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The student awareness of writing skill

The case study third year students at Biskra University

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the Master Degree in Language Sciences.

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DEDICATION

God knows how much I worked to bring this work into light.

To the apple of my EYES, my MOTHER.

To the HARD WORKER from whom I take my power, my FATHER.

*To the people who believe in me my sisters: Hiba, Madiha, Atiga, Hadil and my
brothers Fouzi, Majid, and Ihab.*

To my grand mothers, fatma and Safiya.

To my best friends ; Ahmed and Samir who have always been a source of motivation.

To all my friends; Alabed, Monir, Belal, Haider, Yahia, Maryiem, and Amina.

To the post-graduation class 2011/2012

To all who know me.

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Abstract

Writing in a foreign language is one of the most challenging and complex tasks for language learners. It is a difficult skill that requires considerable effort and practice on the learners' part to reach an acceptable level of writing. Due to the complexity of this skill, many students find it very difficult to produce an adequate piece of writing. This dissertation attempts to identify the student's lack of awareness of the different writing stages. Since writing is a process made up of several steps, this paper seeks to determine the extent to which students are aware of the writing stages and whether this awareness could lead to better achievement. We hypothesize that the student difficulties in writing skills might be due their lack of the awareness of the different writing stages. To check the validity of this hypothesis, we will conduct a questionnaire with 42 third year LMD science of languages and 10 teachers of English in the department of arts and languages, university of Biskra. The students and teachers answers will be analyzed and then evaluated to find out the relationship between students lack of awareness of the stages of the writing process and their achievement.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL :	English as a Foreign language
ESL :	English as a Second Language
FL :	Foreign Language
L1 :	First Language/Mother Tongue
L2 :	Second Language
N :	Number of Teachers/Students
W.E :	Written Expression
LMD:	License Master Doctorate
% :	Percentage
Q :	question

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GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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Introduction

The most important goal of teaching foreign language is to enable the learner to communicate. This communication is based on four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening and reading are considered as receptive skills; on the other hand, speaking and writing are productive skills. Writing in a foreign language is one of the most challenging skills for almost all learners. Developing the writing skill is thought to be highly complex if not the most complex in comparison to listening, speaking and reading.

The Algerian learners of English at Biskra University who follow a three year course in English begin the first semester of the first year by an introduction of some basic concepts in Grammar (parts of speech and word function) , Syntax (phrases, clauses, and sentences) , and Mechanics (capitalization and punctuation) . It is until the second semester that students are followed some basic rules of writing. By the second year, the students are taught different patterns and techniques for essay writing including introductions, developmental paragraphs and conclusions. In addition, they are provided with insights into different patterns of essay development (cause/effect, comparison/contrast, argumentation, etc.). The third year is for an opportunity to practise writing essays with different patterns of development.

Learners should pass through different stages of writing that can enable them to proceed from the blank sheet of paper to the final version of writing. This progression is widely known as “process” or “writing process”. The learners should be aware of the different stages of writing skill in order to produce better writing.

1. The problem statement

Writing is one of the four skills which need special attention especially in foreign language because it is considered as the most difficult skill to be acquired or taught.

We think that the primary cause of these problems in this skill is that the students still believe and feel that the good written production comes from what they have learned about grammar; so, the student often rush toward grammar practice and tend to forget the specific steps and techniques which lead to produce better writing.

When we examine some student's paper we found that their achievement was poor both in terms of the content and form. In terms of content, the ideas were not clearly organized and the thesis statements were not clearly stated. In terms of form, there were long sentences, no parallelism; and a lot of grammatical and spelling mistakes. These observations show us that the students are not aware of the numerous stages of writing process. Because of this, we have come to one major research question.

2. The aim of the research

The present study is designed to determine the extent to which the student is aware of the different stages of the writing process and the impact of such awareness on their Writing. We want to make the students fully conscious of the writing stages and ready to use them whenever they write so they can produce better writing.

They should be aware through intensive practice of writing which leads further to the effective use of the writing techniques that allow them to decide about what to write, how to write, and how to evaluate what they have written. Thus, making students aware of the different processes of writing will help them to overcome the difficulties they face

when they write and therefore produce well written texts.

3. The research question

Writing is not a linear but a recursive process where the students plan, revise and redraft what they produce.

The students develop their ideas on topic and the text at the same time through these different stages. Writing is considered as a difficult and challenging aspect to be learned in a foreign language. For this reason, we have put the following research questions:

- 1- What lies behind the difficulties of students when performing the writing skills?
- 2- To what extent they are aware of the writing stages?

4. The research hypothesis

To check the validity of our research, we hypothesize:

Student difficulties in writing skills might be due to their lack of awareness of the different writing stages.

5. The research methodology

To check the validity of our research questions and hypothesis we conducted a questionnaire in which the students and the teachers are asked to answer some questions about writing skill and the process approach with its different stages of pre-writing, while writing and post-writing without difficulties . We have used it because we believe that the student are the most important element in the process approach of writing, they also provide us with the information about the writing skills and the process writing in general.

The aim of the questionnaire is to know the student level of awareness of writing process and the writing techniques underlining this process.

After collecting the required data for this research, we will analyze them both qualitatively and quantitatively to understand the issue under study; i.e, the importance of understanding the stages of the writing skill.

6. Population and sampling

The population that we decided to work is the third year LMD students at the department of English university of Mohamed Khieder Biskra; since it is not possible to deal with all the third year student (because of time constraints) we will take a representative sample . The reason of choosing this population is that, the third year LMD students have been studying the writing skill and its different stages for two year and consequently, we think that they have enough knowledge about them.

7. The structure of the research

The present research is basically divided into three main chapters. Chapter one and two are devoted to the literature review and chapter three is about the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative responses and the results obtained the student questionnaire.

The first chapter contains detailed information about writing and general overview of the writing skills and its history as complex cognitive activity, as social act, and significant language skill, in addition, we discuss the basic rules of writing skill. The chapter also outlines the different approach to teaching writing and highlights the relationship between writing and reading as these two skills overlap with each other.

The chapter ends up with some strategies to raise student awareness in foreign language learning.

The second chapter is an attempt to present the reader with the special focus on the process approach and the different models of this approach. It also describes the different stages of the writing process. The chapter concludes with some disadvantages of the process approach.

The third chapter is a field study and it is concerned with the description and the analysis of the students and the teachers' questionnaire and answers.

CHAPTER ONE
GENERAL OVERVIEW OF WRITING SKILL

Chapter One

General Overview Of The Writing Skill

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Introduction

In learning a foreign language, learners are subjected to the four skills that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The later is considered as the most challenging aspect of language learning.

For a long time, writing was a neglected area in language teaching as a result of concentration on spoken language which was seen as important and writing as being of secondary importance; however, writing is now an essential component in language teaching. (Brookes and Grundy, 1998).

This chapter Intends to examine the nature of writing and its basic rules. It also aims to highlight the relationship between writing and reading. It attempts to present the different approaches to teaching writing with more focus on the product and process approaches as they represent the recently dominant approaches to teaching writing. The chapter concludes with some techniques that the teachers can use to raise their learners awareness in foreign language learning.

1.1. The nature of writing

Writing is means of communication between people. It should follow some conventions that are unique of all which relate letters to words and words to sentences which must be well organized to have a coherent whole called "text" (Bader, 2007). This skill or means of communication is neither innate or natural , it must be done and practised a lot to be learnt and make use of it and its rules; therefore, the writer does not write for himself but he writes for his reader, for that the writer must clearly state his ideas to make himself understood.

According to Al-Mutawa and Taisser (1989), writing is a complex cognitive activity which requires the following elements:

- Complete acquisition of the Alphabet.
- Understanding how letters combine to form words and the relationship between the word and its meaning.
- Knowledge of the mechanics of writing: spelling, capitalization, punctuation and other writing conventions.
- Mastery of the most frequent rules governing the structure of sentences.
- Ability of combining sentences to build an effective paragraph and combining them to produce essays.
- Formalization with transitions to achieve coherence.

In this context, Bell and Burnaby (1984, cited in Nunan, 1989, p 36): explain:

Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts.

In its physical appearance, writing is an individual activity, therefore, it is a social act that fulfils a set of communicative needs, and accomplishes particular purpose as Hyland (2003, p 27) puts it:

While every act of writing is in a sense both personal and individual, it is also international and social, expressing a culturally recognized purpose, reflecting particular kind of relationship and acknowledging an engagement in a given community.

In terms of pedagogy, writing is a central element in the language teaching as students need to write down notes and to take written exams. Yet, over the years it has seemed that writing has been seen as only a support system for learning grammar and vocabulary rather than a skill in its own right, however, trainers and methodologists have looked again at writing in a foreign language classroom and acknowledged the importance of writing as vital skill for speakers of a foreign language as much as for every one using their first language (Harmer, 2004).

However, in contrast to the natural and spontaneous act of speaking, writing is a difficult activity both in first and second language. Its difficulty descends from many factors classified by Byrne (1988) into three categories, psychological, linguistics and cognitive which overlap to some extent.

For the psychological factors, writing is a solitary act as it is done in the absence of the reader to whom the piece of writing is addressed. This means that there is a lack of interaction and feedback between the writer and the reader, the thing which makes writing a difficult task.

For the linguistic factors, writing lacks paralinguistic devices such as stress, intonation, gestures, and facial expressions. This imposes a great necessity for careful and precise completion, organization and connection of sentences.

For cognitive factors, writing requires formal and laborious instruction: we have to master the written form of language and to learn certain structures. Above all, sometimes the task of writing is imposed on us and this may cause a loss of ideas like in the classroom situation.

So, the idea we draw from the previous definition is that writing is the means to communicate with the language through a graphic representation of ideas. It is also difficult, sophisticated, social activity and an important skill for language learners as well as native speakers.

1.2. The basic rules of writing

Writing is an effective means of communication and self expression; good writing requires certain criteria like clarity, coherence, simplicity and brevity.

1.2.1. Clarity

It is the basic rule in writing and without it communication will be impossible. By clarity is meant to avoid ambiguous words and sentences that may convey more than one meaning or multiple interpretations. The key to achieve clarity is to make sentences short and to the point.

In order to achieve clarity in writing according to Starkey (2004: 12-9) the learner should:

- Eliminate ambiguity by avoiding words or phrases that have more than one possible interpretation.
- Use powerful, precise adjectives and adverbs. One way to accomplish clarity is to use powerful and specific adjective and adverbs.

- Be concise, this means getting right to the point without unnecessary spinning around, and worthless repetition or wordiness.
- Word choice, the writer should choose the right words according to Starkey (2004) and Kome (2000), there are two aspects the learner should consider while choosing the words to be used denotation which is the literal meaning of the word and connotation which is the implied meaning of the word.

In this context Starkey (2004: 15) sees that “wordiness is boring and it takes up valuable time and space... there are two equally important approaches to more concise writing by eliminating unnecessary words and phrases and using active voice whenever possible .”

1.2.2. Coherence

Coherence is an important element in any kind of writing. Kane (2008), Geme; and Lea (2008) among others agree that coherence has a great role in making a good piece of writing according to them, coherence has to do with arranging and linking one’s ideas in a way that makes them most easily understood by the learner.

Mury and Haghés (2008: 45) notice that good a writer is the one “who sticks his Ideas together as links in chain, each link connecting the one before it with the one after. If any links are missing, the corrections become unclear and the argument structure breaks down”.

1.2.3. Brevity and simplicity

It is necessary to convey the maximum information with minimum words, for instance, instead of expressing one idea in five sentences, it is better to state it in one meaningful sentence. All this insists that brevity is an elementary rule because it saves the reader's patience and time, and helps to communicate effectively; in addition, some writers like to show themselves while writing through using pompous words which may not be understandable for the reader since any piece of writing's goal is to express a particular thought or ideas, it is useful to be as simple as possible as the saying goes: "write to express, not to impress".

In addition to all this basic rules of writing there are some convention of writing the writer should take into consideration; for instance, the sentence should begin with capital letters and ends with full stop punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point) and Starkey (2004) considered writing in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

1.3. The relationship between writing and reading

Writing is not an isolated skill. Four language skills work together to enhance the development of each other: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Listening and reading are the receptive skills and the speaking and the writing are the productive skills. According to Johnson (2008), language skills enhance each others, for example, listening and hearing other people use language enhances one's ability to speak, reading helps students become better writers and writing helps and enhances reading fluency. (Hamadouche, PHD dissertation, 2010).

Writing and reading are two aspects of literacy. The former involves the encoding of the message while the latter involves its decoding or interpretation; in other words; writing is the productive whereas reading is receptive. But in spite of their different characteristics, the two skills complement each other; to read is to recognize and interpret written language, to write is to plan and produce language so that it can be read. Stosky (1963; cited in Bader, 2007, p. 9) has advanced that “ Better writers tend to be better readers...and better readers tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers”

Good writers should bear in mind their reader’s needs, knowledge, and expectations so that they can produce readable text (Heffernan and Lincoln, 1990) stated that “but all good writers think about their reader, just as all good speakers think about their listeners” (p. 50).

Hayes emphasizes the importance of reading as a central process in writing and discusses three types of reading that are essential in writing.

The first of these is reading to evaluate, in which the writer reads his or her text critically to detect possible problems and discover potential improvements. The other two kinds of reading are reading source texts and reading an introduction. Since written tasks are frequently based on source texts, there is an obvious relationship between the ability to understand the source text and the ability to use information from the text in one’s writing. Similarly, if writers fail to understand the source text instructions, they may not be able to do the task of writing appropriately (Weigle, 2002).

All this makes it clear that reading is a necessary factor in writing as it gives the opportunity to develop and enrich vocabulary, grammatical structures and rhetorical features of texts.

Reading, then, is pre-condition for writing because it plays an important role in the development of the latter one cannot improve his writing unless he reads a lot. In any case, the two skills go hand in hand, and one can't deal with the first without manipulating the second.

1.4. A Brief History of L₂ writing

The History of writing is the history of how the human being recorded thoughts, events, and Feeling. It is the history of civilization itself. The human beings would never have known their history without drawings, signs and words they have recorded. The first writing Instruments dated back to the cave-men and took many different forms as sharpened- stone, bones.....ect .(cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p 16)

During the 1950, the pedagogy of E.S.L classes was dominated by the audio lingual method which focuses on oral proficiency .Writing on other hand, was marginalized and was only seen as means of reinforcing and consolidating language patterns (Fujieda, 2006).

By the 1960, the number of international students had rapidly increased allowing language teacher to consider L2 (second language) pedagogy and practice .In the U.S, a large number of foreign students entered higher education. At this stage L₁ (first language) composition Instructors perceived major differences in writing between L₁ and L₂ learners.

These differences stimulated interest in teaching writing to non-native speakers ; As a result, teaching writing became a significant subfield of second language studies and learner received instruction about the structure of the target language. (Fujieda, 2006).

Within the appearance of the communicative approach in 1970s, the real importance of teaching writing as a skill was recognized.

From the 1970 s to early 1980, the E.S.L writing witnessed real changes with the appearance of the process revolution. The focus was no longer on the written product. For Zamel (1982, p 565 cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p 24), writing was “reconceptualized as the process of discovering meaning”. Cognitive factors influenced on the stages of this process where the writer engages on recursive mental stages identified in three broad stages: planning, Formulating and revising. These Features are found in most contemporary E.S.L studies as well as first language teaching. Elbow (1973, 1981) and Zamel (1983) pointed out: “this process tends toward individual development through self-detection entirely on adequate writing procedures rather than on complete product”. (Fujieda, 2006, p 64).

The central interest of the process approach clearly lies on the cognitive steps that writers go through when they write.

In the 1990s however, there was a new awareness of the social aspects of writing. In other words, writers became more conscious of the social conventions that govern a particular genre and realized that writing serve a range of social goals.

Teaching writing to non-English speaking learners should always take into consideration learner global needs as well as their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

1.5. Approaches to teaching writing

A number of approaches have emerged to develop practice in writing skill. Applying one approach or another depends on what we want our learner to do: whether we want them to focus on the product of writing or its process, or whether we want to encourage creative writing.

1.5.1. The controlled – to free approach

The dominance of the audio – lingual method on second language writing in the 1950's and early 1960's led to the emergence of this approach which sees writing as product constructed from the writer's mastery of grammatical and lexical knowledge. In another word, writing was regarded as an extension of grammar and means of reinforcing language patterns through guided compositions in which students are provided with short texts and are asked to make grammatical changes such as transforming questions to statements, plural to singular, present to past and phrases to clauses. Such a kind of exercises help students in achieving accuracy and avoiding errors. Obviously, this approach aims at training students to write frequently and giving them the opportunity to produce their own writings without mistakes because their productions are completely controlled. (Hyland, 2003)

This approach is made up of four main stages:

- 1) Familiarization : the learners are taught certain grammar and vocabulary through text.
- 2) Controlled writing : learner manipulate fixed patterns often from substitution table.
- 3) Guided writing : in here, student imitates model texts.
- 4) Free writing : in this stage, learners use the patterns they have developed to write an essay, letter... etc. (Hyland,2003,pp.3-4)

It is only after achieving an intermediate level of proficiency that the students are allowed to try some free composition in which they express their own ideas. The shift from the controlled to free writing occurs gradually as the teacher's guidance reduce from the first to the last stage. It is clear that accuracy is the main emphasis of this approach which stresses the structural aspect of language and neglects its communicative one.

1.5.2. The free-writing approach

This approach is based on the idea that when students are allowed to write freely and frequently, their ability in writing will be improved. Thus, this approach encourages students to write as much as possible and as quickly as possible without worrying about grammar and spelling mistakes because the emphasis is on content and fluently not on form and accuracy. ” In this way, students feel that they are actually writing; not only performing exercise of some kind; they write what they want to write and consequently writing is an enjoyable experience.” (Byrne, 1988, p.22)

Once the ideas are expressed on a paper, teachers can interfere to respond to these ideas without making formal correction. In this approach, teachers see their role as simply to provide students with the space to make their meanings. Hence, they try to avoid imposing their views, offering models, or suggesting responses to topics beforehand. (Weigle, 2002).

Accordingly, it is up to students to choose their own topics and write about them.

Alternatively, some students may be volunteer to read their own writings aloud to the class and by doing so; they develop a sense of audience. In other words, they become aware of the reader to whom the piece of writing is addressed and consequently, they can produce effective writing .In brief, content and audience are seen as the chief parameters in this approach.

1.5.3. The Product - Oriented Approach

In the mid of 1960's, teachers began to realize that the controlled composition was not enough and that the teaching of writing in the 1970's. As the title indicates, this approach main focus should be on the written product. As a result, the product-based

approach appeared and the dominant concern was with the end result of the writing process. It gives priority to classroom activities in which students are required to imitate, copy, and transform model texts supplied by the teacher. In other words, the product approach has its origins in the traditions of rhetoric and focuses its study on model texts in order to make students aware of the text features. It consists of an analysis of students' writing for evaluating their attempts. When such approach is adopted, it is clear that accuracy is the centre of interest. In fact, it attempts to make the student familiarized with the conventions of writing through a model, before s/he gets his/her final draft. (Nemouchi, 2008) "Indeed, the imitation of the model was seen as crucial". R. V. White (1988) sees the model based approach as follows:

Study the model → manipulate elements → produce a parallel text (p. 5)

So, the model text is always viewed as the starting point. It is studied and analyzed from all points of view: grammatical structure, content, sentences organization, and rhetorical features. After being able to use these items skillfully, students are given a new topic and asked to produce a parallel task. (Nemouchi, 2008)

Obviously, the model plays an important role as it guides students in the task of writing from the beginning till the end. Besides, it shows a well-formed text. What the model, unfortunately, fails to show is the way the original writer followed to reach that product. In other words, it does not point out to the process of writing.

In the product approach, the model comes first and the product comes last. Both are, in fact, final drafts: the model is final before becoming first. In this respect, White (quid

in Nemouchi's, 2008, p. 68) argues:

Not only does the model come first in the teaching sequence, it also shows a finished text. In other words, the focus right from the start is on the product, which is, of course, someone else's writing. What the model does not demonstrate is how the original writer arrived at that particular product. In other words, it gives no indication of process.

In brief, the essential interest of this approach resides in the final product: in other words, the production of neat, grammatically correct pieces of writing (Mahon, 1992; cited in Nemouchi, 2008). The process of writing, on the contrary, was ignored. This approach did not take into account the numerous stages the writer goes through while creating a piece of writing.

1.5.4. The process Approach

During the early 1980s, the valuable research done on first language writing led to the dramatic shift from the product to the process approach. This new orientation provides a useful foundation in the teaching of writing as it stresses writing as a process and de-emphasizes it as a product. In contrast to the product approach, the process approach's central concern is no longer on the finished product, rather on the steps that compose the act of writing. These steps are numerous, but the most used in literature are setting goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language, drafting, revising, and writing.

On its face, these steps seem to be complex activities, yet it is necessary for students to go through them in order to produce a good piece of writing. The primary goal of the writing

process, therefore, is to make students aware of, and gain control over the cognitive strategies involved in writing. It works on the individual's specific needs. In this context, T. Gaudery (2002; cited in Nemouchi's, 2008, p. 73) has explained:

In the early seventies, communicative teaching methodology and work on functional/ notional syllabuses directed our attention on the specific needs of the individual learner. These needs were viewed not only in terms of particular types of communication, and the resulting realization that different learners actually had different requirements with respect to language skills meant that new attention was given to, among other things, the teaching of writing. In this context, the process approach arrived on the scene at a very opportune moment.

In other words, the process approach meets students' needs in that it trains them how to generate ideas for writing, plan these ideas, take into consideration the type of audience, draft and redraft in order to produce a final written paper that is capable enough to communicate their own ideas. As such, "writing becomes a process of discovery for students as they discover new ideas and new language forms to express them". (Raimes, 1983, p. 76).

"Furthermore, learning to write is seen as a developmental process that helps students write as professional authors do, choosing their own topics and genres, and writing from their experiences or observations" (Raimes, p. 78). Hence, students are required in this approach to be responsible for their own learning as they make decisions about genre, choice of topics, and collaborate as they write. (Nemouchi, 2008)

It is important for any student using this approach to realize that what s/he considers as a final product is just a beginning in the process of writing. In fact, s/he must always keep in mind that it is possible to improve their writing and to do so, it is necessary to go via different stages like finding new ideas or new sentences, and revising before writing. Besides, with the process approach, the learner is not expected to write on a given topic in a restricted time, and wait for the teacher to correct his paper. He rather writes a first draft, shows it to the teacher or to another student, reads it again, enriches it, and revises it before writing the final draft. In other words, for this approaches no text can be perfect, but that one gets closer to perfection by producing, reflecting on, discussing and reworking successive drafts of a text. (Nemouchi, 2008).

So, the process of writing stresses the importance of the stages writers should follow to produce effective writings. And as opposed to the product approach, the process approach focuses on fluency rather than on accuracy. This table provides a comparison between these two approaches.

Product approach	Process approach
<p>This is a traditional approach, in which students focus on the study of model text. Accuracy is given priority and conventions are taken from the mode.</p> <p>The following stages have been identified:</p> <p>1/ Texts are read and features of the genre are analyzed. For instance, if studying a business letter, students should focus on the terminology and grammar constructions specific to this type of letter.</p> <p>2/ This requires a controlled practice of the underlined features which usually done in isolation. So, if students are studying a formal letter, they may be asked to make formal requests in which they practice the 'I would be grateful if you would ...' structure.</p> <p>3/ Organization of ideas. This stage is very important. Those who favour this approach believe that the organization of ideas is more important than the ideas themselves and as equally important as the control of language.</p>	<p>This is the new trend of teaching writing, which concern is given to fluency. It is mainly based on the identification of the steps a writer goes through when engaging in the act of writing. He has to be conscious of them so that he can gain control of them.</p> <p>These steps are :</p> <p>1/ Generating ideas by brainstorming and discussion. It is students who carry out this task. Thus, the role of the teacher in this approach is restricted to provide only language support if required so as not inhibiting students in the production of ideas.</p> <p>2/ Students extend ideas and assess their quality and usefulness.</p> <p>3/ Then, they organize the ideas using different forms like maps, spider diagrams and others. This phase is crucial as it helps students establish the chronological order of ideas and hence, they find it easy to structure their texts.</p>

<p>4/ At the end of the learning process, students have a variety of writing Tasks. They choose one and individually they use the skills, structures, and vocabulary they have learnt to produce the text; to show what they can do as fluent and competent users of language.</p>	<p>4/ After establishing the hierarchical relationship of ideas, students move to write the first draft. This is usually done in class and often in pairs.</p> <p>5/ Students exchange and read each other's drafts. By responding as readers, students become aware of the fact that a writer is producing something to be read, and thus can improve their own drafts .</p> <p>6/ Drafts are returned and improvements are made on the basis of peer feedback.</p> <p>7/ A final draft is written .</p> <p>8/ Students once again exchange and read each other's work and perhaps this time write a response or reply.</p>
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Table1.1: Comparison between the Product and the Process Approaches (Adapted from Nemouchi, 2008)

1.5.5 The Genre Approach

The genre orientation to writing instruction basically aims to raise students' awareness of the style and the conventions of particular genre. "In a genre approach to writing students study texts in the genre they are going to be writing before they embark on their own writing". (Harmer, 2001, p. 258). In other words, students are provided with texts of particular genres. They analyze these texts in terms of their lexical and grammatical features. Then, after manipulating these features, they produce their own texts that conform to the conventions of each genre. For instance, students might be asked to write a letter of complaint. Before they do so, they study a typical model of such letter to find out the vocabulary and grammar structures related to this genre. They might then use this information to produce their own parallel texts.

In this case, writing is conceived as a form of reproduction rather than as a creative act. At an early stage, students imitate certain genre to get control over its rules. Later at an advanced level, students are free to decide what to do with the data they have collected. (Harmer, 2001)

However, regarding and presenting genre as a set of rigid rules has been criticized. "Halliday argues that we have developed very specific ways of using language to accomplish our goals, which means that texts are related to social contexts ... " (Hyland, 2003, p. 19). Two fundamental issues are developed here; first, language is functional, that is, it is used to achieve certain goals. Second, language is situational, i.e. it occurs in particular social context, and thus cannot be understood outside its context. So, when adopting such approach, students should not only focus on text, but on the context in which this text is produced.

It is illogical, however, to end up without defining the term genre. This latter is defined by Swales (1990; cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 46) as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some sets of communicative purposes". The idea here is that writers follow certain conventions for organizing their messages so that their readers can recognize their purposes. For example, if the writer's purpose is to convince his/her readers that smoking is harmful, s/he should use argumentative essay. "The central belief here is that we don't just write, we write something to achieve some purpose." (Hyland, 2003, p. 18)

By and large, although the genre approach to teaching writing is more appropriate for students of ESP, it is also highly useful for general English students as it enables them to produce texts that are well-formed, meaningful, and appropriate for readers.

1.6. Awareness raising in writing

Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia defines the term awareness as the state or ability to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects, or sensory patterns. More broadly, it is the state of being aware of something.

In learning, language awareness is a term which appeared many years ago and which was defined by the British consortium of centres for language awareness as "... a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life" (James and Garrett, 1992, p8; cited in Cenoz and Hornberger, 2008, p3). In other words, language awareness is concerned with making learners conscious of, and able to use language patterns successfully. It is a matter of great interest for many researchers who carried out a number of researches on lexical awareness, morphological and syntactic awareness, discourse awareness, cultural awareness....etc.

1.7. Type of language awareness

Language awareness could be divided according to Garvie (1990) into six interrelated types: Linguistic awareness, psycho-linguistic awareness, discourse awareness, communicative awareness, socio-linguistic awareness, and strategic awareness.

According to Makhtar Hamadouch (2010)

- **Linguistic awareness** aims to make the language learner aware of the language basic components (phonemes, morphemes and lexical units) and the rules that assemble them in the sentences.

- **Psycho-linguistics awareness:** the learner should be more conscious about the study of language acquisition and use it in relation to psychological factors controlling its use and recognition.

- **Discourse awareness** helps the learners to be more aware about discourse level rather than the sentence level.

- **Communicative awareness** aims at making learners aware of the use of language in specific context.

- **Socio-linguistics awareness:** the learner could be aware of the influence of the social context on the language use.

- **Strategic awareness:** the learner can apply different strategies to solve different learning problems

1.8. Strategies of raising writing awareness

Raising the learner awareness of language learning focus on some aspect such as (grammar, culture, pragmatics, ...etc) and the writing skills has some requirements of awareness which lead to better writing, Van Den Bosh (1903), one of the language

awareness movement central publications in Germany insisted on the role of the teacher to help his learner to be aware of their native language patterns:

It is our aim to turn the youngster into a keen observer and a shrewd judge of language use by teaching him how to compare and how to distinguish by making him find things out of himself so that through process of growing awareness and increasing self confidence that continues throughout life, he becomes the authoritative controlled of his own language use “ (Cenoz and Hamberger 2008, p5).

This can also be applied with foreign language learning in that when the teacher teaches his/ her learners how to observe, compare, and distinguish between their native language pattern and those of foreign language, this help them to comprehend and be aware of the foreign language patterns. Besides, giving the learner confidence in grasping the foreign language pattern motivates them to acquire and be conscious of these patterns. In addition, lengthy explanation which means devoting enough time to explain the foreign language patterns, moreover, practice is another factor that can help the learner to be aware of the foreign language pattern in which it reinforces and fixates these patterns in the learner minds to memorize the pattern easily as (Robinson, 2008, p135) has argued:” with practice, explicitly learned knowledge becomes restructured, and access become less effortful, and eventually authentic.” .

Writing effective texts, whether in L₁ or L₂ involves many different areas of knowledge and skills. These include the ability to generate suitable content, and to organize that content coherently; the ability to form syntactically correct sentences and to link them to form coherent text; and the knowledge of sufficiently wide range of vocabulary and syntactic pattern to express a variety of concepts. (Caudry, 1988)

There are many techniques that can be followed to raise learner awareness either in their native language or in the foreign language context. However, teachers should always bear in mind their learner needs (what learner needs to be aware of), their level, and the learner cognitive abilities in acquiring or being aware of the foreign language pattern.

Conclusion

As we have seen, this chapter is general overview of writing. It has been divided into two parts. The first part explored the nature of writing as a complex cognitive activity, a social act, and as a language skill. It also included the basic rules of writing. beside, it highlighted the relationship between writing and reading as these skills integrate with one another. in addition, the chapter contained a brief history of L1 writing. The second part of this chapter outlined the numerous approaches to teaching writing, with more focus on the process approach as this new trend brought significant changes in the field of teaching writing. The chapter concluded with some techniques that can be used to raise learners' awareness in foreign language learning.

CHAPTER TWO
THE WRITING PROCESS

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The Writing Process

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Introduction

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the teaching of writing has subjected to a number of approaches ranging from the controlled to the genre approach. Although none of these approaches can be considered as ideal, they have all proved to be successful in one period or another. Today, the use of one approach or another depends on the surrounding context and the teaching objectives. This chapter intends to give a detailed description of the process based approach as it is the center of our study. It begins with exploring the nature of the writing process and how it emerged on the scene. Then, it discusses Flower and Hayes' process and presents Kellogg's process. The reason for limiting our concern to these researchers is that they are the ones who contributed mostly to the development and success of the writing process. The chapter describes briefly the process famous models; Hayes (1996), Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987); In addition, it analyzes the different stages that make up the writing process, and sets out some of the instructions that should be followed when adopting such approach. The chapter ends up with the criticism of this approach to teaching writing.

2.1 The Nature of the Writing Process

” First I write one sentence: then I write another. That is how I write. And so I go on. But I have a feeling writing ought to be like running through a field ” Lytton Strachey (cited in Hedge, 2000, p. 299).

In this quotation, Strachey regards writing as a long continuous process in which the writer begins with a single sentence and continues writing without interruption. This means that writing is not an easy task; rather it is a highly difficult and complex process as Shaughnessy (1977: 222; cited in Hedge, 2000, p. 302) put it :”One of the most

important facts about the composing process that seems to get hidden from students is that the process that creates precision is itself messy”.

Before the implementation of the process approach, writing classes concentrated heavily on the final product in terms of its clarity, originality, and correctness. How this product was achieved, i.e. the stages the writer went through to reach this product were ignored and received no attention. It was only in the 1980s that arose a new awareness of the fact that each piece of writing had its own history and followed its own path way. In other words, no piece of writing comes from nothing; rather it is the outcome of a set of complicated cognitive operations. Under such circumstances, the process approach appeared and dominated the field of teaching writing as Weir (cited in Bader, 2007, p. 17) put it:

A current concern in writing theory and practice is with the new "pedagogical orthodoxy" of process writing where the main interest is in what writers do when they write. This approach sees writing as an exploratory generative collaborative process rather than a linear route to a pre-determined product. (p. 130)

Unlike the traditional approach which focuses on the final product, the process approach lays a particular stress on the writer as an independent producer of text, and on the distinct steps s/he follows to produce this text. This approach also regards writing as a non linear, generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they try to approximate meaning. (Zamel, 1983; cited in Hyland, 2003)

Gocsik of the “Dartmouth Writing Program” (2007; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p. 74) relates the stages that make up the writing process to a number of questions one should ask

when writing: "After all, well written essays don't fall from the sky. Rather, they are the result of a long laborious intensely personal process in which writers address several questions, ranging from what do I write about? "Who is my audience"? To "how do I structure my essay"? To "what sort of language and voice should I use"? This means that before putting pen on paper, expert writers should always determine the purpose of their writing, take into consideration the needs and expectations of their readers, and think about the way to shape their messages.

To reinforce the definition of the process-based approach, we include Murray(1992; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p. 74):

The process oriented approach refers to a teaching approach that focuses on the process a writer engages in when constructing meaning. This teaching approach concludes with editing as a final stage in text creation, rather than an initial one as in a product oriented approach. The process oriented approach may include identified stages of the writing process such as: pre-writing writing, and revising. Once the rough draft has been created, it is polished into subsequent drafts with the assistance of peer and teacher conferencing. Finally, editing and publication can follow if the author chooses to publish their writing. (p.16)

Although the writing process includes identified stages, these stages don't occur in a strict, linear manner; rather they are recursive, interactive, and potentially simultaneous as Raimes (1985: 229; cited in Tribble, 1996, p.39) Claimed:

Contrary to what many textbooks advice, writers do not follow a neat sequence of planning, organizing, writing and then revising. For while a writer's product- the finished essay, story or novel- is presented in lines, the process that produces it is not linear at all. Instead, it is recursive...

In other words, at any point in text creation, writers can switch from one stage to another, or return to one stage several times as the situation requires. This means that the stages of the writing process are not static; rather they are dynamic and can occur in parallel manner. For instance, at the revising stage, the writer may find it necessary to go back to pre-writing phase to create new ideas and language, or they may revise parts of their writing as they draft. In this context, Tribble (1997: 37-39; cited in Harmer, 2001, p. 258) pointed out "... and the various stages of drafting, reviewing, redrafting and revising, etc are done in a recursive way: we loop backward and move forward between these various stages". Zamel (1983; cited in Brookes and Grundy, 1998) also stressed the recursive nature of the writing process when she considered planning as not a single stage but as a distinctive thinking process that takes place many times during the act of composition.

2.2. Flower and Hayes Process of Writing

Linda Flower and John Hayes (1981) were the first founders and leaders of the writing process. According to them, the act of writing involves three major categories: planning, translating, and reviewing.

While planning, writers form internal representation of the knowledge they will use when they write. This knowledge will probably be more abstract than what they actually do write (P.58). Planning contains three sub processes: generating ideas, organizing, and goal setting.

While generating ideas, writers retrieve the information they need from long term memory, which "is a storehouse of knowledge about the topic and audience, as well as knowledge of writing plans and problem representations" (P.58)

While organizing, writers arrange their ideas meaningfully by categorizing them into main ideas and subordinate ideas. And while goal-setting, writers set goals for themselves. These goals can be procedural; "I want to start with energy", or substantive; "I have to relate A to B".

Translating, the second part of the writing process is when writers transcribe ideas into written language. During this phase, writers are required to deal successfully with the different demands of written English. The third and last component of the Writing process is 'reviewing' which depends on two sub-processes: evaluating and revising. Reviewing may be "a conscious process in which writers choose to reread for new or to evaluate and revise the physical text", or it may be an unconscious action when writers evaluate either their text or their own planning. (Nemouchi, 2008)

In their article, "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing" (1981), Linda Flower and John Hayes report the findings of their study which used a new model to observe the processes writers go through when writing. The conclusion they reached was that writers use a combination of cognitive operations which come out when needed. Further, they suggest that these operations are structured in a hierarchical way and that varied, changing levels of goals are key aspects of the writing process. Flower and Hayes believe their theory demonstrates that the act of creation is fed and by the ever-changing imagination, arts and goals of the writer". (Mackay, 2003)

Rejecting traditional research methods, Flower and Hayes relied on a new model which is protocol analysis in which students were assigned the task of writing a short interesting composition for a magazine. This should be done under the requirement of thinking aloud and being recorded on a tape-recorder while writing. The written material,

the students' notes, and the recordings were combined to form a single protocol, which is of great importance in that it gives valuable data on the factors that affect the process of writing. (Mackay, 2003)

Flower and Hayes (1981), organize the findings of their research into four main points. The first is that there is "a set of unique thinking processes that the writer selects and sorts during composition». They observed that writers began with the rhetorical problem to which they react to by writing. The rhetorical problem, the audience, and the writer's goals provide motivation. Flower and Hayes point out that an individual's success in this process can be achieved if the writer is able to define the problem. As the work develops, the text involves much more effort upon the writer. The growing text continually narrows the writer's options for the text that is to follow. In addition, they identify the writer's long term memory, which they define as "his/her life experience combined with the writer's external sources, as being involved in the creative process". Finally, the writer plans how to accomplish the assignment by creating an internal representation, which is regarded as the "spark that feeds the creation and organization of ideas" (Mackay, 2003)

Flower and Hayes use the term translating to describe the process of converting ideas into words on paper. This process requires taking abstract thoughts and expressing them according to the technical aspects of writing such as grammar. The next element in the process is reviewing in which the text is evaluated and changed till it fits the writer's goals. Flower and Hayes observed that "writers monitor their process of development and its progress as they write. Monitoring is affected by changing goals and the writer's method of writing. " (p.19)

Their second key point is that the cognitive processes in writing occur in a hierarchical manner, which means that within the same process, we may find other, more specific sub-processes. A hierarchical structure has strength in its flexibility. They suggest, by way of example, that composition can contain idea generation. (Mackay, 2003)

The third and central point of Flower and Hayes (1981) cognitive theory is that writing is goal directed. Goals have a hierarchical structure like the greater hierarchy of the processes involved in writing. Writers create goals as they write. Goals evolve during the writing process and they guide the writer in choosing which process to use at any given moment. All the other processes are managed by the writer's high, middle, and low-level goals. The researchers believe that "good writers generate easily achievable mid-level goals of good quality and quantity." "Poor writers, on the contrary, are caught in top and low level goals that have greater difficulty in advancing the process of writing". Flower and Hayes emphasize that, "in the act of writing, people regenerate or create their own goals in the light of what they learn" (p.45)

The fourth and final point in the study concludes that writers find purpose in goals and those goals evolve as the writer learns about their subject through the process of writing. The researchers classify patterns of goals as: "explore and consolidate state and develop, and write and generate" (p.74). From these revolving patterns of increasing complex goals come learning and creativity. Flower and Hayes conclude that the source of creativity comes from the writer's ability to create and generate ideas.

2.3. Kellogg's Process

In his model (1996), Kellogg highlights the role of working memory in writing and clearly describes the relationship between each writing process and the components of working

memory; the phonological loop, the visuospatial sketchpad, and the central executive. According to him, planning processes require access mainly to the visuospatial sketchpad because during this phase, writers visualize images, organize diagrams and plans. On the contrary, both translating and surely editing impose large demand on the phonological loop. In other words, visual working memory is needed for planning image-based conceptual content, while verbal working, Formulation is made up of planning and translating, Execution is made up of programming and execution, and monitoring consists of reading and editing.

Unlike Flower and Hayes (1981), Kellogg provides detailed explanation about what goes on in each system and how the systems interact with each other. For him, ideas and language are already determined at the formulation stage. Then the ideas and language become the input to the execution system where the writer decides to execute them. Once they are executed, the monitoring system interferes and looks for a discrepancy and a solution in conjunction with the formulation system. This latter starts again for new ideas and language to resolve the discrepancy detected in the previous system. Kellogg emphasizes that such interaction among these systems is "fundamental to the proposed model (p.59; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p. 90)

2.4. Models of the Writing Process

In trying to distinguish between skilled and unskilled writers, and to describe the different factors that influence the writing process, a number of researchers have set out models of the writing process. The two famous models are those developed by Hayes 1996, followed by an updated version known as 'Hayes and Flower Model' (1980), and that of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). While both of these models are based on first language

writing, they have important implications for second language as well. (Weigle, 2002)

2.4.1. Hayes Model (1996)

Hayes' model is essentially based on describing the various factors that affect writing such as the task environment, the individual, and the cognitive processes. While all these factors are important, the task environment and the individual are seen as the main factors that influence the writing process. The task environment is divided into the social environment and the physical environment. The former consists of the audience (real or imagined) and any collaborators in the writing process. The latter includes the text written so far, which reflects the writer's efforts, and the means by which this text is composed, e.g. handwriting or word processing. The central focus of the Hayes model, however, is the individual rather than the task environment. Hayes identified four individual components of writing: working memory, motivation and affect, cognitive processes, and long term memory. (Weigle, 2002)

According to Hayes, "the working memory is made up of three parts: phonological memory, which stores auditory or verbal information (i.e. speech), the visual-spatial sketchpad, which stores visually or spatially coded information (for example, written words or graphs), and a semantic memory, which stores conceptual information". (p.25)

Hayes model recognizes the important roles that motivation and affect play in writing, especially a writer's goals, beliefs and attitudes. For instance, he cites research by Dweck (1986) and Palmquist and Yong (1992) which suggests that students' beliefs about the causes of successful performance affect the amount of effort they are willing to exert. If students believe that writing is inherent and unchangeable gift and that success in writing is due to innate abilities, they tend to give up and work less, and vice versa. If they believe

that success is the result of effort, they tend to work hard.

Hayes' model also analyzes the cognitive processes involved in writing which include text interpretation, reflection, and text production. Text interpretation is used in reading or listening to source texts and understanding the information and the ideas included in these texts. Reflection means representing the knowledge created from the already existed material. Finally, in text production, new linguistic output (spoken or written) is produced from internal representation.

The last individual component in Hayes' model is long term memory, which information and knowledge related to the writing task are stored. Long term memory contains such things as task schemas, topic knowledge, audience knowledge, genre knowledge and linguistic knowledge. Task schemas contain information about how a particular task is organized, done, and evaluated. Topic knowledge is information about the topic being written about. It is a crucial element in writing as one can not write about something s/he does not have knowledge about. Knowledge of the audience includes information about the reader's social and cultural background like age, sex, social status, and educational background. Similarly, genre knowledge includes knowledge about socially and culturally appropriate forms that writing takes in a given situation for a given purpose. Finally, linguistic knowledge involves knowledge about language sources necessary for the writing process such as grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, etc. (Weigle, 2002)

2.4.2. Criticism of the Hayes' Model

While Hayes' model is significant as it gives a complete description of the various factors that influence writing, it has two shortcomings with respect to writing. The first is

that the Hayes model provides little explanation in defining the situational variables involved in writing. While Hayes merely notes that writing is social and lists the audience and collaborators as factors, he neglects the other situational variables like participants and setting. Besides, he does not give detailed examples of these variables. In short, the Hayes model does not describe the writing situation fully.

The second shortcoming of the Hayes model is that it limits the linguistic knowledge to the grammatical or structural aspects of language and pays little attention to discourse and socio-cultural knowledge which are also essential for writing.

2.4.3. Bereiter and Scardamalia Model (1987)

Bereiter and Scardamalia model addresses the fact that while all people can learn to write as well as they can speak, the ability to write well is a difficult and intensive process that only some people can do. To clarify this point, Bereiter and Scardamalia distinguish between two processes; knowledge telling and knowledge transforming. Knowledge telling is similar to spontaneous speech in that it requires very little planning and revision. This kind of writing is called 'natural' or 'unproblematic' as it can be done by any fluent speaker of language who has an understanding of writing system. (Weigle, 2002)

In the process of knowledge telling, the writer uses mental representation of the writing assignment to join both content (what is known about the topic) and schema for the type of discourse required for the assignment. Content and discourse cues (called knowledge and genre identifiers) are used to elicit relevant ideas from one's memory. These ideas are subjected to test appropriateness. The writing process ends when one's memory fails to find additional appropriate content. Bereiter and Scardamalia supply a quote from a twelve-year-old that describes this process quite obviously:

I have a whole bunch of ideas and write down until my supply of ideas is exhausted. Then I might try to think of more ideas up to the point when you can't get any more ideas that are worth putting down on paper and then I would end it. (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987: 9; cited in Weigle, 2002, p.32)

In contrast to knowledge telling, which is a 'natural and efficient process', knowledge transforming involves much more effort and skill. In this process, writing involves not only putting down one's thoughts on paper; rather it requires creation of new knowledge. The key concept in the process of knowledge transforming is problem analysis which includes the content-problem space and the rhetorical-problem space. In the former, the focus is on knowledge and belief whereas in the latter, the writer is concerned with how to best achieve the goals of the writing assignment. The content problem and the rhetorical problem are closely related. The writer solves problem in the content problem space by generating ideas.

In the next step, the solution (general ideas) becomes a problem in the rhetorical problem space where the writer modifies the ideas so that they meet rhetorical constraints. The modified ideas may again introduce a new set of problems to the content-problem space, so that they may be modified again in light of other constraints. In the words of Bereiter and Scardamalia:

There is a two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text. (p. 12; cited in Weigle, 2002, p.34)

This interaction between the problem spaces takes up a considerable amount of cognitive capacity. Furthermore, the ability to address both content-related and rhetorical problems is what separates proficient writers from poor writers. They use the

concepts of "knowledge -telling and knowledge-transforming strategies to capture the different behaviors' of more and less proficient writers. (Cited in Crawford, 2009, p.14)

2.5. The Stages of the Writing Process

Writing is a process made up of several stages. Although there is no total agreement on the definite number of these stages, scholars recognize that the following are the most recursive ones.

2.5.1.Pre-writing stage

Is the first writing stage in which the writer generates ideas and gathers information about the topic. The writer jots down whatever ideas come to their mind. The main principle behind this stage is to keep the ideas flow freely and smoothly without worrying about appropriateness, organization, grammar, and spelling because the focus is on quantity not quality. This step is too productive in that it allows writing as many ideas as possible in short time. Prewriting activities may include drawing, talking, thinking, reading, listening to tapes and records, discussion, interviews, conducting library research, etc. This phase can be done individually or in a group.

2.5.2.Organizing stage

Is the second stage in the writing process in which the writer puts the ideas into logical order. Organizing may take different forms like tree diagrams, maps, webs, vertical, outlines, etc. The advantage of this stage is to keep the writer "on target" and to make the reader follow easily.

2.5.3. Drafting stage

During this stage, the writer develops the ideas s/he wants to get across in paper. Beginning may be painful and difficult, producing false starts and frustration on the writer. In this phase, the writer does not need to worry about grammar, spelling, and punctuation because the focus is on content, not on the mechanics of writing. Harris (1993: 55; cited in Tribble, 1996, p.112) defined this step as the step in which the writer begins to “translate plans and ideas into provisional text”.

2.5.4. Revising stage

Is the stage where the writer attacks the big issues of content and organization. Some basic questions that should be asked here may include: “Is my argument expressed through a clear set of points or does my reader have to make conceptual leaps in order to follow me?”, “Are any sections repetitious and can they be missed out?”, and “Do I need to rearrange any sentences?”, (Hedge, 2000, p. 306). Concerning organization, the writer may ask the following questions: “Is the thesis statement clearly stated?”, ‘Do I need more minor supports?’, and “Do I have a concluding paragraph?” Revision may then involve additions, deletions, modifications in sentence structure, and rearrangement of ideas. It is a crucial writing phase in that it helps to improve the overall quality of writing. This can be better done with the assistance of teachers' feedback and peer response. Hedge (1988: 23; cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 115) considered revising as the stage which distinguishes good writers from poor writers when she said: 'Good writers tend to concentrate on getting the content right first and leave details like correcting spelling, punctuation, and grammar until later.’

2.5.5.Editing stage

This stage complements the previous one but this time the writer pays attention to smaller issues of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and handwriting.

2.5.6.Publishing stage

Is the last stage of the writing process in which the writing is delivered to its intended audience. Sommers and Collins (1984; cited in Nemouchi, 2008) and other investigators found that students produce better achievement and get much motivation when their work is published for a larger audience than the teacher. Classmates, other students, parents, and friends are among the potential audiences for students' written work.

However, one should bear in mind that these stages do not occur in a linear sequence; rather they are recursive and dynamic.

2.6. The Process Instructions

For the teaching of the writing process to be successful, a number of instructions should be given by the teacher all along the lecture. The teacher's role in the writing process is great in that s/he provides students with guidelines that help them write effectively. The following are among the many instructions that are proposed by scholars and that can fit any type of writing based on the writing process.

- Motivating students to write a lot without threatening with bad marks. The topic can be Proposed by the teacher, but if some students prefer to work on their own, they can.
- Raimes (1992; cited in Hyland, 2003, p.12) provided a useful summary of the teacher's role in the writing process which is seen as:

The teacher's role is to guide students through the writing process, avoiding an emphasis on form to help them develop strategies for generating, drafting, and refining ideas. This is achieved through

setting pre-writing activities to generate ideas about content" and structure, encouraging brainstorming and outlining, requiring multiple drafts, giving extensive feedback, seeking text level revision, facilitating peer responses, and delaying surface corrections until the final editing.

We notice here that Raimes put much focus on content than on form because once the ideas are put down on paper, it is easy to edit them. Raimes also placed great emphasis on feedback and peer responses as they help the writer to improve the overall quality of writing by drawing their attention to matters such as the ideas, their organization, and the language used, etc .

- Giving students opportunities to ask you as many questions as they can about their writing while producing their papers.
- Making students aware of the interaction that exists between them and their readers, which is important in conveying ideas clearly. This can be achieved by asking students to read out their writings to their classmates. In case of publishing, students should be aware of the fact that their performance will be read by their classmates, parents, friends, and other people.
- Encouraging collaborative writing as this latter contributes to the overall success of the writing activity in that students exchange and negotiate issues like the appropriateness of the ideas, the way to organize the paper, etc. As Hedge said: "collaborative writing in the classroom generates discussions and activities which encourage effective process writing" (1988:12; cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 105)
- Discussing with students the type of difficulty they encounter with at any phase of the writing process.

- Last but not least,. Adopting formative assessment which is a combination of critical comments with the good ones. This type of assessment is meaningful in that it would let students accept the teacher's negative comments because the latter would be coped with positive ones. Teachers also negotiate with student the mistakes s/he has done. Such activity would take the form of face to face conference and would be supported with questions of the type: "what do you mean?" or "are you sure of what you write here ...?" (Tribble, 2001, p.56- 57; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p.85)

To sum up, the teacher's role in the writing process is significant and he behaves as a facilitator than as a corrector.

2.7. Criticism of the Writing Process Approach

The process approach does not only have proponents, it has opponents too.

One difficulty in dealing with this approach is that "we still do not have comprehensive idea of how learners go about a writing task or how they learn to write" (Hyland, 2003, p.13). One possible explanation of this difficulty is that the teacher behaves like the researcher described by Brookes and Grundy (1990; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p.78) :

Many of the difficulties of research into the writing process are related to how far the researcher can get inside the writer's mind during the process of composing. There are three standard methods, each of which has its own advantages:

- Introspection: the researchers observe themselves at work writing, and afterwards note down what went on in their own minds during writing. This is difficult to do and not objective enough.

- Observation: the researcher observes and notes down all the outward signs and starts, the emendations, the blockages, as well as examining the final draft.
- Protocol technique: the experimental technique in which writers talk through what is going on in the minds as they make decisions about writing. This commentary is picked up by tape-recorder; and the researchers study this afterwards to ascertain as much as they can about what was going on in the mind of the writer. (p.23)

It is clear that these techniques have some limitations, especially when they are used with intermediate level writers in L2; one can not rely on the student to describe, note down, or record faithfully what goes on in his mind during the act of writing. According to McDonough (1995; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p.79), there are three interesting aspects of criticism:

- The first is that the protocol gives unreliable data because one protocol cannot show with what consistency a writer will use a characteristic mix of processes for different kinds of writing on different topics on different occasions for different audiences. (In other words, we cannot conventionalize the think- aloud protocol.)
- The second is that talking while writing is a very specialized task.
 - The third is that this specialized task can only be performed by certain individuals who are either particularly talented or specially trained in self- observation. (p.66)

Besides, writers are not fully conscious of their own cognitive processes as these are complex and involve visual as well as verbal elements; furthermore, trying to report on cognitive processes affects the writer's behaviors and, in fact, distorts them.

Another type of criticism is addressed to the process approach. A. Gaur (1984; cited in Nemouchi, 2008, p. 80), for example, pointed out:

"First of all, the meaning of teaching writing as a process has been misinterpreted". Instead of seeing their job as helping writers through a recursive problem-solving process, teachers may make writers through a set of fixed and rigid steps and stages; e.g. "Monday we brainstorm, Tuesday we write, Wednesday we revise." (p.132). In other words, in teaching writing as a process, teachers guide students into a linear sequence of planning, drafting, and revising. While in fact, they need to take into account both the general excursiveness of the process and the individual strategies of writers. (Hedge, 2000)

Reid (1984) also argued that the process based approach did not address issues such as the requirements of particular writing task, the development of schemata for producing written discourse, and variation in individual writing situations. While others such as Horowitz (1986), questioned whether the process approach realistically prepared students for the demands of writing in particular settings. (p.67). This means that the process based approach did not take into consideration the fact that each writing task involves different amounts of cognitive operations depending on the purpose of the writing, the genre, the level of formality required, the degree of familiarity with the readers, and the subject. For instance, a letter of complaint to an unknown person for the first time requires careful planning and revision, while a regular letter containing news to friends requires quick planning and revising. "This led to a focus on examining what is expected of students in academic and professional settings and the kinds of genres they need to have control of to succeed in these settings." (p.67)

Conclusion

This chapter is a thorough investigation of the writing process. It examined, first, the nature of the writing process and how it arrived on the scene, Then, it identified Flower and Hayes' process and referred to Kellogg's process. The chapter described also the process famous models and analyzed the several stages that form t his' process. Besides, it presented the instructions that should be followed when adopting this approach. The chapter concluded with some negative aspects of the process approach to teaching writing.

CHAPTER THREE

***INCREASING THE AWARENESS OF THE
WRITING PROCESS***

***THE TEACHERS
QUESTIONNAIRE***

CHAPTER THREE
INCREASING THE AWARENESS OF THE WRITING PROCESS
THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

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Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the analysis of both teacher and learner questionnaires. In the first section of this chapter, we will deal with the teacher's questionnaire and in the second section of the same chapter we will analyze the student's questionnaire. The collected data and the obtained results will enable us to diagnose the teaching / learning of writing with its strengths and weaknesses departing from a real situation to suggest the appropriate solutions to the existing problems faced by the students when they write, the participation of teachers is very important because they are aware of the students' abilities and the writing skill complexities.

3.1.1. Research Questions and Hypothesis

Writing is not a linear but a recursive process, where students plan, revise and redraft what they produce. It is through these different stages that the student develops his idea on the topic and the text at the same time. Writing is also considered a difficult and challenging aspect to be learned in a foreign language. For this reason, we have to put the following research questions:

- 1- What lies behind the difficulties of students when performing the writing skills?
- 2- To what extent they are aware of the writing stages?

On the basis of these questions, the following hypothesis is put forward:

Student difficulties in writing skills might be due their lack of awareness of the different writing stages.

3.1.2. The administration of the questionnaire

Most teachers' questionnaire was handed directly on 12/04/2012 to the teachers in the academic year 2011/2012. The questionnaire was given to (10) teachers of «written expression» who have adequate experience that makes their suggestions and observations valuable for the aim of this research. The teachers were very cooperative in that they handed back the answered copies in less than one week.

3.1.3. Description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is largely conceptualized on (12) open-ended and multiple choice questions divided as follows:

Section one: Teacher experience of writing process.

It is from question (1) to question (4) include general information about teacher experience in teaching writing skill.

Section two: Writing skill

It is from question (5) to question (8). They are about writing skills which aim at highlighting the teacher point of view about teaching writing for third year LMD student and the aspects that the students face problem with. It also seeks at knowing if the teachers adopt the process approach in teaching writing skill or not.

Section three: Awareness of writing process.

From the question (9) to question (12) are about the student degree of awareness of the writing process from the teacher perspective, the different stages of the process and the importance of proceeding through them from for a good quality of writing.

3.1.4. Analysis of the questionnaire

Section one : General Information

Question One

How long have you been teaching English?

Year of teaching english	N	%.
5 to 10 years	6	60 %.
11 to 20 years	3	30 %.
21 to 25 years	1	10 %.
total	10	100 %.

Table 3.1. Years of English Teaching

Among the ten teachers questioned, some have been exerting teaching for to 5 to 10 years, some between 11 to 20 years, while others have been teaching for 21 to 25 years. The information indicates that the majority of teachers (60%) have spent 5 to 10 years teaching, followed by 30% who have been teaching for 11 to 20 years, and the rest is one teacher (10%) who have taught English for 21 to 25 years .

The obtained results imply that teachers' experience is important in the analysis of this questionnaire.

Question Two

How long have you been teaching the module of "Written Expression"?

Years teaching of W.E	N	%.
01 to 5 years	07	70 %.
6 to 10 years	02	20 %.
11 to 15 years	01	10 %.
total	10	100 %.

Table 3.2: Years of teaching the module ‘written expression’

Table 3.2 shows that 70% of the teachers have been teaching writing for 1 to 5 years, 20% of them have been teaching writing for 6 to 10 years; whereas only 10% of them have teaching writing for 11 to 15 years.

Our teachers need to acquire more experience in teaching writing in order to teach efficiently and consequently let the students take advantage of such experiences to improve their writing. In addition, our teachers need to teach "Written Expression" to at least one group so that they are in direct contact with students as far as this skill is concerned.

Question Three

Do you think the ""Written Expression"" program you are teaching is enough to improve writing proficiency?

a- Yes

options	N	%.
yes	04	40%.
no	06	60%.
total	10	100%.

b- No

Table 3.3 The "Written Expression" Program and Writing Proficiency

The results of Table 3.3 show 70% of the teachers believe that the "Written Expression" program they are teaching is enough to improve writing level whereas 30 % of the teachers believe that the programme of W.Emodule is not sufficient to enhance students level in writing.

This leads us to think that the programmes should be reviewed in terms of contents and approaches as well. Time allotted to "Written Expression" should be satisfactory and should enable the students to cover what they are presented understandably without feeling they are rushing toward finishing the program by any means.

Question Four

If 'No', please, explain why,

This question completes the fifth's one, it aims at showing the teachers' reasons for their answers' choices. Teachers who selected "yes" represent 40%. Some said that the program is sufficient but needs to be applied well; others said that the program largely covers the expectations, the objectives, and the requirement of effective writing. Among those who answered "no", a number admitted that students are in short of sessions, while others claimed that the overloaded groups made the practice of writing difficult and hardens the teachers' feedback. The remaining teachers (who said "no") argued as follows:

- Training learners to write essays should be introduced right from the beginning of 1st year, not delayed up to 2nd year.
- Learners need develop linguistic competence.
- There is no coordination between teachers of W.E., grammar, etc, for remedy .

Section two : The writing process**Question Five**

Is writing an easy task for third -year university students?

a- Yes

b- No

options	N	%.
yes	3	30%.
No	7	70%.
Total	10	100%.

Table 3.4 The difficulties of writing skills for third year students

This question is about the teachers opinion about the task of writing for third - year EFL students, whether it is an easy or a difficult task. 70% of the participants said that writing is a difficult task for third -year students, and only 30% said that it is an easy task specially for the majority of the students who become good writers in English.

Question six

What are the aspects that your students have problems with?

a: Essay organization

b: Ideas organization

c: Grammar

d: Vocabulary

e: Conventions of writing (spelling, punctuation, capitalization ,...,etc)

This is a close ended question with multiple-choice, which asked teachers about the aspects their students have problems with when they write and require

them to choose one or more of the given options. The teachers responses to this question yield the results displayed in the following table.

The aspect students have problem with	N	%.
a	5	50 %.
b	4	40 %.
c	6	60 %.
d	7	70 %.
e	10	100 %.

Table 3.5 The aspects students have problem with writing

According to the results obtained, all the respondents have stated that their students have problems in all the aspects previously mentioned. Besides, as revealed in table above the percentages of the aspects are very close. Convention of writing ranks first with 100%; i.e., all the teachers said that their students have problems in these aspects, so, students need considerable amount of time in getting a good command of these aspects. Consequently the teaching of these conventions has to be emphasized.

The organization of ideas, vocabulary and grammar come in the second rank. We think that the problems in these aspects are primary due to the lack of practice because these aspects usually develop from extensive reading, some specific training and a good deal of practice. It is surprising to note that even essay organization poses a problem to some third -year learners. What makes the problem with this aspect surprising is that all the second - semester of the Written Expression programme in the second-year is about essay organization from A to Z.

The results obtained in table above confirm the respondents answers to question item 70% considered writing as a difficult task for third -year EFL students.

Question seven

What is the approach you use to teach writing?

a- The Product Approach

b- The Process Approach

c- Both

The aspects	N	%.
a	2	20 %.
b	7	70 %.
c	1	10 %.
total	10	100 %.

Table 3.6 The approaches used to teach writing

From the table above, we can see that 80% of the teachers use the process approach to teach writing, 10% of them admit using the product approach, whereas 20% of the teachers use both of them.

Question eight

Please, explain the reasons for choosing this approach.

Teachers provided us with the following reasons for their choice of the different approaches:

As it has been elaborated in the theoretical part of this research (chapter one), The product approach is concerned with the final result of the writing process, the process approach focuses on the process the writer engaged in when constructing Composition, whereas The two approaches can be used together depending on the students' needs and their individual writing abilities.

The replies given by the respondents, as shown in table above, allow to the conclusion that the process approach is the one which is widely used by teachers at

Mohamed khieder University to teach writing to second-year EFL students. In statistical terms, the highest rate 70% of teachers choose answer (a) an approach which sees writing as a process that involves a number of different activities such as setting goals and generating ideas that the writer has to engage in, but he is not obliged to follow these stages or activities in a linear way. The rest of the respondents 20% have opted for (b) the product approach which is interested in the final product of the writing process. Moreover, this approach requires from the learner to be engaged in imitating and transforming model texts in order to make students aware of the text features.

Concerning the teacher who prefer to depend on the two approaches, the results obtained indicate that 10% of the respondents teaches writing using this method which focuses the students' needs and their individual writing abilities.

Once more, we say that the results typically show a preference for the process approach as an approach that could help students to carry out a writing task effectively.

Question nine

What stage of the writing process is most difficult for your students?

a- pre-writing

b - writing first drafts

c - revising

d - editing

The aspects	N	%.
a	05	50%.
b	03	30%.
c	01	10%.
d	01	10%.
total	10	100%.

Table 3.7 The difficult stages for the students in writing process.

50% of teachers claim that students face the greatest difficulty in writing pre-writing, 30% of the teachers see that students have problems in writing first draft, and only 10% of the teachers see that the difficulty students face in the process of writing lies in revising and editing respectively.

As far as revising and editing are concerned, we note that they do not pose many problems to students when they tackle writing issues. This finding is really encouraging because it is our belief that these stages are very essential in the writing process since they give the opportunity to students to correct, polish and refine their drafts before handing them out.

Pre-writing and writing first drafts are the stages that cause most difficulty for students according to the teachers' responses. As far as pre-writing is concerned, it is our belief that jotting down ideas and getting prepared to write is very essential for producing appropriate compositions that is why teachers need to focus on this stage and prepare students well to write. On the other hand, writing first drafts is the heart of the writing process, and it is logical to consider it as the most difficult step in the writing process; however, students can succeed through it if they bear in mind that whatever they write is not the final draft, they have to come to revise and edit what they have written. In other words, they should follow their ideas without worrying about the writing mechanics.

Section three : The awareness of writing process

Question ten

Do you think that making learners aware of writing as a process is essential in writing?

a- Yes

b- No

The aspects	N	%.
a	10	100
b	/	/
Total	10	100

Table 3.8 The awareness of students in writing skill

Table above shows that all the teachers agree about the importance of awareness in writing. All the teachers said that making learners aware of the writing process is essential in writing.

Question eleven

Do your students follow all the writing stages?

a- Yes

b- No

The aspects	N	%.
a	/	/
b	10	100%.
total	10	100%.

Table.3.9. Students following the writing stages

All the teachers who answered the questionnaire claim that their students do not follow the writing steps. This finding is really surprising, because despite the fact that all the questioned teachers said that they ask their students to proceed through all the writing stages none of the teachers find their students really doing it. In this case, teachers should take some procedures to make their students follow the writing process

starting by raising their awareness of the effectiveness of the step-by-step writing through intensive practice and ending by obliging them to follow the writing steps by evaluating each step independently.

Question twelve

If “No”, please specify the stages your students proceed through

(You can choose more than one box)

a- pre-writing

b - drafting

c - revising

d- editing

The aspect	N	%.
a	05	50%.
b	08	80%.
c	02	20%.
d	02	20%.

Table 3.10 The stages students proceed through

From table above we can see that the drafting stage is the most common to students (80%), followed by the rewritings stage (50%). At the end come the editing and revising stages with 20%. It is not surprising to find that the drafting stage is the most followed by students since it is the heart of the writing process and the ‘actual act of writing’. However, from the teachers’ responses to this question, we find that revising and editing are the most ignored steps by students, a fact that is not beneficial for students when tackling the writing activity since all the writing steps are all of use when producing a piece of paper. Revising ; for example, is the stage when students look back at their writing and try to adjust content and realize substantial changes.

3.1.4. Discussion of the Results of the Questionnaire

In the first section which is concerned with general information, the findings show that the majority of teachers (70%) see that the “Written Expression” program they are teaching is enough to improve learners’ proficiency in writing, and this is something really encouraging.

The section of the process of writing shows that the majority of teachers (70%) use process approach, and 20% of them use the product approach product approach (see table 1.6). As shown in table 1.7, pre-writing is the stage that causes most difficulties for students. The major reason for these difficulties comes from the learners’ reduced awareness about the recursive nature of writing where students can move forward and backward to make the necessary changes.

The analysis of the last section –awareness of the writing process- reveals that all teachers admit that making learners aware of the writing process will help them a lot to produce better compositions (Q10, Q11). From the teachers’ responses, we can see that the majority of them ask their students to follow the writing steps. However, the majority of students do not follow their teachers’ advice and deny the process through which a piece of writing is produced.

Conclusion

The obtained results show that the writing skill is a complex activity that requires much time and practice from the learner's part and a lot of experience and guiding from the teacher's part. A focus should be put on the process approach rather than the product approach since the product is the result of any process of writing. Teachers should guide students through the writing process avoiding an emphasis on form to help them develop strategies for pre-writing, drafting and organizing ideas. Awareness of the importance of the writing process, as the results showed, is essential in the writing activity. Learners need to know that proceeding through the writing steps is not a waste of time; each stage contributes in making effective writing and in diminishing the troubles students face when they write .

***THE STUDENTS
QUESTIONNAIRE***

CHAPTER THREE
INCREASING THE AWARENESS OF THE WRITING PROCESS
THE STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

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Introduction

It seems appropriate to give the students an opportunity to express their ideas not only by means of assignments but via questionnaire as well. The questionnaire was devised in order to explore and investigate how the third year student confront the task of writing and the way they perceive the writing process in general also how the student confront the importance of the awareness of writing process. In this section we will see the results of the student questionnaire to check the validity of the research hypothesis.

3.2.1. The administration of the questionnaire

The target population of this study is third year science of language LMD English students at the University of Biskra. There are 42 students selected randomly each fifth and sixth in each group distributed over 11 group. The reason for choosing this population is that third year students have been studying writing stages for two years and, therefore, we suppose they have enough knowledge about the matter.

On the whole, the participants' ages vary from 19 to 24 years, with an exception of one student who is 29. It can be said that most of the students are young adult whose differences of ages would certainly not alter the results of this study.

Concerning gender, most participants are Female. There are precisely 36 females and 6 males. It is to be specified that girls are the dominant sex in the field of foreign language learning since many decades.

The participants are taught the subject of writing according to three sessions per week.

3.2.2. The description of the questionnaire

The questionnaires consist of 11 open – ended and multiple choice questions divided into three sections as follows:

Section one: General information (Q1 – Q3) : It is about how the students view the module of « written expression » interesting or not.

Section two: The writing skill (Q4 – Q7): It is about the writing skill. It aims to explore how the students deal with the different aspect of writing skill.

Section three: The awareness of writing skill (Q8 – Q11): This section seeks information about the student awareness of the writing skill.

3.2.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Section One : General Information

Question One

Do you find the module of "Written Expression" interesting ?

a-Yes

b-No

options	N	%
yes	40	95.23
No	02	4.76
Total	42	100

Table 3.11. How Students View the Module of "Written Expression"

Table 3.11 shows that 95.23 % of the students find the module of "Written Expression" interesting. This means that our students are aware of the importance of writing. It is to the teachers to guide and help them get more motivated. Surprisingly, only one student 4.76% said that "Written Expression" is not interesting, a result we did not expect at all!

Question two

Does your teacher encourage you to write at home?

a-Yes

b- No

option	N	%
yes	42	420%
no	/	/
total	42	100%

Table.3.12. Teachers encouragements in writing

All the students said that their teachers encourage them to write at home. We believe that giving students topics to write about makes them always active and is a good way to enhance their writing.

Question three

If "Yes", please, explain how

The explanations of the students can be summed up in the following points :

- Our teacher encourages us to write at home, s/he often gives us activities and frequently talks about the importance of writing.

- S/he encourages us to write, and repeatedly says: the more you write, the more you become good writers.
- Our teacher encourages us to write, making use of an English – English dictionary in case we do not find the words.
- S/he insists on the fact that we have to write and write and write again to learn writing.
- In most T.D sessions, our teacher makes a student go to the blackboard to write his/her paragraph, and at the end we correct the mistakes.

Section two : writing process

Question four

Good writing is: (You can tick more than one box)

- a- Correct Grammar
- b- Good Ideas
- c- Precise vocabulary
- d- Spelling
- e- Other

options	N	%
a	40	95.24
b	30	71.43
c	33	78.57
d	20	47.61
E (punctuation)	10	23.81

Table 3.13 : What is good writing

Table 3.13 shows that the great majority of the students 95.24 % consider that good writing is correct grammar. 71.43% of the students indicated that good writing relates to good ideas and 78.57 % of them see that it relates to precise vocabulary. Only 20% and 10 % of the students see that it relate to spelling and punctuation.

The different categories are prioritized as follows:

- 1- Grammar.
- 2- precise vocabulary
- 3- good ideas
- 4- spelling
- 5- Punctuation.

Question five

What is the most difficult step in writing according to you?

- a- pre-writing b- writing first drafts c- revising d- editing

The aspects	N	%
a	15	35.72 %
b	18	42.86 %
c	5	11.91 %
d	4	9.52 %
total	42	100 %

Table 3.14: The Most Difficult Step in the Writing Process

From Table 3.14, we see that the majority of students (42.86%) have difficulties with one of the most important stages in the writing process, pre-writing 35.72 % of the students said that writing initial drafts is the step in the writing process that gives them most difficulty. Although revising and editing are crucial in the writing process, they do not seem to cause much difficulty.

Question six

When you re-read what you have written, do you make changes concerning:

(You can choose more than one answer)

a- content organization b- vocabulary c- grammar d- punctuation e- spelling

The aspects	N	%
a	11	26.19 %
b	9	21.43 %
c	18	42.86 %
d	7	16.66 %
e	5	11.90 %

Table 3.15: what Students do when they re-read thier writing?

It seems from Table 3.15 that the category which requires the most changes is content organization (26.19%). The categories of vocabulary and grammar come next with 42.86% and 21.43% . Finally, 16.66% of the students make changes concerning punctuation and 11.90% of them concerning spelling.

We note that students are more concerned with changes in form, especially grammar rather than content when they read back. This finding is not really encouraging since the adopted approach is the process approach where there is a greater focus on the content rather than the form.

We note that students are more concerned with changes in content organization when they read back. This finding is really encouraging since the adopted approach is the process approach where there is a greater focus on the content rather than the form.

Question seven

While writing, do you think it is important to :

- a- Go back and think about what you wrote
- b- Try to make everything perfect from the very beginning
- c- Write with non-stop and then you revise what you have written

The aspects	N	%
a	7	16.66 %
b	5	11.90 %
c	30	71.43 %
total	42	100 %

Table 3.16: What Students do when they Write?

As shown in Table 3.16. 16.66% of the students think it is important to go back and think about what they wrote, and only 11.90 % of them think it is important to make everything perfect from the beginning, whereas 71.43% of them think it is important to write with non-stop, and then revise what they have written. Such a finding is important because this is what students are encouraged to do when adopting the process approach which views writing as a recursive activity where writers can move forward and backward.

Section Three : Awareness of the Writing skill

Question eight

Do you know that writing is a developmental activity that contains different steps?

- a- Yes
- b - No

The aspects	N	%
a	42	4200 %
b	/	/
total	42	100 %

Table 3.17 : Students Awareness about the Writing Process

All the students agree that writing is developmental activities contains different steps. Because proceeding through all the stages of the process is very helpful in improving students' writing.

Question nine

What are the writing stages you are familiar with?

(You can choose more than one answer)

a- pre-writing

b- drafting

c - revising

d - editing

The aspects	N	%
a	35	83.33 %
b	40	95.24 %
c	22	52.38 %
d	15	35.71 %

Table 3.18 : Students' Familiarity with the Writing Stages.

As Table 3.18 shows, drafting is the most familiar stage to students with 95.24% followed by the prewriting stage with 83.33%. The revising and the editing stages gained 52.38% and 35.71%. It is expected that the drafting stage gains the highest percentage of

familiarity to students as known by everybody as the actual act of writing. However, the other stages should not be neglected since they all together contribute to improving the quality of students' writings.

Question ten

When writing compositions, do you proceed through all the writing steps?

a- Yes b - No

The aspects	N	%
a	30	71.43 %
b	12	28.57 %
total	42	100 %

Table 3.19: Students' Proceeding through all the Writing Steps

Table 3.19 reveals that the majority, 71.43% of the students follow all the writing stages when producing composition, an attitude that is very encouraging because it is very important for students to emphasize the process of writing rather than the product when they write, especially when the process approach is adopted. However, 28.57% of the students do not follow all the writing steps when producing compositions. Here, and because of the great benefits of following the writing process, we advise teachers to help students stick to all the writing steps when they produce compositions.

Question eleven

If "No", please, explain why.

The explanation of the nine (12) students, 28.57% was that they do not have enough time to go through all the writing steps, and sometimes they combine some stages together in order to save time like prewriting with drafting and revising with editing. They also said that they consider some stages like revising and editing not very important so they drop them.

3.2.4. Discussion of the Results of the Questionnaire

The section dealing about general information shows that almost students (95.23%) find the module of writing interesting. Such a finding is very encouraging, and the teacher has to get students more motivated and interested.

When speaking about the writing process, we find that 42.86% of the students who answered the questionnaire face most difficulties during the drafting stage. This finding is reasonable since drafting is the actual act of writing. However, students can overcome this difficulty if they keep in mind that whatever they write is not the final product; they should consider the first drafts as first attempts that serve for achieving an adequate final product. From the analysis of students' responses about the writing process section, we can see that Content organization is the most important component according to them. This result does support the claim of adopting the process approach which focuses mainly on the content rather than the meanings.

The analysis of the last section –awareness of the writing process- reveals that the majority of students have some awareness of the writing process; however, they lack the necessary awareness about the importance of the writing stages and the efficiency of multiple drafts in improving their writing. From students' responses, we can see that the majority of them consider prewriting and drafting as major stages while they view revising and editing as minor ones and thus disregard them when they write. Students should be

made aware of the importance of each single stage; because all the stages of the process contribute to help students produce a good piece of writing.

Conclusion

The analysis of students' questionnaire reveals that students have a little difficulty in approaching the writing task. It confirms that writing is a challenging and complex skill because students showed that they have difficulties in dealing with the different aspects like grammar, vocabulary, content and ideas organization as well as the other mechanics of writing, spelling and punctuation. The results of the study also strongly support the importance of the process approach where recursiveness is applied, going through the different stages of prewriting, drafting, revising and finally editing. Furthermore, the results show that students have a little awareness about the writing process, but they lack the necessary awareness about the importance of going through all the writing stages for producing better compositions.

***GENERAL
CONCLUSION***

General Conclusion

This dissertation is undertaken to determine the impact of students' awareness of the writing stages on their writings. It has comprised two main parts; the first is a theoretical work and has been divided into two chapters. The first chapter is a general overview of writing and the different approaches to teaching it. The second chapter includes detailed information about the process approach to teaching writing. The second part of the thesis has been devoted to the empirical research and has been divided into three sections. The first one is about the description of the questionnaire. The second and third sections deal with the analysis and evaluation of students' answers.

The interesting outcome of the first part embodied in the useful information we presented on writing; its nature, its basic rules, its relationship with speaking and reading, and the approaches to teaching it, with some strategies that can be used to raise learners' awareness in foreign language learning.

The second chapter is a thorough exploration of the writing process in terms of its nature, its models, its stages, the instructions that should be followed when using this approach, and finally, some of its deficiencies.

The second part of the dissertation is a field investigation which took the form of the questionnaire that has been carried out by third year LMD English students at the Department of Foreign Languages, University of Biskra. It has consisted of three sections; the first one is concerned with the description of the questionnaire, the second one with the analysis of students' papers to determine the extent to which students are aware of the various stages of the writing process, and the third one is essentially concerned with the

evaluation of students' papers to check whether there is any relationship between their level of writing and their awareness of the writing stages.

The obtained results could confirm to a large extent the hypothesis which stated that students would produce better writing if they were aware of the writing stages in the sense that the majority of students who showed total or partial awareness of the writing stages got good and excellent marks.

Recommendations

In the light of the obtained results, we recommend the following:

- The process approach to teaching writing should be generalized and adopted by the teachers of written expression in the Department of Foreign Languages. In other words, teachers should be sufficiently trained till they master the different phases of the writing process.
- Teachers should devote enough time and effort when dealing with the numerous stages of the writing process.
- Teachers should not teach the various writing stages as a set of rigid and fixed steps; rather, they should bear in mind that these stages are recursive and dynamic. In other words, students can return to any stage of the writing process several times during the act of composing.

- Students should recognize the importance of using the writing stages, and should be told regularly that the more they go through them, the more they produce better writing.
- Students should also be aware of the fact that each writing task requires different portions of cognitive operations.
- Teachers should encourage students to go through the different stages of the writing process by creating activities that involve students to make use of these stages. For instance, a teacher may ask his/her students to write journals.
- Teachers should also motivate students to move through the several stages of writing by giving good marks to those students who apply these stages.
- Last but not least, students should be provided with enough time when they write so that they could go through the stages of the writing process.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 01
THE STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

THE AWARENESS OF WRITING SKILLS

**THE CASE STUDY THIRD YEAR LMD STUDENTS UNIVERSITY OF
BISKRA**

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire to express your attitudes towards the writing skill, the writing process as well as the importance of awareness in writing. Your answers are very important for the validity of the research we are undertaking. As such, we hope that you will give us your full attention and interest.

Please, mark (✓) the appropriate box (es) or give full answer(s) on the broken lines.

Thank you, in advance, for your collaboration.

Mr. Mekki chaouch

Department of Languages

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University of Biskra

Section One : General Information

1. Do you find the module of "Written Expression" interesting?

Yes

No

2. Does your teacher encourage you to write at home?

Yes

No

3. If "Yes", please, explain how

.....
.....
.....
.....

- Section two : writing process

4. Good writing is: (You can tick more than one answer)

a- Correct Grammar

b- Good ideas

c- Precise vocabulary

d- Spelling

e- Other

5. What is the most difficult step in writing according to you?

e- pre-writing

f- Writing first drafts

g- Revising

h- Editing

6. When you re-read what you have written, do you make changes concerning:

(you can choose more than one answer)

a- Content organization

b- Vocabulary

c- Grammar

d- Punctuation

e- Spelling

7. While writing, do you think it is important to :

a- Go back and think about what you write.

b- Try to make everything perfect from the very beginning .

c- Write with non-stop and then you revise what you have written.

-Section Three : Awareness of the Writing skill**8. Do you know that writing is a developmental activity that contains different steps?**

Yes

No

9. What are the writing stages you are familiar with? (you can choose more than one answer)

a- Pre-writing (generating ideas, planning, etc).

b- Drafting

c- Revising

d- Editing

10. When writing compositions, do you proceed through all the writing steps?

Yes

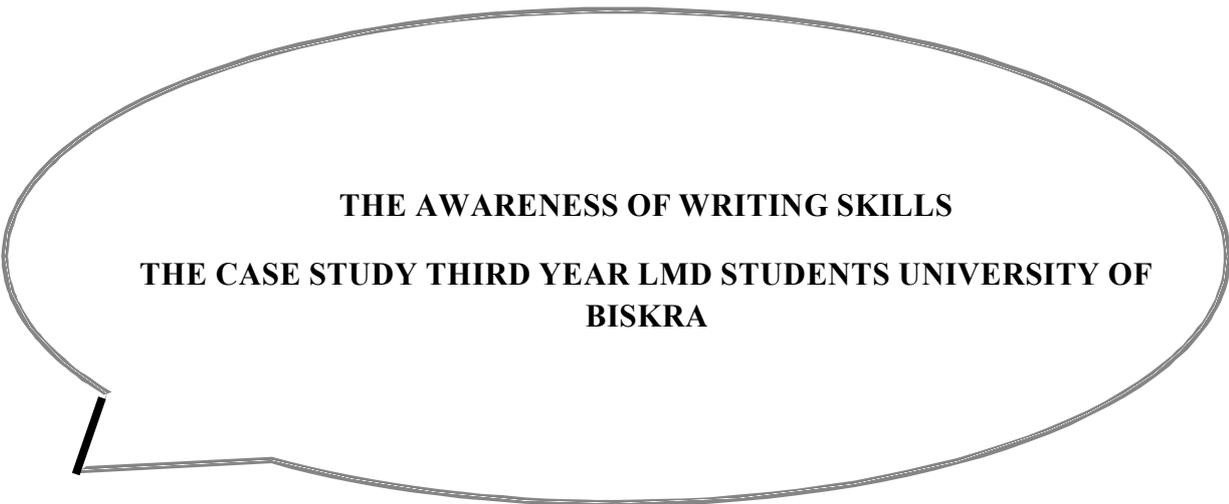
No

11. If “No”, please, explain why

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you

APPENDIX 02
THE TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE



THE AWARENESS OF WRITING SKILLS
THE CASE STUDY THIRD YEAR LMD STUDENTS UNIVERSITY OF
BISKRA

Dear teachers,

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire to express your attitudes towards the writing skill, the writing process as well as the importance of awareness in writing. Your answers are very important for the validity of the research we are undertaking. As such, we hope that you will give us your full attention and interest.

Please, mark (√) the appropriate box (es) or give full answer(s) on the broken lines.

Thank you, in advance, for your collaboration.

Mr. Mekki chaouch
Department of Language
Faculty of Letters and Languages
University of Biskra

Section One : General Information**1. How long have you been teaching English?**

..... Year(s)

2. How long have you been teaching the module of “Written Expression”?

..... Year(s)

3. Do you think that the “Written Expression” programme you are teaching is enough to improve your students’ level in writing?Yes No **4. If “No”, please, explain why****Section Two:** The Process of Writing**5- Is writing an easy task for third -year university students?**Yes No **6- What are the aspects that your students have problems with?**a: Essay organization b: Ideas organization c: Grammar d: Vocabulary e: Conventions of writing (spelling, punctuation, capitalization...etc)

7. What is the approach you use to teach writing?

a- The Product Approach

b- The Process Approach

c- Both

8. Please, explain the reasons for choosing this approach

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. What stage of the writing process is most difficult for your students?

a- pre-writing

b- Writing first draft

c- Revising

d- Editing

Section Three: Awareness of the Writing Process

11. Do you think that making learners aware of writing as a process is essential in writing?

Yes

No

14. Do your students follow all the writing stages?

Yes

No

15. If “No”, please specify the stages your students proceed through (you can tick more than one box)

- a- Pre-writing
- b-writing first Drafting
- c- Revising
- d- Editing

Thank you

Résumé

L'expression écrite d'une langue étrangère est parmi les pratiques les plus compliquées pour les étudiants des langues étrangères. L'écriture est la plus difficile des compétences de la langue, parce qu'elle demande beaucoup d'efforts et de pratique de la part des étudiants pour atteindre un niveau acceptable. En effet, la plupart des étudiants affrontent des difficultés pour produire un essai en bonne et due forme. L'objectif de cette thèse est d'identifier et de mesurer l'effet de la maîtrise des étapes du processus d'écriture. L'act d'écriture est un processus composé de plusieurs étapes que tout un chacun se doit d'en être conscient afin de pouvoir produire un bon écrit.

Afin de vérifier la validité de l'hypothèse qui stipule que tout étudiant conscient des étapes du processus d'écriture doit pouvoir bien écrire, nous avons conçu deux questionnaires : l'un pour les enseignants et l'autre pour les étudiants de 3^{ème} année D'Anglais à l'université Mohamed khieder Biskra. Il s'agissait, en fait, de mesurer la maîtrise des étapes du processus d'écriture et de réflexion sur le document corrigé. Une série de recommandations a été faite à la lumière des résultats obtenus.

ملخص

إن التعبير الكتابي باستعمال لغة أجنبية من بين أهم النشاطات وأكثرها تعقيدا و أشدها تحديا لطلبة اللغات في جامعة محمد خيضر - بسكرة. كما تعد الكتابة من بين أصعب المهارات التي تتطلب مجهودا معتبرا و ممارسة متواصلة من طرف الطالب لكي يبلغ مستوي مقبول في الكتابة و نظرا لصعوبة التحكم في هذه المهارة فإن كثيرا من الطلبة يواجهون متاعب في إنشاء مقال مضبوط و صحيح و مفهوم.

تحاول هذه الدراسة أن تعرف أثر و عي الطلبة بمراحل الكتابة في الممارسة الكتابية. بنا أن الكتابة عبارة عن عملية مكونة من عدة خطوات، يهدف هذا البحث إلى تبيين إلى أي مدى و عي الطلاب مراحل الكتابة و إذا ما يمكن لهذا الوعي أن يؤدي إلى نتائج أحسن و أفضل. لهذا سوف تجري استبيان لاثنتين و أربعين طالبا في تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية سنة ثالثة (ل. م. د) و عشرة أساتذة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر - بسكرة.

سيتم تفحص إجابة الطلبة و الأساتذة ثم تقيم للتأكد إذا كان هناك نقص في و عي الطلبة بمراحل الكتابة و على ضوء النتائج التي نتحصل عليها نقترح مجموعة من التوجيهات التي نظن أنها يمكن أن تكون مفيدة لكل من الأساتذة و الطلبة.