The Process Approach in Teaching Writing

AMIEL M. YACON, PH.D.C1 JOSEPHINE CRUZ, PH.D.2

¹English Department, South Mansfield College, Muntinlupa City, Philippines ²Graduate Studies Department, Rizal Technological University, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

Abstract—Writing is one of the four macro skills along with listening, reading, and speaking. Good writing skills allow an individual to express himself with clarity and ease to a far larger audience. With the complexity of the demands of modern society, expanding economic technological and advancements, the need for highly-qualified writers for the near future is rigorous. Thus, skills in writing technical reports would be one of the most invaluable assets of any individual, not only in their academic endeavors but also in their profession. The purpose of this study was to find out the effectiveness of the process approach in teaching writing in the light of the Zone of Proximal Development of Vygotsky, which would be the basis for the development of writing modules. A descriptive research method was used for this study. Furthermore, with the use of this method, the researcher was able to know the learning difficulties and strengths of the students which helped in the production of writing modules. The study concluded that (1) the students were able to meet the required standards in terms of Content, Organization, Vocabulary, and Language Use except for the Mechanics before the implementation of the process approach; (2) the students earned higher writing performance in terms of all the criteria after the implementation of the process approach; (3) the students were challenged mainly with Content and Organization while Mechanics appeared to be the constant writing problem; (4) the process approach is effective in teaching writing. There is a significant difference between the overall writing performance of the students before and after the implementation of the process approach; and (5) writing modules (Writing Process) with the use of reading selections to serve as the students' resources for evidence, reading comprehension, and finding meaning using context clues, and some grammar exercises are the proposed instructional materials.

Indexed Terms—Peer Tutoring, Process Approach, Scaffolding, Writing Performance, Writing Process, and ZPD or Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

I. INTRODUCTION

The ability to write occupies the last place in the order of macro skills, but it does not mean that it is the least important. It is an important tool, which enables man to communicate with other people in many ways" (Mandal, 2009). Thus, writing is a skill that brings a lot of benefits not only to society but also to the learner considerably. Good writing skills allow an individual to express himself with clarity and ease to a far larger audience. Parents, including the adults around the child, are expected to take a big part in teaching the child how to write.

The modern world is full of astonishing advancements and new developments, from the technology used in everyday life up to the new discoveries mesmerizing the coming generations. Although writing is one of the skills given emphasis in the classroom, students are still challenged to write. One of the main reasons why students find it difficult to write is the lack of mastery of a language. Writing would be hard enough for any beginner without having mastered at least the basic area of a language. Another component of effective writing is the ability of the writer to write with coherence and organization. This supports the idea of the discourse analysis of Widdowson (2007) that an individual is communicatively competent if he has the ability to connect a number of ideas together appropriately in order to interpret and exchange messages. A student has to write not only with excellent grammar but also with organization.

Students may be highly proficient in language; however, effective use of language occupies only a place in effective writing. Their problems are how to write, what to write, and how to begin which all lead

to the problem of producing a well-structured composition. Also, writing without enough assistance from adults and support from peers may affect their attitude towards writing. Thus, the researcher is interested to find out how the process approach in writing may help the students write effectively since they receive aid and support from the teacher and students.

This research is based on Vygotsky's Theory of Cognitive Development. Vygotsky agreed that a child's thinking is qualitatively different from that of an adult. However, it emphasizes the importance of social context in a cultural context. In his social cognition learning model, he claimed that a child's development is driven by his biological maturation and a product of interaction. Moreover, this theory centers on the theme that learning is a product of social interaction between the child and the people around him.

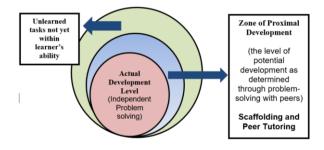


Figure 1. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978)

ZPD or Zone of Proximal Development is the key concept of this study while Scaffolding and Peer tutoring are its extensions. The zone of proximal development (ZPD) has been defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

II. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research method was used for this study to determine the effectiveness of the process approach in teaching writing among thirty-one Grade 9 students. Furthermore, with the use of this method, the researcher would be able to discover the learning difficulties and strengths of the students which would help in the production of writing modules. Four instruments were used in the study: the approved set of lesson plans, the writing performance of the students from the written outputs before and after the implementation of the process approach including their notes of experience, the rubric used to measure the students' performance per criterion, and the transmutation table implemented in the research setting to interpret the mean or the overall writing performance of the students.

III. RESULTS

The following are the results of the study:

Table 1: Grand Mean of Students' Writing Performance Before the Implementation of the Process Approach

	First Term		Second Term				
Criteria	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Total	Interpretation	
	1	2	1	2			
Content	27.8	24.3	24.7	25.9	25.7	Good to Average	
Organization	16.3	17.4	16.3	16.8	16.7	Good to Average	
Vocabulary	16.7	17.1	16.2	16.4	16.6	Good to Average	
Language	19.9	20.3	20.9	20.4	20.4	Good to Average	
Mechanics	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.6	Fair to Poor	
Total	84.2	83	81.7	83.1	83 or A (Average) Grand Mean		

Table 1 shows the summary of students' overall writing performance in the four (4) lessons before the implementation of the process approach. It shows that the overall mean in terms of Content is 25.7, in terms of Organization is 16.7, in terms of Vocabulary is 16.6 and in terms of Language Use is 20.4 which are all interpreted as Good to Average. However, the overall mean in terms of Mechanics is 3.6 which is interpreted as Fair to Poor. The grand mean is 83 or A (Average).

Based on the result, the students have met the competencies stipulated in the rubric, for they were able to maintain Good to Average performance in the four important criteria. Based on the categories for evaluating of Brown (2001) and Robitaille &

Connelly's Rubrics (2012) in Scoring Student's Composition, the Grade 9 students were somehow knowledgeable to develop the main idea either through their own personal experience, facts, and opinion in terms of Content. They were able to write an introduction, and body paragraph with somewhat loose-organized ideas and limited support in terms of Organization. In terms of Vocabulary, their choice of words in an adequate range with occasional errors while in terms of Language Use, they could produce good sentences with some grammatical errors. However, the students need enough practice and serious attention to Mechanics criterion since they experience frequent errors of spelling, misuse of punctuation marks, unnecessary capitalization, poor paragraphing skills, poor handwriting, and vague meaning. However, it can also be gleaned from the table that the students were able to produce acceptable outputs. Furthermore, the findings, such as students were able to meet the Good to Average interpretation of the writing performance and they fairly met the specific writing standards in the curriculum, imply that the students' writing skills will be improved more through the implementation of the process approach. Also, the difficulty in writing in terms of Mechanics will also be addressed when peers will have an involvement in the success of their classmates.

Table 2: Grand Mean of Students' Writing Performance After the Implementation of the Process Approach

	Third Term						
Criteria	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Total	Interpretation
	1	2	3	4	5		
Content	27.9	27.8	27.3	27.4	26.7	27.4	Excellent to
							Very Good
Organization	18.1	19.2	18.1	18.4	17.9	18.3	Excellent to
							Very Good
Vocabulary	18.4	18.8	17.5	18.9	17.6	18.2	Good to
							Average
Language	22.3	23.1	22.2	23	22.3	22.6	Excellent to
Use							Very Good
Mechanics	4.5	4.2	4	4.3	4.3	4.3	Good to
							Average
Total	91.2	93.1	89.1	92	88.8	90.8 or AA (Above Average) Grand Mean	

Table 2 shows the summary of the students' overall writing performance in the five (5) lessons after the

implementation of the process approach. It shows that the overall mean in terms of Content is 27.4 and in terms of Organization is 18.3 which both have a verbal interpretation of Excellent to Very Good. In terms of Vocabulary, the overall mean is 18.2 which is interpreted as Good to Average. On the other hand, in terms of Language Use, it is 22.6 which is interpreted as Excellent to Very Good while the overall mean in terms of Mechanics is 4.3 which is interpreted as Good to Average. The five (5) lessons' grand mean is 90.8 or AA (Above Average).

Based on the result, all the stipulated writing competencies in the rubric have been met by the students. They were able to maintain the Good to Average and Excellent to Very Good verbal interpretation in all criteria. As per the categories for writing an evaluation of Brown (2001) and Robitaille & Connelly's Rubrics (2012) in Scoring Student's Composition, the Grade 9 students have successfully written good written outputs in terms of Content. They wrote thesis statements and developed those through enough support using their own experiences, prior knowledge, and evidence from the reading selection provided to them. They wrote an introduction, and body paragraph with substantive and fluent expressions and well-organized ideas in terms of Organization. In terms of Vocabulary, their choice of words is in an adequate range with occasional errors while in terms of Language Use, their sentences are of fluent and accurate use to convey ideas. However, the students need ample emphasis on the Mechanics criterion since they committed frequent errors of spelling, misuse of punctuation marks, unnecessary capitalization, poor paragraphing skills, poor handwriting, and vague meaning. Moreover, it is proven that the students produced better-written outputs since they received enough support from their peers who could potentially help them in the writing process. Most importantly, the writing standards in the curriculum intended for their grade level were met. To sum it up the students' overall writing performance after the implementation of the process approach is highly acceptable, considering that their writing performance's verbal interpretations in the criteria are Good to Average and Excellent to Very Good.

Table 3: Summary of the Challenges in Writing Before the Implementation of the Process Approach

Criteria	Writing Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Content	Thesis statement not aligned to the	5	16.1%
	assigned topic		
	Inclusion of irrelevant ideas	3	9.7%
	No clear conclusion	2	6.5%
Organization	Ideas are not organized well	5	16.1%
-	Lack of evidences to support the	3	9.7%
	thesis statement		
Vocabulary	Redundancy	5	16.1%
	Inappropriate choice of words	4	12.9%
			12.070
Language	Subject-verb agreement	2	6.5%
	Pronoun-antecedent agreement	2	6.5%
Use	Use of Prepositions	5	16.1%
000	Sentence patterns	5	16.1%
	Contonico pattorno		10.170
Mechanics	Excessive capitalization	5	16.1%
	Punctuation errors	5	16.1%
	Proper margin and Indention	l š	25.8%
	Poor handwriting	10	32.3%
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Table 3 shows the challenges encountered by the students in writing before the implementation of the process approach. It shows that in terms of Content, five (5) students' thesis statements were not aligned with the assigned topic, three (3) students or 9.7% wrote irrelevant ideas, and two (2) students or 6.5% did not have a clear conclusion. In terms of Organization, five (5) students or 16.1% failed to have organized ideas and three (3) students or 9.7% lacked evidence that will support their thesis statement. On the other hand, the words used in the composition were redundant and words were not used appropriately in terms of Vocabulary which was experienced by five (5) students or 16.1% while four (4) students used inappropriate words. Also, the table shows that the students encountered grammar problems in terms of Language Use such as improper subject-verb agreement experienced by two (2) or 6.5% with the same number of students for pronoun-antecedent agreement, misuse of prepositions and poor sentence patterns with five (5) students or 16.1% both. Lastly, in terms of Mechanics, five (5) students or 16.1% displayed challenges in capitalization and correct usage of punctuation marks while eight (8) students or 25.8% were challenged in putting proper indention and ten (10) students or 32.3% have poor handwriting. In Table 3, it is shown that the students have earned a grand mean of 83 or A (Above Average) as the overall writing performance before the implementation of the process approach in writing which is acceptable, but they still encountered problems. One important finding is that the students, even without the implementation of the process approach, have the ability to express ideas through writing with some challenges which need to be addressed. As stipulated in the table only few students experience challenges in each criterion which can be addressed through the help of others.

Table 4: Summary of the Challenges in Writing After the Implementation of the Process Approach

Criteria	Writing Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Content	Aligned but vague thesis statement	2	6.5%
Organization	No clear outline	3	9.7%
Vocabulary	Redundancy	3	9.7%
Language Use	Pronoun-antecedent agreement Use of Prepositions Subject-Verb Agreement	2 2 5	6.5% 6.5% 16.1%
Mechanics	Punctuation errors Paragraphing	2 5	6.5% 16.1%

Table 4 shows the challenges encountered by the students in writing after the implementation of the process approach. It shows that in terms of Content, two (2) students or 6.5% wrote a thesis statement that was aligned to the assigned topic but vague. In terms of Organization, three (3) students or 9.7% failed to have a clear outline of their output. On the other hand, the words used in the composition by three (3) students or 9.7% were redundant in terms of Vocabulary while in terms of Language Use two (2) students or 6.5% have problems with the pronoun-antecedent agreement, the same number of students experienced misuse of prepositions and poor subject-verb agreement are experienced by five (5) students or 16.1%. Lastly, in terms of Mechanics, two (2) students or 6.5% displayed challenges with correct usage of punctuation marks, and five (8) students or 16.1% have poor paragraphing. It was revealed in Table 4 that the students have already mastered the necessary standards in writing since they got their grand mean in writing is 90.8 or AA (Above Average) with three (3) Excellent to Very Good and two (2) Good to Average verbal interpretation. Furthermore, it can also be observed in the table that the students critiqued their own work and were able to identify their own weaknesses in writing. On the other hand, it can also be noticed that after the peer review, common problems in writing came out. This is an indication that the students, whether good enough or not, may have not been thoroughly aware of their difficulties in

writing. Moreover, after the peer review and when the students revised their work while considering the comments and suggestions of their classmates, the number of errors fairly changed in some criteria. In terms of Organization, Language Use, and Mechanics, the number of errors decreased, in terms of Vocabulary, somehow changed and in terms of Content, more practice is necessary because the number of errors increased. Positive changes may have resulted from the implementation of the approach since the students were exposed to collaborative learning which is highly recommended as claimed by Bruner (1985), Shin (2016), and Haider and Yasmin (2015), and scaffolding, including the use of reading materials to serve as their references in writing evidence to support their thesis statement.

Table 5: Comparison of Students' Overall Writing Performance Before and After the Implementation of Process Approach in Teaching Writing

	Before		After		
Criteria	Total	Interpretation	Total	Interpretation	
Content	25.7	Good to	27.4	Excellent to	
		Average		Very Good	
Organization	16.7	Good to	18.3	Excellent to	
		Average		Very Good	
Vocabulary	16.6	Good to	18.2	Good to	
		Average		Average	
Language	20.4	Good to	22.6	Excellent to	
Use		Average		Very Good	
Mechanics	3.6	Fair to Poor	4.3	Good to	
				Average	
Total	83 or A (Average) Grand Mean		90.8 or AA (Above Average) Grand Mean		

Table 5 shows that the students overall writing performance in terms of all the criteria positively changed after the implementation of the process approach. In terms of Content, from 25.7 (Good to Average), it became 27.4 (Excellent to Very Good). From 16.7 (Good to Average), the score in terms of Organization became 18.3 (Excellent to Very Good). However, the score of the students in terms of Vocabulary both belong to the same level which is Good to Average, but still higher in number after the implementation of the process approach with 18.2

from 16.6 before. Also, in terms of Language Use and Mechanics, students had also shown a big improvement. From 20.4 (Good to Average) to 22.6 (Excellent to Very Good) in terms of Language Use and from 3.6 (Fair to Poor) to 4.3 (Good Average) in terms of Mechanics. In addition, students' overall writing performance before the implementation of the process approach was 83 or A (Above Average) while it became higher after the implementation with the grand mean of 90.8 or AA (Above Average). The difference in the overall writing performance is 7.8 points. The increased writing performance of the students is a clear indication that the process approach in teaching writing is effective and that scaffolding (Bruner,1985) in the light of graphic organizer and provided reading materials and social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978) in the image of peer tutoring are effective practices to achieve higher performances in writing. The use of graphic organizers (Sunseri (2011), Tayib (2015), Zaini, Mokhtar, and Nawawi (2010) and Lancaster (2013) had been an effective tool for them to come up with an interesting topic and organize their effectively. On a contrary, students' performance in writing appears to be at an acceptable level. It may have resulted from their rich potential in writing since they are already in Grade 9. However, the implementation of the process approach did not fully eliminate the problems in writing. Students writing under the traditional and process teaching approaches may still encounter those problems.

The Proposed Writing Module

Related studies supported the idea that the process approach in teaching writing is effective. Not only does it give students the opportunity to explore their own abilities on their own, but it also gives them an opportunity to learn from the people around them who can assist and provide them with necessary support (Bruner, 1966 and 1985) and Vygotsky (1978). Through the long process of writing and the careful observation of students' progress in writing, the researcher found out that the implementation of the process approach is effective in teaching writing which is reflected in the students' overall writing performance. Therefore, the writing module has been found to be the most appropriate material to reach out to the needs of the students. Since that scaffolding by the use of organizers is helpful in brainstorming for

ideas (Mayer (2005) and Gardner (1983) and the reading material as the basis for evidence in developing the thesis statement, the inclusion of the are reinforced. In addition, two comprehension activities will also be provided including the unlocking of the unfamiliar terms taken from the reading selections (Ausubel, 1960). Moreover, the integration of grammar exercises is essential since the students encountered problems in terms of Language Use. As revealed in the data after the implementation of the process approach, the grammar topics such as Pronoun-antecedent agreement, Prepositions, and Subject-verb agreement are frequent errors of the students in writing. Therefore, those are topics that will be emphasized in the module. In addition, proper use of punctuation marks and the use of transitional devices will also be part as they are important tools in establishing good organization in writing.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to find out the effectiveness of the process approach in teaching writing in light of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development through scaffolding and peer tutoring. The study was based on the premise (conceptual framework) that the writing performance of the students would significantly increase with the use of the process approach in teaching writing and that the result would be the reference for creating a writing module. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in the writing performance of the Grade 9 students after the implementation of the process approach.

The Grade 9 students underwent the required number of hours for each lesson which was three (3) hours. Each lesson was divided into three parts: (1) a lecture on the basic structure of the target text type, (2) brainstorming, drafting, and peer review (3) and revising which included proofreading and writing the final draft. After the activities and the written outputs were checked, the computation was done with the help of the statistician.

Three instruments were used in the study. The first one was the approved set of lesson plans, the writing performance of the students from the written outputs

before and after the implementation of the process approach including their notes of experience and the rubric. The data gathered from the two sets of writing activities served as the reference in making the proposed writing module.

The results of the study are summarized as follows:

The overall writing performance of the students before the implementation of the process approach is 83. It is a clear indication that the students, even without intervention, can already compose essays for they met the stipulated competencies in writing standards. However, it was also found that the students' weakest area is in terms of Mechanics where they got an overall score of 3.6 with the verbal Fair to Good.

The overall writing performance of the students after the implementation of the process approach is 90.8. It was found that the students' overall writing improved well, especially in terms of Content and Organization which both have the verbal interpretation of Excellent to Very Good. The problem in terms of Mechanics observed before the implementation of the process improved significantly.

It was discovered that the students experienced almost the same problems in writing with or without the implementation of the process approach. Based on the observations made by the researcher and peers including the self-reflection of the students, they had a hard time deciding on the topics to discuss and selecting ideas to support their thesis statement. However, based on the result of the writing activities, Mechanics is the top problem to work on.

The increased level of writing performance of the students, which is 7.8 points, is a clear indication that the process approach in teaching writing is effective and that scaffolding in the light of graphic organizer and provided reading materials and social interaction in the image of peer tutoring are effective practices to achieve higher performances in writing.

The researcher found that the implementation of the process approach is effective in teaching writing which is reflected in the students' overall writing performance. Therefore, the writing module has been found to be the most appropriate material to reach out

to the needs of the students in each criterion. Since that scaffolding by the use of organizers is helpful in brainstorming for ideas (Mayer, 2005 and Gardner, 1983) and the reading material is used as the basis of evidence in developing the thesis statement, the inclusion of the two are reinforced.

The findings provide bases for the following conclusions:

The students were able to meet the required standards in terms of Content, Organization, Vocabulary, and Language Use except for the Mechanics before the implementation of the process approach.

The students earned higher writing performance in terms of all the criteria after the implementation of the process approach.

The students were challenged mainly with the Content and Organization while Mechanics appeared to be the constant writing problem.

The process approach is effective in teaching writing. There is a significant difference between the overall writing performance of the students before and after the implementation of the process approach.

Writing modules focusing on the writing process with the use of reading selections to serve as the students' resources for evidence, reading comprehension, and finding meaning using context clues and some grammar exercises are the proposed instructional materials.

Other significant findings:

Providing Graphic Organizers or any visuals helps the students organize their ideas.

The Reading to Writing technique or providing students reading materials prior to writing a text provides them with ideas they may incorporate into their own composition.

Moreover, the interaction between the students or the peer tutoring helps the students significantly in the process of writing.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study have direct implications for institutions. School institutions may come up with programs anchored on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. They may use this as the basis for developing their existing programs and in creating brand-new programs and instructional materials. Moreover, the researcher recommends the use of an experimental research design or any other applicable design to find out the effectiveness of the Process Approach in teaching writing.

Future researchers may also conduct the same study at a lower level since writing skills are developed at a very young age.

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