

**EFL LEARNERS' INSIGHT INTO PROCESS ORIENTED APPROACH: AN
IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON L2 WRITING
SKILLS, HABITS, AND STRATEGIES**



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SKILLS, HABITS, STRATEGIES**

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Özge AVCI

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ABSTRACT

EFL LEARNERS' INSIGHT INTO PROCESS ORIENTED APPROACH: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON L2 WRITING SKILLS, HABITS AND STRATEGIES

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The process oriented approach to writing has long been regarded as an improvement over the traditional methods of writing instruction. Many studies have examined process writing in terms of its advantages or compared it with other approaches. Nevertheless, few studies were conducted to explore the insight of EFL learners into process writing. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to explore the attitude and perceptions of participants about their writing, writing skills, process writing habits, and strategies. Data were first gathered through a questionnaire with five-point Likert scale questions distributed to the participants studying at an English preparatory program. The questionnaire aimed to investigate their reported process writing skills, habits and attitude. Secondly, in an attempt to collect more in-depth information upon their attitude and perceptions, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed by employing descriptive statistics and the results of the interviews were analyzed by implementing content analysis. It was found that the participants have positive attitude towards process writing and benefit from its strategies.

Keywords: Writing Skills, Second Language Writing, Process Oriented Approach to Writing, Learners' Attitude towards Process Writing, Stages of Process Writing.

ÖZ

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEN ÖĞRENCİLERİN SÜREÇ ODAKLI YAZMA YAKLAŞIMI ANLAYIŞI: ÖĞRENCİLERİN 2. DİL YAZMA BECERİLERİ, ALIŞKANLIKLARI VE STRATEJİLERİNE DAİR ANLAYIŞININ DERİNLEMESİNE ANALİZİ

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Süreç odaklı yazma yaklaşımı geleneksel yazma öğretimi yöntemlerinde bir yenilik olarak kabul edilmektedir. Birçok çalışma süreç odaklı yaklaşımı avantajları bakımından ya da diğer yaklaşımlarla karşılaştırarak ele alırken, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin süreç odaklı yaklaşım benimsenerek yazı yazmaya dair algı ve tutumunu belirlemek üzere çok az çalışma yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı katılımcıların yazı yazmaya, kendi yazma becerilerine, süreç odaklı yazma alışkanlıklarına ve kullandıkları stratejilere dair nasıl bir tutum ve algıya sahip olduğunu belirlemektir. Özel bir üniversitenin İngilizce hazırlık programında yapılan araştırma verileri ilk olarak beşli Likert-tipi soruların yer aldığı anketi dağıtarak elde edilmiştir. Daha sonra daha detaylı veriler elde etmek amacıyla yarı yapılandırılmış sorular sorularak mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Anketlerden elde edilen nicel bulgular tanımlayıcı istatistik yöntemi kullanılarak, mülakatlardan edilen bulgular ise içerik analizi yapılarak incelenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, katılımcıların süreç odaklı yazma yaklaşımına karşı genel olarak olumlu tutum geliştirdikleri ve yaklaşımın stratejilerinden faydalandıkları görülmüştür.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yazma Becerileri, İkinci Dilde Yazma, Süreç Odaklı Yazma Yaklaşımı, Öğrencilerin Süreç Odaklı Yazma Yaklaşımına Karşı Tutumu, Süreç Odaklı Yazma Basamakları



To My Mother

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

L2	Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
INT	Interview



Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter deals with the introduction of the study and presents information about the statement of the problem and significance of the study.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

L2 writing, as a basic skill for EFL learners, is a matter which requires closer attention. Achieving good results in teaching writing and enhancing learners' writing competence have long been remained as a difficult job for EFL teachers. As it is suggested by Harmer (1998), L2 writing has finally been accepted as a significant skill for second language learning. He highlights the significance of L2 writing skill by stating "The reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right" (p.79). L2 writing is essential both in L2 school settings, and in our daily life, especially due to the constant development of information technology, such as writing e-mails, or business letters overseas.

Writing activities or courses offered by many educational institutions are mostly form-oriented. They attach more importance to the product, grammar or structure. This is mainly because the teaching of L2 concentrates on preparing the learners for the examinations; for this reason, it focuses on the assessment and evaluation of the students' receptive skills such as listening and reading and neglects the productive skills such as writing (Tahaineh, 2009). On the other hand, process approach to writing suggests engaging students in communicative activities and authentic writing tasks. They are supposed to share their work with their peers, revise and edit. Furthermore, there is a continuous interaction between the teacher and students which is not offered in product-oriented writing lessons as they complete writing at one single step. Consequently, the curriculum or programs of various schools may ignore process approach as well as L2 writing due to their exam-oriented system.

Another point to consider is that a writing class is regarded as an uninteresting sequence of giving a topic and a model text that is supposed to be imitated because of the product oriented approaches, course books and product-minded teachers. For instance, students are provided with a model text and asked to follow the text to be able to produce a new piece of writing in a typical product-oriented language classroom. As Carnicelli (1980) suggests, a traditional writing class consists of giving students a topic, making them write a first draft which the teacher views as the final product, and assigning another topic. Students are given no time or opportunity to pre-write or rewrite. In contrast, process-oriented approach concentrates on a variety of in class activities which promote the reinforcement of language use.

Next, teachers have created contexts for students to use the target language and retain what they learn; specifically, grammar and vocabulary have been major issues in language learning. In other words, product-oriented teachers generally give topics to the learners, who are expected to write their essays and submit them to their teacher. The teacher evaluates them and returns their papers by giving summative evaluations to the learners. The teacher primarily focuses on language rather than on the content or organization of the learners' writing. When they receive their writing, the learners occasionally read the teacher's evaluation to see their mistakes or correct them. This is mainly because the students are not asked to revise or write for the second time. Instead, it is acknowledged that they usually put the papers aside and never attempt to check them. This is the pioneering pattern in many L2 writing courses. In order to practice or improve these parts of language learning, process writing is an invaluable aid thanks to various pre-writing activities which integrate all language skills and multiple drafts which are based on the interactions with peers and the teacher. The teacher also guides the students to better their contextual language and textual capacity by giving feedback.

To conclude, these features of process writing approach, which have been elaborated in Chapter 2, seem to be adequate because it serves for the communicative purposes and solution to the problems that both teachers and students encounter in L2 teaching and learning settings. Though the process oriented approach does not convert the learners into specialists in L2 writing, it gives the teachers and L2 learners an

insight and a framework which aims to concentrate more on a specific piece of writing and coping with it in an effective way.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

For more than a decade, speaking a foreign language or more than one has been compulsory for many reasons. In addition, with the constantly changing technology, English has become an essential language to enable people to catch up with the innovations in the world. In the most general sense, the main aim of L2 preparatory programs of the universities is to prepare students for their future courses in their degree programs by helping them improve language skills and strategies effectively. In line with this purpose, teaching writing in L2 has become a major responsibility of school systems.

This study, as well as acting parallel to global innovations, is carried out for exploratory objectives and intends to involve EFL learners in identifying their insight into their process writing habits, skills, strategies, attitude towards writing and process writing approach by shedding light to what extent it they benefit from the approach in real classroom setting. More specifically, based on these overviews, it attempts to find out their insight and attitude towards process writing approach adopted by an English preparatory program connected to a foundation (non-profit) university.

1.3 Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of EFL learners towards writing?
2. What are the perceptions of EFL learners about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use?
3. What are the reported process writing habits and strategies of EFL learners?
4. What are the attitudes of EFL learners towards process writing strategies?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Writing is an essential means of communication in the contemporary world, though traditional paper-and-pen writing or via e-mail (CDC syllabus for English Language, 2002). On the other hand, learners generally encounter problems in L2 writing and such ineffectual experience demotivates and prevents the learners from writing with enough confidence.

In an EFL context, writing instruction plays a major role by integrating the other language skills. Even though this role of writing has its own potential, it can only be accomplished by adopting a communicative and interactive approach that emphasizes process instead of product. This process consists of various elements such as attention to target audience, purpose, fluency, coherence and accuracy. It also stresses prewriting activities and multiple drafts. Seow (2002) points out that “teachers should model the writing process at every stage and teach specific writing strategies to students through meaningful classroom activities and as students go through the various stages of writing, they understand what kind of product is expected at each stage.” (p.319), and these activities constitute each other in a recursive way.

McCabe and Whittaker (2006) underlines the significance of L2 writing with Olson’s (1996) suggestion that in developed communities, perception of our world and ourselves derives from our ways of composing and interpreting written texts, and with Walter Ong’s (1982) argument that if it were not for writing, the literary mind could not think as it does, not only when involved in writing, but also when it is creating its ideas in oral form. In other words, L2 writing seems to be a challenging skill and it is the most complex cognitive process of all the other skills since the students are expected to generate ideas, analyze and evaluate them before they express it in written form.

In brief, this study is assumed to be significant in several respects. The main significance of this study lies in its purpose of in-depth exploration of the insight and perceptions of a group of EFL learners whose writing lessons are conducted with the process approach. Regarding the results, it can provide recommendations in terms of the teachers’ existing writing instruction. Students may need a wide range of pre-writing activities or various types of feedback. In other words, it also may serve as a basis for the writing courses of target setting and the results may provide suggestive feedback for the teachers’ methodology and program coordinators to redesign the program.

1.5 Definitions

Audience: Those people who read or hear what you have written; readers to whom a piece of writing is addressed.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): It refers to the learning of English language, usually in a classroom setting, in a context where the target language is not widely used in the community (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Feedback: Response that indicates the extent to which information is understandable; regarding writing, the response of a teacher, mentor, peer, or some other outside reader to a writer's work particularly as such response helps facilitate improved writing (Campbell, 1998).

Free writing: Writing fluently and freely on any topic; focused free writing is writing openly on a specific topic.

Organization: The internal structure of a piece of writing, the thread of central meaning, the pattern that fits the central idea. When the organization is meets the standard, the content begins meaningfully, and the writer is given a sense of anticipation. The ideas proceed logically; information is given to the reader in the right doses at the right times so that the reader never loses interest.

Product-oriented approach: An approach to teaching writing that involves the analysis of sample readings and repeated production of single drafts of writing (Campbell, 1998).

Process-oriented approach: An approach to writing instruction which involves the teacher and student in working on strategies for generating ideas, pre-writing, drafting, revising, redrafting, proofreading, and other activities that occur during the process of writing (Campbell, 1998).

Recursive process: Moving back and forth among the planning, drafting, and revising stages of writing.

Writing: Writing in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/ EFL) is simultaneously an intellectual, intercultural and a social activity. It entails the knowledge of the content that the writing is to address; knowledge of the English language that is compulsory for the creation of the text; knowledge of the process that concerns how to construct the text; knowledge of the genre that the target text belongs to; and knowledge of the context that embraces the reader's expectation, cultural preference, and the related texts (Hyland, 2003b).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview in terms of historical background, outline and implementation of process writing approach and reviews the related research on second language writing.

2.1. Introduction

As a basic language skill for EFL learners, writing is a challenging language skill for the learners (Bayat, 2014). It has long been investigated by the researchers with an aim to achieve better results and develop learners' writing competence. In the mid-1970s, researchers and teachers of writing began to investigate the processes that were noted in the creation of written text by the students. It was found out that writing was a seriously complicated process, made up of in a variety of sub-processes that take place not one after another in a strict linear sequence, but cyclically and in varying patterns (Caudery, 1995).

Badger and White (2000) asserted that writing by adopting process oriented approaches is regarded as primarily connected with various linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less stress on linguistic knowledge which is about grammar and text structure. Students learn how to plan, draft, revise, edit and publishing strategies at each level of the writing process to enable them to write freely and produce a writing of good quality.

In Process Approach, teacher acts as a facilitator instead of an explainer. In other words, teachers do not necessarily provide the students with input or stimulus. Badger and White (2000) put forward that the students resemble to babies or young children in their way of developing their mother tongue. According to these theorists, EFL students develop their second language rather than learn it. That is why teachers' main aim needs to be drawing out their students' potential with the adoption of process approach.

To conclude, according to Leki (1991), the process oriented approach is an approach to writing instruction that emphasizes the stages of the writing process rather than the final product. It is “interpretational, learner-centered and not specifically related to examinations” (Pennington, 1995, p. 707). As it is clearly seen, the process oriented approach to writing instruction, an innovation in a product-oriented culture (Cheung 1999), has been regarded as a development over the traditional methods of writing instruction.

2.2 Product Approach to Writing

Until the 1970s, product writing was the predominant approach to writing instruction. This traditional instruction to writing highlights the style and tends to concentrate on error correction. It deals with the students’ finished products. A typical product writing instruction is based on the various elements of an essay which are described and outlined for the students. After this brief introduction, students are assigned a writing topic. They write it in or out of the classroom and submit to the teacher. The teacher reads, underlines the spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors and writes a comment on it before returning the papers to the students (William, 1998).

Another important aspect of product writing is that the teacher plays the major role in classroom activities. As argued by Williams (1998), all of the talking in the class is done by the teacher; therefore, the product model is accepted as teacher centered pedagogy. Besides, the product oriented approach is a traditional approach to teaching writing whose main objective is to reproduce the model texts (Nunan, 1996). Students are taught how to reproduce the model text, and the activities provide the students with little teacher input. Consequently, creativity is neglected.

Traditional approaches to writing instruction mainly concentrates on the final product which means the composition of grammatically correct and well-organized pieces of writing (Mahon, 1992). It is implied that teaching writing aims at “one-shot correct writing for the purpose of language practice” (Cheung, 1999) and a “one-shot effort by the teacher to evaluate the students’ attempts (Pennington & Cheung, 1995, p. 20). Grammatical correctness and adherence to the given guidelines form the basis of this one shot written product. Students have limited or no opportunity to include their own ideas or thoughts. As a result, it is an inevitable fact that “little attention is

paid to the ideas and meaning of students' writing, what it communicates to the reader, the purpose and the audience." (Raimes, 1983, p. 75). The teacher pays higher attention to accuracy and form which leads to "sterile" and "unimaginative" written products (Mahon, 1992, p. 75).

Hobelman and Wiriyachitra (1990, p. 37) argue that traditional writing approach is insufficient in terms of two aspects:

"First of all, the teacher considers the student's writing as a product and focuses on form, i.e., syntax, grammar, mechanics and organization, rather than content. The content is mainly viewed as a means of the correct expression of the grammatical and organizational patterns taught, and the correct choice of vocabulary."

2.3 Other Approaches to Writing

It can be necessary to highlight the other approaches before reviewing process writing approach.

2.3.1 The Genre Approach. The genre approach to writing has taken part under various forms in different parts of the world since the 1980s. It mainly deals with teaching specific genres which learners need control of with an aim to succeed in specific conditions. Swales (1990) referred to genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (p.58). His description implies that there are particular traditions or set of rules which are usually related to a writer's target. The notion of genre is also defined as "abstract and socially recognized ways of using language" (Hyland, 2003, p.21). To exemplify, personal letters inform us about the writer's private life, or petitions are written for official purposes. Similarly, most genres mainly focus on the conventions associated with communicative purposes; a personal letter is initiated with a question in a friendly manner since it aims at maintaining good relationships with friends, or an opinion paragraph stresses the writer's ideas as its objective is to support the main idea.

It can be inferred that writing is shaped in a social context and the projection of a specific purpose, and it acknowledges that learning can take place intentionally with the help of imitation and analysis. In his study conducted in an Indian setting, Rahman

(2011) revealed that genre approach motivates L2 learners to take part in the world around them, to regard writing as an element they can use and to apprehend how writers deal with the content to reinforce reasonable organization.

The following table demonstrates a comparative study of genre and process approach:

Table 1

A Comparison of Genre and Process Orientations (Hyland, 2003, p.24)

Attribute	Process	Genre
Main Idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing is a thinking process. ● Concerned with the act of writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing is a social activity. ● Concerned with the final product.
Teaching Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stress on imaginative writer. ● How to produce and link ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasis on reader expectations and product. ● How to express social purposes effectively.
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Makes processes of writing transparent ● Offers basis for instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Makes contextual conventions transparent. ● Contextualizes writing for audience and purpose.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accepts L1 and L2 writing similar. ● Overlooks L2 language difficulties. ● Insufficient attention to product. ● Accepts all writing uses same process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involves linguistic understanding of texts. ● Can result in prescriptive teaching of texts. ● Can lead to over attention to written product. ● Underestimate skills needed to produce texts.

According to researchers, genre approach has some limitations. Paltridge (2001) reports that genre approach implies the combination of the knowledge of text and the social context. As a result, specification of the either is a difficult job. It is also concluded by Swales (2000) that a genre approach places too much emphasis on the reader while paying less attention to learner expression.

2.3.2 The controlled-to-free approach. The controlled-to-free approach, which was a product of Audio-lingual method in 1950s and 1960s, emphasized formal accuracy. It mainly dealt with the linguistic accuracy instead of fluency or originality.

According to Adıgüzel (1998), the controlled-to-free approach implies following a sequential procedure in writing classes. First, students are provided with sentences, then a set of paragraphs to be copied or manipulated grammatically by converting present to past, plural to singular or questions to statements. The students combine sentences or form clauses and change lexical items. All these are done according to a teacher generated predetermined activity plan. Furthermore, students generate nothing of their own; they work on given materials. Perhaps, one of the most outstanding attributes of the controlled-to-free method is about its emphasis on accuracy instead of fluency. Owing to the fact that it mainly deals structural aspect of the language, its communicative aspect is neglected. As it is suggested by Raimes (1983), “this approach highlights three features: grammar, syntax, and mechanics.” (p.76).

Byrne (1988) reports that “gradually the amount of control is reduced and the students are asked to exercise meaningful choice” (p. 22). It is not until they reach a high intermediate or advanced level that students are allowed to try any free compositions (Raimes, 1983). The students write freely only when they are expected to express themselves. To sum up, as it is easily inferred from the name “the controlled-to-free-approach”, teachers have a strict control over the students.

2.3.3 The free writing approach. On the contrary to the controlled-to-free-approach, the free writing approach puts too much emphasis on quantity or fluency of writing rather than formal accuracy. Raimes (1983) acknowledges that the first and most significant part of this approach is that content should be put on the paper fluently by the students with intermediate level. Next, it is followed by accuracy, but almost no error correction is provided by the teachers.

According to Peyton and Staton (1996), students write for a while about a topic in the classroom. It can have various forms such quick writings, which are time-limited and can be done individually since they are not always peer checked. The students can also write dialogue journals to the teacher, a classmate or another partner who is expected to respond. He suggests such pieces of writings may be kept in a notebook.

Moreover, many kinds of themes may emerge from these pieces that can act as a facilitator for more extensive writing that is discussed, revised, edited, and published.

To specify, at the beginning of the writing course, students are asked to do free writing about any topic regardless of the mistakes they may make. Teachers generally do not tend to read, check or do error correction. Byrne (1988) suggests that this way of writing may be useful as an out-of-classroom activity in the form of keeping a diary, with the biggest benefit being students' recovery from fear of writing. Raimes (1983) further implies that audience and content are naturally regarded as the most significant aspects of the approach simply because "free writings often revolve around subjects that the students are interested in." (p. 7).

2.3.4 The paragraph-pattern approach. This approach does not deal with formal correctness or fluency of content. However, it highlights the significance of organization. Raimes (1983,) notes that students are asked to copy the paragraphs, analyze the model paragraphs' form, or reproduce the model texts. They are also asked to turn the jumbled sentences into a paragraph, find out general and specific statements and select or create an appropriate topic sentence. Finally, the students may add or drop a sentence.

It also needs to be emphasized that this kind of writing is inappropriate for beginner levels since paragraph is accepted as the first step of writing. Furthermore, learners generally work on model paragraphs which are written by someone else. It means they are sometimes expected to be at advanced level to be able to deal with organizations of different types of paragraphs. Therefore, Baskoff (1981) asserts that model paragraphs can be used with students at any level of proficiency by using adopted paragraphs when necessary.

2.3.5 The grammar-syntax-organization approach. The primary aim of this approach is to improve students' different writing skills in a simultaneous way. Teachers provide various writing tasks for students which guide them to work on not only grammar, but also syntax and organization. By this way, students are encouraged to see the relationship between what they attempt to write and the forms that are essential for writing it. To exemplify, "if they are to write a passage describing a

process, the words like *first, then, later, at this stage*, and the passive form of the simple present tense are revised or taught for the first time if not yet known before the writing task.” (Adıgüzel, 1998, p. 16).

2.4 Historical Overview of Process Oriented Approach

The process writing approach was validated in 1992 by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association, when they suggested Content Standard 5 for the English Language Arts, K-12: Students are expected to use process writing elements strategically (De La Paz, 1999). However, the main ideas and practices of the process writing can be traced back to early Greek and Roman models of teaching rhetoric (Bloodgood, 2002; Winterowd & Blum, 1994). The professional literature does not mention about writing process until Day’s (1947) discussion of the seven steps of the process writing. In the following years, Mills (1953) agreed that “the basic failure in our teaching centers, in my judgement, is our unwillingness or incapacity to think of writing in terms of process.” (p.19).

Later, a definition of a writing process which consisted of four stages was obtained through the interviews held with 16 authors appeared in the introduction to a book edited by Cowley (1958). Many of these published writers came together with the other writers regularly for the purpose of sharing their work in progress, although this was a rare practice in the schools until 1970s. In the 1970s, in the San Francisco Bay Area, a group of instructors began to share their own written products. They compared the model for how professional writers compose with how writing was commonly taught in the schools, labeling their non-traditional instructional model ‘the process approach’ (Gray, 2000; Wilson, 1994).

In addition, over the past 40 years, the description and aspects of process writing have been interpreted again. To start with, a majority of researchers offered a model of process with three-stage. Rohman’s (1965) model of pre-write, write, and re-write is accepted to be the most widely referenced interpretation of the process writing. However, in his dissertation about the composing process of four high school honor students, Brozick (1979) implied that the process writing is much more dynamic and associated with a number of elements and influences such as purpose, audience, type of writing and, and the writer’s characteristics.

These early proponents of the process model emphasized a balance in instruction between writing processes and products. Since the 1980s, the process oriented approach to teaching writing has appeared as the main paradigm, so much that both local and state educational systems have dominated it as the gold standard for writing instruction in K-12 classrooms (Patthey-Chavez, Matsumura, & Valdes, 2004). For this reason, course books have often interpreted the process as a prescriptive, linear formula for creating a text, which is not truly indication of the stop-and-start, recursive process used by expert writers, who are writing for authentic audiences instead of classroom teachers.

Larsen (1983) acknowledged that writers were motivated to produce recursively until the mid-20th century. However, it was not until the work of cognitive researchers, such as Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981), and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), that many researchers and practitioners criticized that linear-prescriptive perspective of the writing process and adopted the one that is recursive and more complex.

To sum up, according to several second language researchers and educators, ESL/EFL writing instruction should consist of (1) a large quantity of writing practice, (2) multiple texts and motivating tasks, (3) opportunities for revising and feedback, and (4) models of acceptable written texts (Grabe & Kaplan 1996; Grabe 2001; Kroll 2001; Nation 2009; Raimes 2002; Reid 2001; Seow 2002; Sokolik 2003). Within this perspective, theorists and educators felt the need to bring a new approach to writing.

2.5 The New Trend and Modern Approach to Writing

Modern approach to teaching writing, which appeared as a reaction against product writing, originates from communicative approach. It describes writing as a kind of process which consists of three stages: prewriting, drafting and revising. In other words, Muncie (2012) states that process writing attempted to demolish the idea that writing was simply alternative skill to revising grammar, to demonstrating learners that effective writing is mostly based on generating ideas, organizing those ideas, drafting, and rewriting. In line with this, writing is accepted as a communicative skill

and emphasizes the audience as well as purpose. It underlines the meaning rather than the form. Students are taught how the process goes through when producing a piece of written form. Teachers let the students learn how to write rather than writing. To sum up, as it is clearly concluded by Fowler (1989), process writing emerged as opposed to product approach since it served the purpose of writing better and let the learners express themselves in a better way as individuals.

Tribble (1996: 160), in his book, states that the process approach appeared with a dissimilar emphasis than the product approach as quoted below;

“The process approach is an approach to the teaching of writing which stresses the creativity of the individual writer, and which pays attention to the development of good writing practices rather than the imitation of models.”

2.5.1 Definition and key features of process approach to teaching writing.

Even though there is no commonly accepted description for the process approach to writing, there are a number of fundamental principles that are communal to it (Graham & Perin, 2007, Nagin, 2006, Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006). To begin with, during the process of writing, learners are involved in a cycle of planning, translating and reviewing. They are engaged in writing for real purposes and addressing to real audience. Learners may also work on writing projects that are extended to long period of time. Moreover, process writing approach highlights the learners’ ownership of their own piece of writing since it is a kind of output of their self-reflection or self-evaluation.

Oluwadiya (1992) states that process approach to writing is

*“a view of writing as a recursive process that can be taught,
an emphasis on writing as a way of learning as well as communicating,
the willingness to draw on other disciplines, notably cognitive psychology and linguistics,
the incorporation of a rhetorical context, a view that writing assignments include a sense of audience, purpose and occasion,*

procedure for feedback that encourages the instructor to intervene during the process (formative evaluation), and so aid the student to improve his first original drafts.

a method of evaluation that determines how well a written product adapts the goals of the writer to the needs of the reader as audience.” (p. 12).

According to Steele (1992), the process oriented approach focuses on a variety of in class activities which support the improvement of language use, generating ideas, group discussion multiple drafting. Moreover, Nunan (1991) defines process approach to writing as a series of steps which create a piece of work. It is known that these pieces of work may not always be perfect. However, they gradually get closer to the perfection by producing, reflecting on, discussing and revising the drafts.

Kroll (2001) defines process approach as follows:

“The ‘process approach’ serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses.... What the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single-shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts.” (p. 220-221)

White and Arndt (1991) report that process oriented approach to writing is an approach whose function ‘enabling’. The purpose of this approach is to enable students to regard themselves as ‘writers’, to raise awareness not only for students but also for teachers, and to enable students to put their ideas into more logically consistent and meaningful messages.

Badger and White (2000) clearly state that process oriented approach is mainly associated with language competence which involves planning or drafting rather than language knowledge such as grammar or text structure. Similar to other theorists (Tribble 1996), they identify four stages of process writing: prewriting, drafting, rewriting and editing. These stages are repetitive and interact with each other throughout the process of the writing. Consequently, they do not lie on a straight line

which makes it nonlinear. Many writers recursively refer to the prewriting stage throughout the revising process in order to include a new idea or develop a perspective. For this reason, it is seen as a cyclical process which allows writers to go back to prewriting activities even after rewriting and editing. They further suggest that brainstorming is a typical prewriting activity in the process approach. When it comes to the composing/drafting stage, students expand the results of brainstorming session and work a plan. Next, they discuss and review their initial draft by working individually or in groups. In the end, they are expected to edit their text (Badger and White, 2000). These stages are elaborated in the following sections of the present chapter.

To sum up, it is acknowledged that process writing requires some stages. Generation of ideas or prewriting or activities such as brainstorming, discussion in group and evaluation of the ideas are indispensable parts of process writing. It is also asserted that students need to draft, seek comments from peers or the teacher and revise the entire text. After proofreading, the final text is published. It is important to conclude that process oriented approach to teaching writing depends on the process of writing itself instead of the final product.

2.5.2 The principles of process writing approach. Graham, MacArthur, Schafer and Schwartz (1995) suggest three key features for process writing approach. To begin with, they stress the communicative aim of writing by generating a community of writing in the classroom setting. Learners are involved in authentic tasks of writing and share their work with their peers. Secondly, learners are provided with a predictable structure, so they are given an opportunity to support their cognitive process by planning, drafting, revising and editing. Lastly, these steps contribute to the continuous, mutual and responsive interactions between the teachers and learners.

Furthermore, the teacher does not assign writing topics or sample texts, but facilitates the collaboration between students and helps them by giving recommendation or advice. Learners are given a long period of time and the opportunity of generating ideas, draft and revise. The significance of language use or accuracy of linguistic is replaced by the ideas and organization as these elements take priority (Raimes, 1991).

Flower and Hayes (1981) report that the process writing approach is based upon four aspects. The first and the most significant aspect is that writing is a series of distinctive thinking processes. Another point is that these processes are interconnected. The third is related to the level of composing which is considered to be a thinking process directed by a goal and guided by the writer's developing cycle of goals. The last point worth mentioning is that the process writing requires setting sub-goals or replacing the main goals at times. These four aspects are exploited by writers or the writer students to a certain extent throughout the writing process.

On the contrary to the product-oriented approach, which relies on studying and imitating previous textual models, the process-oriented approach requires repeated and a variety of steps. These steps expect the writers to consider the topic, language, aim to write and social background of the audience in a detailed way. Although there are several options upon how the implementation of process approach in the writing instruction, the most prominent principles are pre-writing, peer and teacher feedback, and revision (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005).

Further, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005, p. 8) note that "as a transactional activity, writing represents a process that must be undertaken with the reader's background knowledge, needs, interests and ideologies in mind." The process oriented approach claims that writing is based on the interaction between the writer and the audience which builds an awareness of authentic social situations and tendency to work collaboratively with peers.

Figure 1 illustrates "the stages of revision, editing, and generating ideas that are generally associated with the process approach." (Hedge, 2005, pp.51). It is evident that "writing is a linear process; the process of composition often involves going back and forth through the writing process." (Raimes, 1985, pp.229). In a similar fashion, process oriented approach is based on the "recursive nature" of writing as shown by Smith in his book, *Writing and The writer*, writing is a recursive process and the text is always moved around, modified, cut and expanded (Smith, 1982).

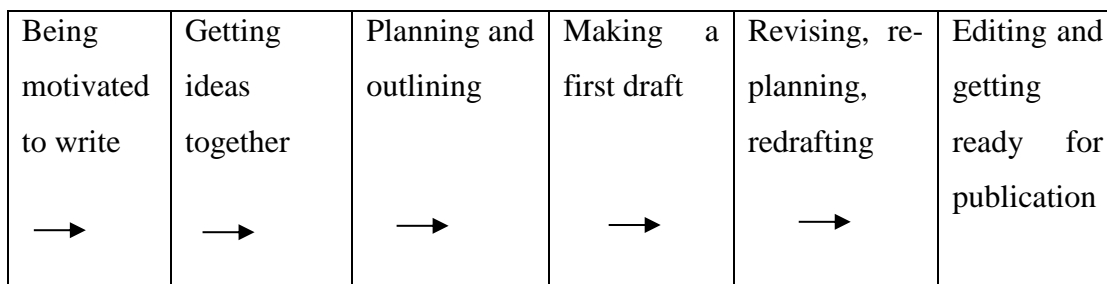


Figure 1 “The Process of Writing” (from *Writing*, p. 51 by T. Hedge, 2005).

As a result, it is significant to add that process approach to writing is also supported by researchers and educators who give writing instruction in the first language (Boscolo 2008; Calkins 1994) as well as by English as a Second/ Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) professionals (Campbell 1998; Grabe and Kaplan 1996; Liu and Hansen 2002; Nation 2009; Raimes 1998; Reid 2000).x

2.5.3 Stages of Process Approach. As Hedgcock (2005) indicates, the procedural elements of writing instruction for students are often inadequate. To be more specific, the writing texts and the assignments in course books that are published by international publishers may not always offer the required information in order to enhance powerful writing strategies. Therefore, teachers ought to design their instructions to incorporate all the steps of process writing. To demonstrate, Steele (2004) suggests that The Process Approach Model involves eight stages which are described in detail below.

2.5.3.1 Prewriting / Generating ideas. The process writing starts with prewriting activities which effectively lead to writing properly (Gunning, 2000). According to Wing (2009), prewriting is the generation in the process writing, whereby the writer makes a decision on the main purpose and objective of the task and ultimately decides on the argument and organization for writing after conducting preliminary research to generate ideas for the task. In other words, the main purpose of prewriting activities is to enable the learners to plan an essay and the process of elaboration. These activities take place before the students begin to write their first drafts. In other words, learners find ideas, strategies, and information for the given task to be completed.

Wing (2009, p. 1) further suggested that “optimal pre-writing strategies eliminate confusion and minimize block while actually writing. Therefore, a mastery of pre-writing strategies is an invaluable investment that is a must for any serious, academic writer.” Students are also expected to share ideas and take into consideration the quality and effectiveness of the ideas at this stage. In a similar fashion, according to Graham (2006), planning refers to production and organization of the content. The most common techniques that support students’ generating ideas are as follows:

Brainstorming: Brainstorming for ideas is connected to learners’ lives and what they have in their mind to write about. It can be either individual or as a group activity.

With an aim to be able to get a solution, it is necessary to consider about many other options. That is why the writer students attempt to bring their minds as many ideas about the related topic as they can. In order to be able to bring these ideas, the writer students ask themselves a couple of questions or the teacher asks them to note down all the ideas, vocabulary, sentences or phrases that raise after asking a question about the target topic.

It is considered to be the most useful way of generating ideas and getting started. Veit and Clifford (1985, p. 3) imply that “the purpose of this technique is to let associations connect with one another in the mind, like rubbing sticks together to create a spark.” In addition, Bob-Wolff (1996) argues that brainstorming can be an effective and enhancing strategy in the EFL classroom and a means of displaying the students that they are capable of generating more ideas to foster their learning process. Accordingly, it results in an increase in their learning autonomy since they take the responsibility of their own learning. However, the most significant of all, it fosters the quality of involvement and productivity of the students.

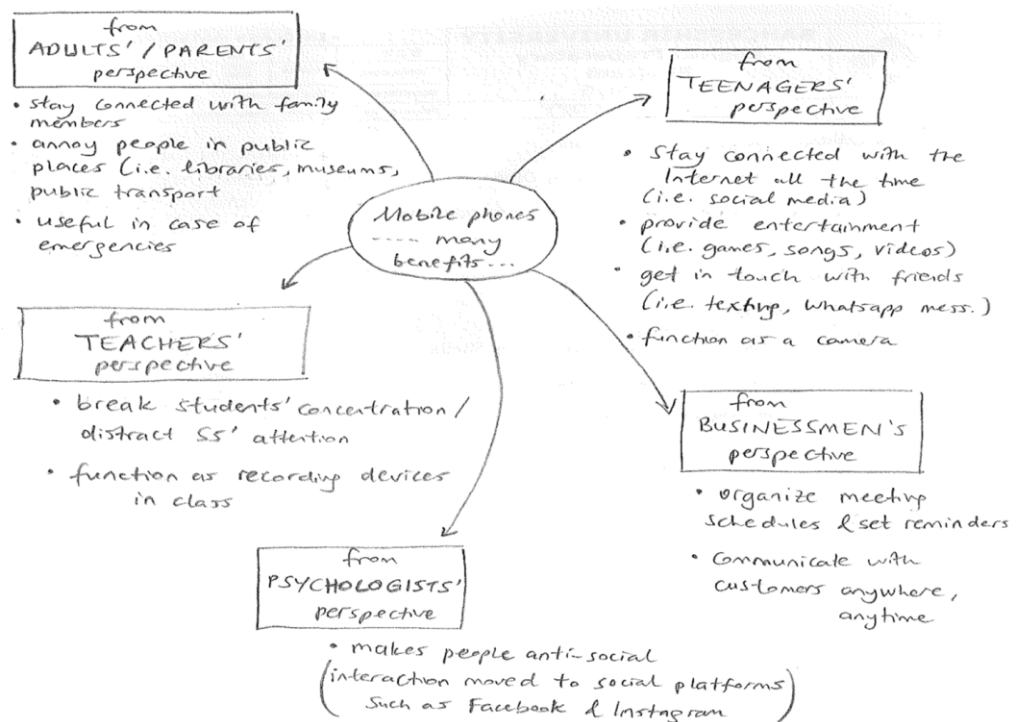


Figure 2 A model of Brainstorming

The brainstorming above has been carried out on the topic ‘Mobile phones have brought many benefits to our lives. Do you agree?’ in an EFL classroom at a foundation (non-profit) university. All the boxes present the perspectives and arguments for the topic.

Clustering / Mind Mapping: Clustering is a prewriting activity which was invented and formulated by Rico (1983) for accessing that the state of consciousness is often called ‘the right side of the brain’ in which we code, plan, associate and cope with complex images. Rico (1983) further defines clustering as a productive, open-ended, cyclical and visual design of ideas, actions and emotions. He asserts clustering is a kind of designing an interior landscape as it begins to arise.

To specify, students label their ideas organizing on a mind map. This stage enables students to make the coherent relationship of ideas which helps them with the organization of their writing. In other words, mapping their thoughts helps the students to organize their ideas and make connections between them. It is also considered to be an effective technique which fosters creative thinking skills of students. Carr (1986,

p.20) regards it as “a non-linear brainstorming process that generates ideas, images and feelings around a stimulus word, until a pattern becomes discernible”. It is recommended that students do it quickly on a scrap paper to prevent any ideas from escaping from the short-time memory.

Looping: This technique suggests that students write anything that comes to their mind regardless of any fear of making mistakes. Similar to mapping, it gives students an opportunity to record their ideas about the related topic before they escape from their short-term memory. The students summarize the ideas that they have written down in a sentence which can be counted as a topic sentence. Next, they start writing quickly again, return to what they have written and summarize all these sentences in a single sentence again. They are encircled and each of these encircled sentences is named “a loop”, for which it is termed as looping technique.

Cubing: Cubing is based on a study which gathers details that associated with the topic under six stages (Spack, 1984).

1. Description: The topic is examined and students write about their thoughts in a descriptive way.
2. Comparison: Students try to write what the topic is different from and similar to.
3. Association: Students are expected to write what the topic reminds them.
4. Analyze: They analyze the topic by considering its components.
5. Application: It is the stage where the students think how it can be utilized in order to reinforce their education/ society/ learning etc.
6. Argument ‘for’ or ‘against’: Students write down their arguments.

On condition that students go through these stages, they will be able to generate plenty of ideas which assist them in their first draft.

Debating / Group Discussion: Students work in two or more groups which consist of opposing ideas. First, they are provided with a set of arguments to initiate the discussion. A secretary is assigned to each group to write down the ideas of

participants. Next, students express their ideas, opinions, beliefs or thoughts in order to be able to write their first draft.

Quick Writing: Now that the purpose of this stage is not organizing the ideas, students are given an opportunity to write about the related topic in a short time. They are reminded not to worry about spelling, repetition or punctuation.

Interviewing: Student writers interview with one another by interacting or sharing their knowledge about the given topic. The teacher asks them to write down each other's ideas or background knowledge which also helps them deal with stress. If the students are supposed to interview someone outside the classroom setting, they are asked to prepare a set of well-selected questions.

Fantasizing / Meditating / Mind Transportation: Dakelman (1973) describes this technique as 'fantasy journey'. Firstly, students put all their belongings away. They travel into a fantasy world while sitting quietly in class. Secondly, when the complete silence is provided, the teacher presents the topics such as: If you had one wish, what would you choose? The teacher and students sit quietly for a couple of minutes. Further, the teacher asks the students to reflect on the question and write down what they have fantasized or meditated about. Finally, these initial drafts are checked by peers or the teacher, then reviewed and rewritten before they are submitted for final evaluation by the teacher.

Reading: Teachers can refer to their classrooms' intensive or extensive reading materials. In other words, reading materials can be utilized at prewriting stage, on condition that they are parallel to the topic they are supposed to write about. For instance, the reading text about *Global Warming* familiarizes the students with climate change, weather, agriculture or economy. This serves the purpose of filling their content schemata in their mind effectively.

Free Writing: Free writing enables students to focus on the main picture without getting stuck in details. It is a non-linear activity using the right side of the brain, which concentrates on the concepts and abstractions. When the students begin to organize, edit, and censor their ideas, they tend to move onto the left side of the

brain where linear thinking happens and that is where thoughts get blocked (Mouser, 2000). In addition, Darling (2004) argues that many writing instructors prefer free writing exercise at the beginning of each class for the purpose of getting the brain in gear.

Free writing usually enables the students to realize not all piece of writing they produce is always perfect and not all writing must be stored. Students are expected to be able to exclude unnecessary or irrelevant ideas. Through the last part of writing, they are likely to have a different point of view about the topic or totally new ideas and discard some of the vocabulary items or structures that never serve the final product.

In conclusion, Bailey (1993) conducted a study to explore the implementation of prewriting strategies among 11 ESL learners from different language backgrounds. He examined the use of prewriting techniques regarding: (1) if they would be implemented when not specifically needed; (2) variety and frequency of use; (3) how the content composed by prewriting activities was included in the draft. Data were collected through the first drafts of a total of 22 essays. The results revealed that ESL students exploit prewriting techniques productively and the subjects tend to prefer the techniques which lend themselves to approximating and translating the inner dialogue of composing process. In other words, they instinctively adapted the techniques to conform to the psychological reality of the composing process (Mogahed, 2013)

2.5.3.2 Drafting. Students begin to write their first drafts roughly by using their ideas which have been generated at the prewriting stage. Drafting is referred as creating or transforming and involves the process of placing the ideas into writing through language (Feng, 2001). This can be done in the class individually, in pairs or groups. The paragraphs which are not completed, but changeable are shaped partially. The students may change their ideas or generate new ones. Richards (1990) asserts that what he has written himself usually creates more ideas, plans and goal, therefore the writer student is flexible and open to any idea that emerge in the process of writing. In addition, guidance and support are compulsory in this stage and the learners have to acknowledge that the initial draft will not be perfectly completed and needs more time as well as effort.

Drafting should not be viewed as quick or free writing as it may be written at paragraph level. The writer students decide on the audience, purpose, and form. Richard (1990) suggests that with an aim to draft or gain the ability of drafting, writing activities may include:

“Elaboration exercise: Students are given a sentence on which they collaboratively elaborate and grow.

Reduction exercise: Students are given a word and multipart paragraph, and break it down into simpler sentences.

Jumbled paragraph: Students are given a jumbled paragraph and they reorder the sentences.

Jumbled essay: Students are given a set of mixed-up paragraphs and asked to rearrange them to make an essay.

Quick-writing: Students quick-write various sections of their composition: beginnings, central sections, conclusions.” (p. 113)

2.5.3.3 Re-writing / Revising. Revising is a significant stage of writing and can take place in any stage. It enables the learners to make required changes and reshape their piece of writing. It involves the students to take into consideration the suggestions or advice from a peer as well as the teacher about how to enhance the writing. The students can correct any errors that they make on the elements of writing such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. It is necessary to reassure the students that the initial draft does not have to be the final product. They can modify the organization, content or form. Thus, the revision stage requires the activities like adding, dropping, excluding, or exchanging the ideas into a variety of discourse levels (Tompkins, 2004).

Before starting rewriting stage, students are expected to complete their first draft. It is suggested that a good writer needs to write as many drafts as he/she can until he/she feels satisfied with it. For this reason, rebuilding or reshaping their drafts is essentially necessary so as to be able to revise them efficiently. As Lee (2006) points out, the positive impact of students’ multiple drafting heavily relies on effective revising process at each drafting stage.

Another way of revising is “Peer feedback”. Drafts are shared so that learners become the readers of each other’s piece of writing. By acting as readers, learners gain the awareness of the fact that a writer creates something to be read by others, so they develop their own drafts. Next, drafts are given back and necessary changes are made in line with the peer feedback. In the end, a final draft is composed and the learners’ writings are assessed with the teachers’ feedback.

The following diagram shows the recursive nature and the interrelationship of the stages:

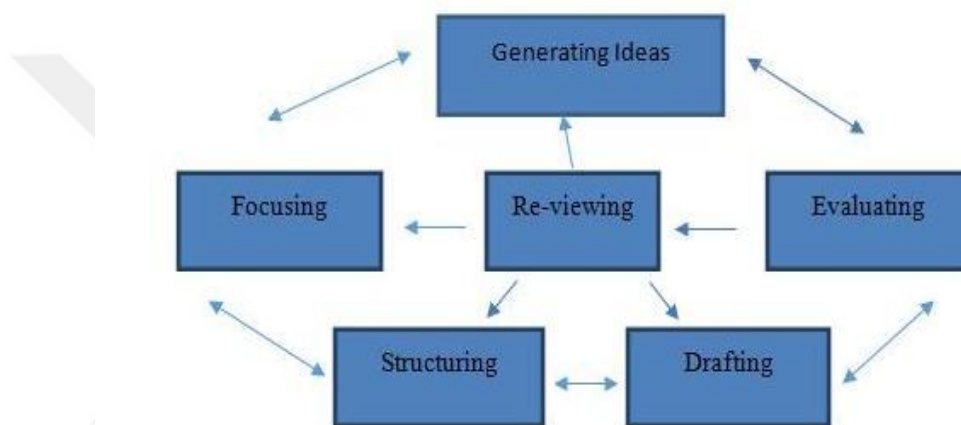


Figure 3 A model of writing (White and Arndt’s diagram of process writing, 1991, p. 43).

White and Arndt’s diagram (1991) suggests teachers a framework which tries to demonstrate the cyclical and not linear nature of writing. In other words, instructors should take into consideration that writers do not perform these stages linearly, but rather like in a pinball game (Campbell, 1998), in which the ball moves back and forth.

Graham and Sandmel (2011) identify the steps mentioned above as planning, translating and reviewing. Students work in these cycles. Planning requires students to set goals, generate and organize their ideas. In next step, they put a writing plan into

action which refers to translating step. Finally, students are supposed to review their work. They evaluate, edit and revise it.

2.5.4 Advantages of process writing approach. There are several possible benefits of the process oriented approach (Graham & Harris, 1997). To begin with, students are engaged in planning, drafting and revising. It is widely known that all these activities contribute to their cognitive development. Secondly, students are given instructions through mini lessons or conferences which enrich the quality of their writing and these teaching strategies help the students meet their instructional needs. Lastly, as it is widely accepted, students need to be motivated to write, and it can be fostered mostly through collaboration, individual responsibility, personal attention, and a positive learning atmosphere. These types of activities are thought to facilitate the value that students place on specific academic tasks (Wigfield, 1994). To specify, process writing gives the students the opportunity of working together. That means, they can work collaboratively and learn from each other. While students are engaged in such a collaborative activity, teachers are expected to create a supportive and non-threatening writing environment (Graham & Sandmel, 2011).

When it comes to pre-writing activities, they represent the best asset of the approach since they offer a combination of speaking, reading and grammar. These activities that the process approach offers have numerous benefits. In other words, almost all language skills are intensively used during these activities. They activate the students' linguistic knowledge or contribute to each other's content schemata so that students can write sufficiently. In this way, extensive comprehensible input is provided for the students during these communicative activities since they read, speak and write a lot (Pica, 1986). Finally, all these reinforce fluency in writing.

It also needs to be underlined that a language learning course must include communicative activities which are also indispensable part of process oriented approach to writing. These activities serve to reinforce interaction among the students by enabling them to share each other's linguistic or previous knowledge about any topic. Consequently, the learners do not only improve themselves, but also interact with the target audience by means of language. This is also known to promote the improvement of skilled language use since a number of interesting classroom

techniques, including ‘conferencing’, have emerged from the process approach to writing (Nunan, 1991). When writing courses include various group activities, learners exchange ideas or comments as well as working together in order to produce a paragraph or an essay. Nunan (1991) also claims that process approach fosters collaborative group work between the students as a way of promoting motivation and developing positive attitudes towards writing.

Another advantage is associated with what students possess internally. Brown (2001) affirms that the process approach is beneficial for the learners when they acquire a new language. The students need to concentrate on the content and main idea since they are the generators of language. As it is widely accepted, language skills are best acquired when students have their own intrinsic motives. Raimes (1983) states that students are not asked to write on a given topic in a restricted time and hand in the composition after the first draft in the process approach. On the other hand, they explore a topic through writing. She further asserts that the writing process is a process of exploration for learners; invention of new ideas and new language structure to be utilized in order to express their ideas.

Product-based evaluation fails to foster writing skills (Murray, 1972). In contrast, process approach to writing integrates the other skills and contributes to the learners’ ability to use L2 effectively since it never implies that the students are asked to write about a topic selected beforehand in a restricted period of time (Raimes, 1983). The teacher simply fosters the student’s act of writing rather than presenting the input directly (Badger & White, 2000). For this reason, process oriented approach to writing instruction has been reviewed as a strategy of thinking (Applebee, 1986) that reinforces the learners’ analyses and organization of ideas (Barnett, 1992), enhances the collaboration among the learners (Nunan, 1991), gives the opportunity to manage and control writing (Brown, 2001), and allows for varied activities (Onozawa, 2010).

Raimes (1983) contends that systematic teaching of writing fosters the language use including grammatical and vocabulary items; thus, helping learners to learn. It can be noted that writing through process oriented approach is considered as an effective remedy both for fostering grammatical items that are being taught at present and for the learners to retain their available or previous language knowledge. To be more

specific, students establish a personal connection with the topic and become aware of the fact that they follow a process while writing about that topic. This process is initiated with the stage of pre-writing which is based on brainstorming. Ideas are generated, and schemata, the background knowledge or personal experience, is activated. In other words, teachers demonstrate the students how to make use of their stored knowledge and experience.

Last but not least, since the learners publish and share their final product with peers, they need to give a message to a specific audience. Accordingly, a great deal of excitement is created, as the students acknowledge that they will exchange their products with their peers. As they see their writing read by classmates, the sense of achievement is reported to be great and it motivates the learners to write more. Displaying and exchanging their work enables the learners to produce authentic texts which is a good way to promote writing (Peregoy and Boyle, 1993). In addition, these ideas are consistent with Graves' (1983) research conducted with primary students' piece of writing. His basic findings include the need to encourage children to write with an audience in mind, for a specific purpose and a style which is appropriate for the purpose. Hence, the learners take the ownership over their written product since they have the opportunity to produce drafts, revise their work and present it for peers to read.

To sum up, process approach regards writing as the practice of linguistic skills. On condition that EFL teachers act as facilitators and select proper activities, they will have promoted their students' writing skills.

2.5.5 Criticisms against process writing approach. Despite potential benefits, the process oriented approach to writing is criticized by a number of theorists (e.g. Baines, Baines, Stanley, & Kunkel, 1999). These theorists argue that a process writing classroom provides inadequate instruction, and particularly learners who have difficulties in writing cannot acquire the input effectively. In other words, it fails to ensure that these students acquire the writing skills that they lack. Critics also claim that insufficient attention is paid to improving foundational skills which are handwriting, spelling, and sentence build-up. They further acknowledge that very

limited time is devoted to teaching the students the techniques for conducting basic writing processes such as prewriting and planning (Graham, & Sandmel, 2011).

As cited in the study carried out by Bayat (2014), another criticism against this approach is that it neglects the cognitive processes implemented by the writer throughout the composition of the text (Flower & Hayes, 1981), that it does not account for language use, and causes inconvenience (Reid, 2001); that means drafting is devoted too much time, thereby resulting in students' failure in the exams (Horowitz, 1986); and that the disagreement that between the product and the process decrease the quality of in class activities (Hyland, 2003)."

A number of theorists such as Horowitz (1986) and Rodriguez (1985) seem to have negative ideas upon process oriented approach. Horowitz (1986) asserts that process approach's concentration on multiple drafts may lead to unprepared students for essay examinations and that overuse of peer evaluation may result in an unrealistic perception on their capabilities. He also reports that trying to transform the bad writers into good ones with the help of a process approach may be of debatable efficacy, and that the inductive orientation of the process approach to writing is appropriate only for some writers and academic tasks.

As a result, it is also mentioned that the number of completed papers produced at the end of the process writing is fewer in number compared with the traditional model since in process model the learners deal with the same topic for longer period.

2.5.6 Process approach versus product approach. Theorists and researchers inevitably tend to make a comparison between product and process oriented teaching. McCrimmon (1994) views it as a contrast between writing as a way of knowing which refers to *process* and writing as a way of telling which refers to *product*. Moreover, Murray (1980) considers it as the difference between internal and external revision. While internal revision implies revising for the purpose of clarifying the meaning for one self, external revision aims to clarify meaning for the reader. For this reason, Flower (1985) defines it as the distinction between writer-based and reader-based

prose. Nunan (2001) also acknowledges process approach differs from traditional product-oriented approach in many ways.

To begin with, product approach deals with the writing tasks which are imitated, copied, or transformed from the models that are supplied by the teachers. However, process approach is based on the stages that are followed through the creation of text. While the main purpose of product writing is error-free coherent text, process writing acknowledges that texts may not be error-free or perfect. The writer has the potential to get closer to the perfection by producing, discussing, reflecting on or revising the drafts of the text. With the help of the process oriented model, it is concluded that students learn to write by writing and in doing so they become better writers (Dyer, 1996).

Further, 'teacher tells, instructs, gives rules, and the student listens, absorbs, and complies', which is regarded as the traditional teacher-student relationship, cannot be implemented in process oriented writing instruction. In a process oriented writing class, the students learn writing by doing, practicing, and being guided by their teacher (Mol, 1991). To conclude, process approach helps the students become talented writers in their student-centered classroom setting.

According to many studies, writing cannot be regarded as a skill or course that can be done at a single step. Smith (1982), Raimes (1983 & 1987) and Zamel (1983) point out that writing is a nonlinear, recursive and composing process that involves a number of steps: prewriting, composing, and rewriting. In line with this statement, process-oriented approach to writing represents a shift from product-oriented approach to process-oriented approach. To demonstrate, product-oriented approach is based on writing only one draft at the end of each lesson. Students are not provided with sufficient feedback or any prewriting activities which assume generating ideas beforehand, while the process approach to writing highlights the significance of prewriting activities that the learners are involved in before producing a good sample of written text.

All in all, the main focus of process model is devoted to writing as a process instead of product. Students improve their writing by rewriting according to the advice and suggestions offered by the peers or teacher. In contrast to traditional approaches

which underline the correction of the product, process writing helps the students develop the process of their writing. It moves the learners through a sequence of prewriting, drafting, peer feedback, and revision (Applebee, 1986; Gage, 1986; Williams, 1998; Reid, 2001).

2.5.7 Research findings from previous studies on process approach. As the process oriented approach is adopted in many institutions, a great number of studies have been carried out with an aim to discover the effectiveness of process approach. Research upon the implementation of process approach generally tends to focus on composing the process of the learners in classroom setting. These types of studies revealed that process oriented approach to writing enables learners to work in a supportive classroom environment where they are viewed as writers and motivated to take risks by creating meaning. Moreover, these types of studies help teachers to explore the connection between the process of composing and writing instruction (Zamel, 1987). Earlier studies based upon reading and writing also revealed that the process is more important than the teaching of language points in unconnected and isolated sentences in a linear fashion (Celce-Murcia and Hilles, 1988; Zamel, 1983).

To continue with the earlier studies, Diaz (1985) explored the change and improvement in the learners' writing in her own process oriented classroom. The setting where the study was carried out consisted of various elements of process writing such as prewriting, drafting, revising and editing. Diaz collected the data from the students' writing. Finally, it was discovered that the participant students in the process oriented classroom tended to write in a better and well-organized way. Diaz also noted that process approach to writing enabled students to feel more confident about their own piece of writing as the writing activities caused anxiety among the students before the introduction of process approach to writing.

Hildebrand (1985) investigated L2 learners' assumptions, attitudes and perceptions on writing. Her study was carried out in two different classrooms of participants with an experimental and a control group. Control group was instructed with product oriented approach as she concentrated on the product. In contrast, experimental group was exposed to the emphasis of meaningful writing for real purpose and audience. They were also encouraged to write collaboratively and give

peer feedback to each other. In line with Diaz's findings, Hildebrand concluded that process approach raised awareness upon writing and process as well as providing learners with confidence. She suggests adopting process writing approach since it contributes to the academic writing skills of learners and fosters appreciation for writing among students.

Another study that was conducted by National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) examined the advantages of process oriented approach. It was observed that students who were instructed with the components of process writing such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing were likely to compose comprehensible writings (Risinger, 1987). Findings of 1992 NAEP assessment in writing also revealed that by implementing process writing strategies, the students were able to achieve proficiency in writing as measured by NAEP assessment writing tasks (Goldstein and Arnold, 1996).

More recent research studies related to the effectiveness of process approach in writing instruction have been conducted in different school settings in different countries. Badger and White (2009) suggested that the process oriented approach has been criticized because it regards the process as the standard for all writers without taking into consideration what is being written and who is doing the writing, and it does not give sufficient importance to the purpose and social context in which writing takes place. Nevertheless, a large number of the studies indicated that the process approach deserves to be widely accepted and utilized because it enables students to understand the stages involved in writing, and it recognizes that what learners bring to the writing classroom contributes to the improvement of the writing skill (Badger & White 2000). Moreover, Jarvis (2002) emphasized the advantages of process writing approach for improving students' confidence as writers and added that if they are given enough time and practice, all learners have the potential of becoming good writers.

These ideas were also in line with the expressions made in the late seventies in many articles (e.g., Murray, 1980) by Donald Murray. He dealt with the one's reflection on her/his own process of writing instead of searching the writing processes of others. He emphasized the importance of a series of drafts in the writing process since the students gradually explored through writing what it was that she/he meant to

say. Moreover, Jarvis (2002) emphasized the advantages of process writing approach for improving students' confidence as writers and added that if they are given enough time and practice, all learners have the potential of becoming good writers.

In the context of a writing workshop, Honeycutt (2002) investigated the effects of explicit instruction and practice in how to implement process writing strategies and strategies for coping with negative feelings that emerge during various stages of process writing. Pre and posttests revealed that the overall quality of the learners' writing increased when they internalized particular strategies for prewriting, writing and revising. With an aim to monitor the development of their text, they employed self-regulation strategies and activated their own strategies for coping with their negative feelings that emerge during the process of composing.

In addition, according to the teachers of writing who were displeased with traditional approach to teaching writing, these findings seemed to suggest further. Rather than focusing on the piece of writing that students produced and making comments on it, it could be possible to provide the students with writing better by providing them with the authentic process of writing, by exploring the reasons of their problems with producing well written texts and helping them overcome those difficulties. To demonstrate, according to a study conducted by Erkol (2011), cooperative writing activities enabled students to learn well. Since they work together, students have a chance to share their ideas with the group associates or pairs. Regarding the post-tests outcomes, it can be concluded that cooperative learning has a positive effect on student learning because the results of the experimental group were better than control group. To give an example, as for the features of writing, the experimental group performed better than the control group in the organization of the written text.

When it comes to the studies upon writing with Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Hyland (2003) reports that "word processing is perhaps the most accepted and universal use of computers in education today." (p.21). Becker and his acquaintances (1999) carried out a study among teachers in order to investigate the EFL learners' usage of computers (as cited in Kulik, 2003). They discovered that 44% of the participant instructors believed that computers enabled students to express

themselves in writing. Likewise, 55% of the teachers suggested that their students were using word processing software habitually. The investigation also indicated that students are able to write less self-consciously and more freely. It was also revealed that the students who used call programs did better than those who implemented conventional programs. Taking these findings into consideration, CALL has been found to be effective in process writing as well as many L2 writing programs.

To wrap up, as previously mentioned, ESL/EFL writing instruction should contain (1) a large amount of writing practice, (2) several diversities of texts and inspiring tasks, (3) chances for revision and feedback and (4) models of satisfactory texts (Grabe & Kaplan 1996; Raimes 2002; Grabe 2001; Kroll 2001; Reid 2001; Seow 2002; Sokolik 2003; Nation 2009). Thus, according to the second language studies mentioned above, process oriented approach fulfils the pedagogy's requirements with its elements and stages. Research findings from many of the studies upon the effectiveness of the process approach reveal that it is in general an effective approach in helping students improve their writing skills and attitudes towards writing at all school levels.

2.6 Chapter Summary

In the light of this literature view on process approach to writing, the main feature of process approach appears to be that it treats specific writing problems and considers language as a whole, instead of focusing simply on grammar or content. It can also be concluded that the most significant aspect of process writing approach is the meaningfulness that offers to the students. The features of process writing approach, which have been elaborated above, seem to be sufficient because it serves for the communicative purposes and solution to the problems that both instructors and students encounter in teaching and learning settings.

On the other hand, it is necessary to identify the attitude and perception of EFL learners about process oriented approach through further research. Since the purpose of this research is to do an in-depth evaluation upon EFL learners' process writing habits, strategies and attitude towards writing, a particular group of EFL learners studying in an English preparatory program at a foundation (non-profit) university in İstanbul, Turkey was chosen as target setting in order to make recommendations by shedding light to their beliefs or needs.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This is a study which aims at investigating the participants' perceptions about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use, process writing habits and strategies, attitudes towards writing and process writing strategies.

In this curriculum, L2 writing instruction is given as a part of academic skills course in which the process writing approach has long been applied in writing courses. However, it is required to explore the students' attitude towards process writing approach and how effectively they benefit from the approach as writing is essential not only in the students' school settings but also in their everyday life because of the endless innovations in information technology. Regarding the findings, the implementation of process writing and writing courses by the instructors might be re-planned in the program.

This chapter introduces the research methodology used by the researcher and presents information about the participants and procedure of the study: an overview of data collection and data analysis procedures in which the study was conducted.

3.1 Research Design

Mixed-method research design was utilized in this study. A mixed-method research design includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis procedures to investigate different aspects of the issue in hand (Bryman, 2004, Creswell & Clark, 2011).

According to Creswell (2009), there may be more than one reason to apply mixed method research designs. The main purpose is to expand the understanding of the research problems, and it may also be implemented to enhance the explanation of

the results from the perspective of other approaches. This study seeks answers to the following questions;

1. What are the attitudes of EFL learners towards writing?
2. What are the perceptions of EFL learners about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use?
3. What are the reported process writing habits and strategies of EFL learners?
4. What are the attitudes of EFL learners towards process writing strategies?

3.2 Target Population and Participants

The present study was conducted at an English Preparatory Program at one of the foundation (non-profit) universities in Istanbul, Turkey. At the beginning of this program, learners need to pass the proficiency exam (with an average of 60). In addition, they can take the alternative exams such as the TOEFL exam (with an average of 74), IELTS (with an average of 6) or YDS (with an average of 60) to continue their education at their degree program. Nevertheless, on condition that the learners cannot pass the proficiency exam, they are required to take the placement exam with an aim to identify their level of English to be studied in the preparatory program. The program comprises of 5 modules and 5 levels which are A1 (Elementary or Beginner), A2 (Pre-Intermediate), B1 (Intermediate), B2 (Upper- Intermediate), C1 (Advanced). In line with the scores of the placement test which was administered at the beginning of the academic year, students who are enrolled in the program are placed in the classrooms taking their levels into consideration and then required to complete each module with an overall grade of at least 65% before they can proceed to the next level. In each level, students are offered 24 hours of EFL instruction per week. Further, the program consists of two basic courses which are main course (17 hours) and academic skills (7 hours). The main course plan requires instructors to teach grammar, vocabulary, reading, speaking and listening, while academic skills course primarily covers writing. To conclude, all L2 learning skill sets such as reading, writing, listening, and grammar are combined in these courses to prepare the students for the proficiency exam and meet their needs.

For the purposes of this study, the data were collected through 24 Turkish EFL students during the first term of the 2017-2018 academic year. The participants

consisted of 15 females and 10 males with the age ranging from 18 to 22 years. They were B1 level students and were voluntary to participate in the questionnaire. In order to collect more in-depth data and enrich the results of the study, depending on their answers to the survey, 18 students voluntarily participated in the interview.

3.3 Procedures

3.3.1 Data Collection Instruments. In this study, data were collected through two devices: a questionnaire and interviews.

3.3.1.1 Questionnaire. A directly administered questionnaire is an instrument which is given to a group of people at a particular place for a specific purpose (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010). They are chief tools of research and data collection. The main purpose of a questionnaire is measurement (Oppenheim, 1992). As suggested by Oppenheim (1992), the rationale behind utilizing a questionnaire as a research instrument are that it needs a short period of time, the participants are not exposed to extended writing, it is not demanding to proceed and it is easy to manage with the group comparisons and is useful for examining target hypotheses.

Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010) state that the foremost benefit of directly administered questionnaires is the rate which is high in terms of the responses, which is approximately close to 100 percent. Other advantages can be counted as the low cost and the fact that the researcher is available to provide guidance or answer the questions raised by the participants.

The questionnaire was completed by 24 students. They were requested to write their names on the questionnaire. However, the outcomes were utilized and interpreted in an anonymous way. The reason why the students were requested to write their names on the questionnaire was that interviewees were selected in line with their responses to the questionnaire.

The questionnaire (See Appendix A) was adapted from a study which was carried out in a Chinese setting by Ho (2006). The items were developed in accordance with the research questions and the literature which was revised by the researcher on the various components of process writing approach. Next, it was piloted and tested

with the volunteer students, a Turkish and an English teacher. Two of the items were reported complicated, therefore they were clarified before the administration in the target setting. Accordingly, the reliability of the present study was increased with the help of the adapted scale and piloting.

The questionnaire was made up of four parts. Each unit comprised of a scale that was capable of eliciting data on a certain aspect of the attitude or perception being measured through Likert Scale type questions. For all the sections, students were asked to choose the items ranged from 5-1 (strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, strongly disagree) in response to various statements about their attitude and perceptions. Besides, a couple of reverse items were also included in the survey in an attempt to increase reliability.

In part A, EFL learners' attitude towards writing was investigated. There were items seeking their competency, confidence and general ideas upon writing and writing lessons at school. After asking the students about writing in general, part B, which was made up of 15 items, aimed to discover the participant group's perception about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use. It was significant that students, while examining the items, contemplated what they learn, benefit from and are capable of doing in their own process oriented classes.

Part C included 13 items investigating the students' process writing habits and capability of using particular strategies suggested by process approach. The participants responded to a series of statements such as "I plan before writing", "I know how to organize ideas" by rating the items from 5 to 1. Finally, part D was made up of two sections each of which included 5 items. The first part aimed at answering the question: How useful are the process writing strategies? In this section, respondents were asked to rate usefulness of the strategies on a scale of 'very useful, useful, somewhat useful, not useful, not useful at all'. In the second phase of part D, respondents were expected to provide data upon how easy it is to manage process writing strategies rating their own competence on a scale of 'very easy, easy, somewhat easy, not easy, not easy at all'.

3.3.1.2 Interviews. The interview is one of the most commonly used methods for collecting qualitative data. They are used to obtain data from people about their beliefs,

opinions, and the feelings are expressed in their own words. Interviews may also supply data which cannot be gathered through observation, or they can be used to diversify observations. The qualitative interview is typically more probing and open ended and less structured than the interview used in quantitative research but varies considerably in the way it is conducted (Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen, 2010).

The main reason for exploiting interviews in this study is that interviews, compared with questionnaires can help to avoid misunderstandings and most importantly, increase the validity and the reliability of the questionnaires (Oppenheim, 1992). Moreover, interviews are significant in terms of the confirmation of the research. With the help of interviews, the researcher can gather data that the subject would not provide under any circumstances. In other words, interviews provide much greater in-depth data than questionnaires.

In this study, semi-structured interview questions were generated in line with the research questions. A semi-structured interview is defined as neither structured nor unstructured interview in which the area of interest is chosen and questions are formulated since the interviewer may modify the format or questions during the interview process. Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010) further suggest that one characteristic that all qualitative interview formats share is that the questions are typically open ended, which cannot be replied with a yes or no or basic responses, and the questions are designed to conclude what is important to understand about the phenomenon under the study.

Specifically, queries upon the students' perceptions and attitudes towards process writing were developed in detail since the function of the interview questions was to collect more detailed information about process writing approach. Interview questions also focused on the responses of the students from the questionnaire with an aim to clarify these answers or annotations obtained from the questionnaire.

The main purpose of the semi-structured interviews held in this study was to elaborate on the participants' perceptions and attitude towards process oriented approach. Eighteen interviewees were selected intentionally to interview depending on their responses to the questionnaire. In other words, the students whose answers

were at extreme ends such as ‘strongly agree or strongly disagree’ were invited to the interviews. Finally, the language of the interview was Turkish as the students would feel more confident in expressing themselves in their mother tongue.

3.3.2 Data Collection Procedures. The expansion of questionnaire and interview questions is accepted as a complicated process, and it is usually viewed as trial and error. The questionnaire and interview questions were adapted and developed by the researcher (Ho, 2006). There might have been unexpected and unnoticed problems within the items or design of the questionnaire or interviews, though. For this reason, the survey and interview should have been tried out for the purpose of overcoming possible problems and making sure that both instruments serve the purpose and work as it is intended. This process of restructuring and trying out questions and procedures is usually called pilot work (Oppenheim, 1992).

To begin with, the survey was piloted with 10 volunteer students from a different classroom. It was distributed to these students on 27th December 2017 and returned on the same day. The interview questions were also piloted with two volunteer EFL teachers and a Turkish teacher in order to check whether they are clear and appropriate or not. Depending on the feedback received from volunteer participants, necessary changes for the instruments were made by the researcher. To demonstrate, some of the participants could hardly understand what ‘I learn from my mistakes’ refers to, therefore the translation of this item into L1 was revised accordingly.

The researcher arranged a meeting with the participants in a classroom setting. They were kindly asked for full and informed participation. All the students agreed to participate in the survey. The researcher distributed the survey to 24 students. They answered the parts A, B, C and D on 3rd January 2018. Then, the researcher collected the survey from the participants, analyzed the results and invited 18 of them to the interview. Next, appointments were made with the students. The researcher recorded the interviews and transliterated them subsequently.

Table 2

Overview of Research Questions and Corresponding Procedures

Research Questions	Data Collection Instruments	Data Analysis
1- What are the attitudes of Turkish EFL learners towards writing?	Questionnaire (Section A)	Descriptive Statistics (means and standard deviations)
	Interviews	Content Analysis
2- What are the perceptions of Turkish EFL learners about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language?	Questionnaire (Section B)	Descriptive Statistics (means and standard deviations)
	Interviews	Content Analysis
3- What are the reported process writing habits and strategies of EFL learners?	Questionnaire (Section C)	Descriptive Statistics (means and standard deviations)
	Interviews	Content Analysis
4- What are the EFL learners' attitudes towards process writing strategies?	Questionnaire (Section D)	Descriptive Statistics (means and standard deviations)
	Interviews	Content Analysis

3.3.3 Data Analysis Procedures. Data analysis tools were varied since there were both mathematical and non-mathematical data (Dörnyei, 2007) and the researcher attempted to draw conclusions from numerical and textual data (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). The qualitative findings which were collected through questionnaire required descriptive statistics. That is why the Likert scale type questions were analyzed by using frequencies and percentages. Next, with an aim to support these, their means and deviations were computed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to code some demographic features of the students.

With an aim to analyze interview results, Informed Grounded Theory suggested by Thornberg (2012) was taken into consideration since the coders examined the previous studies conducted in the relevant literature first, and then they started categorizing the data in order not to miss important points or be left with irrelevant results. That means a second separate coder was involved in qualitative data analysis procedure to reduce the subjectivity of the interpretation of the findings. For this purpose, each coder formed her own main and sub-categories.

The investigator examined the designs that were common in the data. The responses given by the students were categorized according to the content of the questions and research questions by the researcher. To start with, after 25% of the total qualitative data were analyzed, the two coders met and compared their categories to investigate the agreement levels according to the inter-rater formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994: 64). Following the first meeting, the coders went on analyzing the rest of the qualitative data and when 100% of the data was analyzed, another meeting was held where the intra-rater reliability was calculated. The final discussions were made, until there was complete agreement between the two coders. When each coder finished categorizing the data, they revised their previously formed categories after three weeks again to ensure intra-rater reliability as well.

3.4 Trustworthiness

Guba (1981) suggests four criteria for judging the trustworthiness of inquiries conducted within the naturalistic inquiry paradigm. The four aspects of trustworthiness are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Therefore, a study is expected to establish trustworthiness through:

- Credibility: certainty in the 'truth' of the findings.
- Transferability: showing the applicability of the findings in other contexts.
- Dependability: showing the consistency and reproducibility of the findings.
- Confirmability: a grade of neutrality or the degree to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher partiality, enthusiasm, or interest (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Specifically, in an attempt to found credibility, as being one of the instructors, the researcher tried to spend sufficient time in the field as the module lasted 8 weeks. Furthermore, the researcher was deployed in teaching B1 level academic skills courses whose main objective is to teach academic writing to the participants of the research. Therefore, the target context was analyzed in depth by teaching writing adopting process oriented approach in practice closely and being reflective throughout the research process. This provided the researcher with following the right strategy in order to reach the reliable data. In an attempt to make use of transferability, detailed recommendations were made, which also served a basis for alternative use of process approach in the program. Furthermore, dependability was established by working with the students who enrolled in the program approximately 18 weeks before carrying out the study. Finally, for the purposes of establishing confirmability, interviews were held with all 18 students so as to confirm the degree of objectivity of the outcome.

Furthermore, data gathered through the questionnaire were analyzed via SPSS 22.0. The conformity of the data with the normal range was tested with Shapiro Wilk. The correlation between the continuous variables was examined through Spearman Correlation Coefficient. Statistical significance was evaluated as $p < 0.05$.

Table 3

The results regarding the analysis of reliability

Leadership Style Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Questions
Writing	0,687	12
Process writing approach	0,727	15
Writing habits and strategies	0,897	13
Process writing strategies	0,750	10
Total	0,887	50

Cronbach Alphas for the sub-dimensions and items were reported respectively as Writing 0,687; Process writing 0,727; Writing habits 0,897; Process writing strategies 0,750 and 0,936 in total. It can be concluded that the reliability of the scale is high enough.

Table 4

Tests of normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Writing	.091	24	.200*	.983	24	.949
The content, organization and language	.144	24	.200*	.968	24	.618
Writing habits and strategies	.103	24	.200*	.980	24	.899
Process writing strategies	.107	24	.200*	.967	24	.594

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As displayed in the table above, the scores of Writing ($p > 0.05$), Process writing ($p > 0.05$), Writing habits ($p > 0.05$) and Process writing strategies ($p > 0.05$) are in a normal range.

Table 5

The results regarding correlation analysis

	1	2	3	4
1. Writing	————			————
2. The content, organization and language	0.708**	————		
3. Writing habits and strategies	0.384	0.323	————	
4. Process writing strategies	0.325	0.323	0.32	————

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between the scores obtained from the scale of sub-dimensions was calculated and examined by using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. It was reported that there was a linear positive correlation at high level between the sub-dimension of writing and process writing at a level of 0.708. Moreover, it was found statistically significant at a level of 0.01.

3.6 Limitations

Due to the heavy schedule of the participant students and time restriction, the researcher had to limit the data collection instruments to the questionnaire and interviews. Therefore, with an aim to increase reliability of the data, it would have been a better idea to exploit a different data collection instrument such as observation. Further, another limitation of the present study is the lack of an external evaluator since it could also have brought new dimensions to the study.

This study focused simply on the students studying in a B1 level classroom in an English preparatory program at a non-profit, foundation university. The students studying in the other classrooms or levels were not included in the study due to schedule and permit problems. In addition, due to the time restrictions of the study, interviews were held with a small number of students. Finally, due to being a small sample size, the findings and interpretations of the research cannot be generalized to other preparatory programs.

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter covers the results with regard to the research questions. Data were gathered respectively through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

4.1 Results from Questionnaires

The mean and standard deviation of the data gathered from the questionnaire were computed by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 12.0).

4.1.1 Findings about the EFL learners' attitude towards writing. In order to find out the overall attitude of the students towards writing, data were initially collected from the questionnaire. The following table indicates the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) of each item.

Table 6

Students' attitude towards writing

Writing	Mean	Deviation
1-I like writing	3.67	0.868
2-I like the writing lessons at school.	3.79	0.658
3-I think writing is interesting	3.38	0.875
4-I think it is easy to write in English.	3.04	0.908
5-I have confidence in writing in English.	3.63	0.924
6- I like to be given a lot of guidance by the teacher.	4.46	0.721
7- I enjoy working with my classmates while writing.	3.71	1.122
8-Writing in English is difficult for me.	3.29	0.999
9- Writing in English is useful for my future career.	4.67	0.482
10-In my writing class, I generally feel anxious.	3.67	1.049
11- I can develop my writing skill if I do writing practice.	4.58	0.717
12- Writing helps me improve my English	4.54	0.588

According to the results indicated in the table above, the highest scores of the participants were obtained from the items, *Writing in English is useful for my future career* (M= 4.67, SD=0. 482) and *I can develop my writing skill if I do writing practice* (M=4.58, SD= 0.717). It was also concluded that the participants believe writing helps them improve their English (M=4.54, SD=0.588). On the other hand, the lowest scores were obtained from the items *I think it is easy to write in English* (M=3.04, SD=0.908).

4.1.2 Findings about the overall perceptions of EFL learners about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and the language use. In an attempt to answer the second part of the research question which aims to explore the students' attitude towards process writing approach, data were initially gathered through the questionnaire. With regard to quantitative results, participants' attitude towards process writing approach was revealed by means of descriptive statistics of each item as shown below;

Table 7

The content, organization and the language use

Process-oriented Approach	Mean	Deviation
1- Writing lessons help me learn new vocabulary items.	4.29	0.751
2- Writing lessons improve my grammar.	4.46	0.509
3- Writing lessons help me learn new grammatical structures.	4.50	0.590
4- I can generate a lot of ideas in writing lessons.	3.88	1.035
5- I can organize my ideas.	4.04	0.751
6-I can fulfill the requirements of the task that I am given.	3.63	0.711
7- I learn from my mistakes.	4.29	0.859
8- I like checking my classmates' writing.	3.50	1.180
9-Planning my writing helps me write better.	3.96	0.955
10- I like to be given individual feedback.	4.42	0.717
11- I like to be given peer feedback.	3.58	0.776
12- Writing lessons do not help me in finding new ideas.	3.75	1.225
13- Drafts that I write improve my writing skill.	4.21	1.103
14- Using revising check list helps me in finding my errors	4.17	0.868
15- I can find my errors thanks to error correction symbols.	4.21	0.658

According to the findings in reference to students' attitude towards process writing approach displayed in the table above, the highest scores of the participants were obtained from *Writing lessons help me learn new grammatical structures* (M=4.50, SD=0.590), *Writing lessons improve my grammar* (M=4.46, SD=0.50) and *I like to be given individual feedback* (M=4.43, SD=0.717). However, it was found that the items *I like checking my classmates' writing* (M=3.50, SD=1.180) and *I like to be given peer feedback* (M=3.58, SD=0.776) received the lowest score from the participants.

4.1.3 Findings about the EFL learners' reported process writing habits and strategies. The third part of the research question aimed to explore the habits and strategies of the participants that they implement while writing.

Table 8
Students' process writing habits and strategies

Process-oriented Approach	Mean	Deviation
1- I plan before writing.	3.63	0.711
2- I get ideas while writing.	3.88	0.797
3- I organize ideas while writing.	3.96	0.690
4- I write drafts.	3.46	0.833
5-I revise drafts.	3.71	0.955
6-I edit drafts.	3.67	1.007
7- I know how to get ideas.	3.75	0.989
8-I know how to plan before writing.	3.92	0.929
9-I know how to organize ideas.	4.13	0.680
10- I know how to draft.	4.00	0.780
11-I know how to revise the draft.	3.79	0.884
12- I know how to edit the draft.	3.83	0.917
13-I know the strategies to write a complete piece of writing by myself.	3.75	0.794

Based on the results reported in the table above, the items, *I know how to organize ideas* (M=4.13, SD=0.680) and *I know how to draft* (M= 4.00, SD=0.780)

received the highest scores from the participants. In contrast, the item, *I write drafts* (M= 3.46, SD=0.833) obtained the lowest score.

4.1.4 Findings about the EFL learners’ attitude towards process writing strategies. The results of the last section of the questionnaire whose purpose was to discover the attitude of the participants towards process writing stages are displayed below;

Table 9
Students’ attitude towards process writing strategies

Process-oriented Approach	Mean	Deviation
Brainstorming (Mind mapping, Free writing...) (useful)	4.04	0.751
Planning(useful)	4.29	0.751
Drafting (useful)	4.17	0.963
Revising(useful)	4.46	0.779
Editing(useful)	4.58	0.584
Brainstorming (Mind mapping, Free writing) (easy)	2.96	0.859
Planning(easy)	3.75	0.944
Drafting(easy)	3.67	1.007
Revising(easy)	4.13	0.797
Editing (easy)	3.75	0.944

According to the results indicated the table above, it can be concluded that *Editing* (useful) (M=4.58, SD=0.584) and *Revising* (M=4.46, SD=0.779) were rated with the highest score by the students, whereas *Brainstorming (Mind mapping, Free writing, etc.)* (M=2.96, SD=0.859) was the most difficult strategy to handle as suggested by the students.

4.2 Results of the Interviews

Qualitative data collected through semi-structure interviews (See Appendix 2) aimed at collecting in-depth data upon the participants’ attitude and perceptions about process approach to writing. They were generated in line with the research questions

whose purpose was to elaborate on four research questions in greater depth. The interviews comprised of 15 questions which were administered to 18 students whose answers to questionnaire were at extreme ends. It focused on 4 aspects: writing, writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use, process writing habits and process writing strategies.

Moreover, the strategy of probing was used to get the respondents to achieve depth in terms of penetration, exploration, and explanation (Patton, 2002; Ritche & Lewis, 2003; Lichtman, 2006). To demonstrate, additional questions such as “What do you mean by ... ?, Can you tell me more about that?, Can you give me an example, and Can you specify?” were asked.

Next, the researcher analyzed the transcripts line by line and wrote down the memos (Glesne, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Categories and labels were revised and recurring themes, core consistencies and meanings were determined by implementing pattern codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). To sum up, the process is as follows (Yanpar Şahin, 2003):

1. Underlying key terms in the responses,
2. Restating key phrases,
3. Coding key terms,
4. Pattern coding,
5. Constructing themes,
6. Summarizing themes,
7. Integrating theories in an explanatory frame work

4.2.1 Findings about the EFL learners’ attitude towards writing. To begin with, the interviewees were asked about their general ideas upon writing in order to gather additional information regarding their attitude towards writing.

Learning by writing. It is widely known that everybody has his/her strategy of learning. It is mostly explained with reference to Multiple Intelligence Theory or Cognitive Learning Strategies. Similar to the answers given to the questionnaire, the majority of the participants concluded that they are able to learn by writing. They like

taking notes down and write what they learn on a piece of paper over and over again. This is the way they transfer the new knowledge to the long-term memory. To wrap up, writing lessons appeal to these participants. Most of the students have positive attitude towards writing as well as writing courses as displayed in one of the respondents' utterance below;

“I like writing classes a lot since I learn everything by writing down. In this way, I hardly ever forget the things that I have learned. Moreover, I learn new words and grammatical structures while I am using them in my writing.”

Writing for future career. First of all, when the participant students were asked about their attitude towards writing, the majority of the participants noted that writing in a foreign language is useful for their future career which was also one of the most popular answers in the questionnaire. They acknowledged that writing, as the most significant skill, L2 writing will open new doors in their professional life. They have already been concerned about their personal and professional development for their future. That means process approach to writing raised awareness upon the significance of writing, as stated in the excerpts below:

“In my opinion, writing is more important than the other skills and I need writing for my future career. When I graduate, I am planning to work for an international company which requires having competency in writing. That means, I may be asked to write e-mails at work or offer projects prepared in English as it is the most commonly spoken language in the world. That's why writing in English is very useful for my profession.”

Writing for the exams of the degree programs. Apart from two students, all the interviewees highlighted the necessity of having writing competency for their department both in the questionnaire and interviews. In other words, the degree programs, where the participants will study next year, expect their students to possess academic writing skills. For this reason, the participants attach utmost importance to their writing skills in order to be able to overcome their written exams, as indicated by one of the quotations from the interviews.

“Next year, I will be studying at my degree program, International Trade whose courses are based on %100 English. That means, the exams will be given in English, and I will be asked to answer all the questions in English. Actually, by the time I started prep school, I had never thought it would be compulsory for me. Today, I am aware of the necessity of having writing competency, so I am doing my best this year so as to be ready to cope with the exams at my degree program.”

Practice. Most of the students stated that they were not offered writing courses in their previous school. Having been given simply grammar input and instructed with product oriented approach in writing courses which is described by the students as copying the teacher’s model, they had no chance to improve their writing skills. For this reason, the learners believe they need more practice due to ineffective acquisition of writing in their previous school. Moreover, the majority of the participants agreed that practice is the indispensable part of writing. They believe the practice does not only decrease the amount of the errors, but also increases the quality of their writing, as inferred from the excerpt below:

“I believe the more I practice, the better I can write. Practicing is the most important part of developing my writing skills. For example, while I was studying at A1 level, I was literally anxious in writing lessons since I had never taken this kind of writing courses in my life. My teacher realized it and suggested me to write extra city descriptions (one of the tasks of the level) and I could do better. Finally, after more practices, I began to feel at ease because my writing contained a few minor mistakes such as capitalization and spelling.”

In addition to the data upon *practice*, provided by the participant students above, 12 out of 18 students suggested that they should have more writing courses. To specify, they argued that the number of writing courses should be increased in their program, now that practice plays a major in developing writing skills and decreases the amount of errors, as shown in the comments below;

“In my opinion, writing is the most important skill. We should do more writing practice to improve our skills. However, producing a piece of writing requires

finding ideas, planning, organizing and drafting. I have to follow a lot of steps, so I need more time to practice. That means, we should have more writing lessons in our school.”

Lack of confidence. In an attempt to elaborate on the lowest scored item (*I think it is easy to write in English*), in the section of attitude towards writing in the questionnaire, some of the participants were asked about the reason that lies behind their disagreement. These interviewees asserted that it is challenging to produce a written text since they have limited range of grammar which is a barrier against making grammatically correct sentences. In a similar fashion, the participant students got accustomed to imitating model texts in their previous writing program, so they face problems in the process of their writing now. For all these reasons, it is not easy to write in English since they have no confidence, as suggested in the comment below.

“At high school, where I learned little about how to write, I had very limited chance to improve my writing. Our teacher used to provide us with a sample text either by writing it on the board or distributing a copy of it for each of us. Next, we were expected to write a new one which was parallel to her sample text. She used to check our writing and correct all the errors. Today, although I have learned how to write and organize my ideas, I am still afraid of making mistakes. It may stem from the fact that I am used to model paragraphs. When I am given the task, it is really challenging for me to make grammatically correct sentences, so I am unable produce a complete piece of writing. Finally, I have no confidence in writing since I have difficulty in my grammar and have no background knowledge about how to write.”

Generating ideas. The final reason worth mentioning is about generating ideas. To give an example, a couple of respondents admitted that brainstorming is a new strategy for them. They used to be provided with the supporting ideas or examples by the teacher in their previous writing course. In contrast, as it is expressed by the respondents, it is compulsory for them to create their writing on their own, and the writing ‘process’ is evaluated in their current course. While generating their ideas, the participants are expected to support their ideas with relevant examples and details. However, some of the students claimed to encounter difficulties and cannot overcome

this strategy. To be more specific, the length and ideas in their writing which are irrelevant at times do not meet the requirements, as it is mentioned in the quotations below,

“We are expected to write about 200 words both in the tasks and the exams. However, it is too difficult for me to generate ideas. For this reason, I think it is not easy to write in English. I try all the strategies which are supposed to help me generate ideas, but it is still challenging for me. Accordingly, my teacher underlines my sentences and asks me questions about the topic since my examples are sometimes irrelevant. To sum up, I find it difficult to write as it is troublesome for me to generate ideas and provide details.”

4.2.2 Findings about the overall perceptions of the students about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use. The following results and quotations were noted down to see a more complete picture of the participants’ attitude towards process writing approach.

Learning new Grammatical Structures. In line with the findings related to the questionnaire, most of the students suggested that process oriented approach enables them to discover new structures and improve their grammar. Only one of the participants out of 18 does not support the idea of the positive impact of writing courses on grammar and vocabulary. The participant student argues that it is so difficult for him to find the necessary structure that he often gives up and insists on being directly provided with his needs. Although he is guided and discovers it on his own, he cannot remember to utilize when the related structure is needed again. In other words, according to that participant, it is impossible to discover what he has no background knowledge upon and needs much more instruction as well as practice to be able to learn new grammatical structures in writing courses. On the other hand, the rest of the students claimed to have learned countless grammatical items in their writing courses. The participants have concluded that they have achieved this goal not only with the help of the teachers’ instructive feedback, but also with their own effort to discover what they need. One of students summarizes the way how the current writing lessons improve her grammar as displayed in the excerpt below;

“In my previous writing classes, which were covered at high school, I was expected to write only one draft. After the teacher corrected it, she used to give back and ask me to check the underlined parts such as corrected vocabulary and grammatical errors. In contrast to my previous course, my new writing teachers ask me to find what I need on my own through their supportive guidance. While searching them in the direction of symbols that were put on the errors by the teacher, I have learned new words, collocations, grammatical structures and how to use them correctly. To be more specific, last week, we were asked to write about the benefits of learning English. In the second part of my paragraph, I needed to make a sentence based on a purpose (We need to speak English / we find a good job). I asked for help and my teacher provided me with the correct grammar item giving me the necessary guidance to form the sentence on my own. That means I had to use “in order to”. I learned it very well and will never forget.”

Besides, one of the participants further demonstrated that writing courses have made a positive contribution to their grammar in his comments below;

‘Thanks to writing lessons, I learned plenty of grammar structures. One day, I attempted to list my examples just after a noun. I was aware of the fact what it required was quite different from “For example” since I knew it has to be followed by a sentence rather than a word. I approached my teacher and was guided to use “such as”. I was able to write “There are a lot of means of transportation such as bus, tram and subway”. Thus, whenever I intend to list my examples in the noun form, I always use this structure. Likewise, I learned “Gerund” when I attempted to use a verb as a subject in my sentence. Finally, writing lessons have improved my grammar to a great extent.’

Sharing ideas: To elaborate on the findings of the questionnaire, most of the students mentioned that they like working in group as well as pair work in writing courses. These activities encourage interaction among the learners and create more positive and cooperative environment in the classroom. That is why group activities and sharing of ideas were all found useful by the students, as suggested in the following excerpt;

“I like working with my friends and sharing ideas. I think it is the most useful part as we work together and learn from each other. Specifically, it is sometimes difficult for me to find ideas or the grammatical items, so I greatly benefit from group activities.”

Learning how to speak in L2. Half of the participants reported that they have gained speaking skills in their writing courses. To specify, the students acquired the ability of sentence organization and making meaningful sentences. It can be inferred from the utterances of the respondents that they can implement this ability while speaking in an effective way. Moreover, according to the responses given by the students, it was revealed that they can organize their ideas better while speaking which is also another contribution of their current writing courses to their competency in L2.

“I have to confess that writing lessons enhanced my speaking skills, too. Learning new vocabulary items and grammatical structures enable me to make well organized sentences while speaking. In addition to this, I know how to organize my ideas which I learned while writing an opinion paragraph. Finally, I can say that I learned how to speak in English in writing courses which fostered my grammar, vocabulary and the way I organize my ideas.”

Peer-check. With reference to the results of the questionnaire upon the attitude towards peer check, many of the participants reported that they are not in favor of checking their classmates’ writing on condition that it is incomplete or contains errors. In other words, they prefer to check completed paragraphs, or else they learn inaccurate structures or sentences. It is inferred from one of the learners’ responses that she tends to code and grasp what she sees, since she is a visual learner. As a result, during the interviews, the participants reported that they would like to read and check a complete piece of writing because they tend to learn what they see.

“When we finish writing our drafts, our teacher asks us to check each other’s piece of writing. Actually, I would rather not read a paragraph that contains errors. As I learn what I see very easily and never forget it, I usually perceive at

first sight. That means what I learn may be incorrect as it was produced by a student like me, instead of a professional.”

Activities in writing lessons (Spot on the errors). Some of the respondents implied that they may not always benefit from the activities done in writing courses. A student supports it with an example from one of the writing classes. She exemplifies, one day they were supplied with an opinion paragraph which is full of errors from various categories. What they were expected to do was to find out and correct them. Unlike the expectation, one of the participant students stated that she failed to identify the errors and learned inaccurate use of vocabulary items, punctuation and spelling as well as capitalization. That is to say, it is hardly possible to infer that the student benefits from the activity ‘Spot on the errors’. Finally, with reference to the answers given by some of the participants, it is too difficult for them to spot on the errors of their peers’ writing, but easy to copy as they see in the paragraph about which they mention in following comment;

“I would rather not participate in the activity of finding errors in a sample paragraph. Finding all these errors out is troublesome, discussing about the errors with our peers is always confusing and analyzing a bad sample is a waste of time for me. This kind of activities has never contributed to my English positively since I am bad at distinguishing the accurate and the inaccurate items even in all the other topics that are new to me.”

4.2.3 Findings about the EFL learners’ reported process writing habits and strategies. With aim to aim to provide in depth data upon the results of the third section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked questions about their reported process writing habits and strategies. They agreed that they are knowledgeable about the correct strategy and capable of managing them during writing. Many participants stated that they know how to organize their writing and how to draft.

To begin with the organization, 13 out of 18 students suggested that they believe they are good at organizing their writing properly because they know how to tie their ideas and establish the links easily. They further noted that they can overcome the

organization thanks to the strategies that they have learned in their writing courses which are elaborated in detail below.

Narration. The participants stated that they are able develop their paragraph by telling the events in a chronological order. They also know how to start and end it as shown in the following statement;

“In my writing courses, I have learned how to put the events in a chronological order. To give an example, in our previous level (A2) we learned how to write about one of our days and experiences depending on the topic. Organization of the events seemed to be troublesome at first sight. However, we developed our skills day by day and began to write a paragraph of which content flows logically.”

Classification. It was concluded from the responses of the majority of the participant students that they are capable of separating various parts of any topic into groups and arranging them by their logical classification in their process-oriented writing courses as shown below;

“I had no idea about how to organize my ideas while writing. Our teacher highlighted that we need to organize it logically, if we want to produce a well-constructed paragraph. I noticed that I should not have ordered them randomly. After a number of practices, I can progress logically and write fluently in my writing now.”

Illustration. 12 out of 18 participants reported that they give examples and explain how these examples help them prove the point they are trying to push, as indicated in the following statements;

“In the early days of prep school, while I was checking the errors in my paragraph which were marked by the teacher, I noticed a short note on the teacher’s feedback part. She advised me to organize my paragraph cohesively. Otherwise, it would be impossible for me to achieve the task. After my teacher’s feedback, I was informed about the significance of organization. I have also

learned that I need to support my ideas with relevant examples and order my examples in a logical way.”

Drafting. All of the participants agreed that they know how to draft and why they are asked to write the 2nd or 3rd draft. One of the participant students reported that there is a correlation between the numbers of the drafts and timed writing scores giving examples from the previous process and exams of the module. Moreover, the majority of the respondents avoid writing over and over again, so they pay higher attention to all the elements in their writing.

“After discussing about the topic and deleting irrelevant or less important ideas, I begin to write my draft. I know I will never complete it at my first trial, though. I submit and my teacher checks it using correction symbols. I re-write it and the process goes on like that. Specifically, I concentrate on my capitalization and punctuation because I had to write the 4th draft due to those kinds of mistakes that I made in my drafts.”

Some of the students stated that they were given a writing topic and asked to write about it in their previous writing instruction. Next, the teacher collected the finished products. After correcting them, she wrote comments on it. However, the participants confessed that they never read those comments, therefore they are satisfied with the current process based on the teacher’s feedback or comment and correcting the errors in line with the teacher’s advice. Accordingly, the students have to read the comments today so as to be able to correct the errors. They are pleased with their involvement in this process as stated in the excerpt below;

“I never wrote drafts in my previous writing courses. Our teacher used to give us a topic and ask us to start writing without any preparation. When we finished it, she collected and took home. Surprisingly, she corrected all the errors for us and never asked us to write the second draft. She also wrote comments on my writing, but I never attempted to read them. In my current writing course, I have to read my teacher’s comment mainly because I am required to correct my errors and write it again by taking the feedback or suggestion of my teacher into consideration.”

Rewriting. On the other hand, a couple of students stated that they are dissatisfied with re-writing the same draft more than twice. They believe writing the same text several times make no contribution to their writing skills. Instead, they are willing to be given a new task and try to complete it. To wrap up, according to these participants, rewriting is sometimes unnecessary and time consuming as shown in the following comments;

“In my opinion writing only two drafts is ideal. Re-writing about the same topic and copying the same paragraph are really exhausting and time consuming. Our writing teachers sometimes ask us to write it again and again because it still contains punctuation errors and is still incomplete. In the previous module, I had to re-write the entire paragraph due to a single grammar and spelling mistake. Instead of this, I would rather write about a different topic. To sum up, I believe it will be more beneficial for me not to repeat the same topic with the same paragraph but produce a brand new one.”

Another participant stated that he is not in favor of copying the same draft with a couple of errors as mentioned below;

“I write draft, but I do not write drafts. I find it very boring and unnecessary to write the whole paragraph again just because of a couple of errors. When my teacher points to the error with a correction symbol, I discover the correct form or vocabulary at that moment. I should not be asked to write everything down from the very beginning.”

4.2.4 Findings about the EFL learners’ attitude towards process writing strategies. In an attempt to obtain more in-depth data upon the quantitative findings gathered through questionnaire, the students were asked about their attitude towards process writing strategies. Quantitative findings revealed that majority of the students believe editing and revising are useful, whereas generating ideas seem to be difficult to manage. Semi-structured interviews were held with the participants at extreme ends in the questionnaire and aimed to investigate the rationale behind their agreement and disagreement in the items related to process writing strategies. The most popular

themes obtained from thematic analysis of their responses will be discussed in the following part.

Sense of achievement. Most of the students acknowledged that editing is the most useful strategy of process writing approach. It was concluded that editing fosters the cooperation between the students which means they learn from each other. In other words, the participant students like to share their piece of writing with each other and get new ideas as well as learning new items as mentioned below;

“I think editing is the most useful strategy in our writing lessons. After my teacher underlines my errors, I correct these errors by writing drafts. In the end, I edit it having a sense of achievement. If any friend of mine needs assistance or support, he/she can check and benefit from it, too. Similarly, I can read my peers’ writing and learn how to use different items. Therefore, editing is my favorite strategy.”

Feeling like a writer. Some of the students clearly stated that they feel themselves as a writer when they implement process approach to writing which has several steps followed by the students. Without any reminder or guidance from the researcher, two of the participant students listed the 8 steps of the approach and suggested how useful they are. They further mentioned about their satisfaction since they take part in each step actively and create it on their own which is quite different from their previous writing course. However, they voted for ‘editing’ as the most useful strategy which helps them learn from their mistakes as well as making them feel like a real writer whose work is read by the other students in the classroom as reported below;

“In my previous writing course, my high school teacher used to correct and edit my paragraph on behalf of me. One day, while she was checking my paragraph, she unconsciously rewrote almost the half of it in an attempt to correct my errors. Next, my teacher gave it back to me so that I can check her corrections. Today, it seems to me as if it was a piece of work produced by her. For this reason, it was not possible for me to adopt my work. In contrast to my previous experience, I take the responsibility of every element of my writing, today. The role of my

teacher is sometimes giving feedback or asking questions which guide me through the right path. Moreover, when I need her feedback, I am never directly provided with what I need. She either puts error correction symbols or writes questions on it. Therefore, everything in my writing belongs to me and is produced by me. In the end, after I edit it, I regard myself as a writer. One day, I had unconsciously signed it.”

Revising Checklist: Half of the students reported that they utilize revising checklist and highly benefit from it. They check their writing and tick the related items before submitting. To specify, checking their paper in line with the revising checklist enables the students to find their mistakes, missed or overlooked items on their own. Three of the participants added that they have better learned about the mechanics of writing such as capitalization or punctuation by means of revising checklist. For this reason, they concluded that the participants take the responsibility of their learning as expressed below;

“In my opinion, revising is the best part of process writing. Thankfully, our teacher has provided us with a list called ‘Revising Checklist’ which enables us to see our mistakes beforehand. It helps me explore some of my errors or unnoticed points before my teacher gives feedback. I read my paragraph from the beginning and tick the items. To give an example, last week, I forgot to write a title on my paragraph and noticed it via the list immediately. Finally, I added one and made sure I would not forget to write a title in the exam.”

Brainstorming while working individually. Two out of 18 participants reproachfully reminded the researcher of generating ideas individually. To clarify, the students work in pair or group during process writing. On the other hand, when it is time to take timed writing exam, the participants have to work individually. They are not allowed to share any of the responsibilities of the task. Therefore, these two participants confessed that it is literally challenging for them to create an opinion paragraph since they have serious issues in finding new ideas. According to the further responses of the students, they can find only two supporting ideas, however these ideas fail to support the topic. In the end, they describe themselves as the students who are too far from creativity as demonstrated in the excerpt below;

“Brainstorming is the most challenging stage of process writing. It is sometimes impossible for me to find supporting ideas. During process writing, we work together with the whole class or group and I can overcome this strategy to some extent. In contrast, when it comes to timed writing exam, I am obliged to work individually, so I waste half of my time thinking about the topic desperately. Even though I can generate only two supporting ideas, they are mostly irrelevant or hardly support the idea. It may stem from the fact that I am not creative enough.”

Limited Vocabulary. Some of the participants reported that they are unable to generate new ideas while writing in L2. They explained that they have limited vocabulary so as to be able to produce a well-written paragraph. Besides, when the participant students attempt to use the existing vocabulary learned before, they mostly fail to select the relevant ones. They further asserted that although the students are allowed to use their dictionary, they have limited time to search or strategy to use it in an effective way. What they mostly need is to be provided with a couple of ideas in L2 during the exams as commented in the quotation;

“Generating ideas is too difficult for me as I fail to translate -the supporting ideas or details that I generated- from L1 to L2 because I have limited vocabulary. In order to find a solution to this problem, I benefit from the vocabulary items that I am already familiar with. This may be the reason why I find irrelevant ideas. For this reason, I need to be provided with a couple of supporting ideas written in L2 on my exam sheet.”

Planning. A great number of the participant students highlighted the significance of planning before they start writing. To start with, it was suggested that planning facilitates their progress and %90 of their paragraph is constituted in this stage. The participants also implied that they used to plan their writing after they started to write in their previous writing course. In other words, writing without planning led to many difficulties and negative attitude towards writing. They complained about wasting time and faced countless problems in their organization. As for current writing program, one of the students defined planning as drawing the objects of a main picture. He demonstrated that he picks these objects when needed

and places them in the correct section on the main picture. Another participant student emphasized that planning prevents her from going back and forth when she writes, therefore she never wastes his time. To wrap up, some of the respondents stated that their favorite strategy is planning and they implement it effectively.

“In my opinion, planning is the most useful strategy of process writing. I have learned how to plan my writing this year and greatly benefit from. At first, I thought it would be time consuming to think about the topic, find ideas or details. In contrast to my assumption, writing after planning enables me to save time and write in a well- organized way. While planning, I even decide on the grammatical structures and the linkers that I may need in order to be able to support my ideas in my paragraph.”

“Thanks to planning, I do not have to go back and forth because I order everything and design my paragraph beforehand. For this reason, planning is the best strategy and helps me write more smoothly.”

“I think writing resembles to drawing a picture and planning looks like drawing the people, trees or houses that will be included in the picture. You prepare them beforehand and paste when necessary. That’s why planning is the most useful strategy for me and removes the possibility of failure in content, organization or many other aspects in my writing.”

4.3 Summary

The following table presents a complete picture the findings related to each research question in the study.

Table 10

Overall findings of the research question

	Quantitative Findings: Results of the questionnaire	Qualitative Findings: Results of the interviews
1-What are the students' attitudes towards writing?	Writing in English is useful for my future career (M= 4.67, SD=0. 482) I can develop my writing skill if I do writing practice (M=4.58, SD= 0.717) I think it is easy to write in English. (M=04, SD=0.908).	Learning by writing, Writing for future career, Writing for the exams of the degree programs, Practice, Lack of confidence, Generating ideas.
2-What are the perceptions of the students about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use?	Writing lessons help me learn new grammatical structures (M= 4.50, SD=0.590) Writing lessons improve my grammar (M=4.46, SD=0.509) I like checking my classmates' writing (M=3.50, SD=1.180)	Learning new grammatical structures, Sharing ideas, Learning how to speak in L2, Peer-check, Activities in writing lessons.
3-What are the reported process writing habits and strategies of the students?	I know how to organize ideas (M=4.13, SD=0.680) I know how to draft (M= 4.00, SD=0.780) I write drafts (M= 3.46, SD=0.833)	Narration, Classification, Illustration, Drafting, Rewriting.
4-What are the attitudes of students towards process writing strategies?	Editing (useful) (M=4.58, SD=0.584) Revising (M=4.46, SD=0.779) Brainstorming (Mind mapping, Free writing, etc.) (M=2.96, SD=0.859)	Sense of Achievement, Feeling like a writer, Revising checklist, Brainstorming working individually, Limited vocabulary, Planning.

To sum up, it can be inferred from the results obtained through the analysis of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews that the participant group has positive attitude towards writing and process writing. In other words, compared with their previous writing courses, process writing approach has made a positive contribution

to the participants' writing habits or skills. They are well-informed about the steps and objectives of the writing course. It was also evident that the participants benefit from the approach to a great extent, and there is a considerable increase in their confidence and motivation. For this reason, it can be concluded that process writing approach to writing assists the students to write in a better way in the actual process of writing.

However, it was revealed that some of the participant students have difficulties in some stages of process oriented approach like brainstorming, and it was noted that they are not in favor of checking their peers' writing.



Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of EFL learners' on L2 writing, writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use, process writing habits and strategies in an English preparatory program of a foundation (non-profit) university in İstanbul. The data were gathered through both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments, which consisted of a questionnaire and semi-structure interviews. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 24 students and semi-structured interviews were administered to 18 students studying at B1 level. Means and Standard deviations were computed in order to obtain the results of questionnaire, whereas interviews of the participant students were analyzed by implementing content analysis. This section covers the discussion of findings of each research question and includes the conclusion and recommendation for future research.

5.1 Discussion of Findings of RQ 1: EFL learners' attitude towards process oriented approach.

In an attempt to find out the participant students' attitude towards writing, the collected data from the questionnaire revealed that the students like writing and believe writing is essential for their future career. To give an in-depth data, interview results reported that they had no concerns about their career in their previous writing course and was not aware of its significance. Today, process writing approach raised awareness upon writing and they are worried about the written exams at their degree programs and even concerned about their career since they are planning to work at an international company after or before graduation. As the participants suggest, writing is inevitable and essential for their future career. For this reason, they have attached more importance to writing and developed positive attitude towards the skill. In line with this study, Ho (2006) reported that the students were very positive in their attitudes towards writing after they were taught how to write by adopting process writing approach.

Secondly, the participants reported that practice plays a significant role in developing their writing skills. They believe the more writing practice they do, the better writing skills they have. For this reason, the participant students suggested that the number of writing classes should be increased as they need more time to be able to achieve their goals. That means students need more practice to become competent at their writing abilities. For this reason, they should be given sufficient time in order to internalize the process of writing. Students need both free writing and structured writing activities to write fluently. (Buhrke, L, Henkels, L., et al. 2002). In a similar fashion, Bridge, Compton-Hall and Cantrell (1997) found that the more students are allowed time to write, the more their writing abilities develop. Stanley (1993) further reported that the process approach deals with writing as a creative act which needs time and positive feedback to be done well. These research findings in literature overlap with the findings of this study.

On the other hand, the majority of the participant students asserted that writing something is not easy for them. According to the interviewees, their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is sometimes not adequate to make well-organized or meaningful sentences. They also stated generating ideas and being obliged to write about 200 words are the other handicaps for them. The other participants added that they have no background knowledge about writing. Some of them were simply taught grammar in their previous writing courses. Moreover, the majority of the participants who rated the extreme end of this item reported that they were not given a chance to practice writing neither in L1 nor L2. Similar to these findings, Arndt (1987) and Hall (1990) demonstrated similarities in L1 and L2 writing processes of individuals, while Cumming (1988;1989) suggested that the quality of writing products in L1 and L2 were related, though the quality of the L2 product was independently affected by knowledge of L2. To wrap up, these findings imply that writing competency in L1 can be transferred to L2, and poor writing skills in L2 cannot be the indication of insufficient writing skills or inadequate knowledge of L1, though.

5.2 Discussion of Findings of RQ 2: The overall perceptions of Turkish EFL learners about their writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use.

As for the second part of research question, the results of the questionnaire and interviews indicated that process writing activities foster students' written expression in terms of cohesion, grammar, vocabulary or mechanics of writing. During the interviews the students gave examples from the grammar and vocabulary items that they have acquired in their writing courses. In Lee's (2006) study, conducted with 100 EFL learners from a variety of disciplines, the process oriented approach was found to provide students with using complex sentences. Moreover, Adıgüzel (1998) revealed that the process approach to writing had a considerable impact on the subjects in terms of the number of correctly used conjunctions, transitional signals, tenses, articles, prepositions and subject verb agreements. That means teaching occurs during the writing process. It can be inferred that process writing approach influenced their writing performance positively and considerably as the process oriented approach deals with the process of the construction of the text and many dimensions underlying writing (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Furthermore, they claimed that they learned how to speak in English in writing courses. To be more specific, since the participants are able to organize their sentences and ideas better now, it also contributes to their speaking skills when they are given a topic to discuss orally. In accordance with Steele (1992), process writing fosters the development of language use in other skills.

In contrast, the students do not support the stage of peer check for two reasons. To begin with, they do not believe checking their classmates' writing contributes positively to their writing. They report that they need to read a good sample or complete piece of writing, but their classmates perform in the same way as the participants do. Secondly, the participants regard themselves as visual learners. That means they have the tendency of learning what they see and keep it in their long-term memory. When the participants check their classmates' writing, which is considered (by the participants) to be full of errors, they get confused and code everything including spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammatical errors inaccurately.

Finally, they agree on the positive effects of checking their peers writing, on condition that it is completed after being checked by the teacher and corrected in line with the teacher's feedback. In his study, Bayat (2014) revealed that the texts guided with process writing approach contain fewer errors since evaluations are conducted by the students themselves, their peers and teachers. Thus, he highlights the significance and positive effect of peer-check.

5.3 Discussion of Findings of RQ 3: The reported process writing habits and strategies of Turkish EFL learners.

The third part of the research question attempted to explore writing habits and strategies of the participants. Most of the students know how to organize their ideas and how to draft.

Firstly, the participants stated that they are capable of organizing their ideas effectively. In their previous writing course, they had no idea about the organization of their writing. Today, they are able to select the most important ideas and organize them cohesively. These findings are in accordance with the study of Goldstein and Peggy (1996) who suggested the primary function of process oriented writing instruction is to motivate the learners to think about their writing and reflect on their ideas.

Secondly, the students note that they write drafts and know they have to write the 2nd or 3rd draft until it is a complete one. Specifically, in order not to re-write the whole paragraph because of minor mistakes, they pay higher attention to the elements of writing such as punctuation and spelling. A study carried out by Yaylı (2009) proved that L2 writing instruction given through process approach decreased EFL learners' negative perceptions about writing. This is mainly because they are given more than one chance to re-write after being evaluated or corrected during the writing process.

However, some of the participants stated that -as implemented in their previous writing course- producing only one text, which was checked and corrected by the teacher herself, did not improve their writing skills. In their current program, they like being guided and provided with feedback by correction symbols, but the participant

students are dissatisfied with drafting more than twice. They report it is sometimes unnecessary and time consuming, also there is no point in repeating the same draft with the same content more than two times just because of a few punctuation or capitalization errors. Different from this study, Goldstein and Peggy (1996) found that that while process writing instruction may not result in better writing for all students, the implementation of the strategies such as planning and writing more than one draft is associated with higher performance. That means the more drafts the students write, the higher performance they show.

5.4 Discussion of Findings of RQ 4: The attitudes of Turkish EFL learners towards process writing strategies.

The last research question aimed to investigate the participant students' attitude towards process writing strategies. According to the questionnaire and interview results, the students are in favor of editing and revising. To begin with, editing their own production enables the participants to have a sense of achievement. When they edit and share their completed writing with their peers, the participants state that they feel themselves as real writers rather than copier of a writing sample. As for revising, the students can find the errors or missing elements in their writing with the help of revising checking. To sum up, the findings upon the participants' attitude towards process writing strategies coincide with the study of Ho (2006) carried out in six classrooms in a Chinese setting. The study concluded that most students were positive towards all aspects of the process writing program. "Instead of using traditional method to put given words and ideas together to form a standardized composition, they now had greater satisfaction in being real writers who could write imaginatively and freely on their own". Ho (2006).

On the other hand, a great majority of the participants indicated that they face problems in the stage of pre-writing. According to them, brainstorming is rather challenging since their vocabulary is limited besides finding irrelevant ideas and being unable to translate their sentences into L2. In addition to this, the participants believe they are not creative enough. For this reason, they face problems in coherency and get de-motivated. In a similar fashion, Mogahed (2013), in his study, indicated that mastering pre-writing facilitated the later stages of writing, such as drafting and

revising and encouraged the participant students to write more and more. That's why prewriting is crucially important for students and a key stage in process writing.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of present study was to investigate the insight of EFL learners into writing, their skills regarding the content, organization and language use, their use of writing strategies and their attitude towards process writing strategies so that the teachers could have a more precise idea whether students benefit from the approach effectively or the program needs to be modified. It was concluded that process oriented approach leads to improvement in writing fluency as well as grammar, vocabulary and speaking. The approach also reinforces the quantity and quality of their writing.

To be more specific, process writing helps the learners share their ideas, gather information and build up vocabulary as well as grammar through group activities. Furthermore, it enhances students' motivation since it provides them with a purpose to write. It also helps them develop an awareness of audience. They are more likely to pay more attention to producing quality work as they know that their writing is shared and read by an audience. Therefore, the process approach to writing is highly efficient in addressing specific writing difficulties.

However, this finding is not consistent with Hall (1990) who demonstrated that the effects of process approach are highly limited in an EFL situation. Students highly benefit from the approach because they learn how to use concrete instruments to follow various strategies at various stages of the writing process. Accordingly, it is fruitful as a teacher method since the learners have an opportunity to practice multiple strategies at a time and all the skills they gain. On the other hand, it was also found that students need more time and practice to use the writing process. According to the participants, drafting more than twice is unnecessary and time-consuming and they face problems in brainstorming. Therefore, it is suggested that with an aim to enable the students to use the target language in a context and retain their linguistic knowledge, the number of writing courses should be increased and instructors should be fully aware of all the pre-writing activities and how to teach them. To conclude, the process approach to

writing both provides a perfect method for students to be able to reinforce their writing skills and simultaneously improve their vocabulary, grammar and speaking skills.

5.6 Recommendations

The participant students generally benefit from the process oriented approach. After being exposed to the approach, they have developed positive attitude towards writing and gained new perspectives. In other words, process writing has made positive contributions to the students' writing competency. However, some of the participants encounter problems while generating ideas, organizing ideas and sentences. For this reason, Hyland (2003) suggests that the conflict between process and product can only be damaging to classroom practice, and the two are more usefully used to supplement and round each other out. That means it would be a good idea to conduct a study upon the implementation of these approaches simultaneously by taking into consideration what students need and what motivates them to enhance their abilities. In line with the needs of the students, future study may suggest an eclectic method which combines the benefits of the other approaches to writing.

Furthermore, the effects of process approach to writing instruction on other skills could be investigated. As suggested by the students, when they speak in L2, they utilize the same strategies with writing. The further research may also seek to answer if process writing approach simultaneously develops the other skills such as speaking fluency or reading.

In addition, the effect of digital tools on improving writing skills could be explored. As it is known, the students are born into digital era and make use of technology in their daily life. That is why it is the indispensable part of teaching and the integration of technology into writing courses deserves detailed investigation.

The present study has recommendations to consider for further research. Firstly, this study was conducted with the researcher's class comprised of 24 EFL learners, 14 of which are female and 10 of which are male. Therefore, with an aim to enhance the scope of the results of the study, the size of the study can be expanded by carrying out

with more participant students to reach more concrete outcomes. It might also increase the generalizability of the results.



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APPENDICES

A. Questionnaire

Name & Surname: _____

Class: _____

Dear Students,

This questionnaire aims to identify your attitude towards writing in English and your writing habits in your English language classes. There are no right or wrong answers. The answers you give will remain confidential and the overall results will be evaluated and interpreted for the research. It is extremely important to be sincere in your answers and not to skip the questions, in order to reach a healthy evaluation of the research results. Thank you for participating in the survey.

Lecturer, Özge Avcı

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A- Attitude towards writing

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1- I like writing.					
2- I like the writing lessons at school.					
3- I think writing is interesting.					
4- I think it is easy to write in English.					
5- I have confidence in writing in English.					
6- I like to be given a lot of guidance by the teacher.					
7- I enjoy working with my classmates while writing.					
8- Writing in English is difficult for me.					
9- Writing in English is useful for my future career.					

10- In my writing class, I generally feel anxious.					
11-I can develop my writing skill if I do writing practice.					
12- Writing helps me improve my English					

B- Writing skills regarding the content, organization and language use

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1-Writing lessons help me learn new vocabulary items.					
2- Writing lessons improve my grammar.					
3- Writing lessons help me learn new grammatical structures.					
4- I can generate a lot of ideas in writing lessons.					
5- I can organize my ideas.					
6- I can fulfill the requirements of the task that I am given.					
7- I learn from my mistakes.					
8- I like checking my classmates' writing.					
9- Planning my writing helps me write better.					
10- I like to be given individual feedback.					

11- I like to be given peer feedback.					
12- Writing lessons do not help me in finding new ideas.					
13- Drafts that I write improve my writing skill.					
14- Using revising check list helps me in finding my errors.					
15- I can find my errors thanks to error correction symbols.					

C- Process writing habits and strategies

	5	4	3	2	1
1- I plan before writing.					
2- I get ideas while writing.					
3- I organize ideas while writing					
4- I write drafts.					
5- I revise drafts.					
6- I edit drafts.					
7- I know how to get ideas.					
8- I know how to plan before writing.					
9- I know how to organize ideas.					
10- I know how to draft.					

11- I know how to revise the draft.					
12- I know how to edit the draft.					
13- I know the strategies to write a complete piece of writing by myself.					

D- Attitude towards process writing strategies

2.1	How useful are the following strategies?	Very useful	Useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful	Not useful at all
2.1.1	Brainstorming (Mind mapping, Free writing...)	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.2	Planning	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3	Drafting	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.4	Revising	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.5	Editing	5	4	3	2	1

2.2	How easy is it to manage the following strategies?	Very easy	Easy	Somewhat easy	Not easy	Not easy at all
2.2.1	Brainstorming (Mind mapping, Free writing...)	5	4	3	2	1
2.2.2	Planning	5	4	3	2	1
2.2.3	Drafting	5	4	3	2	1
2.2.4	Revising	5	4	3	2	1
2.2.5	Editing	5	4	3	2	1

B. Interview Questions

1. What is your attitude towards writing in general?
2. Did you have writing lessons at your previous school? If yes, what kind of difficulties did you face while learning writing? Do you still face the same problems?
3. What did you use to do before you start writing?
4. How did you use to generate your ideas? Did you do brainstorming?
5. Did you use to plan before you start writing?
6. Did you know how to organize your ideas? If yes, how would you do it? Are there any differences between the way you organize your ideas today and at high school?
7. Did you use to ask your peer to check your writing before you handed it in? Do you ask now?
8. Did you receive feedback from your teacher or peers?
9. Do you think you have confidence in writing?
10. Do writing lessons improve your English? If yes, please specify.
11. Is it easy to generate ideas for you?
12. Do you write drafts?
13. Do you think there is interaction between you and your teacher in your writing lessons? If yes, how?
14. Do you make “planning” now? Why or why not? If so how exactly you do it?
15. Do you think the writing program of your school is useful? Compared with your previous writing courses, do you think you write better now? What are the contributions of the program to your writing competency?

C. Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Avcı, Özge

Nationality: Turkish (T.C.)

Date and Place of Birth: 19 August 1985, Gebze

Marital Status: Single

Phone: +90 531 883 46 60

email: ozge.avci@sfl.bau.edu.tr

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Bahçeşehir University	2018
BS	İstanbul University	2008
High School	Gebze N. Yalçın Anatolian School	2003

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2013-	Bahçeşehir University	English Instructor
2011-2013	Bilfen Schools	English Teacher
2009-2011	Oğuzkaan Schools	English Teacher
2008-2009	Doğa Schools	English Teacher

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English, Spanish, German

CERTIFICATES

Bahçeşehir University

Bahçeşehir University

British Side

British Side

British Side

Instituto Cervantes

Yıldız Technical University

I.U School of Foreign Languages

Microsoft Recognized Educator

Introduction to Coaching in Education

CELTA

NLP Introductory Course for EFL Teachers

Teaching Skills Effectively

Spanish 1

ELT Pedagogical Formation

German 2

HOBBIES

Tennis, Literature, Movies, Fitness