responded. He organized the data by question to look across all the respondents and their answers in order to identify consistencies and differences.

In like manners, the data obtained from the interview conducted with writing instructors were organized, described and discussed as follows. One point that needs to be noted is that the interview items were not presented to each interviewee in the same order. The main reason was, as mentioned earlier, several of the items emerged from the responses provided by each interviewee during the interview sessions.

6.2.1 Discussions of the Results of Instructors' Interviews

The interview was conducted with 4 Basic Writing Skills instructors as was done during the pilot study. In presenting the description, interpretation and discussion of the data in the interview, the researcher used the following abbreviations:

Resp₁ _____ instructor one (any of the interviewee who is coded number1)

Resp₂ _____ instructor two (any of the interviewee who is coded number2), etc.

Category of Themes

No	Major Themes	Sub-themes
1	Perceptions about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Discussions in Writing Classes • The Basic Requirements to Learn and Improve Writing skills • Methods of Teaching Being Employed in Basic Writing Skills Classes • Process-oriented Writing Instruction
2	The Feasibility of Teaching Materials in Implementing the Process Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for Determining Well-developed Teaching Materials • Sequentially Developed Teaching Materials • Holistically Developed Teaching Materials
3	Difficulties Writing Instructors Face in Implementing the Process Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Constraint • Students' Background • Large Class-size • Instructors' Attitudinal Difference • Lack of Discussion Forums • Lack of Refreshment Trainings • Shortage of Reference Materials

4	Solutions Suggested to Fully Implement the Process Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the Grammar Ability of Students • Accessibility to Reading Materials • Familiarizing Students with a Variety of Model Genres • Motivating Students to Write Continuously • Creating Affiliation with Secondary School English Teachers • Arranging Tutorial Classes • Arranging Refreshment Training for Writing Instructors
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The major purpose of this section of the interview was mainly to find out answers to research question number one: “ *What is the perception of both writing instructors and students about the methods of teaching/learning in Basic Writing classes at Hawassa University?*”

Writing instructors’ perceptions about the nature of writing and its method of instruction has strong impact either on the success or failure of their teaching. The way, for example, writing instructors and students perceive a given theory, language skill or method of teaching has to do with the implementation of the process approach. In connection to this, Bookhart and Freeman (1997) recommend that in order to make knowledge-based decisions in their everyday teaching practice, teachers must be well aware of their beliefs and perceptions about the learning and teaching. This is to say that teachers must have their own perspective-consciousness on which their personal implicit and explicit theories and practices are founded. Such kind of consciousness in turn helps them increase their tolerance and understanding more appropriate approaches and viewpoints in order to make the language classroom a more feasible environment where language teaching/learning become more successful.

In process-oriented writing classes, learners are seen as active creators and constructors of their own learning environment. Thus, in order to implement the above perspective in writing classes, the instructors' perceptions about autonomous or discovery approach to teaching/learning writing does influence their constructions of the teaching environment. The other point is that the instructors' perceptions can help them construct or revise their classroom practices which in turn lead them to observable progress both the learners and the teachers will achieve later. In other words, the perception writing instructors reconstructed about the practice and progress in their writing classes will determine the degree to which a given approach is implemented or non-implemented.

Before directly discussing the perception of Basic Writing Skills instructors about the method of teaching/learning which was being employed in their writing classes, it was found appropriate to see first their perception about group discussions in Basic Writing classes, good command of grammar in learning and improving the writing skills of students and methods of teaching being employed in Basic Writing Skills classes. This was deliberately done having the belief that the perceptions on the above issues have direct or indirect relationship with the perception of the process approach to teaching/learning writing. In other words, the perceptions on the above issues give hint what the respondents' perception is about the process approach in general. Accordingly, the findings from the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors are presented as follows:

6.2.1. Perceptions about Group-discussions in Basic Writing Skills Classes

There are arguments that writing scholars raise regarding the contributions of group-work in writing classes, especially, in the context of the process-oriented writing classes. Some scholars like Weaver and Romanko (2005) think that writing is a personal creative activity which is often achieved as a result of personal effort. In contrast, according to the constructivists' school of thought, writing is a social act which needs the involvement of others in building a given subject matter into a full text. The purpose of asking the respondents about the contributions of group-work in writing classes was to check whether they perceive group discussions as benefits to enhance personal writing or not. On the basis of the data in the interview, three of the respondents

have the perception that group discussions have a lot of advantages in writing classes. When the major points were summarized, the following were the most remarkable benefits on which the respondents focused.

As resp₁ explained, in process-oriented writing classes, idea generation is one of the most important stages of writing where writers activate and process the information in their mind. Because of this, the stage of idea generation is considered as laying foundation for one's writing. In his further explanation, he states that sometimes an idea generated by an individual student may not be adequate to construct a full-fledged written text. Thus, as he further elaborates, different ideas generated by each group members can be used as an input for individual writers to begin with writing. In this regard, he forwarded:

Group work, in writing classes, has benefits that fall into the cognitive and affective domains. Such kind of learning enhances not only students' social skills, but also it helps them to increase confidence and practise generating ideas collectively which will later be used as input for their writing. Of course, we know that writing is mostly an individual activity, however, when students come into groups and exchange ideas, they can get opportunity to think of the subject matter on which they will write paragraphs or essays from different angles.

When the response of the above respondent is associated with the constructivists' school of thinking, group learning is at the center of attention. The belief is that students write better when they first come together and discuss the topic on which they are going to write a paragraph or essay. In other words, before writing instructors directly get students involve in any writing task, it is sometimes important to let them discuss the topic and share ideas which would later be developed either at paragraph or essay level individually.

The other benefit of group discussion is, as Resp₁ further clarifies, it creates a competitive mood among members of the group. This in turn, encourages students to read and collect relevant information which would help them as sustentative evidences when they present their ideas during group discussion sessions. In doing this, they can increase the degree of their participation

in the group. The more they participate in group discussions, the more they collect relevant data for their writing.

As it is known, group work requires students not only to express themselves in oral language it also requires them to listen to fellow members' ideas. When they involve in such kind of activities, they can develop a sense of competition in expressing themselves either in spoken or written language among themselves. In doing this, those students who demonstrated sophisticated performance can serve as a model .This can encourage other group members to read ahead of the discussion sessions or think about assignments in variant ways. Being aware of, understanding, and applying diverse learning styles and learning outcomes implicitly prepares students to compete in the idea generations, drafting, editing and achieve best recognition in the group.

From the above responses we see that group discussion is important in process-oriented Basic Writing Skills classes. The perception is that when students are organized and are encouraged to discuss in group, they can get wider ideas which could be discussed in their writing. Furthermore, the respondent suggested that group discussion is important to create competition among the members of the group; as a result, they tend to read and gather various information which would enable them participate in the group more actively.

The other opinion suggested by the respondents as benefit of group discussion in writing classes was integration of different language skills. All of them remarked that when students discuss in groups, they can read a piece of text and report what they understood to other members of the group. Moreover, they can listen to each group members' opinion and finally can write different texts based on the context. Resp₃ goes on discussing how a group work can help students integrate language skills in the process-oriented writing class as follows: “Group discussion displays what students really know if they are required to articulate in the presence of others. When they clearly articulate what they know, they can answer probing questions that emanate from their reading background. While doing this, they can integrate, listening, reading and speaking.” In his further analysis, the respondent suggested that high quality group work involves rotating assignments within the group. Group members, for example, can be assigned at different

times for different task dimension duties such as: goal setting, data collecting, organizing, analyzing and giving explanation about the data. All activities mentioned above require using different skills of language.

One of the respondents (Resp₄), however, has the perception that writing is a personal activity which often emanates from the writer's schemata. If group discussion is always assumed as a means of writing effective paragraphs or essays, students will hardly generate ideas and produce various written texts independently. In his further argument, he further reasons out that when students are allowed to discuss in group and write their own text later, they cannot familiarize themselves with independent thinking.

When we see the above view, it has conformity with the expressivists' branch of the process approach. The expressivists' branch believes that writing is a personal activity whose purpose is to express oneself. According to their view, the major purpose of the writer is to express his/her feelings in any way he/she likes. In their further explanation, they state that whether ideas are discussed in group or not, writing is a means of personal expression. In their further discussion they point out that when a person is forced to produce impromptu writing unexpectedly or asked to respond to exam items which require responses in writing, no one will be with him/her. It is the writer him/herself who should generate ideas and explain everything independently. Thus, if a writer is always inhabited to borrowing ideas from others, he/she will not develop experience of generating ideas spontaneously when situations demand. Based on the expressivists' view, therefore, the more successful way of learning and improving writing skills is exposing oneself to idea generation independently.

On the basis of the responses given by majority of the respondents, however, we see that group discussion is important to generate ideas, increase competitiveness among group members, integrate different language skills and improve group member's communicative skills. When we associate the above responses with the process approach, especially with the cognitive branch to writing instruction, the activities carried out at each stage of writing enhance the skills of the writer better when there is interactive and meaningful learning. In conclusion, when group discussion is used wisely along with individual creative endeavour, implementing the process approach in Basic Writing classes will be more effective.

Thus, based on the responses from majority of the respondents, it is possible to conclude that they have positive perception about group discussion in process writing classes.

6.2.1.2 Perceptions about Basic Requirements to Learn and Improve Writing

All of the respondents believe that students necessarily need to have good command of grammar to learn writing and improve their skills. Their argument is that grammar is the basement of effective communication in writing. Thus, unless students have a good deal of grammar knowledge, it is difficult to learn writing as grammar and good writing are inseparable. Resp₄, for example, is of the view:

Writing is one of the difficult language skills because it needs good command of grammar, diction, punctuation and ability of generating and organizing ideas. If one of the above things is missing, it is very challenging to learn writing. This means students must first know to write grammatically correct sentences, and then they must know how to link them and build a good paragraph and then how to organize paragraphs and form an effective essay. Thus, as I think, before students enter into the writing task, they should learn how to write grammatically correct sentences. Once if they developed good grammar skill, learning how to organize ideas and forming bigger written texts is not that much a challenging task.

From the above response, one can understand that writing instructors were of the perception that good command of grammar was more important than having ability to write in learning and improving writing skills. Their perception was that unless students have achieved good grammar knowledge, they cannot express themselves in a clear language. Of course, grammar has an important role in any human communication be in first or second language. Good grammar can make written communication clear, interesting and readable. Accordingly, writing, as one means of communication, can transmit the intended message to the audience without confusion when the writer has good command of grammar. However, the argument of the process writing experts is

that to learn writing and improve the skill, the more essentially needed requirement is skills of writing than good command of grammar skill.

When we connect the situation with freshman students taking Basic Writing Skills, they had learnt grammar more than a decade before they joined a university. As a result, there is no convincing reason to teach grammar before they begin to learn writing. If there is an assumption that most students who came to university have serious difficulty to express themselves in a clear language, it is unlikely that they will bring about significant change through one semester grammar teaching at university level. Thus, the belief is that the more students are exposed to practise writing meaningfully, the more they improve both their writing skills and grammatical skills side by side. Studies conducted so far, Zamel (1983), for example, revealed that those students who are exposed to intensive and meaningful writing practices showed better improvement both in their writing and linguistic competence than those who learnt grammar separately before or after learning writing. When we associate this perspective with the implementation of the process approach, writing class is not merely confined to teaching writing skills but also to dealing with different language skills meaningfully and purposefully based on different contexts.

6.2.1.3 Perceptions about the Teaching Methods Being Employed in Basic Writing Skills Classes

The other area of investigation of the perception of Basic Writing Skills instructors was the methodology they employed in conducting the course. One of the factors which contribute either to the success or failure of implementing the process approach in EFL Basic Writing Skills class is the method of teaching being employed. In order to identify the frequently used method of teaching, first investigating the major objectives, the roles of students and instructors in the classroom, the category of students based on the character they show in producing their first draft were relevant. Consequently, this section discusses the findings from the interview as follows.

6.2.1.3.1 The Major Objectives of Writing Instruction

Writing experts are of the belief that objectives are blue prints which guide teachers how to go about their teaching performance and where their destination is. Mostly, objectives have strong influence in determining the method of teaching that teachers employ in their writing classes. That is why Cunningsworth (1995) briefly remarks that a teacher without valid and tangible objective is like a pilot without a compass. Accordingly, when writing instructors were asked about their objective of teaching Basic writing Skills, Resp_{3&4} responded that their major objective is to enable students write well organized and grammatically correct paragraphs and essays. Ins_{1&2}, however, have the perception that the major objective of writing instruction is to improve the written communicative skills of students.

From the above responses, we understand that two of the four writing instructors (50% of them) perceived that they achieve their goal when their students are able to produce meaningfully written texts by the end of their instruction. The other half (50%), however, viewed that their major objective is to get their students write accurate written texts. As has been explained in the literature part of this study, the objective of process-oriented writing instruction is to foster the written communicative competence of students. The assumption is that once the students have developed their communicative competence through meaningful practice, it is easy to develop linguistic competence gradually because according to the perspective of the process approach, linguistic competence is achievable when students are exposed to meaningful written activities abundantly.

6.2.1.3.2 The Role of Instructors and Students in Basic Writing Skills Classes

The other question presented to Basic Writing Skills instructors was regarding their role in writing classes. Accordingly, Resp_{1 & 2}, have the perception that their role is to facilitate or encourage students to engage themselves in meaningful writing activities continuously. Resp₂, for example, said: “My role is to give students input and then encourage them to write different paragraphs and essays and finally get them edit their written work by themselves, in peers or by

me. When it comes to students, their role is to practise writing meaningful sentences, paragraphs or essays using the lessons that they got during the input sessions.

Resp_{3&4}, however, had the opinion that their role was to explain the important parts of the lessons, give students practice exercises and model written texts and then get them write well developed paragraphs or essays following the models given. Resp₃'s actual words are:

Mostly my role is to give relevant lecture orally and then give them short notes on very relevant points of each lesson. Then, I let my students do different exercises that are provided in the teaching materials. After they have done the exercises individually, in pair or in group, I will ask them to write a paragraph or essay which is similar to the model they have already learnt. After they had done this, I give them time to correct their work by themselves or in group or sometimes I myself correct them.

According to the responses given above, two of the respondents had the perception that their role was to give students input that helped them as spring-board to pursue their writing and then create conducive environment for them in which they developed different texts by themselves. When it comes to students, their role was to understand the lessons given to them during the input sessions and do their writing continuously until they came up with meaningfully developed pieces of written texts. According to Resp_{3&4}, however, their role was to supply information to students how to produce correctly written texts and then provide them with a variety of models that helped them imitate to produce similar written texts. Regarding the role of the students, their role was to follow what the instructor taught them and practise writing different written texts which suited the guide-lines provided by the instructor.

When the above responses are examined with some details, the perceptions of two of the four respondents, (50% of them), for example, (Resp_{1&2}), suit the principles of the process approach. As we can see from the data further the respondents had the perception that the roles of both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students are to teach/learn Basic Writing Skills by giving attention to implementing the process approach, which gives more opportunity to students to learn

writing through writing. The perceptions of the other two respondents, (Resp_{3&4}), however, have conformity with the theoretical background of the product approach which gives emphasis to model imitations.

6.2.1.3.3 Categorizing Writers

The way writing instructors categorize their students based on the performance they manifest especially when they produce the first draft of their paragraphs or essays in Basic Writing classes has strong connection with the method instructors employ in their writing classes. Subsequent studies revealed that those students who were frequently taught writing through the process approach and those who were taught with the product approach showed different characteristics when they produced the first draft of their written texts. Hence, the way instructors categorize their students when they write the first draft of their essays or paragraphs in Basic Writing Skills classes can give hint to decide whether the approach being employed is process-oriented or product-oriented.

In like manners, to the item of the interview which asks the respondents about behaviors good writers and poor writers manifest on the first draft of their writing, different responses were obtained. Ins₁, for example, stated: “good writers take time and think carefully to write efficiently and clearly in their first draft then they make corrections right as they begin writing. Poor writers, however, write what they feel correct and make corrections at the end of their writing.” Ins₂ is of the perception that good writers focus on the message that they want to convey and the language that they use in their first draft. They make correction as soon as they begin writing since they want to avoid errors right from the outset. Poor writers, however, mostly waste their time searching for ideas, appropriate words and correct sentences. Mostly, they carry out corrections after completing their first draft. Ins₃ believes that “good writers consider both content and form at the initial stage of their writing because they want to evaluate the standard of their writing before proceeding further. Poor writers, on the other hand, write few sentences and think the content and language after completing the first draft.” Resp₄, provided the most detailed description of good and poor writers’ characteristics as follows:

From my experience, good writers follow what they were taught strictly and produce writing which fulfils all the components such as relevant content, well organized ideas, intelligible language use and appropriate use of mechanics. As far as my experience is concerned, good writers make corrections as soon as they produce a single sentence because they do not want to continue with their mistakes. Poor writers, on the other hand, do not generate relevant ideas; moreover, they are unable to put their ideas coherently. Over and above, faulty punctuation use is common on their writing. Since they are inefficient in producing ideas and correct sentences, they are incapable of making corrections.

When the data in the interview are examined in the light of the findings reported by the process writing experts, none of the responses directly reflected the characteristics good and poor writers display when they produce their first draft in process-oriented writing classes. According to Resp₁, for example, good writers use their maximum effort to include relevant ideas in their first draft and then they decide to carry out correction at the beginning of their writing. Poor writers, however, write what they feel correct and make corrections at the end of their writing. Resp₂ thinks that good writers consider message and correct language use simultaneously as they begin writing. Poor writers, however, write few sentences and make correction after completing their writing. Ins₃ has the perception that good writers think of both contents and forms initially. This means, they conduct correction immediately as they finished writing their first draft in order to evaluate the different components of their written work. Poor writers, however, produce few sentences and consider corrections at the end of their writing. Resp₄ is of the view that good writers follow the instruction given to them by their instructor vigilantly and then produce valid, well organized and grammatically correct texts. Poor writers, nevertheless, mostly fail to generate relevant ideas; moreover, their grammar is mostly not clear; as a result, in most cases, they do not make corrections.

Good writers who have already experienced passing through different phases of the process approach manifest three major behaviours when they produce the first draft of their paragraphs or essays: the first one is that they are ego-centric, that is, they produce writer-focused written texts. This means, they consider their audience and purpose after they have completed writing the first

draft. Secondly, their major concern is to produce crude ideas giving less attention to accuracy. In other words, they review and rectify their written text after they have completed getting down their ideas on a sheet of paper. The third one is that they are more concerned about the content of their message rather than surface features of the language. Therefore, from the above responses we understand that most respondents did not clearly identify and stipulate the characters good writers and poor writers manifest when they produce the first draft of their writing especially in the context of the process approach.

As the process writing experts recommend, if a writing instructor knows the behaviors good writers and poor writers manifest when they produce the first draft of their written texts, he/she can search for mechanisms by which poor students learn more appropriate writing strategies from good writers. As a result, the belief is that gradually many of the poor writers will turn to be good writers by using the strategies that they learnt from good writers. When we examine the perceptions of Basic Writing Skills instructors about the characteristics good and poor writers manifest when they produce the first draft of their paragraphs or essays, there is a significant difference from the perceptions of the process writing experts. This might be because of not noticing very closely the performance of good and poor writers when they pass through various stages of writing in developing various written texts.

6.2.1.4 Perceptions about Process-oriented Writing Instruction

On the basis of the responses obtained from the interview data, Resp_{1&2} had the perception that students could learn writing better when process-oriented writing instruction was frequently practised with meaningful activities in writing classes. As they further explain, presenting writing lessons sequentially mitigates the creative and independent thinking of students in the course of meaning discovery. When the lessons are presented sequentially, there will be less advantage to promote students' writing performance because students pay attention to each discrete item of the writing lessons rather than considering writing as a holistic activity which can be achieved as a result of continuous and meaningful practices. They have the belief that writing, especially at university level, is better taught when students are encouraged how to learn writing rather than teaching them about writing. In his further argument, Resp₁ states:

Writing is a developmental process, so if students are taught writing lessons merely from the instructor sequentially, they cannot think writing as a creative process. Their focus will be on alleviating errors that they may likely to commit later on their writing. As it is known these days the communicative approach to foreign language instruction is the dominant approach to foreign language teaching. According to this approach, the role of the students is to engage themselves in a meaningful language learning environment. The role of the teacher is to create conducive situations to the learners to practise a piece of language using their own strategy of learning. Therefore, when it comes to writing classes, the approach which suits the communicative approach is the process approach. Because according to this approach, students learn writing more effectively when they are given important basic introductory ideas and are allowed to practise producing a variety of written texts through their own effort and edit their written work by themselves, receive comments from their teacher or peers to improve their major problems. This, however, does not mean that the teacher needs to be idle leaving everything to students.

When we examine the above responses with some details, the respondent had the perception that writing instruction became more successful when students were provided with meaningful activities that promoted creative learning. From this perspective we can deduce that the involvement of the instructor in presenting writing lessons need to be limited and a large portion of the class- time should be given to students to work on their writing by themselves. When we say creative learning, it does not mean that every activity is left to students and the instructor is simply an observant. As Hedge (1991) remarks, the teacher is always there to help students learn in a better way and solve their problems by using different mechanisms. In fact, there could be students who have poor grammar ability which is below the standard to communicate through their writing effectively. As repeatedly argued, the perception is that such students improve both their grammatical competence and writing competence side by side when they are provided with relevant input through contextualized activities and are encouraged to practise continuously. Resp₂, in the same way has the following view:

Dealing with writing through process approach helps students to relate what they write with the context in which they are writing. When students learn writing creatively, they will focus on their writing progress rather than worrying about errors that they commit on their writing. From my point of view, writing is a creative activity which requires idea generation, structuring and drafting, thus, when students are engaged in such type of writing, their focus should be on producing meaningful written texts. The point to be underlined is that the more students practise, the more they reduce their errors.

According to the perceptions of Resp_{1&2}, writing instruction became more successful when the role of the instructor was limited to giving students input and then allowing them to generate ideas, structure them, draft them and review them by passing through different stages of writing. Regarding the organization of writing lessons, they believed that writing instruction was more successful when the lessons were structured and presented holistically. The assumption was that presenting writing lessons sequentially may make the lesson easier but it does not give room to students to freely express their ideas by focusing on meaning.

Resp_{3&4}, however, perceived that successful writing instruction was the one which gave emphasis to teacher-fronted presentations which often emphasized learning to write through strict control of the instructor. In his further explanation, Resp₃, for example, remarked:

In any writing instruction environment, the most important requirements are the instructor, the students and the teaching materials. Students go to teachers to learn how to write. Unless the teacher teaches them what writing is, what its components are and how to develop well written texts, it is unthinkable to expect well developed writing with fully independent struggle of students. As we know these days most students have problem in expressing themselves in grammatically correct English. If we leave such students to learn independently, who learns from whom?

From the above data, it is possible to understand that the respondent had the perception that writing is better taught when the instructor took the upper hand to teach students how to write different texts and allow them to practise accordingly. Resp₄ further suggested:

First of all, when the teaching of writing is under the control of the teacher, it is easy to arrange the lessons according to their level of complexity. This kind of instruction in turn helps students learn writing with fewer challenges as the complexity develops gradually. Secondly, when the instructor has significant role in presenting lessons on how to write good sentences, paragraphs or essays frequently, students will reduce errors that they make on their writing. The most essential point, as far as I am concerned is, to be eclectic in presenting writing lessons. Practically, as I have observed, most students in my writing classes, are incapable of producing correctly written sentences let alone bigger texts such as paragraphs or essays. Thus, I have the perception that students need to be frequently supported by the instructor.

When we look into the above responses carefully, we notice that the respondent was of the perception that when the writing instruction was under the control of the instructor, he/she could grade the writing lessons in accordance with the students' level of understanding. According to his perception, when writing lessons were arranged sequentially, they would be feasible for teaching and became easy for students to understand better. Over and above, as he thinks, currently students at university level are incapable of producing their own well written texts, thus, leaving students to learn independently without intensive follow up of the writing instructor is leading them further to learn wrong language.

We can observe from the above discussions that 50% of the respondents (Resp_{1&2}) were of the perception that implementing the process approach was more successful in Basic Writing Skills classes. The other two, (Resp_{3&4}), however, had the perception that instructor-fronted or the product approach was more appropriate to teach writing in Basic Writing Skills classes.

Based on the above discussions, thus, it is possible to conclude that, by and large, 50% of the Basic Writing Skills instructors had the perception that the process approach was more appropriate to improve the students' writing ability. The other 50%, however, had the perception that the process approach was less effective in bringing about substantial progress on students' writing.

6.2.1.5 The Feasibility of the Teaching Materials in Implementing the Process Approach

The major purpose of examining the feasibility of the teaching materials being used in Basic Writing Skills classes in implementing the process approach was basically aimed at finding out answers to research question number 2. It appears as: *“To what extent the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach?”*

Implementation of the process approach has strong connection with the teaching materials in use. The main reason is, in most cases, it is the materials which guide the instructor to implement a given method of teaching. Secondly, students will have access to various practice activities which are developed in harmony with their academic status. Thirdly, they help students learn according to their own pace. For example, those students, who are not fast to understand the lessons discussed in the class can take time, read repeatedly and understand the central idea. In order to implement the process approach in writing classes, one of the requirements is the availability of contextualized and holistically designed teaching materials that encourage students to practise writing meaningfully Freedman and Dalute (2001).

Accordingly, to see the extent to which the teaching materials being used in Basic Writing classes at Hawassa University were feasible to implement the process approach, the results from the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors are discussed and presented as follows.

6.2.1.5.1 Instructors' Criteria in Evaluating Well- developed Teaching Materials for the Course Basic Writing Skills

There is a perception that the requirements of well developed teaching materials for any writing course can vary according to the objectives and method of teaching being employed. When we see, for example, the requirements needed to evaluate well developed process-oriented teaching materials, they have their own peculiar nature as compared to those materials designed for the implementation of the product approach. In this regard, Long (1981) is of the opinion that the criteria any writing instructor uses when he/she evaluates any teaching materials, can determine the approach that he/she prefers to implement in his/ her writing classes. Having this in mind, the respondents were asked in the interview to explain the criteria that they use in evaluating well developed teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills classes.

When the responses of the interviewees were examined, all of them perceived that well developed teaching materials need to have strong relationship with the objectives stipulated by the course designers. Furthermore, almost all of them perceived that well developed teaching materials for the course Basic Writing class should be written with clear language. In further explanation, two of the respondents, that is, (Resp_{3&4}) had the perception that well developed teaching materials should be organized from less challenging to more challenging hierarchy. When we see the responses of Resp₁ and ₂, on the other hand, they suggested the criteria such as: comprehensiveness, variety, clarity of language, contextualization and learner-centeredness.

As we can see from the above responses, two of the above respondents (Resp_{1&2}) had the perception that well developed teaching materials for the instruction of Basic Writing Skills need to fulfill the criteria such as holistic arrangement, contextualization, clarity of language use and variety. This implied that the requirements suggested by two of the above respondents suited the requirements which were proposed by process-writing experts. The other two respondents (Resp_{3&4}), however, had the perception that well developed teaching material need to fulfill the criteria such as: clarity of language, hierarchical arrangement, harmony with the objective of the course and the like.

On the basis of the above responses, thus, it is possible to suggest that instructors of the course Basic Writing Skills had different understanding regarding the criteria that they use in evaluating the teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills. This implied that there were instructors who preferred to use materials which enabled to implement the process approach. In contrast, there were instructors who opted to use teaching materials that go in line with the product approach.

6.2.1.5.2 Sequentially Developed Teaching Materials

According to the responses obtained from the interview, two of the respondents confirmed that the writing teaching materials that they were using for the teaching purpose in their Basic Writing Skills classes were developed sequentially thinking that the materials designed from simple to complex were more effective in improving students' writing skills. Their argument was that when writing materials were developed from sentence to essay level, they could be learnt with fewer challenges. Secondly, when the materials were organized from simple to complex, it is easy to evaluate the progress of students. As a result, errors can be easily reduced from time to time. The actual words of Resp₃ go as follows:

The writing teaching materials that I am currently using in my Basic Writing Skills classes are developed sequentially, that is, from sentence to essay level writing. As I think, the major reason was that students can have chance to learn each component of writing according to their own pace of learning. In addition, I believe that a student who understands the nature of sentence can easily learn paragraph level lesson. Similarly, a student who has good understanding of paragraphs can understand the lesson on essay writing without facing a lot of challenges.

From the above response, it is possible to understand that the respondent preferred to use sequentially arranged teaching materials in his Basic Writing Skills classes. His perception was that when writing materials were developed sequentially, they become convenient for teaching and students can understand the lessons without more challenges. Moreover, the respondent

thought that when the writing materials are developed from simple to complex, it is easy for students to learn grammatically correct sentences. Similarly, Resp₄ goes on explaining the benefits of sequentially developed writing materials as follows:

Writing is one of the difficult language skills which require so many things from the students' side. Not only for students, is it also challenging for teachers in presenting the lessons as there are several factors to be considered. As far as I am concerned, especially to those students who are learning writing as beginners, the lesson should start from simple topic. Thus, the materials that I am using for my freshman students begin with simple lesson, that is, sentence formation and end in essay writing. I think sentences are the bases for writing. If, however, the lesson is dealt with writing in general, only few students may be benefitted. In order to write a good paragraph, writers first should know how to write grammatically correct sentences.

The above responses showed that two of the Basic Writing Skills instructors(Resp_{3&4}) were of the perception that writing teaching materials developed from simple to complex were more effective in teaching writing skills in their classes. The major reasons that they presented were that writing lessons which were graded from simple to complex could easily be learnt and understood by students. The second reason that they presented was that in order to write an accurate paragraph, students need to first know constructing grammatically correct sentences. This implied that according to the perception of the above respondents in order to conduct Basic Writing Skills lessons more successfully, materials which give attention to construct correct sentences and accurately developed paragraphs or essays were more appropriate to make the teaching/learning more successful.

6.2.1.5.3 Holistically Developed Teaching Materials

Contrary to the above responses, Resp_{1&2} had the perception that the teaching materials which were being used in conducting the course Basic Writing Skills were communicatively developed. In their argument, they explained that these days learner-centered approach was highly acclaimed in most second language classes. Thus, in order to make the teaching/learning more of student-oriented, the

teaching materials need to match the communicative approach to second/foreign language teaching. In like manners, Resp₁ remarked:

The teaching materials that I am using in my Basic Writing Skills classes are more or less communicative. As you know, in developing teaching materials, the most influential factor is the method to be used. If the methodology to be used is the process approach, the teaching materials should be contextually and holistically developed. If the method of teaching that the teacher uses is, on the other hand, the product method, the materials consist of lessons arranged from less challenging to more challenging structure. Currently, the communicative approach to foreign language teaching is taking the upper hand. Therefore, the materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are task-based which enable students, solve problems.

According to the above responses, the instructor had the comment that the teaching materials that he used in his Basic Writing Skills classes were task-based materials which promoted problem-solving mode of learning. Resp₂, similarly, had the following comment on the teaching materials that he was using in his Basic Writing Skills classes.

As far as I am concerned, the teaching materials that I used in my Basic Writing Skills classes were developed in line with the objectives of the course. The objectives of the course state that by the end of the class students are expected to express themselves through meaningful paragraphs or essays in different situations. In my opinion, this objective suits the principles of the communicative approach to teaching writing. Thus, I can say the materials are appropriate to conduct writing lessons as process. Moreover, the materials have room to practice some grammar lessons communicatively. Such kind of activities help students reduces their grammar deficiencies. Thus, my comment is that though the materials are convenient to teach writing communicatively, still they need further communicative activities.

From the above responses, we understand that the materials were developed according to the objective of the course. Therefore, they encourage students to learn writing contextually and meaningfully. Furthermore, the materials gave attention to contextualized grammar lessons. As a result, students could link it implicitly with their writing lessons.

Generally, as could be observed from the above responses and discussions, it is possible to conclude that 50% of the Basic Writing Skills instructors commented that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills were appropriate to implement the product approach. The other half, however, had the comment that though some amendments were necessary, the teaching materials were by and large appropriate to implement the process approach. As could be further seen, instructors had different perceptions on the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes. The major reason for this variation might be their insight and attitude towards the process approach.

6.2.1.6 Difficulties Writing Instructors Face in Implementing the Process Approach

The major purpose of collecting data through the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors about the difficulties writing instructors face in implementing the process approach was to get answers specifically to the research question number 4: *What are the most pressing factors which are attributable not to fully implement the process approach in Hawassa University?*

These days it is difficult to present any English language skills in the Ethiopian context fully ignoring the theoretical framework of the communicative approach because it is an approach which has gained impetus across the world in EFL classrooms. As long as the communicative approach is dominantly used in a given second language teaching context, employing the process approach in writing classes is a common practice Clarke (1994). Secondly, as could be seen from the results of the interview presented above, almost half of the instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes is conducted through the process approach. The center of the discussion is that the teaching of writing in Basic Writing Skills classes becomes more successful when the process

approach is fully implemented. Consequently, the researcher found essential to examine the major factors, which constrained its implementation in its entirety.

Accordingly, on the basis of the interview held with Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University, there were a large number of constraints which influenced the implementation of the process approach. Among the serious difficulties the respondents pointed out as challenges, the major ones are discussed as follows.

6.2.1.6.1 Time Constraint

The data showed that one of the impediments which constrained the successful implementation of the process approach in writing classes was time constraint. All of the interviewees agreed that in order to implement the process approach in writing classes successfully both writing instructors and students need sufficient time. As the respondents further explain, there are different activities in which they are engaged in apart from their teaching duties. Some of them are: handling different courses, engagement in student advising, involvement in research activities, lesson preparation, involvement in various extra-curricular activities, inter-alia. One of the detailed comments given by Resp₂ is presented as follows:

First and for most, to conduct process-oriented writing lessons, there must be sufficient time for both writing instructors and students. When we see the reality in our department, most writing instructors are supposed to handle up to eighteen credit hours per week. In addition to this, most instructors are expected to handle different courses of the department which need different preparations and mode of delivery. As it is known teaching writing requires working with students closely for longer time. It needs, for example, designing a variety of supplementary teaching materials, getting students produce a variety of writing and evaluating each student's written work subsequently and providing feedback. Furthermore, it is sometimes important to arrange special classes to those students who need special support. Thus, having carried the teaching load mentioned above, it is difficult to fully engage students in process-oriented writing environment. Not only carrying the teaching load mentioned above, but also instructors are required to participate

in various committees, give advisory service to final year undergraduate students. Over and above, they are requested to conduct action research during their spare-time. When we see it from students' side, mostly they take 18 to 21 credit hours per semester. As a result, it is difficult to call them for supplementary classes or give them intensive exercises and assignments to practise writing outside the classroom.

The above responses disclosed that in order to fully implement the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes, both instructors and students needed adequate time. The respondents were of the view that they are engaged in various activities apart from their teaching duties. The process writing experts, similarly, critique the consumption of too much time as one limitation in implementing the process approach. In this regard, the researcher is of the opinion that though the problems mentioned above have their own influence not to successfully conduct process-oriented writing classes, there are remedial solutions that can be sought through discussion at school or college level.

In his further explanation, Resp₃ remarked that in process-oriented writing classes, students need ample time to practise writing. As practically can be seen, however, the School of Language and Communication Studies wants each of them to cover the list of topics designed in the course outline according to the academic calendar of the semester. If all of the topics included within the course outline are not completed on time, it is considered as a serious breach of duty which will result in serious conflict with the school and other bodies concerned in the university. Consequently, due to the mismatch of time required to complete the content of the writing course designed by the school and time needed to conduct process-oriented writing lessons, most instructors refrain from getting their students involve in the process-oriented writing instruction.

6.2.1.6.2 Students' Weak Background in Writing

Writing is a cumulative effect of several years of experience. What is learnt at lower level has either positive or negative impact on the current teaching/learning practices. According to the information obtained from the interview conducted with writing instructors, all of them believe

that most students did not have a good deal of writing experience when they were at secondary school. Resp₁, for example, states the condition as follows:

I myself had an experience of teaching the English language at secondary school level for about seventeen years. I taught both text books developed during the military regime and those developed after the EPRDF came to power. Due to various factors, I did not teach writing at paragraph or essay level. Even when some of my colleagues attempt to teach lessons on paragraph development, most students, especially those who prepare themselves for national examination, do not feel comfortable. One of their major reasons is that they need to learn those language items which have close connection with the national examination items such as grammar, vocabulary and passage comprehension. Thus, if a teacher attempts to teach writing at secondary school level, most students think as an activity which kills their time. Therefore, writing is one of the less attention given skills at secondary school level. Due to the above reasons writing instruction at university level becomes a new experience to most students.

The above remark indicated that most students who join universities learn writing for the first time. As a researcher, I attempted to examine the English language text books developed for Grades 9----12. Moreover, I attempted to borrow the new English curriculum from the Ministry of Education and look into it. The curriculum developers stated in the curriculum that writing is one of the language skills that have been given serious attention at each grade level. In the same way, the textbooks consist of a variety of writing lessons at the end of each unit. According to my informal discussion held with some secondary school English teachers, the problem is not related to the development of the text books or the policy of the curriculum. As they informed to the researcher, the major problems are three. The first one is pertinent to the nature of national examinations set at Grade Ten and Grade Twelve level. That means, most of the questions do not test the writing skills of students either at paragraph or essay level. The second problem is the large number of students who are learning in one classroom. As they explain further, writing needs teaching students how to write, getting students practise widely and giving continuous feed-back. When the number of students is too large, it is difficult to control all the above

problems and conduct the lesson. The third one is students' lack of interest. Most students do not want to write either because of its nature of difficulty or the time it consumes.

As could be understood from the above responses, the students' poor background was one of the factors which impeded the successful implementation of the process approach.

6.2.1.6.3 Large Class-size

As the respondents confirm large class-size is not only a problem of secondary school education but also it is a constraint at university level. In their further explanation, the respondents stated that the School of Language and Communication Studies at Hawassa University urges to tolerate a maximum number of 50 students in one-language classroom. According to the respondents of the interview, having 50 students in one language classroom is not manageable to conduct writing course effectively. Their argument was writing or any other language course requires a strict follow-up of each student's performance. As a result, working with each student, evaluating his/her everyday performance and giving feedback is difficult when the number is limited to 50. Resp₄, for example, is of the opinion:

I am required to give 6-10 assignments in the form of continuous assessment per semester to each students. Then, if I am assigned to teach four sections of students, sometimes together with other department courses, how can I properly access each student and give him/her the assistance that is expected of me?

In his further explanation, he stated:

giving lecture and then allowing students to work in group and individually and assessing the performance of students are the methods of teaching that I am implementing. When I do this, I know that I am not discharging my responsibility of teaching as effectively as I wish. If the number of students is reduced to 30 or 25, however, as I said earlier, I can have opportunity to approach each student, understand his/her problem and provide him/her with the necessary support which enhances his/her writing competence.

From the above view we perceive that writing instructors complained that teaching 50 students in one classroom was difficult to deliver writing course through the process approach successfully. They were of the assumption that in writing classroom where close follow-up and continuous assessment is required, the number of students needs to be limited to less than 50. Of course, no respondent indicated the exact number of students which is manageable in writing classes. Studies indicate that large class size is a serious problem of several developing countries. In our case, the problem may continue for the coming few years until the number of instructors in each university becomes proportional with the number of students, more classrooms are built in each university and sufficient resources are made available. Until then, there are various measures that can be taken by Basic Writing Skills instructors, the school and the university. The first one is developing an attitude that organizing students into various groups and working with each group is one way of alleviating the problem. Secondly, familiarizing students with a variety of feedback provision mechanisms and encouraging them to implement them on various written texts is another way of curbing the problem. Thirdly, different consultation forms can be organized and instructors can share experience on teaching writing in large classes.

6.2.1.6.4 Instructors' Attitudinal Difference

Two of the respondents have the view that there is no agreement among writing instructors in employing modern approaches (the process approach) to foreign language teaching. The course Basic Writing skills is mostly conducted by a large number of instructors as it is a common course offered across the board. Of course, as in any other social science discipline, instructors of EFL can have different attitudes and perceptions on a variety of issues pertaining to the teaching/learning of different language skills. Accordingly, the respondents were of the view that some writing instructors were resistant to implement the process approach in writing classes. Resp₁, for example, states the fact as follows:

As most of the instructors are second degree holders, they had better opportunity to deal with various language teaching theories and approaches to second language teaching when they were studying at postgraduate level than first degree holders. When it comes to practice, however, most of them turn to the traditional method of

teaching. The major reasons, as far as I am concerned, are may be two. The first one is the deep-rooted beliefs and perceptions on traditional method of teaching prevailed for long years in our English Language teaching paradigm. As a result, most of them could not separate themselves from such method of teaching/learning. Even in my own experience, students at university level accept a writing instructor who explains every lesson deeply and clearly and get students do a variety of exercises accordingly. The second one is lack of confidence on modern approaches to second language teaching. Since most of the approaches were tested on the context of other country's experience, some instructors have suspicion on the effectiveness of the approaches.

The above responses showed that sometimes there was no agreement among writing instructors to implement modern theories and practices. The dominantly mentioned reasons were two. Firstly, it is difficult for some teachers to detach themselves from the traditional method of teaching as it had long years of influence on the teaching practice of our country. Secondly, even though the instructors have awareness about modern approaches to second language teaching, they lack confidence in implementing them. Consequently, it is still common conducting writing lessons at university level according to the principles of the product approach.

6.2.1.6.5 Lack of Discussion Forums

Three of the respondents opined that one of the problems which hindered the full implementation of the process approach was lack of tradition to come together and discuss strengths and weaknesses in conducting Basic writing course or any other language courses that are offered under the supervision of the School of Language and Communication Studies. As the respondents further stated, teaching is a profession which needs updating knowledge from time to time. In order to update one's thinking, one of the mechanisms is sharing ideas with other colleagues. It is understandable that some of the instructors who conduct the course Basic Writing Skills are first degree holders who studied teacher education or English for non-teaching purposes. As a result, especially those assistant instructors, who graduated from English for non-teaching discipline, might not have dealt with various modern language teaching theories as the focus of their training was on communication studies, journalism, public relations and the like.

Even those who graduated from the English education discipline, may not have detailed understanding about modern approaches to EFL classes as the training at this level usually focuses on more general issues which help learners get basic ideas about second language teaching.

When we see the requirements by which they are employed, the dominantly considered criterion was better academic achievement. Thus, in order to improve their teaching performance to some degrees, organizing different discussion forums has important contribution in improving the teaching performance of especially those instructors who have never taken any English language teaching methodology courses. The belief is that in such discussion forums, novice English teachers gain experience from veteran English instructors in the school. Over and above, every instructor, be experienced or non-experienced, has his own strengths and weaknesses in conducting any course. In order to alleviate weaknesses, the discussion that teachers hold and the experience they share among themselves has great contribution to their professional development. In our case, as the above respondent explained, we do not have such tradition. Once a teacher is graduated from a university, it is up to him/her to cope with challenges and conduct the course that he/she was assigned to conduct in any way he/she wishes. In connection to this, Resp₂ briefly commented: "We often come together informally to discuss several personal issues but we hardly raise anything about our profession."

The above responses revealed that developing the habit of coming together and discussing different problems related to the teaching/learning of various courses is one of the mechanisms which can help to implement the process approach and improve the students' writing skills.

6.2.1.6.6 Lack of In-service Trainings

As can be understood from the responses given to the interview, three of the respondents disclosed that they have not attended any workshops and seminars organized for English Language instructors either at regional or national level. We know that our world is going fast with dynamic changes. Hence, it is compulsory to adjust oneself with modern thinking. In this regard, Freeman and Richards (1997) strongly remark that unless teachers update their knowledge

and insights from time to time, it is obvious that their teaching cannot produce efficient citizens who can keep themselves abreast of modern innovations.

From the above view we understand that though formal educational trainings at university level are crucial in producing efficient teachers who can discharge their teaching responsibilities competently, different in-service trainings have their own contributions to update their thinking and insights Hillocks (1987). In order to familiarize oneself with modern theories and practices, one of the mechanisms is getting intensive short-term trainings which help to refresh the mind of the practitioners. When we associate the case with foreign language instruction, a number of changes are taking place across the world within various contexts. As a result, different educators recommend that short-term in-service training is one of the mechanisms for foreign language teachers to adapt themselves with new findings and innovations that help them modernize their method of teaching. The belief is that such kind of trainings help instructors assess their beliefs and perceptions in the light of recently developed theories and practices.

As we could see from the above responses, however, majority of the writing instructors in Hawassa University did not get opportunities to attend upgrading or refreshment workshops and seminars. This implies that majority of them are teaching writing courses based on the formal trainings that they got from universities. In fact, there is a possibility to read and improve the standard of one's profession. The argument is that when different instructors come together to get training, they expect lessons not only from the organizing body of the workshop or seminar but also from the participants who have several years of teaching experiences.

6.2.1.6.7 Shortage of Reference Materials

According to the responses to the interview, the other constraint mentioned in the as an impediment in implementing the process approach at Hawassa University was shortage of reading materials which help students practice writing in the context of the process writing paradigm. According to their opinion, the course is offered to thousands of freshman students, yet the most important books reserved for reference are not more than ten in number. In fact writing is a skill that often students develop through their own continuous personal effort. Nevertheless, good writing is always the result of good reading. Unless students read a lot of literature and familiarize

themselves with various styles of writing and uses of expressions, it will be difficult to improve one's writing. Similarly, the theoretical framework of the process approach states that writing is not a skill to be learnt merely by practising in the classroom. Students must be exposed to a variety of writing activities that they practise outside the classroom, as well. Hence, in order to encourage students to learn writing independently, the availability of sufficient reference materials is unquestionable.

The other problem is related to students' reading habit. The respondents have the view that several of the freshman students do not have habit of extensive reading. Ins₄, for example, reported that when he asks students to tell him whether they have ever read any book written in English during their spare-time, no student could tell him the title of a single book. This implied that unless students develop the habit of reading different literatures written in English, it is difficult to improve their writing skills.

6.2.1.6.8 Cultural Influence

According to the comments given by Resp₁, one of the factors which affected the full implementation of the process approach is lack of writing culture in the community. He is of the view that most Ethiopians' cultures do not encourage writing. Mostly people come together, discuss various issues and depart. Writing journals, keeping diary, recording personal experiences are not the inherent behaviors of most Ethiopians. In addition, those students, especially who come from poor and illiterate families, do not have favorable environment to practise writing. For example, those students who come from economically poor families cannot get sufficient support such as supplementary reading materials, computers and the like which motivate them to write on various issues and get feedback from their parents; as a result, mostly they are not inspired to write on various issues personally. Moreover, students coming from such family must support their family with a lot of house and farm activities in order to improve the livelihood of the family. Thus, they do not have spare time to practise writing.

6.2.1.7 Solutions suggested to successfully Implement the Process Approach

As was attempted to explain earlier, employing the process approach successfully in writing classes makes the teaching learning interactive, creative and more successful. The general objective of the newly developed curriculum of the School of Language and Communication Studies at Hawassa University confirms that each of the courses in the school is organized in such a way that students can take responsibility for their own learning. Secondly, the objectives sketched for the course Basic Writing Skills state that at the end of the course students are expected to express themselves with meaningfully written English in different contexts and situations. Moreover, there is a suggestion from the curriculum developing team to conduct the course using student-centered method of teaching which is often considered suitable to implement the process approach to writing instruction. Nevertheless, there are challenges which disrupt its implementation. In order to alleviate the difficulties and implement it successfully in Basic Writing classes, the following are solutions suggested as remedies.

6.2.1.7.1 Improving the Grammar Ability of the Students

Three of the interviewees agreed that the Basic Writing course that is being offered at university level need to incorporate grammar lessons. Their assumption was that unless students first developed their grammar ability, it would be difficult to improve their writing skills. In their further analysis, they stated that before students are engaged into the writing task, they should be able to learn how to construct grammatically correct sentences. Resp₃, for example, was of the view:

As we practically observe most of our students who are coming to our university have shortcoming in constructing meaningful sentences, as a result of this, what they write at sentence or paragraph level is not clear to readers. Thus, devoting at least the first unit of the course for grammar awareness is essential to improve students' writing skills.

As we can understand from the responses given above, the respondent was of the opinion that before students engaged themselves into any writing tasks, they should be taught grammar

lessons. His assumption was that before students begin to produce different written texts, they must have good knowledge of grammar which enables them write well built paragraphs or essays. Resp₂, in the same way, has the view that conducting grammar lessons is significant but he suggests that the lessons should be presented contextually in an implicit manner. When he explains further: “Though continuous practice is a core issue in improving students’ writing skills in process writing classes, sometimes raising the students’ grammar awareness through contextualized communicative activities is an important measure to implement the process approach more successfully.”

One of the respondents, however, suggests that talking about grammar while conducting writing course at university level is not important. He is of the opinion that writing is often improved only through writing.

Generally, when we examine the above responses we understand that majority of the respondents perceived that grammar lessons need to be included as one components of the course Basic Writing Skills. Nevertheless, they had different attitude towards the way it should be included. Some of them are of the view that including communicative grammar lessons within the writing lessons is more important to improve students’ writing skills than attempting to teach it at the initial stage of the course. Others, however, have the belief that grammar lesson is not relevant while learning the course Basic Writing Skills at university level.

6.2.1.7.2 Motivating Students to Write Continuously

Two of the respondents suggested that in order to implement the process approach successfully, the best ways is to engage students into a variety of writing activities continuously. In their detailed explanation, they suggested that learning about writing can hardly help students improve their writing capacity. Resp₁, for example, remarks: “As far as I am concerned, in order to implement the process approach more successfully, one of the remedies is to motivate students to practice the skill meaningfully and repeatedly and facilitate situations in which they can get comments on their writing either from their instructor or peers.” As Ins₂ further comments: “Practising writing continuously especially by integrating it with other language skills is one of the remedial solutions to implement the process approach.”

Resp₁ further suggests that the perspective of the process approach is to engage students into continuous and meaningful writing practices. In his further explanation, he remarked that continuous practice alone is not enough. The practice should be meaningful and accompanied by effective and positive comments either from the instructor or peers. The other important point that the respondent capitalized was that writing instructors need to have sufficient time to read and comment on their students' written work in order to help each student learn from his/her mistakes. In his final comments, he suggested that writing instructors need to carry less teaching load than other course instructors in the school and they need to be free from other co-curricular activities that encroach upon their time. The understanding was that when writing instructors have sufficient time, they can help students improve their writing in many ways.

6.2.1.7.3 Arranging Tutorial Classes

Regarding the remedial solutions to be taken to implement the process approach more successfully, two of the respondents recommended that tutorial classes need to be arranged for students who are taking the course Basic Writing Skills at Hawassa University. In their further explanation, they suggested that the writing capacity of most students who are joining the university is less than the required standard. As has been repeatedly explained, writing is one of the important language skills which play important role in enabling students to succeed in their academic activities. Therefore, students have to attend supplementary classes in order to practice writing further and improve their skills.

The main reason is that by attending only the formal class time instruction, it is difficult to achieve the objective expected by the end of the course as there are different students with different capacity to learn writing. Of course, students are also busy with many courses that they take during the first semester of the academic year. Nevertheless, with the consent of the students, if supplementary classes are arranged for them during their free time, they can practise writing different texts according to their own speed of learning. Furthermore, the instructor gets additional time to help students learn writing with less pressure. In such type of classes, it is more comfortable to assess each student's limitations and assist him/her personally because during

tutorial classes, there is no pressure from the instructor to complete the portion according to the schedule of the department.

6.2.1.7.4 Familiarize Students with a Variety of Genres

The other remedial solution suggested as one way of paving a way to process-oriented writing instruction is coming to class with different pieces genres and allowing students to learn whatever they need from the genre. Writing experts like Bawarshi (2003) report the utilization of genre approach in actual writing classes enables learners to familiarize themselves with various styles of writing and this will help students learn whatever they like from each genre.

In the contemporary writing classes, the genre approach to writing is becoming the attention area of second language classes. Accordingly, Resp₃ is of the view that presenting different genres to students and getting them read thoroughly and produce their own written texts using the lesson they got from the genre that they read is one of the appropriate approaches which encourage students to write various paragraphs or essays in their own way. Moreover, the respondent suggested that genre writing is one of the important approaches which play a significant role in enriching the experience of students in analyzing and learning different writing components which would later be used in their writing. In his final comments, he briefly forwarded: “employing the genre approach in writing classes, as one component of the process approach, will really provide students with different lessons in different contexts to enhance their personal writing.”

6.2.1.7.5 Arranging Refreshment Training for Instructors

In implementing any new approach in EFL classes, the first requirement is to understand the theoretical framework of the approach or method. As we know a great many theories on foreign language teaching emerged and were popular for sometimes and then left their place to others. Of course some are still in use under some contexts. As research findings indicate, the concern of the day is not to look for best theories for the purpose of teaching foreign language skills but to be as successful as possible in teaching the skills Ellis (2003). In order to teach any language skill

successfully, keeping oneself abreast of the time is mandatory. Though there are several ways to update oneself from time to time, getting refreshment and upgrading training subsequently has several privileges. As a result of this, scholars recommend that unless teachers are aware of current findings in connection to their field of study, it will be difficult for them to be successful in their teaching profession. In the same way, Resp₃, remarks the following opinions.

I have been in the profession of teaching the English language for the last twenty-six years. I have taught the English language at secondary school, college and university level. Surprisingly, I have never taken any workshop or seminar on modern language teaching since my graduation. Of course, sometimes I get some ideas from my colleagues who had got training on second language teaching. I have the belief that the science of teaching is going fast; therefore, I must adjust myself with the realities. In order to achieve this, I read my level best. Nevertheless, there are items of information that are not accessible simply through reading. Thus, coming together and discussing different issues and getting knowledge from more qualified and experienced scholars has an irreplaceable advantage.

As can be understood from the above response, writing instructors are very eager to participate in different workshops and/or seminars which can help them improve their teaching profession. Nevertheless, such in-service trainings are not accessible to almost all writing instructors. Due to this reason, they could not update their beliefs, perceptions and attitudes towards the theories and practices of the process approach. Regarding this point, it is possible to raise two points. The first one is that organizing workshops is not necessarily the responsibility of higher bodies of the university or government. If, for example, universities in one region create affiliation to work together and establish a co-coordinating committee, it is possible to arrange a discussion forum where they can exchange experiences and learn from each other. Secondly, the committee can invite scholars from local mother universities or from foreign universities and get English language instructors in general, writing skills instructors in particular refreshment trainings.

6.2.1.7.6 Creating Affiliation with Secondary School English Teachers

There is a belief that writing is not a skill which can be developed as a result of the instruction writers get at certain level of learning. It is a skill that learners develop through intensive practices gradually. Concerning this, all of the respondents remarked that the meaningful practices learners made at secondary school level had direct influence on the implementation of the process approach at university level. This means, the way students learnt writing at secondary school level, determines their learning at university level. Almost all of the respondents agree that one of the factors for low standard of most freshman students writing skills is less attention given to writing at secondary school level. Thus, in order to improve the existing writing instruction at secondary school level, one of the solutions suggested as remedy was creating a link with secondary school English teachers and discussing the problems and arriving at agreement so that the problems can be alleviated and students begin to achieve writing skills when they were at secondary school. One of the respondents, for example, briefly stated:” If we know the way writing is handled at secondary school level, why shouldn’t we contribute our share to bring a piece of change on students’ writing?”

The above response reminds us that rather than always discussing the problems, it is necessary to create a bond with secondary school English teachers and work together to solve at least some of the problems which attribute to low standard of most students’ writing. Of course, the writing teachers by themselves cannot establish the link. Nevertheless, they can come together and discuss the problems with the heads of departments and then department heads can communicate with higher bodies of the universities to arrange a procedure in which teachers in both institutions work together.

6.2.1.7.7 Accessibility to Reading Materials

Almost all respondents seriously complained that the scarcity or entire absence of relevant teaching materials or references for the course Basic Writing Skills did hinder the successful teaching/learning of the course. They were of the perception that writing has strong connection with reading. Thus, students need to be engaged in reading various literary works of various

writers so that they can learn a lot of things from the materials that they read and then use them in their own writing. Accordingly, Res₂ puts the point more precisely saying: “Separating reading and writing is like attempting to separate water into its different components being outside chemistry laboratory.”

As we can understand from the above responses, students can be more successful in their process writing classes when there is sufficient supply of reading materials that can help them increase their scope of thinking and practice a variety of activities. As the present researcher attempted to explore the realities in the library of Hawassa University, the higher management is doing its level best to fulfill the library with various reference materials either by purchasing from local markets or by soliciting support from donating institutions; nevertheless, their number is not proportional as compared to the overwhelmingly increasing number of students joining the university from year to year. Moreover, the respondents complained that though some reference materials are available in the library, there are not recent editions. Due to this, it is difficult to familiarize students with modern way of learning and developing writing skills through their own effort. In sum, the respondents suggested that libraries need to be furnished with sufficient and latest reference materials that help students read widely and improve their skills of writing.

6.2.2 Discussions of the Results of Students' Interviews

The study relied not only on the data collected from the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University but also it required further interview data that were collected from eight students taking the course in the same university. From each group 1 student was selected. The criteria used for selection have already been stated on page 89-90 of this paper. The major purpose of the interview aimed at investigating the students' perception about what writing is, methods of writing instruction, the role of good command of grammar in learning and improving writing skills, the role of group work in writing classes, the teaching materials being used in Basic Writing classes, etc. The other purpose for conducting the interview with students was to compare and contrast their responses with that of the writing instructors. To achieve this, first the interview guide was given to students and then they were made to go through it thoroughly and ask questions if they had any problem in responding to any of the items.

After each respondent had pondered over each item, some of them asked the researcher to give further clarifications on few of the items. Accordingly, the researcher gave appropriate clarifications until each point became clear to the respondent who asked for clarifications. Having been certain that each respondent had understood each item clearly, the researcher went on interviewing each respondent and recorded his/her responses with an audio tape-recorder. In carrying out the interpretations and discussions, the researcher followed the same procedures that he used while discussing the responses of Basic Writing Skills instructors. Accordingly, first three major themes were identified and then fourteen sub-themes were derived which were related to the different major themes.

Category of Themes

No	Major Themes	Sub-themes
1	perceptions about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Writing at University Level • the Nature of Writing • the Basic Requirements to Learn and Improve Writing • group/Pair discussions in Basic Writing Skills Classes • methods of Teaching Being Employed in Basic Writing Skills Classes
2	The Nature of Teaching Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authenticity to Life • Mode of Organization
3	Solutions Suggested to Improve Writing Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting Sufficient time for Practising • Developing Reading Habits • Improving Grammar Knowledge • Getting Adequate Lessons from the instructor • Learning Writing as an Independent Course at Preparatory Level • Increasing the Number of Credit Hours for Basic Writing Course • Controlling class-size

The major purpose of this part of the discussions is to find out answers to research question number 1: *What is the perception of both writing instructors and students about writing instruction in Basic Writing classes?* There is an assumption that the perceptions students have already developed in their mind has serious impact on the teaching/learning of writing skills. Entwistle , (1998) is of the opinion that there is a strong relationship between the students' perceptions and the outcome to be achieved at the end of the day. The main idea is that if students, for example, perceive that writing is better learnt when the teaching process is under the control of the teacher, they always expect every lesson from the teacher rather than attempting by themselves. If, however, students have the perception that writing is better learnt when they are given freedom to practise writing continuously through their own effort, they always generate ideas by themselves and struggle to produce meaningful paragraphs or essays. Thus, the results from the students' interview is presented and discussed as follows.

6.2.2.1 Perceptions about Learning Writing at University Level

According to the responses obtained from the interview, all respondents had the perception that writing was an important language skill which had multidimensional advantages in connection to their academic performance in the university. All respondents admitted that writing had a very crucial role in determining their academic performance since they joined the university. As they further explained, university education, unlike that of secondary school, requires them to write assignments, examinations, term papers and the like. In order to do all the above activities successfully, there must be a good skill of writing. Resp₂, for example, remarked that writing is significant not only for the success of university education but also it is important for their future career in the world of work when they join the community because there are several governmental and non-governmental organizations in the country that use the English language as their medium of work. Furthermore, one of the students suggested that writing is a skill which enables students to integrate speaking, listening and reading. This means, when students learn writing, they will have opportunity to develop other language skills, as well.

6.2.2.2 Perceptions about the Nature of Writing

In responding to the interview item which asked the respondents about the nature of writing, seven of the respondents have the perception that writing is the most challenging and demanding language skill to learn. Resp₂, however, explained that he does not have any difficulty to express himself in written English. In explaining his reasons, he elaborated that when he was at secondary school, he was writing different paragraphs and essays voluntarily and showing them to his teachers and getting appreciation. Similarly, after he has joined university, he is learning writing happily and scoring excellent marks. Moreover, he used to read different books during his free time and wrote different articles in his own interest. Mostly, he used to show his writing to his English teachers and got comments. Thus, the more he wrote the more he could learn about writing and produce more sensible essays.

When the responses of the other seven respondents were examined, however, they had the perception that writing is a difficult language skill which cannot be easily developed. One of the dominant reasons most students cited as pressing problem was lack of experience when they were at secondary school level. In their further explanation, they pointed out that throughout their four years stay at secondary school, they were not made to write a single paragraph let alone essays. Therefore, when they are currently asked to write different paragraphs or essays, they will be confused in constructing meaningful sentences and organizing ideas that will grow into essays.

The second reason which made writing a difficult language skill is that most of the students had phobia to express themselves in written English having the assumption that their grammar is poor. Most of them associate writing with an accurate skill of grammar. If their grammar is faulty, they think that they will be criticized by their teacher and given less academic status. The third reason was poor habit of reading. All of them disclosed that they have not yet read any literature written in English to improve their English language command. When they were asked to explain the reasons further, they stated that they did not have interest to read. Moreover, getting books which could go with their standard in the library of their school was difficult. The fourth one was time

constraint. All of them had the view that writing requires adequate time to practice continuously. However, when they described the situation at university level, they were of the opinion that it was difficult to practise writing a paragraph or essay within a single period because the instructor needed much of the time to explain the lessons and do different exercises.

On the basis of the responses given above, it is possible to understand that writing is one of the most difficult language skills for most of the students taking the course Basic Writing Skills at Hawassa University. This implied that the teaching of writing requires so much attention from both the students' side and the instructors', as well.

6.2.2.3 Perceptions about Basic Requirements to Learn and Improve Writing

The researcher had the doubt that students may not understand the meaning of the phrase 'command of grammar'. As a result, he first attempted to define the contextual meaning of the phrase for students. Then, they were asked to give their responses about the necessity of good command of grammar skill to learn and improve their writing skills. In their response, all of the respondents are of the perception that good command of grammar is one of the important requirements to learn writing. In their conclusion, they recommend that unless writers have a good command of grammar, they cannot learn and improve their writing skills. Resp₁, for example, suggests:

Grammar is important to speak or write. Most of us have grammar problem because of this we cannot write good paragraphs or essays. If we have good command of grammar, we can write correct sentences or paragraphs, but if our grammar is poor, no one can understand our ideas. Therefore, for me, good command of grammar is very important to learn writing.

Respondent ₈, similarly, suggested that having good command of grammar is one of the relevant requirements to learn and produce good writing. He further explained that those students who have good command of grammar always get good marks for the paragraphs or essays that they write. In the details of his explanation, he remarked that most of the time the paragraphs that the

instructor selects and reads out to the class as model are written with grammatically correct sentences. Resp₃, similarly, states: “As I think, good command of grammar is very important to learn writing. As I understand, a student who has good command of grammar can learn writing without more challenges. The main reason is that if a student has good command of grammar, he can explain everything in correct sentences.”

As we understand from the above responses, respondents were of the perception that in order to learn writing and improve their skills, they necessarily need good command of grammar. Proponents of the product approach have the assumption that in order for students to learn writing successfully, they should develop a good command of grammar ability. Process writing experts like Zamel (1983), contrarily, suggest that even beginner writers who have difficulty to express themselves in grammatically correct sentences can learn writing through continuous and meaningful practices.

The central idea of the argument is that though grammar knowledge is unquestionably relevant to write clearly, those students who have limited knowledge of grammar can develop their writing skills as long as they have ability to write. In this regard, ability to write is meant to skills of the writer to generate ideas, organize them and develop them at paragraph and essay level. The assumption is that the more writers are exposed to idea generation on various topics, the more they will develop experience of creativity and organization of ideas. In conclusion, almost all respondents have the perception that good command of grammar is one of the important requirements in learning and improving writing skills.

6.2.2.4 Perceptions about Group/Pair Discussions in Basic Writing Skills Classes

In order to check whether students considered group discussions as a relevant technique of learning writing in Basic Writing Skills classes or not, they were asked to give their opinion. Accordingly, all of the respondents suggested various benefits that they got as a result of group discussions.

As the data from the interview indicated, all of the respondents were of the perception that group discussions had potential contribution in improving their writing skills. All of them agreed that one of the advantages of group discussion was the freedom it provided them to learn according to their own pace. As they further explained, when they were grouped to discuss a given lesson either in group or pair, they could get an alternative learning environment which made them free from teacher- dominated treatment. This freedom in turn helped them to get time to think for their writing, structure ideas into coherent text, edit or revise their written work and give it final shape.

In their deeper analysis, they elaborated that each student, as a human being, has his/her own strengths and weaknesses in learning or doing something. In order to bridge the gap, the discussion that they were holding with their group members helped them share ideas among themselves. The ideas that they shared in turn could help them as resource to develop personal bigger texts such as paragraphs or essays. In their conclusion, the respondents were of the understanding that discussions in group enabled them not only to share ideas among themselves but also they could learn how to speak with different people.

From the above explanation, we understand that when students are organized into different groups and are allowed to learn from each other, they feel free to express themselves confidently. The above responses, thus, indicated that students had already understood the benefit of group work in their writing classes irrespective of any approach the instructor employed.

The other benefit the respondents suggested as one advantage of group discussion was developing responsibility for their own learning. In their detailed analysis, they stated that when they developed responsibility for their writing, firstly they could become critical and all rounded in presenting their argument. Moreover, rather than receiving information from their instructor, they would exercise problem-solving learning approach which often needed individual effort in examining ideas and breaking them into smaller pieces and synthesizing them into one whole. The second benefit that the respondents mentioned was developing competitive attitude among the group members. In their detailed discussion, they stated that as a result of the competition they made among themselves, they got two major advantages. Firstly, when group discussion went on,

they evaluated the standard of their ideas and strived further to achieve better recognition in the group. Secondly, after collecting different ideas from different members of the group, they did their level best in building better paragraphs or essays using the ideas that they shared during the group discussions.

6.2.2.5 Perceptions about Methods of Teaching Being Employed in Basic Writing Skills Classes

In order to study the extent to which the process approach was being implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University, one of the areas that should be investigated was the teaching methods instructors employed. As a result, students were asked to explain their perceptions about the method of teaching that their writing instructors were employing in conducting the course Basic Writing Skills.

6.2.2.5.1 Product-oriented Writing Approach

According to the responses obtained from the interview conducted with students, the respondents had varied opinions. Resp_{1, 3, 7&8} explained that the teaching method their writing instructor was using in their writing classes was by and large teacher-fronted though sometimes they were being provided with group activities that helped them exchange information about the topic that they were talking about. Resp₁, for example, stated the role of his writing instructor in the following way.

As our writing instructor enters the classroom, he writes the title of the lesson on the blackboard and then he asks us to explain what we know about the title. Then he explains everything that he thinks are important to us and then asks us whether the lesson is clear or not. If students ask him question, first he gives chance to us to answer the question. If students are unable to answer, he himself answers each question until the answer is clear to each student. Then he gives us different exercises either by writing on the blackboard or distributing printed copies.

From the responses given above we perceive that the instructor first wrote the lesson topic on the blackboard and then elicited different definitions from students' background knowledge. He then explained what the topic was and the lessons incorporated within the topic. As could be observed from the above responses, students were not given chance to practise writing even at paragraph level by passing through different stages. This revealed that most part of the methodology was devoted to the teacher's practices. Resp₃ further reinforces the above explanation saying:

The role of my instructor in my Basic Writing class is to explain each lesson until we understand it properly. First he tries to make each writing lesson as clear as possible to all of us. After he has understood that the lesson is clear to all of us, he gives us different exercises on identification of topic sentence, essential components and linking devices of a paragraph. Then he gives us different titles to write paragraphs. Generally I can say that our instructor is a very good instructor because he shows us every step of writing at word level, sentence level and paragraph level very clearly. He corrects each of our mistakes by giving us a lot of assignments on various paragraph writing.

In the same way, Resp₇ disclosed that the role of the instructor in their writing class was to explain each lesson until they understood it properly. In his further explanation, he stated that first he attempted to make each writing lesson as clear as possible to all students. After he had assumed that the lesson was clear to all of them, he gave students different exercises on identification of topic sentence, essential components of a paragraph and linking devices of a sentence. Then he gave them different titles to write paragraphs. According to the responses given above, it is possible to infer that students were of the perception that the method which was largely being employed in their Basic Writing Skills classes was more of product-oriented.

6.2.2.5.2 Process-oriented Writing Approach

Contrary to the above respondents, Resp_{2, 4, 5 & 6}, had the perception that the methodology which was being employed in their Basic Writing classes gave them opportunity to write a variety of paragraphs by passing through various stages. Resp₂, for example, explained the classroom experience in Basic Writing classes as follows:

Our instructor comes to us with different paragraphs which are followed by different questions. Mostly he asks us to read each paragraph carefully and answer the questions individually or in group. Then asks us to generate different ideas, organize them, make corrections and write the final draft. He always motivates us to write different paragraphs even if our English is not good. I didn't have interest for writing before I joined this university. But now I am trying to write paragraphs even when I am outside the classroom.

The above responses were reinforced by resp₄, saying that the method their Basic Writing Skills instructor had been using was more of practice-focused. In his further explanation, he delineates the classroom situations as follows:

“Writing needs knowing a lot of things about writing. Especially knowing how to organize ideas, how to use correct grammar and punctuation marks. Therefore, our instructor mostly gives us explanation on the lessons that are difficult for us to understand. Then, he encourages us to practice writing in the classroom and outside the classroom continuously.”

In the same way, Resp₅ had the perception that he was practising writing as repeatedly as possible in his Basic Writing Skills classes. In his further explanation, he reported:

“I think our Basic Writing Skills class is very interesting because our instructor first gives us basic ideas that help us write different paragraphs and then he gives us time to prepare outlines, prepare the first draft of our paragraph then he allows us to correct it by ourselves, by our friends or sometimes he himself corrects them. This helped us to have interest and improve our writing.”

When we look into the response given by Resp₆, we understand that the Basic Writing class was largely participatory. As the respondent explained, mostly their class time was used to practice writing different paragraphs or essays which would help them improve their writing ability through meaningful practices. He goes on explaining the realities in the classroom as follows:

“My instructor has different roles when we learn writing. He first gives us lectures on the most important parts of the lesson with supporting examples.

Moreover, he gives us chance to ask questions if there are points which are not clear during the lecture time. Then he gives time to write different paragraphs by ourselves. After we have finished our writing, sometimes he collects our paragraphs or essays and corrects them by himself or sometimes he allows us to correct our paragraphs by ourselves.

From the above response we understand that the role of the instructor was to give students the necessary input which he thought relevant in guiding students to go about their writing. Then, his major role was to facilitate favorable situations which enabled students learn writing through continuous practices.

The other way of examining the methodology being used in Basic Writing Skills classes was investigating the role of students in the course of learning the lessons. Accordingly, Resp 1, 3, 7 & 8 disclosed that their role in their writing class was to learn how to write correct sentences, how to join them to get more complete idea and how to build grammatically correct and organized paragraphs. The rest of the respondents, that is, Resp 2, 4, 5 & 6 admitted that their role was to get guiding ideas that helped them how to develop their writing and then practise continuously by themselves or in group until they came up with readable paragraphs.

Generally, the discussions of the above results indicated that in 50% the Basic Writing Skills classes the lessons were conducted in harmony with the principles of the process approach.

6.2.2.6 The Nature of Teaching Materials

The major purpose of collecting data from the respondents about the teaching materials being used in Basic Writing Skills classes was to answer research question number2: *To what extent the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach?*

In conducting writing courses, teaching materials are considered as important resources in achieving the aims which have already been set either by the course instructor or the institution in charge of executing the teaching/learning. According to Cunningsworth (1995) and Hachinson

and Waters (1996), teaching materials have a number of advantages in making the teaching/learning successful.

Firstly, they can serve as resources for presenting any language skills. This means, they are source of activities for learners to practise and enhance their communicative interaction. Secondly, they serve as reference sources for further reading and practice. Whatever discussed orally is ephemeral. Thus, instructors use them as a guide to determine their method of teaching and their final goal. Moreover, they serve as a resource for self-directed learning or self-access work. An instructor cannot teach everything in the classroom for various reasons. Thus, students can read and do activities by themselves, avoid ambiguities and enhance self- learning. Over and above, teaching materials give support to less experienced teachers who have yet to gain confidence.

In order to come up with a conclusion about the nature of teaching materials, one of the mechanisms was gathering data through interview conducted with students. This helped the researcher to know what the respondents felt about the content, organization and authenticity of the materials. Accordingly, the results of the interview conducted with students were presented as follows:

6.2.2.6.1 Authenticity to Life

One of the features of process-oriented teaching materials for writing classes is its authenticity to the real life of students. Accordingly, Resp₂ is of the perception that the teaching materials that his Basic Writing Skills instructor had been using for teaching purposes were interesting and motivating to learn writing skills because their contents had direct connection with his day-to-day life. Resp₄, in the same way, shares Resp₂'s view saying:

*I think the teaching materials were interesting because they discuss different issues which have close relationship with our life. For example, I like the paragraph entitled **Empathy**. Moreover, they are of different varieties. They provide us with different titles on which we write our paragraphs and some of the instructions give us chance to create our own title and then write paragraphs or essays in any way we*

like. In addition to this, most of the activities guide us what to do at each stage of writing.

Resp₆, similarly, forwards his view saying:

*The teaching materials that our writing instructor uses in our writing classes consist of varied passages which are really very educative and interesting to me. I read some of them not only for the purpose of learning writing but also to associate their content with my own life. For example, the model paragraph entitled, **The Lion's Whiskers** and **The Old man in the Street** gave me unforgettable lessons to my life. In addition, most of the tasks invite us to solve different exercises written for various purposes being in group, in pair or individually. The other point is that the materials comprise a variety of tasks which can really improve our writing skills.*

When we see the responses given above by Resp_{2, 4& 6}, the materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were interesting to them as they could reflect their day-to-day life. As a result, they could associate the content of the materials with their life and were motivated to write further on similar issues. The other reason, which made the teaching materials interesting was, as they further explained, they were made up of a variety of activities which motivated them to write further.

When we see the responses given by Resp_{1, 3, 7& 8}, on the other hand, they did not have much satisfaction with the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes. They presented four different reasons to substantiate their arguments. The first one was that some of the activities were beyond their comprehension capacity. Secondly, they faced different problems in deciding what to do at each stage of writing as the instructions did not give further explanations. Thirdly, some items of the examinations did not focus on writing paragraphs or essays. Instead, they focused on mechanical questions. The fourth constraint the respondents raised was that since the materials were not compiled and reserved in the library, it was difficult to read ahead of the instructor and prepare themselves before discussions were held in the classroom. Regarding the short-coming of the materials, let us see what resp₁ commented.

“The teaching materials that we are using in our Basic Writing classes are mostly beyond my understanding level. To tell the truth, most of the activities are difficult for me to understand and do them correctly. When I sometimes consult my friends to learn from each other, they do not feel comfortable due to time shortage as everyone is busy with his/her own tasks.”

From the above responses, we understand that four of the respondents suggested that the teaching materials were authentic to their day-to-day life. The other four, however, thought that the materials were not that much interesting and motivating to learn writing successfully as they were difficult and not self-explanatory.

As the above data indicated, half of the respondents had the perception the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were authentic, full of varieties and encourage self-learning. This implied that the teaching materials were partially suitable to implement the process approach.

6.2.2.6.2 Mode of Organization of the Materials

The ways teaching materials are organized determine the kind of method to be employed. As syllabus designers such as Nunan (1999) note, when professionals intend to develop teaching materials, one of the important criteria that they take into consideration is how the materials are going to be graded. Those teaching materials designed in the light of the process approach should often gear towards holistic approach which enables to solve problems. Those materials that focus on model imitation, on the other hand, require sequentially arranged teaching materials. Having this understanding in mind, the respondents were asked to express their feelings about the modes of development of the teaching materials in Basic Writing Skills classes. Accordingly, Resp_{2,4,5} & ₆ had the perception that the materials were developed in such a way that they could learn writing through writing. In their responses, they further explained that the teaching materials were comprehensive in which different skills were integrated and presented meaningfully. Resp₅, upheld the above view saying:

The teaching materials through which we were learning writing were interesting because they give us chance to discuss in group, read and write. For example, when we were learning about description of people, we heard the description of an old man orally. Then our instructor asked us to draw the picture of the person on a sheet of paper. Then he asked us some questions to answer orally. When we were explaining about the picture, he wrote the main points on the blackboard. Then he allowed us to discuss different ideas related to the picture in pairs. Finally, he asked us to describe another person in any way we liked.

When we examine the above responses with some details, we understand that the instructor used holistically developed teaching materials which encouraged students to deal with writing comprehensively and freely. The other point mentioned by the above respondents was that the materials encouraged them to integrate other language skills with writing.

Respondents 1, 3, 7 and 8, however, were of the perceptions that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were sequentially arranged, that is, they first dealt with sentence level lessons and then developed to paragraph level lessons and ended with essay level lessons. Resp₃, for example, stated: “In our teaching materials, first, we learnt sentence level writing such as classification of sentences, linking sentences and correcting errors in sentences and then we learnt about how to develop paragraphs and finally we learnt how to write essays.”

In sum, the above discussion of results showed that half of the respondents (50% of them) were of the perception that the teaching materials were organized in such a way that students could solve problems by themselves. This implied that the respondents had the perception that the materials were appropriate to implement the process approach. The rest of the respondents, however, perceived that the materials were developed discretely, that is, they were non-contextualized. The reason for having different perceptions on the same type of teaching materials might be because of their level of examining and understanding the nature of the materials.

6.2.2.7 Solutions Suggested to Improve Writing Skills

As explained in chapter three of this study, a number of local studies confirmed that the writing status of many students at university level is below the required standard. Secondly, according to the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors, the results showed that most university students have difficulty to produce written texts which are expected of students at university level. The results obtained from the interview conducted with students, in the same way, suggested that all respondents except one of them were producing written texts which were below the required standard.

The major purposes of asking students about the solutions that they thought as remedies to improve their writing skills were to check whether their responses matched the responses given by Basic Writing Skills instructors to the same item of the interview or not. Secondly, the present researcher has the perception that the major factor which constrained most students not to produce a written text which meets the required standard is pertinent to the partial implementation or non-implementation of the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes. Accordingly, the responses provided by the students as remedial solutions for the improvement of their writing skills could help to check the extent to which their responses matched the argument of the researcher or not. Accordingly, the responses of the students are discussed and the results are presented as follows:

6.2.2.7.1 Getting Sufficient Time for Practising

Based on the responses given to the interview, one of the solutions suggested by the students as remedy to improve their writing skills is getting more time for practice. The problem of time-constraint began when they were at secondary school. In their further explanation, they reported that when they were at secondary school, they were giving more attention to read materials on other subjects such as natural science, social science and the like. Due to this reason, they did not have time to practice writing paragraphs and essays. Finally, few of the respondents disclosed that they did not have time to read various short stories and novels which could help them learn

writing even during summer vacation as they were engaged in different activities to help their parents.

When they explained their experience in Hawassa University, Resp 2, 5 & 6 stated that they were taking different courses which consisted of a total number of eighteen to twenty-one credit hours per week. For each course, as they said, they were expected to produce different assignments and term papers. Moreover, they had to prepare themselves for mid-semester and final semester examinations. As a result, they were facing various problems to practise writing different paragraphs and essays and improve their writing skills. Resp 5, for example, disclosed the problems as follows.

I know that writing is a skill which needs continuous practices. Our instructor always tells us that in order to be a successful students at the end of this course, we must practice writing different paragraphs and essays. When he asks us to write a paragraph or essay in the classroom, the class time ends before most of us finish our writing. Sometimes he changes the classwork into homework to think over the topic widely and write carefully. The problem is that sometimes we are given three to four assignments to be submitted on the same day. Because of this, we write the paragraphs or essays we were asked to write hurriedly and submit them to our instructor. Thus, the total number of credit hours that we carry need to be reduced to maximum 15.

From the above responses, we observe that students had scarcity of time to practise writing and improve their skills. Writing is a difficult language skill which needs sufficient time for practicing. Especially, when it comes to the implementation of the process approach, students need sufficient time to generate ideas, prepare outlines, carry out editing and write out the final draft. The process writing experts themselves admit that time constraint is one of the dominant factors which often hinder the coverage of all topics selected for discussions. In order to cope with this challenge, there were solutions that the respondents suggested as remedies. The first one was reducing the number of credit hours that they should take within a semester. When the number of total credit hours is reduced, the number of years for the completion of their work

can increase. This in turn can disturb the curriculum which has already been developed by exerting considerable amount of money, time, knowledge, etc.

The other solution which was suggested as remedy to control time constraint was identifying the phases of writing that could be done in the form of class activity and homework or assignments. When we see the details of the students' responses, they had the perception that if they were allowed to do the planning and drafting stage in the first period, they could do the editing and writing the final stage outside the classroom. Or else, the reverse could sometimes be possible. This means, the planning and writing the first draft could be done outside the classroom and then editing and writing the final draft could be done in the classroom. The second remedial solution that they suggested was using group or pair work as frequently as possible. When we associate the second remedy with the philosophy of the process approach, we observe similarities. There is a belief that, in process-oriented writing classes, it is more convenient to teach ten or fifteen groups than attempting to teach fifty students at the same time in one period. Though using group work is not always appropriate to conduct process-oriented writing classes, it can be used as an alternative technique to teach writing meaningfully.

6.2.2.7.2 Improving Grammar Skills

It is possible to understand from the responses that almost all of the respondents had the belief that their grammar ability was so weak that they could not explain their ideas as clearly as possible. When their explanation was further examined, they were of the view that in order to be successful in their writing, they must learn grammar along with writing skills.

When we associate the above responses with the realities in Basic Writing Skills classes, we know that students had learnt grammar for more than ten years before they joined a university, yet they were reporting that their grammar skills were not sufficient to communicate intelligibly. Thus, the remedial solution that most students suggested was to get further grammar lessons based on the realities in the classroom as long as it could support their success in writing.

6.2.2.7.3 Developing Reading Habit

Almost all respondents disclosed that their reading experience was so limited that they could not improve their writing ability. Every respondent had the belief that he/she has not yet read well any literature written in English language. As it was mentioned in the discussion part of the interview conducted with writing instructors, there were several factors which constrained the reading habit of students. Nevertheless, the dominant ones that most respondents mentioned were the following: The first one was lack of interest to read literature written in English language because of the problems related to comprehension problem. As the respondents further explained, their first reason was that they were not exposed to reading a variety of literature since their childhood. As a result, they lacked the courage to read and appreciate materials written in English.

The second reason was lack of reading materials that could go in line with their comprehension ability in the library when they were at secondary school. The third problem was related to English teachers' reluctance in encouraging them to develop extensive reading habit especially when they were at secondary school level. Most of the respondents confirmed that no English teacher had ever selected and reserved a book in the library to make them read and appreciate the value of literature when they were attending their education at secondary school level.

From the responses given above, we learn that all respondents had the perception that they have not yet developed their reading experience. In connection to this, several writing experts remark that reading and writing are very interrelated language skills. Experience showed that, in most cases, a person who has read well can write without much difficulty because there is a belief that when the person reads, he/she can learn a lot of things such as language use, style of writing, diction, etc, from the literature he/she reads so that he/she can use them in his/her own writing. When we associate this point with process-oriented writing classes, writing instruction becomes more successful when students are able to integrate reading and writing skills and produce meaningful texts.

6.2.2.7.4 Learning Writing as an Independent Course at Preparatory Level

According to the responses given by five of the respondents, in order to improve their writing ability, one of the remedial solutions that they suggested was learning writing as an independent

course at preparatory level. The major reason was that learning writing as independent course at secondary school level enables English teachers to teach it with their full attention; consequently, they can develop the skill of writing through continuous practices. As a result, in their opinion, they might not consider writing as a new experience when they join universities.

As we understand from the above response, students were of the opinion that learning writing as an independent course at preparatory level can help them build their writing competence in a better way. Of course, as the respondents had suggested, if they began to learn writing as an independent course at secondary school level, they could get opportunity to practise it widely and most of them might improve their ability sustainably. Nevertheless, regarding its implementation, the following questions need to be first answered adequately. The first question is that can writing, excluding other language skills, be offered as an independent course at secondary school level? Secondly, would there be sufficient time for each subject to be offered as an independent course? and thirdly, wouldn't such kind of instruction affect administering national examinations? and the like.

As a researcher and writing instructor at Hawassa University, these days there is a new trend that freshman students are taking two service courses, namely: *Communicative English Skills* and *Basic Writing Skills*. The communicative English course includes different micro and macro skills that students practice individually, in pair or group. One of the components of this course is writing which is often to be practised at the end of each unit. Thus, if students are made to practise writing with other language skills within this course through process-oriented approach, they will have at least background knowledge which paves the way for the course Basic Writing Skills.

6.2.2.7.5 Increasing the Number of Credit Hours for the Course Basic Writing

Nowadays Basic Writing Skills is given as a three- credit hour course at Hawassa University. Three of the respondents were of the view that the number of credit hours attached to the course Basic Writing Skills need to be raised from three to four. Their major reason was that since

writing is one of the difficult language skills to develop, getting more sufficient time to practise in the classroom is one way of reinforcing the learning process. When they explained their reason further, they stated that writing a single paragraph sometimes needs more than thirty minutes. Thus, meeting the instructor only for one hundred and fifty minutes per week is not enough to take lecture, practise exercises and produce different paragraphs or essays.

Though increasing the number of credit hours for the course Basic Writing Skills has its own merit in facilitating their writing practices, time extension by itself may not help to bring about the desired change. Because, what matters is considering the size of the total load they carry per semester.

6.2.2.7.6 Controlling Large class-size

All respondents suggested that if their number was limited to thirty to forty, they could learn writing in a better way. These days, in Hawassa University, the maximum number of students assigned for every language class is fifty. As the researcher saw it practically, sometimes the above size was not easily manageable when the instructor wanted to supervise each student's performance. Moreover, when the number of sections to be handled was many, the problem would be more and more serious. When writing instructors sometimes come together and discuss the situation informally, most of them had the conviction that writing could be more successfully taught if the number of students was reduced to twenty-five or maximum, thirty.

When the above responses given by the students were summarized, the major solutions that they suggested as remedies to improve their writing skills were getting more time to write, getting further grammar lessons, developing reading habits, learning writing as an independent course at preparatory level, raising the Number of credit hours for the course Basic Writing Skills and controlling class-size.

When the above solutions are examined closely, they have relationship with the principles of the process approach. First, if we see, the writing practices in process-oriented writing class, students need sufficient time to practice and develop their writing skills. This means, when students

struggle to produce a given written text, they need time to generate ideas, to draft them, edit and write the final draft. When we see the second remedial solution, that is, improving the grammar skills of students, there is a connection with process-oriented writing practices. Though the major purpose of process writing is to enhance the writing ability of students, it gives room for practicing contextualized grammar lessons. The next one is developing reading habit. As everyone understands, reading cannot stand by itself because mostly there is a belief that writers write on the basis of their knowledge that they got from their reading background.

The other point suggested as remedial solution was taking the course Basic Writing Skills when they were at preparatory school level. Practising writing abundantly and meaningfully is the core principle of the process approach though there are no convincing reasons to learn it alone at preparatory level. The other point was increasing the credit hours attached to the course Basic Writing Skills. Indirectly, the implication of this suggestion was to get more time to practice writing. The last one is a problem related to large class-size. Practising writing continuously with the help of the instructor as a facilitator are more successful when the number of students in writing class is as manageable as possible. Thus, depending on the responses given above, it is possible to suggest that most of the solutions suggested as remedies were almost the same with those suggested by Basic Writing Skills instructors. Moreover, majority of them had the perception that they need process-oriented writing classes as remedies in order to improve their writing skills.

6.3 Discussions of the Data from the Teaching Materials

In evaluating the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes, the first step was to indicate the general objective, the specific objectives and the course descriptions stated by the curriculum committee of the school. Accordingly, three of the components of the course mentioned above are presented as follows:

General Objective

At the end of the course students will be able express themselves in meaningful written English in different situations.

Specific Objectives

Up on completing the course, students will be able to:

- *construct meaningful sentences in English*
- *learn to compose a paragraph that has a clearly stated topic sentence and details;*
- *use appropriate co-ordination and subordination skills to relate ideas;*
- *Identify and correct common sentence problems: fragments, comma splices and run on sentences, dangling modifiers and agreement errors.*
- *Compose paragraphs that that have clearly stated topic sentences and supporting details.*
- *Write a well structured essay of different types (descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative)*

Following the objectives of the course is the course description which incorporates the following topics:

Course Descriptions

Sentence level writing: sentence structure, sentence types, functional and structural category, common sentence category, common sentence errors,(fragments,, comma splices, run-ons, sentences dangling modifiers, and agreement errors; Paragraph level writing: paragraph, topic sentence and supporting details, structure essentials of a paragraph, basic types of paragraphs (expository, narrative, descriptive and argumentative) and techniques of paragraph development; essay level writing: structure of an essay, thesis statement and supporting paragraphs, types of essays, and techniques of essay development.

When we examine the objectives and course descriptions designed for the course Basic Writing Skills in the light of the process approach to writing instruction, we understand two important points. Firstly, the expected outcome at the end of the course is to enable students write meaningfully written texts. This implies that the focus of the teaching is not to enable students produce error- free sentences or paragraphs. Secondly, as it is stated in the newly developed curriculum, the method of delivering each course of the department is student-centered. Thus, it is possible to understand that the Basic Writing Skills, as one of the courses of the school, needs to be conducted through the process approach which encourages creative and independent learning with limited support from the instructor.

In order to arrive at a decision whether the teaching materials were developed in harmony with the frame-works of the process approach or not, it was mandatory to go through and examine the activities designed in the teaching materials to teach Basic Writing Skills. Accordingly, the researcher first studied the nature of each activity thoroughly and then evaluated it based on the criteria listed on page 96. In like manners, the whole evaluation is presented as follows.

When we examine the first lesson in unit 1 in the materials, the focus was to teach students the structure of a sentence non-contextually. This means the major purpose was to teach a discrete item of the language. For example, under Activity 1, the instruction says: ***Identify the subjects or predicates in the following sentences. Then exercise number 1*** follows: *Mental health can refer to a field of study encompassing both mental health and mental illness.* The lessons in activity 2 and 3 on sentence connection, error correction, etc., continue in the same way.

When the above example is seen from the point of view of criterion number 1, the exercise was designed aiming at helping students develop the skills of using appropriate subjects and predicates in writing meaningful sentences. The belief is that before students begin to write paragraphs or essays, they should be able to know how to use the subjects or predicates appropriately in the sentences that they construct. In fact, teaching such kind of lessons at the initial stage of writing has its own advantage because students can use appropriate subjects and predicates in the sentences that they construct while building paragraphs or essays.

Either speaking or writing needs appropriate use of language because the intended meaning of the writer or speaker reaches the audience when clear language is used. Moreover, we understand that there are situations which entirely need accurate use of the language. For example, writing examinations, constitutions of a country and treaties between governments require accurate use of the language. Thus, practicing language item to achieve accuracy is not a curse. The point is that students should be first given a variety of meaningful contexts in which they practise writing for fluency. The perception is that if students frequently engage themselves in meaningful practices, they will learn grammatical items implicitly. Therefore, activities 1-3, did not fulfill evaluation criterion number 1. With regard to the second criterion mentioned above, that is, the degree of complexity of the materials; actually there are no sentences which are beyond the understanding level of most students. When we see the above activities in line with criterion number 3, that is, variety, the above exercises lack variety. All of them are designed aiming at improving students' linguistic competence. Moreover, each of the exercise is designed discretely and to be done individually.

When we evaluate the above activities in connection criterion number 4, (see page 96), most of the sentences do not reflect situations related to students' everyday life. When material developers consider the existing situations and produce materials which reflect the realities around students, first the learners will get chance to associate what they write with the realities around them. Moreover, they will be motivated to think about other similar situations which have close connection with their everyday life. In this regard, White and Arndt 1995, report that the writing lessons become meaningful and interesting when their theme is interesting and life-like to the

learner. The materials become meaningful and authentic when they, for example, discuss realities about themselves or current issues in their surrounding or at national level. This can be achieved by using the formula SPRE. ‘S’ stands for situation,’ P’ problem ‘R response’ and ‘E’ evaluation White and Arndt (1995).

In connection to developing teaching materials, the writers can ask the following questions under each of the requirements. For example, under ‘situation’, the questions such as what is the present situation? how did it come about? and what are its characteristics? can be asked. Under ‘problem’ what is the problem? What are the immediate causes and when has it occurred? are some of the questions that can be asked. Under ‘response’ writers can ask questions such as how can the problem be dealt with? what alternative situations are there? and what constraints are there with each possible solution? Lastly, under ‘evaluation’, possibly such questions as which of the solutions is likely to be the best? what would be the side effect of applying any of the solutions? etc., could be asked.

On the basis of the above evaluation results, it is possible to suggest that activities number1-3 incorporated into unit one, by and large, do not give wider room to process-oriented writing practices.

The lessons under unit two, fully discuss paragraph development. The first lesson begins with brainstorming questions that would be done in pair. For example, *What is a paragraph? What are the criteria a paragraph has to fulfill? etc.* Such kind of exercises are important to motivate students discuss each question and share ideas among themselves so that they can learn from each other. Moreover, the exercises encourage students to look for answers to each question by themselves. As a result of this, students can be motivated to know more about the nature of paragraph and how a meaningful paragraph is developed. Then a short note follows, which gives brief explanation on what a paragraph is, its development, the topic sentence, etc. Next to the note, in activities 4-6 model paragraphs entitled, Thomas Edison’s inventions and Mosquitoes were presented. The paragraphs were followed by practice exercises. The purpose of the paragraphs was to teach essentials of a well written paragraph like unity and coherency.

When we see the above lessons in the light of the first criteria, they are all about the development of good paragraph. None of them was presented contextually. Students were simply taught what coherency or unity in a paragraph was meant. When we see the lessons, along with criterion number 2, the paragraphs were written with short and simple sentences and thus they were not challenging to understand their message. Regarding the third criterion, the exercises were of different varieties. For example, the first paragraph talks about the ‘Black Death in Europe’, the second one ‘The Effect of Green House’, etc. When it was evaluated in terms of criterion number 4, the exercises have direct relationship with the day-to-day life of students. For example, the paragraph which discussed the life history and inventions of Thomas Edison can motivate students to give attention to everything in front of them and think how to change it for the benefit of human beings.

When we examine activity number seven in unit two, we see that the lesson presentation requires implementing the process approach. For further understanding, let us see the following example:

Instruction: *Write a paragraph of seven to ten sentences on the following titles: Benefits of Television, Why Students are Poor and Becoming an Academic Writer. You can also use your own title that you think is more convenient for you. Make sure that your title should be manageable to discuss your ideas at paragraph level. Then, in writing your paragraph, follow the steps given below:*

Step1: *plan the ideas that you want to develop within your paragraph. This means, prepare an outline by generating ideas that help you develop your paragraph.*

Step 2: *After deciding on the logical order of the ideas that you have generated, write the first draft of your paragraph. At this time, you should not worry about the grammar, punctuation and other things.*

Step 3: *Read your first draft very carefully and then edit your first draft. When you carry out editing, consider the essential requirements of a well developed paragraph that we*

discussed in our previous lesson, that means, the three T's, unity of ideas, coherency of ideas, adequacy of ideas, using clear language and the like.

Step 4: *Write the final draft of your paragraph considering all the corrections you made on the first draft.*

As could be seen above, students were ordered to develop their own paragraph by passing through different steps. Secondly, the students were given freedom to select their own title by themselves. Thirdly, students were oriented what to do at each stage of writing. Moreover, they were informed what and how to edit after writing the first draft of their paragraph. Thus, in general, it is possible to come to the conclusion that the materials in 1 are more feasible to implement the process approach than the materials in unit 1.

The next lesson is on modes of paragraph development. Under this title, different modes of paragraph writing such as descriptive paragraph, narrative paragraph, expository paragraph and argumentative paragraph are discussed. Each lesson begins by giving definition to each mode of paragraph writing accompanied by different illustrations. After the explanation, students were asked to write their own paragraph based on the notes given. For further understanding, let us see the following sample lessons.

Instruction: Read each of the topic sentences given below carefully and then decide the method that can be used in developing each topic sentence at paragraph level

- 1. Some endemic wild animals are threatened with extinction in Ethiopia. Wallia Ibex is the case in point.*
- 2. Reading is an important language skill which enriches our thinking capacity. Writing, similarly, helps us learn how to express our ideas in an organized way.*
- 3. Most car accidents in Ethiopia are caused due to negligence of drivers.*
- 4. Speaking is a skill that we learn at home without going to school. Writing, however, is often learnt through school instruction.*
- 5. Teaching requires enthusiasm, creativity and honesty. Enthusiasm refers to passionate interest in or eagerness to do something.*

Then the lessons continue by giving further process-oriented practice exercises. For instance, when we see the exercise/activity given below, we see that students

After the students had been provided with the above practice exercise on descriptive paragraph writing, they were provided with short note which helped them grasp the major points of the discussion.

When we examine activities number 8 and 9, their major purpose was to lay foundation for students in order to learn '*modes of paragraph development*' successfully. If we see, activity number 8, it asks students to read each of the topic sentences and identify the dominant method the writer can possibly use in developing ideas. When we examine the second purpose of the above activity, its major intension was to elicit background information from the students' background about modes of paragraph development and brainstorm their mind for further discussion. Secondly, the content of most of the topic sentences has direct relationship with day-to-day life of the students. Thirdly, the activities were designed for pair discussion. This implied that students had got chance to discuss various ideas and learn by themselves. Thus, in more general terms, it is possible to come up with the conclusion that the above activities were feasible to practise writing as a process.

As we continue our investigation further, we observe that activity number 9 gave chance to students to examine the nature of definition paragraph. As further investigation revealed, the paragraph was followed by different questions which aimed at helping students identify the nature of definition paragraph. The assumption was that before students directly began writing, it was important to give them input especially in the form of elicitation. The understanding was that students in EFL classroom need basic ideas about the new lessons that they would be learning further. Thus, as long as the presentation is student-fronted, input sessions have significant contribution in building the background of the students.

In activity number 10, we see that students were provided with different titles on which they would prepare only an outline of the paragraph. The instruction for example, says: *select one of the titles given below and prepare an outline being in pair. Make sure that the outline that you sketch will help you write a definition paragraph: Love, Poverty, Peace and Democracy.*

This indirectly implied that if students are once made to generate ideas, there is an assumption that they will be ultimately asked to draft, edit and write the final draft of their paragraph. The main reason is that normally there is no writing activity which ends in simply writing down the outline on a sheet of paper. Therefore, it is easy to predict that the activity may continue up to the final stage of writing though the detail has not been written in the instruction. In sum, when the nature of the above activity is examined, it is possible to remark that the above lessons were feasible to implement the process approach.

When we examine activity number 11, the students were asked to describe one of their friends or anyone that they were very familiar with in one paragraph. The instruction of the activity goes as follows:

Instruction: Describe one of your friends or someone you know well in one paragraph. In your description, try to follow the steps listed below.

Step 1: prepare an outline on the physical appearance of the person you describe. For example, his/her physical appearance, the inner personalities, hobbies, clothing styles and the like.

Step 2: Write the first draft of your paragraph without giving much emphasis to grammatical or other errors.

Step 3: edit your paragraph by yourself considering the essential requirements discussed in the previous writing classes.

Step 4: Exchange your paragraph with your friend and comment on each other's paragraphs.

Step 5: Write the final draft of your paragraph

According to the instruction given above, the students were informed what they were expected to do when they passed through each stage of writing. Furthermore, students were asked to edit their first draft by themselves and then to carry out peer editing. On the basis of the nature of the above activities, it is possible to suggest that the activities were convenient to implement the process approach.

When we investigate the nature of activity number 12, students were asked to write a narrative paragraph consisting of maximum ten sentences. Students were asked to write the paragraph in pairs. In further instruction, they were reminded to use appropriate topic sentence, arrange ideas coherently, describe the setting clearly and use intelligible language. Moreover, the students were asked to do the activity in pairs. This means, students were given opportunity to discuss and share ideas which would ultimately be used for their individual paragraph development.

As we can observe further, the narration lessons began with brain- storming questions which motivated students to think and learn about the lesson by themselves. Next to the brain storming activity was a narrative paragraph followed by practice exercises. Then, lessons on direct and indirect speeches were presented contextually for further practising. When we associate the activities on narrative paragraph writing with the theoretical background of the process approach, it is possible to suggest that the activities were more of learner-focused, which gave emphasis to practise writing independently through the process approach.

In investigating the writing lessons on expository paragraph writing, we observe that initially lessons on ‘different models of reasoning’, ‘how to use different transitional devices’, ‘ways of developing ideas in an expository paragraph’, etc. were presented. We, then, find the following instruction. *Write an expository paragraph on one of the titles listed below: Note that you should include relevant ideas, use correct language, arrange ideas coherently and use punctuations and capitalizations appropriately. The titles are: Learning in Group, The Advantage of Reading, and Education in High School versus University, Vitamins and Endemic Wild Animals in Ethiopia.*

As could be understood from the above activity, students were asked to write an expository paragraph using one of the titles suggested by the instructor. When we examine the nature of the above activity, its major purpose was to provide students with opportunities which could enable them practice writing a paragraph through their own effort. As we further observe, students were asked to develop their own paragraph using the titles suggested by the instructor. Giving such kind of opportunity was encourageable as it would allow self-learning. The limitation was that students were not given chance to select their own title. Furthermore, they were not informed the stages that they were expected to pass until they came up with their final draft. Thus, when the materials for the expository paragraph were seen with some details, it is possible to say that the

activity did not give much attention to practice expository paragraph writing through the process approach.

The next lesson was on argumentative paragraph. The lesson begins with short notes which explain what an argument is, qualities of good argumentation, how to develop reasons in argument, how to control various fallacies in argumentation. Next the note were various exercises which were intended to give further understanding about reasoning in building successful argument. After the exercises we find the following instruction, which asks students to develop their own argumentative paragraph. The instruction is read as: *Identify any title that you think is suitable for argument and write an argumentative paragraph of maximum ten sentences. In writing your paragraph, try to follow the tips given below.*

- *construct an outline(sketch ideas)*
- *arrange ideas chronologically*
- *write your first draft(at this time don't worry about grammar, choice of words, mechanics and other requirements).Your focus need to be on flow of idea*
- *edit your draft either by yourself or with your peer.*
- *consider the correction you made and write the final copy of your draft*

Next to the above tips, the students were asked to carefully take into account the following criteria set for evaluation

- *Simplicity of the topic (select a topic which is manageable)*
- *logical sequencing of ideas*
- *validity of ideas*
- *unity of ideas*
- *intelligible language use*
- *controlling fallacies and the like*

When we closely study the argumentative paragraph writing lessons presented above, students were given an opportunity to argue for or against the title that they would be selecting by themselves. Secondly, the students were informed the criteria by which their paragraph would be evaluated. Informing students the way their argumentative paragraph would be evaluated was very helpful because after finishing writing the first draft, they could assess the standard of their

paragraph based on the parameters they were given by their instructor. The other point was that the students were given guidelines that could help them know what they should do right from the outset up to the last stage of their writing. As could be seen practically during the researcher's observation sessions, the instructor was first giving explanation before students started doing each activity. Then he was moving through each row of students, guiding and encouraging them to complete each stage of writing as successfully as possible. Thus, it is possible to conclude that, by and large, the materials on argumentative paragraph writing were suitable to implement the process approach.

The last part of the lesson was on essay writing. It begins with introduction which explains about what an essay is, what a thesis statement is and how it differs from a paragraph. Next to the introduction is a model essay entitled '*Bigness in Business*'. The passage was followed by five comprehension questions. Then, we find another model passage entitled '*Lost and Found*'. It consisted of six paragraphs. After the paragraph, there were still 4 comprehension questions.

The next lesson is on sentence linking devices (directional words) in an essay entitled Consumption of Energy in the past, the present and the Future. Students were asked to use the directional words **consequently**, **However**, **Also** and **For one thing**. The essay has seven paragraphs. After the passage, there is a note which gives further explanation about the use of directional words. Finally students were given the following instruction to write an essay. *Select any title you like and write an essay of three paragraphs*

As can be seen from the above sample lessons, the first attempt was to give students information about essay writing through the notes. After the explanatory notes, students were given non-contextualized exercises and then were provided with different essays which the material writers thought were significant to follow as model. After students had provided with a variety of model essays, they were required to produce their own essays on any titles they liked. This implied that the materials were not fully contextualized and holistic in their organizations. As it is known, this kind of writing practice does not help students generate their own ideas, draft them and produce their own meaningful essay. Thus, when we examine the materials under unit three, there is no as such an attempt to incorporate process-oriented writing activities which give room to students to

develop their ideas by passing through different phases. Thus, based on the nature of the activities in the essay writing part, it is possible to conclude that they are not feasible to implement the process approach.

In examining the whole of the teaching materials which are developed to teach Basic Writing Skills, there are various exercises/activities which were designed for various purposes. Therefore, on the basis of the evaluation made on each of the activities given above, it is possible to come up with a conclusion that 50% of the materials were suitable to implement the process approach. The rest, 50% of them, however, need further modifications. This conclusion takes us to the understanding that the process approach has not yet been given full attention in conducting Basic Writing Skills lessons.

1.4 Discussions of the Results of the Questionnaires

Implementing any language teaching/learning method or approach is subjected to several factors. One of them is the implementers' perception about the new approach to foreign language teaching Entwistle (1998). Thus, investigating the perception of writing instructors about the implementation of the process approach helped the present researcher understand whether they were ready to accept the principles and implement or non-implement it in writing classes.

Accordingly, the present researcher designed eighteen questionnaire items which mainly focused on very general issues which have strong connection with Basic Writing Skills instructors' perceptions in implementing the process approach in their classes. Then, the items were distributed to twenty writing instructors who have experience in conducting the course at higher learning institutions.

The last item of the questionnaire requests respondents to give comments whether the items were appropriate in providing the researcher with the required information to answer the research questions presented in chapter two of this study. In like manners, the analysis of the responses indicated that most of the items were appropriate to achieve the desired target. Some of the respondents, of course, disclosed that few of the items needed modification. For example, the phrase '*writing teaching materials*' need to be rephrased as '*Teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills*'. Furthermore, items 2, 3 and 5,7,10 and 12, 13, 14 and 16 were redundant as they were similar in content. Finally, the researcher decided to obtain information about writing instructors' perceptions on the following major issues.

- The nature of writing in general
- The method of teaching/learning being employed in Basic Writing Skills classes
- The necessity of good command of grammar in learning and improving writing skills
- The nature of teaching materials being used currently in Basic Writing Skills classes
- The role of group-work in writing classes
- Process-oriented writing instruction

Accordingly, the data obtained from the questionnaires distributed to writing instructors along with their interpretation and results are presented as follows.

1.4.1 Discussions of the Instructors’ Responses to the Questionnaires

First of all in determining the sample size of the respondents who filled in the questionnaires, the researcher did not face difficulty. The reason was that according to the information received from the Head of the School, the total number of Basic Writing Skills instructors who have experience in conducting the course was exactly 20. Therefore, taking all of them as respondents to the questionnaires, did not bring about challenge in managing the data. The basic purpose of conducting this questionnaire was to find out answers to research question number1: “ *What is the perception of both writing instructors and students about the methods of teaching/learning in Basic Writing classes at Hawassa University?*”

Key: St. A-Strongly Agree, Ag-Agree, St. D.A -Strongly Disagree, ND-Not Decided,

Table 1: Perceptions about the Nature of Writing

No.	Item		Responses					Descriptions			
			St A	Ag	DA	St. D.A	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max
1.	Writing is one of the most challenging and demanding language skills of all other language skills.	No.Of R.	12	8	0	0	0	20	4	3	4
		%	60	0	40	0	0	100	-	-	-
2.	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other macro language skills.		0	0	12	8	0	20	2	1	2
		%	0	0	60	40	0	100	-	-	-

Responses to the first item in the above table showed that 12 (60%) of the respondents strongly agreed that writing is one of the most challenging and demanding language skills of all other language skills. The other 8 (40%) of the respondents, similarly, agreed to the item. The modal value, is 4 (strongly agree).The maximum value is 4 and the minimum value is 3. In responding to the second item, 8(40%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that writing is not as challenging and demanding as any other macro language skills. The rest of the respondents, that is, 12 (60%)

of them, agreed to the item. The modal value is 2 (Disagree). The maximum value is 2 and the minimum is 1. From the above responses we observe that almost all of the respondents perceived that writing is the most challenging and demanding language skill. When we see the above responses in detail, they have strong connection with the principles of process approach. The process writing experts, similarly, are of the perception that writing is a multifaceted creative thinking process which is often linked with psychological, cognitive and linguistic factors. Consequently, it requires continuous and meaningful practices.

Table 2: Writing as a Process versus Linear Activity

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St.DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
3.	Writing is a process through which writers pass by writing and re-writing recursively.		8	4	4	4	0	20	4	1	4
		%	40	20	20	20	0	100	-	-	-
4.	Writing is a linear activity that can be achieved first by understanding its components and then by grasping the entire subject.		4	4	7	5	0	20	2	1	4
		%	20	20	35	25	0	100	-	-	-

When we observe the responses given to the 3rd item of the questionnaire in the above table, 8(40%) of the respondents strongly agreed that writing is a process through which writers pass by writing and re-writing recursively. The other 4(20%) also agreed to the above item. The other 4(20%), however, disagreed to the same item and the rest 4(20%) strongly disagreed that writing is not a process through which writers pass by writing and re-writing recursively. The mode is 4 (strongly agree), the maximum value is 4 (strongly agree) and the minimum value is 1 (strongly disagree). When we examine the responses given to item number 4, 4(20%) of the respondents strongly agreed that writing is a linear activity that can be achieved first by understanding its components and then by grasping the entire subject matter. The other 4(20%), in the same way, agreed to the item. The other 7(35%), contrarily, disagreed to the same item. Lastly, 5 (25%) of them strongly disagreed to the item. Thus, in sum, we can say that more than half of the

respondents had the perception that writing is a process through which writers pass recursively. This implied that more than half of the writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes was process-oriented.

Table 3: Perceptions about Methods of Teaching Writing

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
5.	The process approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which encourages students to pass through various stages of the writing independently and come up with meaningful written work.		5	7	2	6	0	20	3	1	4
		%	25	35	10	30	0	100	-	-	-
6.	The product approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which enables students write error-free sentences, paragraphs or essays.		3	5	6	6	0	20	2	1	2
		%	15	25	30	30	0	100	-	1	4

As could be seen from the responses given to item number 5 in the above table, 5(25%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the process approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which encourages students to pass through various stages of the process independently and come up with meaningful written work. The other 7 (35%) of them agreed to the item. However, 2 of the respondents disagreed to the item and the rest 6(30%), strongly disagreed to the item. In examining the 6th item, we see that 3(15%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the product approach is the most appropriate model of writing instruction. The other 5(25%) expressed their agreement to the same item. The other 6(30%), nevertheless, disagreed to the item and the rest 6 (30%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to the same item. Therefore, depending on the responses given above, it is possible to suggest that the larger portion of the instruction in Basic Skills Writing Skills classes was process-oriented.

Table 4: Basic Requirements to Improve Writing Skills

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions			
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max
7.	Students can learn writing in a better way when they have ability to write than they have a good command of grammar ability.	4	5	4	7	0	20	1	4	1
		% 20	25	20	35	0	100	-	-	-
8.	Students can learn writing in a better way when they have good command of grammar than they have ability to write.	2	9	6	3	0	20	3	4	4
		% 10	45	30	15	0	100	-	-	-

As we can see from the 7th item of the questionnaire, 45% of the respondents (20% strongly agree & 25% agree) had the perception that students can learn writing in a better way when they have ability to write than they have a good command of grammar ability. The others 55% of the respondents (20% disagree & 35% strongly disagree) had the perception that having ability to write is not as relevant as having good command of grammar ability. The mode is 1, the minimum value is 4 and the maximum is 1. When we investigate the 8th item, we see that 55% of the respondents (10% strongly agree & 45% agree) had the perception that students can learn writing in a better way when they have good command of grammar than they have ability to write. The mode is 3, the maximum value is 4 and the minimum is 4.

In investigating the above data, we see that majority of the respondents, though not vast, were of the perception that students could learn and improve their writing ability when they have good command of grammar ability. Minority of the respondents, however, were of the perception that having writing ability is more important than having grammar ability in order to learn and improve writing skills. From the above discussion of results, we can deduce that the responses given by majority of the respondents did not suit the perspectives of the process writing experts.

A number of studies conducted on process-oriented composition instruction suggested that the secret behind good writing is not necessarily having high skill of surface feature structures (grammar and other related items) of the language but the composition skill of the writer. This, however, does not mean that grammar is entirely of less significance in promoting the writing ability of students. The center of the discussion is, as long as a writer has a capacity of intelligible grammar to express his/her ideas meaningfully, having high knowledge of grammar is not compulsory to learn and improve writing skills. The reason is that when students practise writing with meaningful writing activities continuously, they can implicitly learn and improve their grammar skills. Therefore, instructors of the course Basic Writing Skills require perceptual change regarding the two skills mentioned above.

Table 5: Perceptions about the Teaching Materials Being Used in Basic Writing Skills Classes

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mod	Min	Max	
9.	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts		4	8	7	1	0	20	3	1	4
		%	20	40	35	5	0	100	-	-	-
10.	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to learn about writing and imitate texts that would serve them as model.		1	6	10	3	0	20	2	1	4
		%	5	30	50	15	0	100	-	-	-

Teaching materials have their own influence to implement an approach which was selected for the instruction. In implementing the process approach, for example, the materials need to be set up in such a way that students can create ideas for their writing, organize them coherently and write their final draft independently. The purpose of the above items was, thus, to check the perceptions

of the instructors about the teaching materials that they were using in their Basic Writing Skills classes.

Accordingly, the responses given to item number 9 in the above table showed that 4 (20%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encouraged students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts. The other 8(40%) of them, in the same way, agreed to the item. In contrast, (35%) of the respondents disagreed to the item and 1(5%) of the respondent strongly disagreed to the same item. The mode is 3,the maximum value is 4 and the minimum value is 1.The responses given to item number 10 indicated that 1(5%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to learn about writing and imitate texts that would serve them as model. The other 6(30%), similarly, agreed to the item. However,10(50%) of the respondents disagreed that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes did not encourage students to learn about writing and imitate texts that would serve them as model. The rest 3(15%) of them strongly disagreed to the proposed statement.

A close observation on the above data revealed that majority of the respondents, that is, 60% of them were of the perception that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encouraged students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts. This implied that the materials were suitable to implement the process approach to teaching writing.

Table 6: Perceptions about Group-work in Process Writing Classes

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
11.	Pair/group learning has a crucial role in implementing the process approach in writing classes.		5	15	0	0	0	20	3	3	4
		%	25	75	0	0	0	100	-	-	-
12.	Personal thinking, creativity and writing practices are the only techniques that should be encouraged in process writing classes.		2	4	9	5	0	20	4	1	4
		%	10	20	45	25	0	100	-	-	-

In order to investigate the sample instructors’ perceptions about both pair/group learning and personal practices in process writing classes the above two items were designed. The intension of the first item was to evaluate the perceptions of writing instructors whether they accept the contribution of group/pair learning in process-oriented writing classes. The second one was intended to check whether the respondents perceive that personal thinking, creativity and effort to practice writing are sufficient techniques by themselves to learn writing in process-oriented writing classes or not. Examining the whole data from the table revealed that almost all respondents perceived that putting students into groups and getting them discuss various issues related to their writing, has significant role to learn and improve their personal writing in the process writing classes. When we see the data under item number 14, 70% of the respondents disagreed that personal thinking, creativity and writing practices are not the only techniques that should be encouraged in process writing classes. 30% of the respondents, however, agreed to item number 12. Their reason might be due to the influence of the expressivists’ perspective which argues that writing is a personal activity which can be achieved as a result of the writers’ repetitive trial and error.

Hence, from the whole data given above, it is possible to conclude that the respondents were of the perception that group/pair work (study) were significant in learning and improving the

students' individual writing skills along with personal thinking, creativity and effort to practice in process writing classes.

Table 7: Perceptions about the Teaching/Learning in Basic Writing Skills

Classes

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
13.	The writing instruction in Basic Writing classes is going on successfully.		0	7	10	3	0	20	3	2	3
		%	0	35	50	15	0	100	-	-	-
14.	The writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes is constrained with many problems.		3	11	5	1	0	20	3	4	2
		%	15	55	25	5	0	100	-	-	-

The above data pointed out that 65% of the respondents (50% disagree & 15% strongly disagree) had the perception that the writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes was not going on successfully. The most repeatedly occurred response is 3 (disagree). The rest 7 (35%) of the respondents, contrarily, agreed that the instruction was going on successfully. When we see the responses given to item number 14, we understand that 70 of the respondents (15% strongly agree & 55% agree) signified that the writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes was constrained with many problems. The frequently occurred response is 2 (agree). On the basis of the above data, thus, it is appropriate to conclude that majority of the respondents were of the perception that the writing instruction in Basic Writing classes was constrained with many problems.

When the above data are scrutinized thoroughly, it is possible to understand that in conducting the course Basic Writing Skills, there are difficulties that need rectifying measures. In further examination, we understand that, as long as most teachers had the perception that any instruction is not going on successfully, the teaching method, students' perceptions, the nature of teaching materials being used, etc, must be examined thoroughly and the necessary remedial measures should be taken as early as possible

Table 8: Categorizing Students Based on the First Draft of Their Writing

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
15.	Good student-writers are those writers who give more attention to the content of their writing than to their target audience and surface features of the language while they are producing their first draft.		0	7	10	3	0	20	3	2	3
		%	0	35	50	15	0	100	-	-	-
16.	Poor student-writers are those writers who give more attention to the surface-features and target-audience than to the content of their writing while they are producing their first draft.		2	4	3	11	0	20	1	4	2
		%	10	20	15	55	0	100	-	-	-

The major purpose of checking instructors' perceptions about the characters good and poor writers manifest while they produce the first draft of their writing has many advantages in connection to the implementation of the process approach. Firstly, when the instructor is aware of the characters both groups show while they produce their first draft, he can organize good and poor writers together and look for situations in which they can help each other. Secondly, such awareness helps the writing instructor to identify the progress students are making in their writing class. Thirdly, he/she can assess the extent to which both writers improve their grammar skills as a result of employing two different techniques in writing a text. Fourthly, if the instructor is well aware of the different characters the two types of student-writers manifest, the probability of employing the process approach will be very high.

By the same token, the responses given to item number 15 showed that 7 (35%) of the respondents agreed to the item and the other 65% disagreed to the item or the proposed statement. The modal value is also 3 (disagree). In examining the responses to item number 16, we observe that 70% of the respondents had the perception that poor student-writers are those writers who do not give more attention to the surface-features and target-audience than to the content of their writing while they are producing their first draft. The modal value is also 1. From the responses, thus, it is possible to arrive at a conclusion that majority of the respondents' perception about good and poor student writers was not in harmony with the principles of the process approach. According to the process writing experts, good writers do not give attention to their target audience and surface features of the language when they are at drafting stage. The major reason is that their focus is to develop writer-focused text at drafting stage. They carry out corrections on their writing during revision stage. Poor writers, contrarily, focus on writing accurate sentences right from the outset of their first draft. Their major reason is to produce reader-focused written text as they are in phobia of the criticism they receive from evaluators of their written work. As a result, there is a perception that in most cases such students are unlikely to improve their writing abilities as promptly as possible. Thus, regarding the characters good and poor writers manifest when they produce their first draft, instructors of the course Basic Writing Skills need to conduct an action research and identify the characters both types of students manifest.

Table 9: Challenges to Fully Implement the Process Approach

No.	Responses	No. of Resp.	%
1	Methodological problems at lower grades level	18	90
2	Lack of grammar skills	18	90
3	Lack of wide reading habit	17	85
4	Difficulty nature of writing	17	85
5	Lack of interest	16	80
6	Lack (absence) of reference materials that harmonize with the process approach at university level	15	75
6	Time-constraint	14	70
7	Lack of writing culture in the society	13	65
8	Lack of deep understanding on various language teaching approaches and methods	3	15
9	No opinions	2	10

Before categorizing the responses written in the above table, the researcher attempted to read each response very thoroughly. He then recorded each response on a sheet of paper. After each response had been collected and recorded, the researcher categorized similar responses into groups. Having done this, he attempted to summarize those responses which had almost similar meaning or nearly the same meaning in one phrase. Finally, he tallied the number of respondents who had suggested similar responses.

Accordingly, the first response given by 90% of the respondents revealed that the method by which writing skill was handled when students were at lower grades level had several limitations. The respondents could suggest the above factor based on their own two tangible justifications. As most of them mentioned, they were teaching the English language at secondary school level for many years before they joined university. Others disclosed that they conducted research studies on the teaching/learning of both macro and micro skills of the English language at secondary school level as a partial requirement of their second degree and as part of their profession after they had joined university. Accordingly, most of the respondents confidently stated that most English teachers at secondary school level focused on teaching grammar, vocabulary,

punctuation, comprehension passages, sometimes speaking skills and the like. When it came to writing, it was an occasional activity which was hardly practised for various reasons. One of the reasons that they cited was that due to time constraint, most English teachers encouraged students to write rarely outside the classroom and get feedback from peers because they wanted to cover the portion that they needed to complete prior to the end of the semester.

The other factor which made secondary school English teachers, (especially preparatory level English teachers) reluctant to deal with writing seriously was the nature of examination items requested both at school and national level. Since most of the items were multiple question type, it was difficult to include writing items which needed students' creativity either at paragraph or essay level. As a result, most English teachers who were especially assigned to teach those students were sitting for national examination, emphasized teaching language items which had strong connection with the content of the national examination on the basis of previous years exam natures. Moreover, most of the students who were preparing themselves for national examination were too much enthusiastic to learn language items that made them successful in the final examination. In their further analysis, the respondents were of the view that most English teachers at secondary school level were overloaded with a large number of periods therefore it became difficult for most of them to deal with each macro and micro skills and supervise the activity of each student. In connection to the method of teaching at secondary school level, respondents were of further view that large class-size was one of the stumbling blocks which deterred approaching writing skills effectively in the classroom. The major reason was that a number of English teachers mostly associated writing instruction and students' improvement of writing competence with teacher's feedback provision.

The second reason which was suggested by 90% of the respondents was lack of adequate grammar skill which enabled students to express themselves. As most of the respondents mentioned further, most students committed global grammatical errors so that they could not produce intelligible sentences which make their writing meaningful. The third factor which was suggested by 85% of the respondents was lack of wide reading habit. As the respondents further explained, good writing is the result of good reading because well read people are mostly critical thinkers. When it came to our context, most students did not have a good deal of reading habit so

that they could not appreciate various literary products, learn a variety of expressions, styles and language use and be inspired to produce their own genre.

The fourth reason which had been capitalized by 85% of the respondents was the difficulty nature of writing for both secondary school and university students. The respondents stated that writing is a skill which requires tackling psychological, cognitive and linguistic problems, therefore, most students do not want to engage themselves into writing activity as they think that withstanding all the above problems is insurmountable. The fifth response which was given by 80% of the respondents was that most students' less interest to develop their writing skills. The respondents further explained that since writing is a challenging and demanding language skill, most students have the phobia that writing is unachievable language skill though they make effort relentlessly. Some students think that good writing is always an attribute of academically outstanding students.

The sixth reason which is mentioned as a drawback for implementation of the process approach by 75 % of the respondents was scarcity of reference materials that encourage both students and writing instructors to deal with writing along with the precepts of the process approach to writing instruction. As far as the present researcher is concerned, almost all writing instructors in Hawassa University seriously complained that the scarcity or entire absence of relevant writing teaching materials or reference materials hindered the successful teaching/learning of writing skills. Time constraint was another factor that was reported by 70% of the respondents not to implement the process approach to writing instruction in writing classes at university level. In process-oriented writing classes students need ample time to practise writing. In their further explanation, the respondents remarked that the School of Language and Communication Studies wanted each writing instructor to complete the list of topics designed in the course outline according to the academic calendar of the semester. If all of the topics included within the course outline were not completed within the prescribed time, it was considered as a serious breach of duty which resulted in serious discord with the school and other colleagues. Consequently, due to the mismatch of time required to complete the content of the writing course designed by the school and time needed in process-oriented writing classes, most instructors refrained from getting their students involve in creative thinking process. In fact, it was possible to discuss the issue and attempt to solve the problem. The problem is that some instructors did not have

confidence on such latest theories for several reasons; thus most of the time discussions end in depute.

The eighth factor which was reported by 65% of the respondents was lack of widely flourished writing culture in the community. The respondents were of the perception that most Ethiopians cultures do not encourage writing. Mostly people come together, discuss various issues and depart. Writing journals, keeping diary, devotion to personal writing are not the inherent behaviors of most Ethiopians. In addition, those students who come from rural area, poor and illiterate families do not have feasible environment to practise writing. For example, those students who come from economically poor families, cannot get sufficient support such as supplementary reading materials, computers and the like from their parents ; as a result, they cannot be motivated to write on various issues personally. Moreover, students coming from such family must support their family with a lot of house and farm activities in order to improve the livelihood of the family. Thus, they do not have spare time to practise writing.

The ninth factor mentioned by 15% of the respondents was lack of deep awareness about the theoretical frameworks of the process approach to writing instruction. In their further analysis, they disclosed that though they were familiar with the process approach when they were studying their second degree, much of their reading was on the area that they developed their thesis. The other serious problem, under some circumstances, was that writing courses were handled by first degree holders who graduated in English language sometimes from non-teaching area. In this regard, as the researcher attempted to observe, most of the respondents who were qualified at first degree level, did not have sufficient idea about the process approach to writing instruction.

6.4.2 Discussions of the Results of the Students' Responses to the Questionnaires

Students are at the center of attention when any model of teaching is developed because every effort in the second language model development is to make students learn language skills as best as possible. This is to say that in implementing any method of teaching, their perceptions about the nature of the lesson, the methodology, the teaching material, etc., has significant contribution. The assumption is that students' perceptions need to be considered seriously in investigating the implementation of a given second language teaching paradigm. In studying the perceptions of the students, the investigation areas of the questionnaires were almost the same as that of Basic Writing Skills instructors'. Here below are the interpretations and discussions of results.

Table 10: Perceptions about the Nature of Writing

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
17.	Writing is the most difficult language skill which is challenging and demanding by its own very nature.		61	39	0	0	0	100	4	3	4
		%	61	39	0	0	0	100	-	-	-
18.	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other language skills such as reading, listening, grammar, etc...		0	3	57	40	0	100	3	2	3
		%	0	40	57	1	2	100	-	-	-

As it is described in the above table, all of the respondents agreed that writing is the most difficult language skill which is challenging and demanding by its own very nature. The modal value is 4. This value revealed that most of the respondents strongly agreed to the item under number 1. When we investigate the responses given to item number 2, in the same way, we observe that the vast majority disagreed that writing is not as challenging and demanding as any other language skills such as reading, listening, grammar, etc. This implied that for almost all students writing is one of the most difficult language skills which need continuous and careful practices.

The other point is that regarding the difficulty nature of writing, both instructors and students had the same perceptions.

Table 11: Perceptions about Methods of Teaching

	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
19.	The more appropriate method of learning writing is first getting explanations on each of the lessons from our instructor and then practicing different exercises and finally writing error-free paragraphs or essays which are similar to the model we have been given		16	32	40	12	0	100	2	1	2
		%	16	32	40	12	0	100	-	-	-
20.	The more appropriate method of learning writing is first getting guiding ideas from our instructor and then planning what we write, writing the first draft, editing and revising and lastly writing the final draft		20	31	21	28	0	100	3	4	3
		%	20	31	21	28	2	100	-	-	-

As we understand from the responses given to item number 19 in the table given above, 48 (48%) of the respondents had the perception that they learnt writing better when the instructor gave them detailed explanation on each of the lessons and got them produce written texts which were similar to the model that they learnt. The rest, 52% of the respondents, contrarily, disagreed to the item. The modal value is 2 (disagree). From the above data, therefore, we can conclude that majority of the respondents, though not vast, had the perception that explanation by the instructor aimed at helping them produce error-free paragraphs or essays was not effective in improving their writing skills. When we look into the responses given to item number 20, 51% of the

respondents agreed that when the role of the instructor was to guide them how to generate ideas, draft them coherently and edit mistakes, they could learn writing exultantly. The other 49%, nevertheless, disagreed to the item. This means, they liked writing classes where their instructor took more responsibility for their learning. Their reason might be due to awareness problem with regard to the creative process effective writing requires.

Based on the above results, thus, it is possible to understand that more than 50% of the respondents had the perception that the teaching method which was being employed in their Basic Writing Skills classes was at large process-oriented.

Table 12: Requirements to Learn Writing More Effectively

	Item	Responses					Descriptions			
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max
21	To learn writing more effectively,	10	30	37	23	0	100	2	4	2
	having ability to write is more important than having good command of grammar.	10	30	37	23	0	100	-	-	-
22.	To learn writing more effectively,	21	42	20	17	0	100	3	1	3
	having good knowledge of grammar is more important than having ability to write	21	42	20	17	2	100	-	-	-

As we can see the responses to item number 21, 40% of the respondents agreed that in order to learn writing more effectively, having ability to write is more important than having good command of grammar. Majority of the respondents, that is, 60%, contrarily, disagreed to the statement. The modal value is 2(disagree). This means, they were of the perception that in order to learn writing more effectively, having good knowledge of grammar was more important than having ability to write. When we examine the responses under item number 22, 63% of the respondents, similarly, had the perception that in order to learn writing more effectively, having

good command of grammar was more important than having ability to write. Only 37% of them disagreed to the proposed item.

When we examine the results of the above data, it does not go with the perspective of the process writing researchers. The perception of the process writing researchers is that in order to learn and improve writing skills, what student writers need more is ability to write than having good command of grammar because a number of studies showed that those students who were perfect in grammar were not necessarily good writers. The understanding was that if writers have an average ability of grammar, it is possible to enhance their writing competence through meaningful and continuous practices. As cognitive process writing experts suggest when writers begin to write, their package of knowledge is activated and the scope of their thinking extends. Therefore, there is opportunity to improve a number of skills related to writing. When we associate the above argument with the actual practices in Basic Writing Skills classes, students at university level had at least a twelve-year experience of grammar learning. So, if learners are provided with contextualized grammar awareness activities in conjunction with writing activities, it is possible to make them good writers who can produce well developed written texts which are made up of intelligible grammar.

Table 13: Perceptions about the Feasibility of the Teaching Materials in Implementing the Process Approach

	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
23	The teaching materials being used in Basic Writing Skills classes are suitable to practise writing by planning, writing the first draft, editing by oneself or peers and writing the final draft of the paragraph or essay independently.		22	27	30	21	0	100	2	1	2
		%	22	27	30	21	0	100	-	-	-
24.	The teaching materials being used in Basic Writing classes are suitable to learn structure of sentences, essentials of well developed paragraphs, and essays aimed at helping us write error free written texts.		34	19	32	15	0	100	4	1	2
		%	34	19	32	15	2	100	-	-	-

In investigating the responses given under item number 23, we observe that 49% of the respondents agreed that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were suitable to practise writing by planning, writing the first draft, editing by oneself or peers and writing the final draft of the text independently. This response implicitly indicated that the teaching materials were feasible to implement the process approach. The rest, 51%, however, disagreed to the item. This means, the teaching materials were not feasible to implement the process approach. According to the responses given to item number 24, 53% of the respondents had the perception that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing classes were suitable to learn structure of sentences, essentials of well developed paragraphs and essays. Generally the above responses suggested that though the materials have their own room for the

implementation of the process approach, their larger portion was feasible for the implementation of the product approach.

This result further suggested that the teaching materials which were being employed in Basic Writing Skills classes need amendment in order to make them largely process-oriented.

Table 14: Perceptions about Group-learning in Basic Writing Skills Classes

	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
25	Group/Pair learning is an important technique of learning writing in order to improve our individual writing abilities.		39	23	13	25	0	100	4	2	4
		%	39	23	13	25	0	100	-	-	-
26.	Personal thinking, creativity and effort to write continuously are the only techniques which enable us improve our writing skills.		13	15	47	18	0	100	3	2	3
		%	13	15	47	18	2	100	-	-	-

The purpose of this questionnaire was to see the perceptions of students about group/pair learning in their Basic Writing classes. According to the constructionists' point of view, writing is a social act which requires the co-operation of different individuals who have relationship with the subject matter under discussion. When their view is further examined, we understand that pair/group learning has a strong contribution to any writing instruction paradigm. Having this view in mind, the respondents were asked whether group/pair work had its own benefit when they learned Basic Writing Skills. As it can be seen from the table, 62 (62%) of the respondents were of the perception that group/pair work was an important technique that had significant role in improving their skills. The other 38 (38%) of the respondents, in contrast, disagreed to the statement. Their disagreement to the above statement might be due to their understanding that writing is a skill that can be learnt either through the individual effort of the learner or the instruction that they received from the instructor. In responding to the twenty-sixth item of the questionnaire, 28 (28%) of the

respondents had the perception that personal thinking, creativity and effort to write continuously were the only techniques which enabled them to improve their writing skills. Majority of the respondents, that is, 62% of them, however, disagree to the item.

When we see the results given above in detail, they suggested that majority of the respondents had the perception that both group/pair work and personal thinking, creativity and effort to write were complementary techniques which could improve their writing skills side by side in process-oriented writing classes.

Table 15: Perceptions about the Teaching/Learning in Basic Writing Skills

Classes

	Item	Responses					Descriptions			
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max
27	The teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes is going on successfully	8	39	7	46	0	100	1	2	1
	%	8	39	7	46	0	100	-	-	-
28.	The teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes is constrained with several factors.	34	19	32	15	0	100	2	1	4
	%	34	19	32	15	2	100	-	-	-

When the above results were examined, we observe that 47% of the respondents agreed that the teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes was going on successfully. The other 53% of the respondents, in contrast, disagreed to the item. In investigating the responses given to the 26th item, we observe that 53% of the respondents had the perception that the teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes was constrained with several factors. The other 47% of the respondents, however, disagreed to the item. From the data we understand that almost majority of the respondents were of the perception that the teaching/learning in Basic Writing classes was trapped with several problems.

On the basis of the above discussion, therefore, it is possible to suggest that those factors which made the teaching/learning challenging in Basic Writing Skills classes need to be investigated and remedial solutions should be sought.

Table 16: Judgment on Standard of Writing

Key: Exc.-__Excellent, V.G-__Very Good, G.___ Good, BA__ Below Average

The above criteria for judgment were given based on Widdodo (2006a)

No	Item	Responses											
			No	%		No	%		No	%		No	%
29	In your opinion, what standard would you give to your present writing ability?	Exc.			V.G			G.			BA		
			0	0		17	17		31	31		52	52

As we can see from the above responses, more than average number of students (52%) remarked that the standard of their present writing is below average. From this response it is not difficult to suggest that most students at freshman level have serious difficulties in expressing themselves in intelligible written English. Therefore, all factors which hindered the full implementation of the process approach need to be alleviated as best as possible.

Chapter 7: Major Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Major Findings of the Study

The major objective of this study was to investigate the extent to which the process approach was being implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University. Hence, in order to conduct the study, the researcher employed different research tools such observations conducted in two Basic Writing Skills classes for one month, semi-structured interviews conducted with Basic Writing instructors and students, questionnaires distributed to twenty Basic Writing Skills instructors and one hundred students taking the course, evaluation of the teaching materials which were being used currently in Basic Writing Skills classes.

The major research tool, which was used to gather data for this study was observation conducted in two Basic Writing Skills classes. The major purpose of the observation was to find out answers especially to research question number 3: *To what extent do Basic Writing instructors at Hawassa University implement the process approach?*

The results of the data from the observation sessions in Basic Writing Skills classes revealed that 50% of the activities were, by and large, accomplished in accordance with the theoretical background of the process approach. The other 50%, however, were largely in conformity with the product approach.

On the basis of the responses obtained from Basic Writing Skills instructors through interview and the discussions of the results, the first research question, which goes as: *“What is the perception of both writing instructors and students about writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes?”* was answered as follows.

As analysis of the results indicated, 50% of the respondents (two of the four respondents) had the perception that they frequently used the process approach in presenting most of the writing lessons. The other 50%, however, perceived that they used the product approach in presenting most of the lessons in Basic Writing Skills classes. When we see the responses given by students regarding the teaching/learning in their Basic Writing Skills classes, 50% (four of the eight respondents) had the perception that the methodology being employed in presenting the writing

lessons was student-centered which enabled them write various paragraphs or essays by passing through different stages of the process. The other 50% of the respondents, however, had the perception that the methodology which was being used in their Basic Writing Skills classes was more of instructor-fronted, which often focused on getting explanation from the instructor, doing a variety of practice exercises, imitating various model paragraphs, etc.

The other investigation area was the perception of Basic Writing Skills instructors about the successfulness of the process approach in improving the students' writing skills. In like manners, 50% (two of the four respondents) had the perception that students could learn writing better when process-oriented writing instruction was frequently practised with meaningful activities in Basic Writing Skills classes. The other two (50%), however, perceived that successful writing instruction was the one which was largely under the guidance of the instructor.

The other focal area of the interview was to look for answers to research question number 2: *‘‘To what extent the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach?’’* Accordingly, the results indicated that two of the four respondents (50%) of them had the perception that the teaching materials that they were using in their Basic Writing Skills classes were feasible to implement the process approach. The other 50% (two of the four respondents), however, remarked that the teaching materials that they were using in their Basic Writing Skills classes were largely appropriate to implement the product approach. When we came to the students' responses, similarly, 50% (four of the eight respondents) had the perceptions that the teaching materials were suitable to learn writing by planning, drafting, editing and reviewing. The other four of the eight respondents, (50%) of them, contrarily, responded that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were appropriate to learn how to construct correct sentences, build well-organized paragraphs, which were free from grammar and punctuation errors.

The other purpose of the interview was to find out answers to research question number 3: *To what extent do Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University implement the process approach?* In the same way, two of the four respondents, that is, 50% of them had the perception that the largest portion of their classes was conducted through the process approach. The other

two (50%), however, confirmed that most parts of their Basic Writing Skills classes were devoted to product-oriented writing instructions.

According to the data from the interview conducted with Basic Writing Skills instructors, research question number 4 was answered as follows: The research question is “*What are the most pressing factors which are attributable not to fully implement the process approach at Hawassa University?*” Correspondingly, all of them agreed that in order to implement the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes successfully, the following factors were major constraints: lack of sufficient time, students’ lack of writing experience at secondary school level, large class-size, instructors’ attitudinal differences, lack of discussion forums for instructors, scarcity of sufficient reading materials in the library, students’ cultural influence, etc, were among others.

In order to alleviate the major challenges and implement the process approach successfully in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University, the following solutions were suggested by writing instructors as remedies: improving the grammar ability of the students, motivating students to write continuously, arranging tutorial classes for students, familiarizing students with a variety of model genres, arranging refreshment training for English teachers, creating affiliation with secondary school English teachers, accessibility to reading materials, giving fewer teaching loads to Basic Writing Skills instructors than other course instructors in the school, etc.

Students, on their part, suggested the following remedial solutions: getting sufficient time for practices, getting grammar lessons along with writing lessons, developing their reading habit, learning writing as an independent course at preparatory level, increasing the number of credit hours attached to the course Basic Writing Skills from three credit hours to four credit hours, controlling class-size, etc.

The other research tool, evaluation of the teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills, mainly aimed at answering research question number 2: “*To what extent the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach?*”

On the basis of the investigation made on the teaching materials, it is possible to come up with the conclusion that 50% of the materials were, by and large, appropriate to implement the process approach in Basic Writing classes. The other 50%, however, were designed in line with the principles of the product approach.

The other research instrument which was used to investigate the perception of both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students about the existing instruction in their writing classes at Hawassa University was questionnaires distributed to them. The major purpose of the questionnaires was to find out answers to research question number 1: “ *What is the perception of both writing instructors and students about the writing instruction in Basic Writing Skill classes?*”

On the basis of the summary of the results, 50% of the respondents perceived that the writing instruction in their Basic Writing Skills classes was more of process-oriented. The other 50%, however, had the perception that their instruction was largely in harmony with the product approach.

7.2 Conclusions

On the basis of the major findings in this study, the following conclusions were drawn. Findings from the observations indicated that though the process approach had its own significant place in conducting the writing lessons in Basic Writing Skills classes, the product approach also had its own magnificent role.

The results obtained from the discussions of the interviews data revealed that two of the four instructor-respondents, that is, (50%) of them), confirmed that they used the process approach in presenting most part of the writing lessons. The other two (50%), however, disclosed that most parts of their Basic Writing Skills classes were devoted to the product-oriented writing instructions. Thus, on the bases of the above results, it is possible to come up with the conclusion that the process approach was implemented partially in Basic Writing Skills classes in Hawassa University.

In responding to the factors which obstructed the appropriate implementation of the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes, all of them capitalized on the following remedial solutions: allowing sufficient time for both the instructors and students, including communicative grammar activities in the teaching materials, arranging intensive discussion forums for instructors to reduce their attitudinal differences and so on.

According to the evaluations made on the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills at Hawassa University, the results indicated that 50% of the activities were by and large, appropriate to implement the process approach. The other 50%, nevertheless, were more appropriate to conduct the lessons through the product approach.

When the responses provided to the questionnaires distributed to both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students were examined, the results revealed that the existing writing instructions in Basic Writing Skills classes were carried out using both the process and the product approaches alternatively. This implied that the results from the questionnaire, as in the results from observations, interviews, etc, pointed out that the process approach was being employed along with the product approach.

7.3 Recommendations

The study was conducted to investigate the extent to which the process approach is being implemented in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University. In order to achieve this objective, an attempt was made to explore the Basic Writing Skills instructors' perceptions about related issues such as the role of grammar in learning and improving writing skills, the methods of teaching being used, the role of group work in learning writing and the like. In addition, the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were evaluated whether they were feasible or not in implementing the process approach depending on the parameters suggested by Long (1981) and Cunningsworth (1995). Then, the extent to which the process approach had been implemented was investigated. Finally, the factors, which were responsible for not fully implementing the process approach were explored and the remedial solutions suggested by both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students were discussed.

Thus, on the basis of the findings, in order to alleviate scarcity of time, those instructors who would be assigned to offer writing courses need to engage in fewer co-curricular activities than other course instructors in the school of Language and Communication Studies so that they can have more time to help their students practise writing frequently and improve their skills. In addition, based on the data analysis, to solve the problem related to time constraint, those instructors, who are assigned to handle the course Basic Writing Skills, as much as possible, need not handle other department courses throughout the semester or they should be assigned to handle other writing courses which require nearly the same preparations, like intermediate English Advanced Writing Skills, etc. This would help them to save the time that they would spend in preparing lessons for other courses, which are different by nature from Basic Writing Skills.

Regarding attitudinal differences among Basic Skills Writing Skills instructors, there is a saying that discussions are laboratories where a number of effective solutions are sought to problems. Instructors of the course Basic Writing Skills like other course instructors vary in knowledge, experience, interest, perceptions, attitudes, etc. Thus, the School of Language and Communication

Studies need to organize different discussion forums at least once a year so that they can share experiences and bring about professional development.

On the basis of the findings in this study, the other important issue that needed further recommendation was providing Basic Writing Skills instructors with opportunities to involve in refreshment training at least once a year. We know that our world is drastically changing. As a result, thousands of changes, discoveries, innovations, etc are regularly reported at an unprecedented rate. Therefore, in order to keep oneself abreast of such latest findings, intensive in-service training is of paramount significance to the whole language skills instructors in general. Of course, it might be difficult to arrange workshops, seminars or refreshment trainings every year due to various constraints. However, as long as there is common understanding among all instructors and other bodies concerned, it is possible to cluster at least universities in one region and set up a co-coordinating committee which can arrange mini-workshops, seminars, refreshment trainings, etc., by contacting veteran instructors in pioneer universities in the country or internationally.

According to the responses from the interviews and questionnaires distributed to Basic Writing Skills instructors, one of the factors which were presented as drawbacks in implementing the process approach successfully in Basic Writing Skills classes was assigning instructors whose training background is not related to English education or teaching English as a foreign language. In Hawassa University, any student graduated from non-teaching discipline with the best CGPA is recruited to handle the course Basic Writing Skills. The most important requirement that the recruiting bodies consider is the academic performance of the candidates when she/he was on training at first degree level. Moreover, any instructor who had got MA degree in any language stream, such as linguistics, literature or journalism was assigned to handle the course Basic Writing Skills. The results of the data, however, showed that anyone who is assigned to handle the course at university level need to have MA degree in TEFL or an outstanding academic achievement during BA degree training in English education. At this junction, the point that could be asked is the privilege of instructors that they get in handling the course in the extension programme. Regarding this point, the researcher recommends that giving equal attention to instructors' privilege and academic excellence is difficult. In addition, if the problem is closely

examined, there are different alternative measures that can be taken to help those instructors who could be non-privileged as a result of not handling the course outside the regular class time. One of the measures could be giving them priority in writing modules, producing course materials, and other activities in which they can be remunerated.

Results from the evaluation of the teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills showed that the teaching materials have their own shortcomings to implement the process approach as half of the materials were developed in the light of the product approach. In order to alleviate this problem, a material writing team need to be established and in-depth discussions have to be held by involving all instructors of the school and sufficient needs assessments should be carried out.

In fact, the effort of Basic Writing Skills instructors alone may not enable to come up with well developed teaching materials for the course. As a result, the reliable solution is to discuss the significance of having jointly developed teaching materials for the course with the higher bodies of the university and come up with a decision in which the materials developing teams are encouraged and supported. The other remedial solution, along with producing well developed teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills is furnishing the library with sufficient and latest reference materials which go in line with the number of students taking the course. Moreover, the internet connection should be expanded and the way instructors get speedy service need to be taken into account.

The other serious problem suggested by almost all respondents as factor for many students to produce written texts which were below their standard was students' lack of experience of writing when they were at secondary school level. Most student-respondents remarked that most of the English language education at secondary school level focused on teaching grammar, vocabulary and passage comprehension questions. Contrarily, Writing, as one language skill, was hardly taught or learnt due to several factors. As it is understood, writing, as one of the important language skills, cannot be achieved merely as a result of learning one course being conducted only for one semester. It requires continuous and meaningful practices for a long time. Thus, based on its contribution at university level, the teaching of writing especially at preparatory school level should get necessary attention.

The other point that could be recommended based on the findings of this study is establishing a system in which both instructors of the School of Language and Communication Studies and secondary school English teachers work together. The present researcher believes that if there is an affiliation between the aforementioned bodies, there could be opportunities to discuss various issues and exchange relevant experiences which would be of mutual advantages for both institutions.

As a former member of the school, the present researcher remembers that the university allocates significant amount of budget to purchase books from both local and international markets. The problem is, as the present researcher had discussion with the chief of librarians informally, the over-whelming number of students joining the university from year to year. Furthermore, some books were borrowed by instructors for the purpose of reference and stayed with them for about a semester.

In order to alleviate the problem of reference materials, one of the remedial solutions is encouraging course instructors to form groups and develop teaching materials that serve as major references. The second one is collecting some most relevant books from the instructors and arranging situations in which they can be duplicated and made available for students taking the course. The third one is improving the procedures of library services especially regarding the deadlines for lending books.

The other serious problem suggested by almost all respondents was the problem related to the grammar ability of students to express themselves clearly. The respondents were of the view that students improve their writing skills when the grammar lessons are incorporated into the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills. In fact, we know that students learnt grammar along with other language skills starting from lower grades and yet there is a complaint that most students joining the university have difficulty in expressing themselves through intelligible language. This implied that the methods used in teaching grammar need to be investigated further. As the results of the discussions of the interview and questionnaire data indicated, the process approach achieves its goal more successfully when the teaching materials for writing instruction are accompanied by functional grammar activities. The present researcher, thus, recommends that the teaching materials for the course Basic Writing Skills need to have

room for functional grammar lessons which have especially close connection with what students would be writing.

Finally, the present researcher would like to recommend future areas that require further investigations. The first one is teachers' perception about feedback provision at each stage of writing in process-oriented writing classes. The second one could be the type and nature of examinations for students who have learnt writing as a process. As the researcher thinks, if in-depth studies are conducted on the above issues, the findings can significantly contribute to the more successful teaching/learning of writing at university level.

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Appendix A: Checklists for Observation Sessions during the Pilot Study

Key: W₁__Week one, W₂__ week two, etc.

No	Items	W ₁	W ₂	W ₃	W ₄
1	The writing instructor strictly follows the objectives of the course stated in the course outline.				
2	The writing instructor creates flexible, smooth and non-threatening environment in which the students experience the different stages of process writing.				
3	The writing instructor attempts to inculcate the recursive nature of writing into the mind of the students where they can move to different directions as in cognitive model of writing.				
4	The writing instructor guides and follows up the learners' activity when they pass through various stages of writing processes until they come up with the final product.				
5	The writing instructor encourages students to approach writing holistically, meaningfully and independently.				
6	The writing instructor encourages learners to collect relevant information which would help them solve problems in line with the goal they set.				
7	The writing instructor builds in learners a trend of judging coherency, relevance and practicality of generated ideas at planning stage.				
8	The writing instructor gets learners practise how to define the writing problems in the light of the content and purpose of their writing scheme.				
9	The writing instructor gives brain storming activities individually, in pair or in group.				
10	The writing instructor gives guidelines that help learners evaluate the standard of their writing.				
11	The writing instructor gives learners sufficient time to shape their mass of information into a coherent full text				
12	The writing instructor follows up how students review their completed written text recursively by deleting unwanted ideas, adding missing ideas or making entire changes.				
13	The writing instructor collects information about student writers what they feel about their own personal progress in their own writing and takes rectifying measures.				
14	The writing instructor brings as much published texts as possible to class to demonstrate a wide range of writing styles and elements of crafting.				
15	The writing instructor encourages peer/group correction in conjunction with other approaches to feedback provision at different stage of students' writing.				
16	The writing instructor uses writing teaching materials which promote self-learning and problem solving approach				
17	The writing instructor encourages students to write both in the classroom and outside.				
18	The writing instructor promotes a high degree of individualistic learning style.				
19	The instructor encourages feedback provision on the final product of students' writing				
20	The instructor encourages feedback provision at each stage of writing				

Appendix B: Sample Lesson I from the Observation sessions for the Pilot Study

Inst: Writes the title “Paragraph Development” on the Blackboard

Inst: What is a paragraph, students? Who can tell me what a paragraph is?

s: A paragraph is the combination of many sentences.

Ins: Very good, Kalkidan. What do you mean when you say the combination?

S : It is a kind of writing which carry different sentences.

Ins: That is nice. Anyone else?

S: A paragraph is the combination of sentences which consist one major point.

Ins: This is also good. Anyone else?

S: A paragraph is type of writing which has many sentences.

Ins: Ok. Do you mean that all sentences can form a paragraph?

Ins: A paragraph is a piece of writing which consists of group sentences with a single main idea or topic sentence. A paragraph may consist of two or more sentences but it often discusses one major idea. Now, take out your exercise on page 1 entitled ‘Edison’ and then identify the topic sentence.....gave them 10 minutes.

Ins: Who can tell me the topic sentence of the paragraph?

SS: The first sentence.

Ins: Read it to the whole class

S: No other inventor has had more impact on modern life than Thomas Alva Edison.

Ins: Is he correct?

SS: Yes, in chorus.

Appendix C: Sample Lesson II from the Observation Sessions for the Pilot study

Ins: What did we discuss Yesterday?

SS: Descriptive paragraph

Questioning and answering went on in the same way.

Ins: Think of any of your friend, instructor or anyone you like and then plan your writing: Think of the person's physical appearance, clothing style, his internal qualities such as likes and dislikes, generosity, selfishness, hardworking, laziness, etc. Do this within 10 minutes.

He then moved through each row of students, helping some students who needed his help and making notes from his observation. After 10 minutes, he asked students to give him attention and then informed them to proceed with the second stage of writing, that is, writing the first draft of their paragraph. In his further instruction he explained that at this stage, their focus is to use the ideas generated earlier and write the paragraph without giving more attention to grammar errors. He then, as usual, started to move through each row of students and evaluate what each student was doing.

Appendix D: Checklists for Observation Sessions (main study)

Key: W₁__Week one, W₂__week two, etc.

No	Items	W ₁	W ₂	W ₃	W ₄
1	The writing instructor strives his level best to achieve the objectives designed by the school.				
2	The writing instructor creates flexible, smooth and non-threatening environment in which the students experience the different stages of process writing				
3	The writing instructor attempts to inculcate the recursive nature of writing into the mind of the students where they can move to different directions as in cognitive model of writing.				
4	The writing instructor guides and follows up the learners' activity when they pass through various stages of writing processes until they come up with the final product.				
5	The writing instructor encourages students to approach writing holistically, meaningfully and independently.				
6	The writing instructor encourages learners to collect relevant information which would help them solve problems in line with the goal they set.				
7	The writing instructor builds in learners a trend of judging coherency, relevance and practicality of generated ideas at planning stage.				
8	The writing instructor gets learners practise how to define the writing problems in the light of the content and purpose of their writing scheme.				
9	The writing instructor gives brain storming activities individually, in pair or in group.				
10	The writing instructor gives guidelines that help learners evaluate the standard of their writing.				
11	The writing instructor gives learners sufficient time to shape their mass of information into a coherent full text				
12	The writing instructor follows up how students review their completed written text recursively by deleting unwanted ideas, adding missing ideas or making entire changes.				
13	The writing instructor collects information about student writers what they feel about their own personal progress in their own writing and takes rectifying measures.				
14	The writing instructor brings as much published texts as possible to class to demonstrate a wide range of writing styles and elements of crafting.				
15	The writing instructor encourages peer/group correction in conjunction with other approaches to feedback provision at different stage of students' writing.				
16	The writing instructor uses writing teaching materials which promote self-learning and problem solving approach				
17	The writing instructor encourages students to write both in the classroom and outside.				
18	The writing instructor promotes a high degree of individualistic learning style.				

Appendix E: Interview Items for Basic Writing Skills Instructors (for the Pilot Study)

Dear Instructor: The purpose of this interview is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing Skills** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each of the items carefully and honestly. Please note that the items included in this interview are mainly meant to collect the kind of information needed for this research. I do not dare to say here that the items cover all information needed for this research. Hence, I request you to add any items of information that you think are necessary in promoting the quality of this research and reflect your insight.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the interview is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any queries. For this reason, you are not required to mention your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Instruction I: Below are interview Items on your perceptions and beliefs on writing in general, the method of teaching you employ and the teaching materials that are being used in your writing class. Please listen to each of the items very carefully and then provide your responses briefly and clearly.

1. What are your perceptions about implementation of the process approach in your Basic Writing class?
2. What is your perception about group learning (collaborative learning) in process-oriented writing class?
3. What is your perception and belief about mastery of grammar and learning writing?
4. What are the objectives of the teaching/learning of writing skills?
5. To what extent would you make effort in implementing the process approach in your Basic Writing class?
6. In relation to the methodology you employ in your writing class, what are your major roles and that of your students?
7. In your opinion, what are the behaviors good writers and poor writers manifest when they produce any given written text?
8. Have you ever attended any workshop or seminar on the teaching/learning of the English language in general, the teaching of writing in particular after you graduated from a university? If your response to the above item is **yes**, what are the most important lessons that you acquired?
9. These days a number of local researchers and scholars have the view that most students at university level have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. In your opinion, what are the major factors?
10. To what extent writing teaching materials have contributions in promoting the writing abilities of students in Basic Writing classes?
11. Have you ever developed teaching materials for writing course?
12. What is your opinion in using sequentially developed and holistically developed teaching materials in writing classes?
13. Would you please explain the contributions of well developed instructional materials for Basic Writing classes?
14. What are the most important requirements that well developed writing instructional materials need to fulfill?
15. What is your comment on the teaching materials that you are using in your Basic Writing classes currently?

16. Are there steps that need to be followed in developing writing teaching materials? If your response to the above item is **yes**, what are they?
17. What are the most serious problems that you face when you implement the process approach in your writing classes?
18. Would you have any opinion that you want to further explain about the whole teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing Skills here at Hawassa University?

Appendix F: Interview with Students (for the Pilot Study)

Dear Student:

The purpose of this interview is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the interview is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond confidently without any reservation. For this reason, you are not required to mention your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Instruction I: Below are interview items on your perception and belief about writing in general, method of teaching that is being implemented and the teaching materials that are being used in your writing class. Please listen to each of the items very carefully and then provide your responses briefly and clearly.

1. Why do you learn writing skills at university level?
2. What is your perception about the nature of writing as compared to other language skills? Why?
3. In what way are you learning Basic Writing Skills in your writing class here at Hawassa University?
4. What can you say about the standard of your present writing ability?
5. A number of local researchers and scholars of the field complain that most students at university level have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. In your opinion, what are the major factors?
6. In what way if you learn writing, you can improve your ability quickly?
7. To what extent good command of grammar is significant as compared to ability to write in learning and improving your writing ability?
8. Do writing teaching materials have significant contributions in promoting your writing abilities?
9. If your response to the above item is **yes**, what is your comment on the teaching materials that are being used currently in your Basic Writing class?
10. Do the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills encourage you to plan, draft and edit your writing?
11. According to your understanding, what should be the major objectives of effective writing teaching materials?
12. Would you think that writing teaching materials have relationship either with your success or failure on your writing? If your response to the above item is **yes**, would you give further explanation?
13. Should writing teaching materials include activities in which you work in group or collaboratively?
14. What is your general comment on the teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing Skills at Hawassa University?

Appendix G: Interview with Writing Instructors (Main Study)

Dear Instructor: The purpose of this interview is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing Skills** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each of the items carefully and honestly. Please note that the items included in this interview are mainly meant to collect the kind of information needed for this research. I do not dare to say here that the items cover all information needed for this research. Hence, I request you to add any items of information that you think are necessary in promoting the quality of this research and reflect your insight.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the interview is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any queries. For this reason, you are not required to mention your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Instruction I: Below are interview Items on your perceptions and beliefs on writing in general, the method of teaching you employ and the teaching materials that are being used in your writing class. Please listen to each of the items very carefully and then provide your responses briefly and clearly.

1. What are your perceptions about the implementation of the process approach in your Basic Writing classes?
2. What is your perception about group learning (collaborative learning) in process-oriented writing classes?
3. What is your perception about having good command of grammar versus ability to write in learning and improving writing as a beginner?
4. In relation to the methodology you employ in your writing class, what are your major roles and that of your students?
5. These days a number of local researchers and scholars have the view that most students at university level have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. Do you agree? If your response to the above item is 'yes' in your opinion, what are the major factors?
6. To what extent writing teaching materials have contributions in promoting the writing abilities of students in Basic Writing classes? why?
7. What is your comment on the teaching materials that you are using in your Basic Writing classes currently?
8. Would you have any opinion that you want to further explain about the whole teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing Skills here at Hawassa University?

Appendix H: A Sample Response from Instructors' Interview (Main study)

R₁: *Writing is a developmental process, so if students are taught writing lessons merely from the instructor sequentially, they cannot think writing as a creative process. Their focus will be on alleviating errors that they may likely to commit later on their writing. As it is known these days the communicative approach to foreign language instruction is the dominant approach to foreign language teaching. According to this approach, the role of the students is to engage themselves in a meaningful language learning environment. The role of the teacher is to create conducive situations to the learners to practise a piece of language using their own strategy of learning. Therefore, when it comes to writing classes, the approach which suits the communicative approach is the process approach. Because according to this approach, students learn writing more effectively when they are given important basic introductory ideas and are allowed to practise producing a variety of written texts through their own effort and edit their written work by themselves, receive comments from their teacher or peers to improve their major problems. This, however, does not mean that the teacher needs to be idle leaving everything to students.*

Resp₂: *Dealing with writing through process approach helps students to relate what they write with the context in which they are writing. When students learn writing creatively, they will focus on their writing progress rather than worrying about errors that they commit on their writing. From my point of view, writing is a creative activity which requires idea generation, structuring and drafting, thus, when students are engaged in such type of writing, their focus should be on producing meaningful written texts. The point to be underlined is that the more students practise, the more they reduce their errors.*

Appendix I: A Sample Response from Instructors' Interview (Main study)

Resp₃: *In any writing instruction environment, the most important requirements are the instructor, the students and the teaching materials. Students go to teachers to learn how to write. Unless the teacher teaches them what writing is, what its components are and how to develop well written texts, it is unthinkable to expect well developed writing with fully independent struggle of students. As we know these days most students have problem in expressing themselves in grammatically correct English. If we leave such students to learn independently, who learns from whom?*

Ins₄ : *First of all, when the teaching of writing is under the control of the teacher, it is easy to arrange the lessons according to their level of complexity. This kind of instruction in turn helps students learn writing with fewer challenges as the complexity develops gradually. Secondly, when the instructor has significant role in presenting lessons on how to write good sentences, paragraphs or essays frequently, students will reduce errors that they make on their writing. The most essential point, as far as I am concerned is, to be eclectic in presenting writing lessons. Practically, as I have observed, most students in my writing classes, are incapable of producing correctly written sentences let alone bigger texts such as paragraphs or essays. Thus, I have the perception that students need to be frequently supported by the instructor.*

Appendix J: Interview with Students (Main Study)

Dear Student:

The purpose of this interview is to gather raw data which would be analyzed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the interview is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond confidently without any reservation. For this reason, you are not required to mention your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Instruction I: Below are interview items on your perception and belief about writing in general, method of teaching that is being implemented and the teaching materials that are being used in your writing class. Please listen to each of the items very carefully and then provide your responses briefly and clearly.

1. Why do you learn writing skills at university level?
2. What is your perception about the nature of writing as compared to other language skills? Why?
3. In what way are you learning Basic Writing Skills in your writing class here at Hawassa University?
4. What can you say about the standard of your present writing ability?
5. A number of local researchers and scholars of the field complain that most students at university level have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. In your opinion, what are the major factors?
6. In what way if you learn writing, you can improve your ability quickly?
7. To what extent good command of grammar is significant as compared to ability to write in learning and improving your writing ability?
8. Do group/pair work have significant contribution in your writing class?
9. Do writing teaching materials have significant contributions in promoting your writing abilities?

Appendix K: A Sample Response from Students' Interview (Main study)

Resp₁: *As our writing instructor enters the classroom, he writes the title of the lesson on the blackboard and then he asks us to explain what we know about the title. Then he explains everything that he thinks are important to us and then asks us whether the lesson is clear or not .If students ask him question, first he gives chance to us to answer the question. If students are unable to answer, he himself answers each question until the answer is clear to each student. Then he gives us different exercises either by writing on the blackboard or distributing printed copies.*

Resp₃: *The role of my instructor in my Basic Writing class is to explain each lesson until we understand it properly. First he tries to make each writing lesson as clear as possible to all of us. After he has understood that the lesson is clear to all of us, he gives us different exercises on identification of topic sentence, essential components and linking devices of a paragraph. Then he gives us different titles to write paragraphs. Generally I can say that our instructor is a very good instructor because he shows us every step of writing at word level, sentence level and paragraph level very clearly. He corrects each of our mistakes by giving us a lot of assignments on various paragraph writing.*

Appendix L: A Sample Response from Students' Interview (Main study)

Resp₂: *Our instructor comes to us with different paragraphs which are followed by different questions. Mostly he asks us to read each paragraph carefully and answer the questions individually or in group. Then asks us to generate different ideas, organize them, make corrections and write the final draft. He always motivates us to write different paragraphs even if our English is not good. I didn't have interest for writing before I joined this university. But now I am trying to write paragraphs even when I am outside the classroom.*

Resp₅: *I think our Basic Writing Skills class is very interesting because our instructor first gives us basic ideas that help us write different paragraphs and then he gives us time to prepare outlines, prepare the first draft of our paragraph then he allows us to correct it by ourselves, by our friends or sometimes he himself corrects them. This helped us to have interest and improve our writing.*

Resp₆: *My instructor has different roles when we learn writing. He first gives us lectures on the most important parts of the lesson with supporting examples. Moreover, he gives us chance to ask questions if there are points which are not clear during the lecture time. Then he gives time to write different paragraphs by ourselves. After we have finished our writing, sometimes he collects our paragraphs or essays and corrects them by himself or sometimes he allows us to correct our paragraphs by ourselves.*

Appendix N: A Sample of the Evaluated Teaching Material

Paragraph Writing

Instruction: *Write a paragraph of seven to ten sentences on the following titles: Benefits of Television, Why Students are Poor and Becoming an Academic Writer. You can also use your own title that you think is more convenient for you. Make sure that your title should be manageable to discuss your ideas at paragraph level. Then, in writing your paragraph, follow the steps given below:*

Step1: *plan the ideas that you want to develop within your paragraph. This means, prepare an outline by generating ideas that help you develop your paragraph.*

Step 2: *After deciding on the logical order of the ideas that you have generated, write the first draft of your paragraph. At this time, you should not worry about the grammar, punctuation and other things.*

Step 3: *Read your first draft very carefully and then edit your first draft. When you carry out editing, consider the essential requirements of a well developed paragraph that we discussed in our previous lesson, that means, the three T's, unity of ideas, coherency of ideas, adequacy of ideas, using clear language and the like.*

Step 4: *Write the final draft of your paragraph considering all the corrections you made on the first draft.*

Appendix O: Survey Questionnaires for Writing Instructors (Pilot study)

Dear Instructor:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing Skills** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly based on the instruction provided. Please note that the items included in this questionnaire are mainly meant to collect the kind of information needed for this research. I do not dare to say here that the items cover all information needed for this research. Hence, I request you to add any items of information that you think are necessary in promoting the quality of this research.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the questionnaire is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any queries. For this reason, you are not required to write your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Instruction I: Below are questionnaire items which refer to your perception and belief, the methodology that you implement and the teaching materials that you employ in your writing class. Please read each of the items carefully and then put a tick in the grid.

No	Statements	Responses	
		Agree	Disagree
1	Writing is better taught when the instructor gives students input and then gives them freedom ranging from topic selection to producing the final copy of their written text		
2	Writing is better taught when the instructor explains each lesson deeply and gives students a model that they imitate		
3	Writing is the most difficult language skill which is challenging and demanding by its own very nature.		
4	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other language skills		
5	The instruction is going on successfully		
6	The instruction is constrained with different constrains		
7	In order to improve writing skills, learners at university level necessarily must have high knowledge of grammar		

8	In order to improve writing skills, learners at university level are not necessarily expected to have high knowledge of grammar		
9	Holistically developed writing teaching materials are more successful in improving students' writing skills		
10	Holistically developed writing teaching materials are not successful in improving students' writing skills		

Appendix P: Questionnaires for Writing Instructors (Main Study)

Dear Instructor:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly based on the instruction provided. Please note that the items included in this questionnaire are mainly meant to collect the kind of information needed for this research. I do not dare to say here that the items cover all information needed for this research. Hence, I request you to add any items of information that you think are necessary in promoting the quality of this research.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the questionnaire is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any queries. For this reason, you are not required to write your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Part One: Close-ended Items

Instruction: Below are questionnaire items which refer to your perception and belief, the methodology that you implement and the teaching materials that you employ in your writing class. Please read each of the items carefully and then put a tick in the grid.

Key:

St. Ag _____ I Strongly Agree

Ag. _____ I Agree

Disag _____ I Disagree

St. Disag. _____ I Strongly Disagree

ND. _____ Not Decided

No	Item	Responses				
		St. Ag	Ag	Disag	St. Disag	ND
1	Writing is one of the most challenging and demanding language skills of all other language skills.					
2	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other macro language skills.					
3	Writing is a process through which writers pass by writing and re-writing recursively.					
4	Writing is a linear activity that can be achieved first by understanding its components and then by grasping the entire subject.					
5	The process approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which encourages students to pass through various stages of the process independently and come up with meaningful written work.					
6	The product approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which enables students write error-free sentences, paragraphs or essays.					
7	Students can learn writing in a better way when they have ability to write than they have a good command of grammar ability.					
8	Students can learn writing in a better way when they have good command of grammar than they have ability to write.					
9	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills Classes encourage students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts					
10	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to learn about writing and imitate texts that would serve them as model.					
11	Pair/group learning has a crucial role in implementing the process approach in writing classes.					
12	Personal thinking, creativity and writing practices are the only techniques that should be encouraged in process writing classes.					
13	The writing instruction in Basic Writing classes is going on successfully.					

14	The writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes is constrained with many problems.					
15	Good student-writers are those writers who give more attention to the content of their writing than to their target audience and surface features of the language while they are producing their first draft.					
16	Good student-writers are those writers who give more attention to the surface-features and target-audience than to the content of their writing while they are producing their first draft.					

Part Two: Open-ended Items

Instruction: Give your own explanation to each of the following items

17. Please write out the major difficulties, if any, that you think are factors not to fully implement the process approach in your Basic Writing Skills classes.

18. Please write your free comment in the spaces given below with regard to the limitations you feel about the whole items of the questionnaire.

Appendix Q: Survey Questionnaires for Students for the Pilot Study

Dear Student:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data which would be later analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. Thus, the extent to which you are willing to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the questionnaire is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any reservation. For this reason, you are not required to write your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Instruction I: Below are questionnaire items on your perception and belief, method of learning/teaching of writing and the teaching materials that are being employed in your writing class. Read each of the items carefully and then put a tick in the grid.

NB. Perception _____ means in this context, your attitude or understanding based on what you observe or think

Belief _____ means in this context, a statement, principle or doctrine that you accept as truth

No	Statements	Responses	
		Agree	Disagree
1	Writing is the most difficult language skill which is challenging and demanding by its own very nature.		
2	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other language skills		
3	In better writing lessons presentations, the instructor gives detailed explanations on sequentially developed writing lessons and gives us model writing which helps us write out similar written texts		
4	In better writing lessons presentations, the instructor gives input(guiding ideas) and students learn through continuous practice		
5	To learn writing more effectively, ability to write is more important than higher knowledge of grammar		
6	To learn writing more effectively, high knowledge of grammar is more important than ability to write		
7	Holistically developed writing teaching materials are more successful in improving students' writing skills		
8	Holistically developed writing teaching materials are not successful in improving students' writing skills		

Open Ended Item

9. How do you judge your present writing ability? (Is it excellent, very good, good or below average ?

Appendix R: Questionnaires for Students(Main Study)

Dear Student:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data which would be later analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. Thus, the extent to which you are willing to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the questionnaire is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any reservation. For this reason, you are not required to write your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

Part One: Close-ended Items

Instruction: Below are questionnaire items on your perception and belief, method of learning/teaching of writing and the teaching materials that are being employed in your writing class. Read each of the items carefully and then put a tick in the grid.

NB. Perception_____ means in this context, your attitude or understanding based on what you observe or think

Belief_____ means in this context, a statement, principle or doctrine that you accept as truth

St. Ag _____ I Strongly Agree

Ag. _____ I Agree

Disag _____ I Disagree

St. Disag. _____ I Strongly Disagree

ND. _____ Not Decided

No	Item	Responses				
		St. Ag	Ag	Disag	St. Disag	ND
1	Writing is the most difficult language skill which is challenging and demanding by its own very nature.					
2	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other language skills such as reading, listening, grammar, etc.					
3	The more appropriate method of learning writing is first getting explanations on each of the lessons from our instructor and then practicing different exercises					

	and finally writing error-free paragraphs or essays which are similar to the model we have been given					
4	The more appropriate method of learning writing is first getting guiding ideas from our instructor and then planning what we write, writing the first draft, editing and revising and lastly writing the final draft					
5	To learn writing more effectively, having ability to write is more important than having good command of grammar.					
6	To learn writing more effectively, having good knowledge of grammar is more important than having ability to write					
7	The teaching materials being used in Basic Writing Skills classes are suitable to practise writing by planning, writing the first draft, editing by oneself or peers and writing the final draft of the paragraph or essay independently.					
8	The teaching materials being used in Basic Writing classes are suitable to learn structure of sentences, essentials of well developed paragraphs, and essays aimed at helping us write error free written texts.					
9	Personal thinking, creativity and effort to write continuously is the only technique which enable us improve our writing skills.					
10	Group/Pair learning is an important technique of learning writing in order to improve our individual writing abilities.					
11	The teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes is going on successfully					
12	The teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes is constrained with several factors.					

Part Two: Open-ended Items

Instruction: Please read the item given below and then give your own explanation.

13. What is your perception about the standard of your current writing ability? (Is it below average? average, good, very good or excellent?) Would you please give further explanations why you could achieve the standard of writing ability that you have mentioned above? In deciding the standard of your writing use the following criteria suggested by Widdodo (2006a).

Excellent:

Content: Very clear and substantive /related to the real fact understanding of the topic given in terms of the length/scope of the essay, well-developed, thoughtfully and thoroughly supported, very reasonably and relevantly-presented, excellent awareness of audience and purpose.

Organization of Ideas: A very convincing and clear thesis statement, very coherent and well-organized in an introduction, development, and a conclusion with excellent use of cohesive devices (paragraphs at the essay level; sentences at the paragraph level), very appropriate and logical structure both within the essay as a whole and within the paragraph, excellent main ideas at the paragraph level, very well-informed

Language: Excellent command of English, excellent control of language usage, very frequent use of excellent complex and compound sentences without any errors, impressive range of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language.

Style: Evident stylistic control and display of impressive creativity and flair as well as originality throughout the essay

Very Good:

Content: Clear and substantial understanding of the topic given in terms of the length/scope of the essay, well-developed, thoughtfully and thoroughly supported, reasonably and relevantly-presented, good awareness of audience and purpose.

Organization of Ideas: A convincing and clear thesis statement, coherent and well-organized in an introduction, development, and a conclusion with good use of cohesive devices (paragraphs at the essay level; sentences at the paragraph level), appropriate and logical structure both within the essay as a whole and within the paragraph, good main ideas at the paragraph level, well-informed.

Language: Good command of English, good control of language usage, frequent use of good complex and compound sentences with insignificant errors, good range of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language

Style: Good stylistic control and display of creativity and flair as well as originality throughout the essay

Good

Content: Clear and substantive understanding of the topic given in terms of the length/scope of the essay, sufficiently-developed, satisfactorily supported and presented, satisfactory awareness of audience and purpose.

Organization of Ideas: A fairly convincing and clear thesis statement, coherent and satisfactorily-organized in an introduction, development, and a conclusion with satisfactory use of cohesive devices (paragraphs at the essay level; sentences at the paragraph level), fairly appropriate and logical structure both within the essay as a whole and within the paragraph, satisfactory main ideas at the paragraph level, fairly-informed.

Language: Satisfactory command of English, satisfactory control of language usage, fairly frequent use of satisfactory complex and compound sentences with a few errors, a satisfactory range of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language

Style: Good control and display of creativity and flair as well as originality throughout the essay

Below Average

Content: Poor understanding of the topic given in terms of the length/scope of the essay, occasionally irrelevant and poorly-developed as well as supported, dissatisfactorily-presented, poor awareness of audience and purpose.

Organization of Ideas: A barely convincing and less clear thesis statement, less coherent and poorly-organized in an introduction, development, and a conclusion with poor use of cohesive devices (paragraphs at the essay level; sentences at the paragraph level), less appropriate and logical structure both within the essay as a whole and within the paragraph, poor main ideas at the paragraph level, poorly-informed.

Language: Poor command of English, poor control of language usage, frequent use of poor complex and compound sentences with many errors, poor range of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language.

Style: Poor stylistic control and display of creativity and flair as well as originality throughout the essay

14. If you have any more opinions which you think are relevant regarding the teaching/learning of Basic Writing Skills, but not included in this questionnaires, please write them in the spaces given below.

Declaration

I declare that this PhD thesis is my own work. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university. Moreover, all the sources that I used or quoted were indicated and acknowledged as complete reference.

Name: _____

Signature: _____