

## **A STUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCESS APPROACH TO THE TEACHING/LEARNING OF THE COURSE BASIC WRITING SKILLS: THE CASE OF HAWASSA UNIVERSITY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

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

**KEYWORDS:** The Process Approach, the Product Approach, Communicative Approach to Language Teaching, Academic Writing, Stages of Writing, Process-Oriented Teaching Materials

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

Writing is one of the important language skills which have multidimensional advantages in different aspects of human life. Among its several contributions, the role it plays in promoting the academic performance of students is underscored by a large number of scholars repeatedly.

Despite the fact that writing is an indispensable language skill before and after school life of students, studies conducted subsequently revealed that it is not easy to develop it as it is often vulnerable to such factors as psychological, cognitive and linguistics. Furthermore, the difficulty of writing skills is attributed to such factors as the method of instruction, the kind of teaching materials, beliefs and perceptions of the instructors on the current theories and practices, the class-size, the interest of the learners to augment their writing proficiency, the time given for practicing, inter-alia.

The first approach to writing instruction, that is, the product approach, geared towards almost exclusively on mechanics, commonly referred to today as conventions. The major purpose of writing was to enable learners produce error-free texts. During this period, the behaviorists' view of language teaching, which thought learning as an action of stimulus and response in the learner was influential. The other pedagogical phase is characterized as a paradigm where the writer is at the center of attention in the teaching/learning process. The core idea of the philosophy of the school was that the only man who has brought behavioral change is the man who learned how to learn; the man who learned how to adapt and change; the man who realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives basis for security. Therefore, the role of the teachers, based on this school of thought, is to carefully follow up what writers do in the process of developing a given text and give them comments to write better.

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

When we associate the situation with realities in the School of Language and Communication Studies at Hawassa University, Basic Writing Skills is one of the courses which are being offered as a common course to all freshman students who have successfully passed the pre-requisite course entitled, Communicative English Skills. The major objective of the course is to enable students express themselves in written English flexibly where and when necessary. However, whether the teaching/learning is going on in the light of modern approach or not has been an area of further investigation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Investigations on improving students' writing skills have been issues for long years. These days, as most of the second language classrooms are highly influenced by the communicative approach to second language teaching, emphasizing the process approach to composition instruction is mandatory in writing classes. Experience and research results show that in the contemporary writing classes, emphasizing accuracy over communicative intent is likely self-defeating because the teaching of writing successfully achieves its goal when students work with their writing and the teachers with their students. In this regard, Bracewell (2001) remarks that it is unthinkable to marginalize the process approach to writing from the cognitive developmental psychology and the communicative approach to language teaching. By the same token, White and Arndt (1995) explain that the process approach, which emanates from the cognitive developmental psychology, considers writing as a goal oriented and recursive act where a writer discovers meaning and shapes it through the writing process.

On the basis of the experience of the researcher as a writing instructor at university level and the informal discussions that he held with a number of writing instructors, most of them are of the opinion that most freshman students produce written texts which do not meet the required standard when they develop term-papers, assignments, examinations and other discourses. Moreover, instructors from other departments, who are conducting courses other than English, are informally heard that they face so many serious challenges when they evaluate paragraphs or essays that students produce while they respond to different subjective items of examinations. The deterioration of the students' writing skill is further confirmed by a number of local researchers such as Solomon (2004), Tsegaye (2006) Haregewoin (2008) and others.

In spite of the fact that difficulties in writing are attributed to multifarious factors, the conspicuous one is level of

emphasis given to the implementation of more appropriate language teaching theories and approaches. Due to this reason, the current Educational and Training Policy of Ethiopia encourages the application of the communicative approach to teaching English language skills at any level of learning. Similarly, the course outline designed for the course Basic Writing Skills by the School of Language and Communication Studies at Hawassa University states that the teaching/learning has to be conducted in line with the principles of the communicative approach to language teaching.

As a staff member of the school, the researcher informally hears different views from both writing instructors and students and observes different practices with regard to the teaching/learning of the course. Some instructors are heard saying that the course is one of the relevant courses which are being conducted through the process approach to help students express themselves successfully in written English both before and after their university life. Others are contrarily heard complaining that the course could not achieve its goal due to the conventional method of teaching some instructors frequently employ. The rationale for conducting this research is, thus, to investigate the extent to which the process approach is implemented in offering the course at Hawassa University. To achieve this, this research attempts to answer the following basic research questions:

- What is the perception of both instructors and students about the methods of teaching/learning being employed in Basic Writing classes at Hawassa University?
- To what extent the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills are feasible in handling writing lessons in the light of the process approach?
- To what extent do Basic Writing Skills instructors at Hawassa University implement the process approach?
- What are the most pressing factors, if any, which are attributed not to fully implement the process, approach in Hawassa

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which the process approach to the teaching/learning of writing is implemented in conducting the course Basic Writing Skills in Hawassa University and thus the study specifically aims at:

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

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is envisaged primarily to help writing instructors specifically at the university level to assess their approach to writing instruction and identify their strong and weak sides so as to improve the standard of their teaching.

Moreover, it may help them reconsider their teaching materials that they are using in their Basic Writing Skills classes and make them more suitable to implement the process approach. Secondly, the findings of this study may also give hint to material developers on the development of teaching materials especially in the context where the process approach is influential. Finally, it may serve as a spring board for other researchers in the field to examine the findings meticulously and conduct further investigations in other academic settings.

### **Scope of the Study**

In order to achieve the aim of this study, out of twenty-three universities in the country, while this research was being conducted, Hawassa University was selected from the Southern Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. The first reason was that it has been my work place thus I have access to collect relevant data from each research subject as easily as possible. Secondly, I have taught various writing courses in this university for several years; consequently, I can easily associate some of the responses that I got from the respondents in line with my own experience. Thirdly, as long as this research is largely qualitative in nature, if the data are selected from large sample size, it will be cumbersome to discuss them deeply and exhaustively. University level students writing instruction is selected due to the fact that a wide range of writing courses, by and large, are conducted at university level.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **The Challenging Nature of Writing**

In spite of its crucial role in all walks of life, writing is not an easy skill that can be achieved without experiencing lots of ups and downs. Conrad, for example, expresses his own experience: "I sit down religiously every morning. I sit down for eight hours every day-and the sitting down is all In the course of that working day of 8 hours, I write three sentences which I erase before leaving the table in despair... sometimes it takes all my resolution and power of self-control to refrain from butting my head against the wall (1965:1).The above complaints point out that writing is a challenging skill which requires controlling a number of factors that deter its progress.

## **APPROACHES TO TEACHING WRITING**

### **The Product Writing Approach**

The Philosophical foundation of this approach is the behavioral psychology and the structural linguistics. According to the proponents of this approach, learning in general, language learning in particular, is considered as a habit formation. In the context of learning writing, thus, students are expected to imitate the model so as to comprehend the pattern of the language. Hillocks,(1987) notes the theoretical underpinnings of the product approach stating that it is a traditional approach which encourages students to mimic a model piece of writing and produce their own replica text.

### **The Process Writing Approach**

The process movement originally came into view aiming at improving teaching composition to native English speaking students. The model advocates an approach to composition teaching that emphasizes students' writing process rather than the product. Assuming that the ESL/EFL writing process is similar to that of the first language, early ESL/EFL process enthusiasts borrowed the methods and the techniques from the English language class to be used in an EFL/ESL writing class that allow students ample time and freedom to write in the real sense. As studies indicate, this approach is these days influential almost in all EFL contexts. In connection to this, Matsuda (2003) notes that the process movement

over the past few decades has been considered the most successful paradigm in the history of pedagogical reform in the teaching of writing. Similarly, Haregewoin (2008:10) upholds the above view suggesting: "Students' achievement is higher when the teaching approach emphasizes on writing as a process." According to this approach, the writers start off with an overall plan in their mind then think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. Hence, writers who have passed through this approach are characterized as writers who have a sense of purpose, a sense of meaning and a sense of direction Cooley (1992). As a result of this, the proponents of the paradigm believe that learning to write involves creative thinking so as to discover meaning which could be polished and republished in the course of the hierarchical movements.

### **Lesson Presentation through the Process Approach**

The basic Principle developed by the theorists of the process approach is that knowledge in each discipline is interconnected with each other. Thus, when this principle is applied to writing instruction, students become more effective in their writing when they are made to learn writing through continuous and meaningful practices without giving emphasis to a single sentence or paragraph. As a result, the primary focus of this approach is to enhance students' fluency in writing. This, however, does not mean that other approaches are entirely marginalized. For its successful presentation, the lesson delivery is divided into three phases: planning (pre-writing), drafting (composing) and reviewing (evaluation). Planning phase, according to White and Arndt (1995), includes generating ideas, goal setting and organizing. Generating ideas is meant to gathering information which would enable to solve the problems in accordance with the goal set ahead of the writing task. At drafting (composing) phase, writers make the transition from idea-generating or theme- identifying phase to the reader- based writing, which will constitute the final piece of writing. At this stage, writers utilize the ideas generated and structured during the planning stage and write them out depending on their own experience and the input they acquired during the pre-writing and while writing stages. Reviewing (evaluation) entails deleting, reformulating, cutting, moving different parts of writing to different positions, adding new ones and even sometimes going back and revising, etc. In the process of reviewing, evaluation is the most significant activity which enables to judge the extent to which the whole writing is successful in achieving the goal.

### **The Belief and Perception of Teachers and Students on Writing and Its Instruction**

Writing experts report that the beliefs of both teachers and students can have a serious impact on the teaching/learning of writing skills. Brookhart and Freeman (1992), in this case, explain that writing teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing lesson, method of teaching and their students can affect either positively or negatively the writing instruction. Entwistle (1998) upholds the above view stating that there is a strong relationship between the students' beliefs and their writing status whether they are poor, average or good writers. When the students develop positive perception about writing and writing instruction, they can gather all their strengths and strive towards their goal vigorously. When learners do not have positive perception on the given writing activity, on the other hand, their inner motive will be below the mark, thus, it is difficult to bring about substantial progress on their writing.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

In order to deal with the research problems in this study holistically, the research is mainly designed qualitatively. The basic reason is that the data collected about the subjects' perceptions, beliefs, classroom behaviours, phenomena, processes etc., largely require qualitative (inductive) reasoning. Furthermore, when the research is designed non-

experimentally, the researcher could carry out in-depth investigations on research issues aiming at answering the questions, what is happening, why is it happening and how is it happening Eisnerand and Peshkin (1990) and Peters (1999). The other reason for designing the research non-experimentally was that the researcher's understanding about the nature of knowledge and practices would be best represented, analyzed and explained as deeply as possible in conformity with qualitative paradigm.

### **Research Data Sampling**

Several qualitative researchers remark that there is no fixed way to determine the sample size of the population in qualitative study. To avoid some complications, however, the researcher used the currently widely accepted model of qualitative data sampling known as data saturation. In determining the sample size of respondents to the questionnaires, however, he used the sample-size determining formulae suggested by Israel (2009). Accordingly, he selected 100 respondents who responded to the questionnaires.

### **Research Instruments**

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

### **Method of Data Analysis**

In analyzing the qualitative data, coding the responses, identifying categories or themes and explaining their meanings were the main procedures followed. In evaluating the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills, the researcher summarized and adapted the guiding frame-works suggested by Long (1981) and Cunnings worth (1995). The parameters are: 1. Are the materials contextualized and consist of problem solving activities? 2. Does the degree of complexity of the course materials go in conformity with the academic standard of students? 3. Is there enough variety? 4. Do the contents of the materials relate to the real life of the students? In analyzing the questionnaire data, the researcher used the most important descriptive statistics like mode, percentage, minimum and maximum values.

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Discussions of the Results of the Observations Sessions**

As the results secured from the observations conducted subsequently in two Basic writing Skills instructors' classes revealed, the first instructor largely implemented the process approach in conducting the lessons. Students, for example, were given opportunity to write their own paragraphs either by selecting their own titles or using one of the titles given by the instructor. Secondly, the instructor was encouraging students to generate ideas individually and forward them to the group members during the discussion sessions. Thirdly, moving around the classroom and supervising each student's activity is one of the roles expected from process-oriented writing instructor.

When we examine the observation data in the second Basic Writing instructor's class, similarly it is possible to conclude that the activities were conducted by and large through the process approach. However, we see that there were activities, which were performed pursuant to the principles of the product approach. For example, under some

circumstances, students were not oriented how to pass through each stages of writing. Secondly, most feedbacks were given at the end of the students' writing. This signifies that the product approach had its own room in conducting the lessons. In general, both Basic Writing Skills instructors gave more emphasis to the process approach though the product approach had its own incontestable room.

## **DISCUSSIONS OF THE RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS**

### **Discussions of the Results of Instructors' Interviews**

In discussing the data in the semi-structured interviews, the researcher used the following abbreviations: Resp<sub>1</sub> \_\_instructor one and Resp<sub>2</sub> \_\_instructor two, etc.

When the respondents were asked the contribution of group discussion in process writing classes, three of the respondents had the perception that group discussions are relevant to integrate different language skills and learn from each other freely. (Resp<sub>4</sub>), however, had the perception that writing is a personal activity therefore if group discussion is always used in writing classes, students will hardly generate ideas and produce various written texts independently.

Regarding perceptions about requirements that help students improve their writing skills promptly, all of the respondents agreed that students necessarily need to have good command of grammar to learn writing and improve their skills. Their argument is that grammar is the basement of effective communication in writing. Thus, unless students have a good deal of grammar knowledge, it is difficult to learn and improve writing skills as grammar and good writing are inseparable.

When their perception about the teaching method that they used in their Basic Writing Skills was examined, two of the instructors (50%) of them perceived that they often presented the course in harmony with the principles of the process approach. The other two (50%), however, were of the perception that giving more emphasis to the surface features of the language was the more frequently employed approach in presenting the writing lessons. This implied that the product and the process approaches were being implemented side by side in conducting the writing lessons in Basic Writing classes.

### **Discussions of the Results of Students' Interviews**

Regarding the contribution of group discussions, all of the respondents were of the perception that group discussions had potential contributions in improving their writing skills. One of the advantages that they emphasized was the freedom it provided them to learn according to their own pace.

In giving priority either to the development of good command of grammar or the enhancement of ability to writing, all of them had the perception that prioritizing the enhancement of command of grammar is more preferable to giving more attention to the enhancement of writing ability. In their conclusion, they recommend that unless writers have a good command of grammar, they cannot learn and improve their writing skills. Resp<sub>1</sub>, for example, suggests: "Grammar is important to speak or write. Most of us have grammar problem because of this we cannot write good paragraphs or essays." This view, however, does not go with the precepts of the process approach as there is a belief that developing the writing ability is implicitly enhancing command of grammar.

In responding to methodology which was being used in Basic Writing Skills classes, Resp<sub>1, 3, 7&8</sub> explained that the teaching method their writing instructor was using in their writing classes was dominantly teacher-fronted though

sometimes heexposed them to free writing activities. In contrary, Resp 2, 4, 5 & 6, had the perception that the methodology which was being employed in their Basic Writing classes gave them opportunity to write a variety of paragraphs by passing through various stages.

In responding to the item which asked them about the remedial solutions which help them improve their writing skills, they listed out: having sufficient time for practicing, improving grammar skills, developing reading habit, learning writing as an independent course at preparatory schools level, increasing the number of credit hours for the Course Basic Writing Skills and controlling large class-size.

Based on the analysis made on the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills, more than 50% of the tasks are convenient to implement the process approach. In fact, some of the activities in the material encourage students to learn writing through the product approach.

## DISCUSSIONS OF THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

### Discussionf the Results of the Instructors' Responses to the Questionnaires

**Table 1: Perceptions about Methods of Teaching Writing**

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	A g	D A	St DA	ND	Total	Mode	Min	Max	
5.	The process approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which encourages students to pass through various stages of the writing independently and come up with meaningful written work.		5	7	2	6	0	20	3	1	4
		%	25	35	10	30	0	100	-	-	-
6.	The product approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which enables students write error-free sentences, paragraphs or essays.		3	5	6	6	0	20	2	1	2
		%	15	25	30	30	0	100	-	1	4

As the data indicated, 5(25%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the process approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model to writing instruction which encourages students to pass through various stages of the process independently and come up with meaningful written work. The other 7 (35%) of them agreed to the item. However, 2(10% of them) disagreed to the item and the rest 6(30%), strongly disagreed to the statement. This finding suggested thatthe larger portion of the instruction in Basic Skills Writing Skills classes was process-oriented.

Forty-five per cent of the respondents (20% strongly agree & 25% agree) had the perception that students can learn writing in a better way when they have ability to write than they have a good command of grammar. The other 55% of the respondents (20% disagree &35% strongly disagree) had the perception that having ability to write is not as relevant as having good command of grammar ability. The mode is 1, the minimum value is 4 and the maximum is 1.

**Table 2: Perceptions about the Teaching Materials Being Used in Basic Writing Skills Classes**

No.	Item	Responses					Descriptions				
		St Ag	Ag	DA	St DA	N D	Total	Mod	Min	Max	
9.	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts		4	8	7	1	0	20	3	1	4
		%	20	40	35	5	0	100	-	-	-
10.	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to learn about writing and imitate texts that would serve them as model.		1	6	10	3	0	20	2	1	4
		%	5	30	50	15	0	100	-	-	-

Majority of the respondents (60%) of them were of the perception that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encouraged students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts. This response indirectly implied that the materials were largely suitable to implement the process approach to teaching writing.

Not to fully implement the process approach, the following were the most frequently listed factors respectively: the low level of writing practice at secondary school, the method of teaching writing skill and mode of assessment at secondary school level, lack of adequate grammar skill, lack of wide reading habit, lack of interest to develop writing skills, lack of widely flourished writing culture in the community, lack of deep awareness about the theoretical frameworks of the process approach to writing instruction.

**Discussions of the Results of the Students’ Responses to the Questionnaires**

Forty-eight per cent of the respondents had the perception that they learnt writing better when the instructor gave them detailed explanation on each of the lessons and got them produce written texts which were similar to the model that they learnt. The rest, 52% of the respondents, contrarily, disagreed to the item. The modal value is 2 (disagree). This response further depicted that more than 50% of the students had the perception that the method of teaching being used in Basic Writing Skills classes is learner-fronted, that is, process-oriented.

Sixty per cent (60%) of the respondents agreed that to learn writing more effectively, having good command of grammar is more important than having ability to write.

As the data revealed, 49% of the respondents agreed that the teaching materials which were being used in Basic Writing Skills classes were suitable to practise writing by planning, writing the first draft, editing by oneself or peers and writing the final draft of the text independently.

Forty-seven per cent of the respondents agreed that the teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes was going on successfully. The other 53% of the respondents, contrarily, disagreed to the item. In giving their judgment, the respondents were provided with the criteria developed by Widdodo (2006a). From this response it is not difficult to suggest that most students at freshman level have serious difficulties in expressing themselves in intelligible written English.

## CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the major findings in this study, the following conclusions were drawn.

The results obtained from the discussions of the interviews data revealed that (50%) of Basic Writing Skills instructors, confirmed that they used the process approach in presenting most part of the writing lessons. The other two (50%), however, disclosed that most parts of their Basic Writing Skills classes were devoted to the product-oriented writing instructions. This finding pointed out that the process approach was implemented partially in Basic Writing Skills classes in Hawassa University.

To implement the process approach in Basic Writing Skills classes successfully, the major remedial solutions suggested are the following: allocating sufficient time to both the instructors and the students, including communicative grammar activities in the teaching materials and arranging intensive discussion forums for instructors to reduce their attitudinal differences.

According to the evaluations made on the teaching materials developed for the course Basic Writing Skills at Hawassa University, the results indicated that 50% of the activities were by and large, appropriate to implement the process approach. The other 50%, nevertheless, were more appropriate to conduct the lessons through the product approach.

When the responses provided to the questionnaires distributed to both Basic Writing Skills instructors and students were examined, the results generally revealed that the existing writing instructions in Basic Writing Skills classes were carried out using both the process and the product approaches alternatively.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings, in order to alleviate scarcity of time, those instructors who would be assigned to offer writing courses in general need to engage in fewer co-curricular activities than other course instructors in the school so that they can have sufficient time to help their students practise writing frequently and improve their skills.

Regarding attitudinal differences among Basic Skills Writing Skills instructors, the School in collaboration with other bodies concerned, need to organize different discussion forums and other in-service trainings in which they can share experiences and bring about professional development.

Anyone who is assigned to handle the course at university level, need to have MA degree in TEFL or an outstanding academic achievement during BA degree training in English education.

In order to alleviate the limitations in the teaching materials of the course, material writing team need to be established and in-depth discussions have to be held by involving all instructors of the school and adequate needs assessments should be carried out. Moreover, to help students reinforce their grammar skills, they need to have room for functional grammar lessons which have especially close connection with what students would be writing on.

To further improve the teaching of writing, especially at preparatory school level, there should be a system in which both university instructors and secondary school teachers create affiliation and share experiences.

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## APPENDIX A: CHECKLISTS FOR OBSERVATION SESSIONS

Key: W<sub>1</sub>\_\_ Week one, W<sub>2</sub>\_\_ week two, etc.

No	Items	W <sub>1</sub>	W <sub>2</sub>	W <sub>3</sub>	W <sub>4</sub>
1	The writing instructor strives his level best to achieve the objectives designed by the school.				
2	The writing instructor creates flexible, smooth and non-threatening environment in which the students experience the different stages of process writing				
3	The writing instructor attempts to inculcate the recursive nature of writing into the mind of the students where they can move to different directions as in cognitive model of writing.				
4	The writing instructor guides and follows up the learners' activity when they pass through various stages of writing processes until they come up with the final product.				
5	The writing instructor encourages students to approach writing holistically, meaningfully and independently.				
6	The writing instructor encourages learners to collect relevant information which would help them solve problems in line with the goal they set.				
7	The writing instructor builds in learners a trend of judging coherency, relevance and practicality of generated ideas at planning stage.				
8	The writing instructor gets learners practise how to define the writing problems in the light of the content and purpose of their writing scheme.				
9	The writing instructor gives brain storming activities individually, in pair or in group.				
10	The writing instructor gives guidelines that help learners evaluate the standard of their writing.				
11	The writing instructor gives learners sufficient time to shape their mass of information into a coherent full text				
12	The writing instructor follows up how students review their completed written text recursively by deleting unwanted ideas, adding missing ideas or making entire changes.				
13	The writing instructor collects information about student writers what they feel about their own personal progress in their own writing and takes rectifying measures.				
14	The writing instructor brings as much published texts as possible to class to demonstrate a wide range of writing styles and elements of crafting.				
15	The writing instructor encourages peer/group correction in conjunction with other approaches to feedback provision at different stage of students' writing.				
16	The writing instructor uses writing teaching materials which promote self-learning and problem solving approach				
17	The writing instructor encourages students to write both in the classroom and outside.				
18	The writing instructor promotes a high degree of individualistic learning style.				

### Appendix B: Interview with Writing Instructors

Dear Instructor: The purpose of this interview is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing Skills** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each of the items carefully and honestly. Please note that the items included in this interview are mainly meant to collect the kind of information needed for this research. I do not dare to say here that the items cover all information needed for this research. Hence, I request you to add any items of information that you think are necessary in promoting the quality of this research and reflect your insight.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the interview is kept confidential and thus I request

you to feel free and respond to each item without any queries. For this reason, you are not required to mention your name.

Thank You Very Much!

Mesfin Aberra

**Instruction I: Below are interview Items on your perceptions and beliefs on writing in general, the method of teaching you employ and the teaching materials that are being used in your writing class. Please listen to each of the items very carefully and then provide your responses briefly and clearly.**

- What are your perceptions about the implementation of the process approach in your Basic Writing classes?
- What is your perception about group learning (collaborative learning) in process-oriented writing classes?
- What is your perception about having good command of grammar versus ability to write in learning and improving writing as a beginner?
- In relation to the methodology you employ in your writing class, what are your major roles and that of your students?
- These days a number of local researchers and scholars have the view that most students at university level have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. Do you agree? If your response to the above item is 'yes' in your opinion, what are the major factors?
- To what extent writing teaching materials have contributions in promoting the writing abilities of students in Basic Writing classes? why?
- What is your comment on the teaching materials that you are using in your Basic Writing classes currently?
- Would you have any opinion that you want to further explain about the whole teaching/learning of the course Basic Writing Skills here at Hawassa University?

#### **Appendix C: Interview with Students**

##### **Dear Student:**

The purpose of this interview is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation of the process approach to writing instruction in **Basic Writing** classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your co-operation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the interview is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond confidently without any reservation. For this reason, you are not required to mention your name.

Thank You Very Much!

**Mesfin Aberra**

**Instruction: Below are interview items on your perception and belief about writing in general, method of teaching that is being implemented and the teaching materials that are being used in your writing class. Please listen to each of the items very carefully and then provide your responses briefly and clearly.**

- Why do you learn writing skills at university level?
- What is your perception about the nature of writing as compared to other language skills? Why?
- In what way are you learning Basic Writing Skills in your writing class here at Hawassa University?
- What can you say about the standard of your present writing ability?
- A number of local researchers and scholars of the field complain that most students at university level have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. In your opinion, what are the major factors?
- In what way if you learn writing, you can improve your ability quickly?
- To what extent good command of grammar is significant as compared to ability to write in learning and improving your writing ability?
- Do group/pair work have significant contribution in your writing class?
- Do writing teaching materials have significant contributions in promoting your writing abilities?

**Appendix D: A Sample of the evaluated Teaching Material**

**Writing a Narrative Paragraph Emanating from Personal Experience**

*Instruction: Write a narrative paragraph of maximum ten sentences being in pair. Make sure that the paragraph needs to focus on one of the unforgettable experiences in your life. In addition, notice that there should be a valuable moral lesson in the theme (main idea) that you want to convey to your reader. In developing your paragraph, do not forget to include a clear topic sentence, make ideas coherent, and portray the setting and using clear language.*

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**Appendix E: Questionnaires for Writing Instructors**

**Dear Instructor:**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather raw data which would be analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. The major objective of the research is to investigate the extent to which emphasis is given to the implementation

of the process approach to writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes at Hawassa University. Thus, your cooperation and willingness to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each item carefully and honestly based on the instruction provided. Please note that the items included in this questionnaire are mainly meant to collect the kind of information needed for this research. I do not dare to say here that the items cover all information needed for this research. Hence, I request you to add any items of information that you think are necessary in promoting the quality of this research.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the questionnaire is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any queries. For this reason, you are not required to write your name.

Thank You Very Much!

**Mesfin Aberra**

**Part One: Close-ended Items**

Instruction: Below are questionnaire items which refer to your perception and belief, the methodology that you implement and the teaching materials that you employ in your writing class. Please read each of the items carefully and then put a tick in the grid.

**Key:**

St. Ag \_\_\_\_\_ I Strongly Agree

Ag. \_\_\_\_\_ I Agree

Disag \_\_\_\_\_ I Disagree

St. Disag. \_\_\_\_\_ I Strongly Disagree

ND. \_\_\_\_\_ Not Decided

No	Item	Responses				
		St. Ag	Ag	Disag	St. Disag	ND
1	Writing is one of the most challenging and demanding language skills of all other language skills.					
2	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other macro language skills.					
3	Writing is a process through which writers pass by writing and re-writing recursively.					
4	Writing is a linear activity that can be achieved first by understanding its components and then by grasping the entire subject.					
5	The process approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which encourages students to pass through various stages of the process independently and come up with meaningful written work.					
6	The product approach to teaching writing is the most appropriate model of writing instruction which enables students write error-free sentences, paragraphs or essays.					
7	Students can learn writing in a better way when they have ability to write than they have a good command of grammar ability.					
8	Students can learn writing in a better way when they have good command of					

	grammar than they have ability to write.					
9	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills Classes encourage students to plan, draft and proof-read their written texts					
10	The teaching materials which are currently being used in Basic Writing Skills classes encourage students to learn about writing and imitate texts that would serve them as model.					
11	Pair/group learning has a crucial role in implementing the process approach in writing classes.					
12	Personal thinking, creativity and writing practices are the only techniques that should be encouraged in process writing classes.					
13	The writing instruction in Basic Writing classes is going on successfully.					
14	The writing instruction in Basic Writing Skills classes is constrained with many problems.					
15	Good student-writers are those writers who give more attention to the content of their writing than to their target audience and surface features of the language while they are producing their first draft.					
16	Good student-writers are those writers who give more attention to the surface-features and target-audience than to the content of their writing while they are producing their first draft.					

**Part Two: Open-Ended Items**

**Instruction: Give your own explanation to each of the following items**

17. Please write out the major difficulties, if any, that you think are factors not to fully implement the process approach in your Basic Writing Skills classes.

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18. Please write your free comment in the spaces given below with regard to the limitations you feel about the whole items of the questionnaire.

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**Appendix F: Questionnaires for Students**

**Dear Student:**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data which would be later analysed and incorporated into my PhD research. Thus, the extent to which you are willing to provide genuine and accurate response to each of the items determines the quality of the ultimate findings of this research. Therefore, I courteously request you to respond to each

item carefully and honestly.

Please note that any information that you give to each item of the questionnaire is kept confidential and thus I request you to feel free and respond to each item without any reservation. For this reason, you are not required to write your name.

Thank You Very Much!

**Mesfin Aberra**

Instruction: Below are questionnaire items on your perception and belief, method of learning/teaching of writing and the teaching materials that are being employed in your writing class. Read each of the items carefully and then put a tick in the grid.

NB. Perception \_\_\_\_\_ means in this context, your attitude or understanding based on what you observe or think

Belief \_\_\_\_\_ means in this context, a statement, principle or doctrine that you accept as truth

St. Ag \_\_\_\_\_ I Strongly Agree

Ag. \_\_\_\_\_ I Agree

Disag \_\_\_\_\_ I Disagree

St. Disag. \_\_\_\_\_ I Strongly Disagree

ND. \_\_\_\_\_ Not Decided

No	Item	Responses				
		St. Ag	Ag	Disag	St. Disag	ND
1	Writing is the most difficult language skill which is challenging and demanding by its own very nature.					
2	Writing is as challenging and demanding as any other language skills such as reading, listening, grammar, etc.					
3	The more appropriate method of learning writing is first getting explanations on each of the lessons from our instructor and then practicing different exercises and finally writing error-free paragraphs or essays which are similar to the model we have been given					
4	The more appropriate method of learning writing is first getting guiding ideas from our instructor and then planning what we write, writing the first draft, editing and revising and lastly writing the final draft					
5	To learn writing more effectively, having ability to write is more important than having good command of grammar.					
6	To learn writing more effectively, having good knowledge of grammar is more important than having ability to write					
7	The teaching materials being used in Basic Writing Skills classes are suitable to practise writing by planning, writing the first draft, editing by oneself or peers and writing the final draft of the paragraph or essay independently.					
8	The teaching materials being used in Basic Writing classes are suitable to learn structure of sentences, essentials of well developed paragraphs, and essays aimed at helping us write error free written texts.					
9	Personal thinking, creativity and effort to write continuously is the only technique which enable us improve our writing skills.					
10	Group/Pair learning is an important technique of learning writing in					

	order to improve our individual writing abilities.					
11	The teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes is going on successfully					
12	The teaching/learning in Basic Writing Skills classes is constrained with several factors.					