

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the major changes in the approaches to the learning and teaching of composition writing. First, the traditional approach, which is product-based will be described. This is followed by a comprehensive discussion of the process approach. Among the issues discussed in the two major approaches - product and process, are their strengths and weaknesses, and their effectiveness in improving composition writing.

2.1 The Product - based approaches to the teaching of composition.

Currently, in Independent Chinese schools, the teaching of composition can generally be classified into the following: the form bound/prose-model approach, the content approach and the outline approach.

2.1.1 The Prose-Model Approach.

This approach is widely practised by teachers and the bulk of resource books in this approach flood the market. When analyzing prose, teachers concentrate on these 2

aspects: i) the use of content to stimulate students' thinking and ii) the discussion and analysis of forms with respect to content. Its strength in providing students, especially beginner writers, with different ways of organizing ideas according to the appropriate mode is widely recognized. To Watson (1982), good models provide useful directions and the necessary exposure to linguistic forms and habits of target language and rhetoric pertaining to different purposes and audience.

However, the prose-model approach is widely criticized for its weaknesses too. Zamel (1982) opines that failure to see the chaotic and disorganized thinking and writing that goes on before the final, polished drafts may mislead students into concluding that the composing process is linear and straight forward. Eschholz (1980, 1982, cited by Watson 1982 :11) in his papers discusses in depth some of the weaknesses of the model approach. First, " some teachers may use models that are too long, too remote from students' own writing problems, and consequently will not be of much help to them." Furthermore, it may " mislead students that forms are more important than contents, resulting in the production of "mindless copies of a particular organizational plan or style." Besides, model analysis which puts undue emphasis on the final and correct product may threaten students with the idea that they are expected to achieve the same level of competency and may render them incapable of even starting. He remarks that " imitation of models may stultify and inhibit writers."

2.1.2 The Content Approach

In this approach, writing teachers will begin their classes by writing one or a few topics on the board. This is followed by an analysis of the topic/topics and limited to explanations or discussions about the content. Then, students are asked to complete the task individually, either in class or at home. Finally their drafts will be evaluated. Obviously, in this approach, students are not taught the necessary skills involved in the process of composing. The assumption is that given the main ideas of composition topics, students are able to apply the grammatical rules they have learned and automatically proceed to the task of composing (Smadi 1982). The emphasis of this approach is on content and the evaluation of the products.

Goh (1986) questions the effectiveness of this approach that is practised in some schools in Singapore. He unveils several weaknesses of the approach. Firstly, the lack of pre-writing activities results in students not having enough opportunities to explore the topic well. Thus, not enough ideas are generated. In fact, many teachers have commented that students often end up reproducing what they have told them without much facts added. Likewise, the lack of rewriting activities may end up in poorer writing. Another shortcoming is that the teacher still plays the traditional role of examiner, going all out to point out students' mistakes. They see their role as evaluator for the finished product and not the facilitator who intervenes in the composing process to improve the quality of writing. To make matters worse, the teacher's written feedback is not beneficial at all. It is either too general, negative or merely concentrates on mechanical errors.

2.1.3 The Outline Approach

The outline approach requires students to outline their essays before they actually write. According to Taylor (1981), the outline approach is based on the premise that writing is a one-way process of recording on paper, ideas which are already well thought out and carefully organized. He argues that this is not necessarily true. He is of the opinion that essay writing is a bi-directional movement between content and written form. The very act of writing can itself facilitate thought and ideas. His view is also shared by Murray (1978) and Perl (1979). They are of the opinion that writing is a creative discovery procedure characterized by the dynamic interplay of content and language. Writers do plan but they have to adapt their strategies as they write. Hence, often the process itself frequently results in the creation that has no shape prior to the act of composing,

Britton (1978) was not in favour of this approach. He even suggests that "not only does outlining or advance planning not guarantee success but it may also even militate against it." However, Elbow (1981) commented that the outline approach can be useful if it is preceded by thorough exploration of the topic whereby the writer is at the stage of organizing ideas already generated in an orderly manner.

All these three traditional approaches adopted in the teaching of composition reveal more weaknesses than strengths. Besides, these approaches also share a common characteristic i.e. they are product-based. According to Freedman, Aviva, Pringle and Yalden (1983: 179) the product approach emphasizes the properties of the finished piece of writing. of

This kind of approach revealed two weaknesses, firstly, meager guidance in the composing process and secondly, over concern for the product.

Besides that, students have to go through the composing process without much direct instructional guidance from teachers. Teachers simply assume that students can apply the grammatical rules they have learned to produce texts without problems. Furthermore, the focus of composition teaching has been on the form or grammatical correctness of the essay, with teachers stressing the need for writing that is free from linguistic errors. The emphasis is on an error-free final essay – the product. According to Applebee (1986: 95) “The traditional approach to writing instruction has been prescriptive and product-centred. At the sentence level, instruction has emphasized the traditional modes of discourse...instruction usually consists of analyzing classic examples of good form, learning the rules...and practise following the rules...success in writing has been measured by the ability to incorporate those rules into one’s own writing.”

As a result, composition writing becomes a painful experience for many students. Yusof Marohaini (1993) criticized teachers who adopt the traditional approach and for taking writing instruction too much for granted. She commented that teachers seemed to place more emphasis on generating content and leaving students to do the major part of composing as if composing is a natural skill acquired by most students, thus placing tremendous pressure on them. Goh (1986) also doubts the progress of students writing in the absence of substantial development writing skills.

Another critique on the traditional approach is the over emphasis on product. Many teachers believe that intensive marking of the students' work will result in improving writing skills (Applebee,1981). The problem is further aggravated by the fact surface features are the main focus of evaluation (Harris, 1977, Applebee, 1981, Lim 1994). Teachers who labour on "error hunt" should be made aware of its lack of effectiveness. Research has shown that intensive marking does not produce mechanically perfect papers (Braddock et al 1963) even in terms of overall writing quality.

Wong (1989 : 11-20) points out the weakness of product-oriented instruction. He is of the opinion that the teacher cannot effectively guide students in solving problems encountered during the process of writing by commenting on finished products. He emphasizes that the act of providing guidance and comments when the composing process is in action is parallel to the principle of teaching since it is tailored to the student's needs. Researchers like Hairstone (1982) and Freedman et al (1983) are of the opinion that by looking only at what students have written is not enough. They remarked that we must also understand how that product came into being, and why it assumed the form that it did. We have to try to understand what goes on during the act of writing... if we want to effect its outcome, we have to do the hard thing, examine the intangible process, rather than the easy thing, evaluate the tangible product.

It is with this shift of paradigm from the product to the process pedagogy that leads a series of research which explores the creative, mysterious aspects of the composing process.

2.2 The Process of Composing

According to Paulstone (1976: 12), composing is “writing beyond the sentence level, putting together words in a grammatical acceptable form and ordering the result sentences in an appropriate way.” Research on composing process flourished during the 70s and 80s. Numerous studies employing different methodologies like think-aloud protocols, interviews, analysis of product etc were carried out. Results and findings of the studies have important implications for writing pedagogy.

The composing process is found to be non-linear, recursive and generative. Emig’s (1971) study on 8 twelfth graders revealed the complexity and the non linear pattern of the composing process. This is a major finding as it challenged the conventional notion about writing. The linear composing model suggested by Rohman and Wlecke (1964) can no longer hold. In addition, the study also reveals that the act of writing is a continuing effort to clarify and refine one’s thought. Writers do not know the outcome of the final product from the outset. According to Sarada (1991 : 25) writing is thus perceived to be “ a process of exploring one’s thought and learning from the act of writing that what these are.”

Emig’s study was supported by many studies that followed. However, it should be noted that the recursive, generative behaviour is more developed among the skilled writers. Mischel’s (1974) subject, Clarence, a capable, level-headed, twelfth grader was observed

to follow a cyclical, exploratory writing pattern. He observed that Clarence would stop midway in his writing to re-read what he had done so far, sometimes to keep the subject whole in mind. Stallard's (1974) good writers stopped writing more frequently to read what they had written and changed significantly more paragraphs than the writers of heterogeneous abilities. To Pianko (1979 : 18) " the text of a written composition unfolds in progress rather than pre-determined from the outset." All her college freshmen did most of their planning during the actual composing. During the course of composing, they paused and rescanned for " planning ahead...what to write next...to reorient themselves." Perl's (1980a, 1980b) skilled and unskilled writers use " retrospective structuring" in order to discover what they want to say, though her unskilled writers are prematurely distracted from the exploration of ideas because of surface-level concerns. For Sommers' (1980) more proficient writers, revising is an integral part of composing as it leads to further writing. In contrast, revising for inexperienced writers only involved local changes. Furthermore, Rose's (1980) finding indicated that unskilled writers were less flexible in their plans than good writers

Time spent on pre-writing is another behaviour observed from the studies on composing process. It was found that skilled writers spent more time thinking and planning before putting their first words on paper. Stallard's (1974) good students spent longer time in pre-writing as compared to the poor writers. Similar to Stallard's finding, Pianko's (1979) unskilled writers also spent less time in the initial planning.

On the whole, it can be concluded that skilled writers and unskilled writers differ in their composing behaviours. To skilled writers, composing is a process of discovery. It is non-linear and recursive. They spend more time thinking about preliminary plans. However, they are flexible to allow for major changes in ideas and forms. During the course of writing they depend heavily on rescanning, rereading and thinking on what they have written to decide on what they are going to write. It is this kind of "back and forth movement" that results in the construction and clarification of ideas and meanings. They are more concerned for meaning than form in the early stage of writing. They delay editing to maintain a free, smooth flow of ideas to create meaning. On the other hand, unskilled writers spend less time in pre-writing. They are inhibited by their inflexible plan and premature concern over mechanical errors. They lack reflective ability.

Another important finding of research on the composing process is that it unveils the effect of traditional instruction on students' writing behaviours. Traditionally, writing is perceived to assume a linear fashion. Thus, pedagogies emphasize elaborate preliminary outlining, provide models for imitating and insists on teaching writing prescriptively. This type of teaching has negative repercussions on students especially unskilled writers.

More evidence can be derived from direct studies on writers' problems in composing. Rose's (1984) study of "blockers" and "non-blockers" showed that students who were experiencing writer's block had learned the rules and strategies from textbooks and teachers. The concept of good writing has in a way inhibited writers to write freely. Murray (1984b) attempted to analyse the cause of writer's block. He pointed out that the

main cause of writer's block is the inappropriate standard set by writers who want to write better than they can at that moment, not knowing that their text can be improved through the process of composing. Selfe's (1985) cited by Zamel (1987) case study of writing apprehension found that the writing anxiety of one particular student was linked to her limited writing experience throughout her school and to her belief that teachers expected perfect papers. The legacy of traditional instruction is further evident in Zamel's (1987) own ESL student. In Zamel's words, according to feedback from the student " his teacher's emphasis on the rules and limitations of how to write a research paper has to a great extent impeded his creative thinking and writing skills. He felt too restricted and lost the desire and confidence to write " (Zamel 1987 : 109).

The main findings of research on composing can be summarized in the following:

- 1) composing is a process of discovery, it is recursive and generative
- 2) skilled writers employ composing strategies, whereas the composing process of unskilled writers are underdeveloped.
- 3) the poor performance of the unskilled writers is to a great extent the result of traditional instruction.

Based on this knowledge, a new dimension into the teaching of writing is revealed. The focus of teaching begin to shift from the product to the process. Students are to be informed and taught the skills and strategies involved in the entire composing process. The assumption is that by teaching students the composing strategies employed by skilled writers, students' writing ability can be improved. Thus, under the process approach,

more classroom time is devoted to the instructions and practice in generating , organizing and revising ideas to promote better writing. As Pianko (1979) has pointed out, for teaching to be effective, teachers should focus on the composing process of students and the whole composing process is to be slowed down so that each stage can be reflected on and strengthened.

2.3 The Process-based approaches to the teaching of writing

The philosophy behind the approach is when students are given the time and opportunity to explore during the composing process under teachers' guidance, they are able to produce better writing. White and Arndt (1991) state the aim of the approach is to nurture the skills with which writers work out their own solutions to the problems they set themselves with which they shape their raw materials into a coherent message and with which they work towards an acceptable and appropriate form for expressing it.

The process approach is based on the following assumptions:

- 1) Classroom writing tasks should be structured to encourage students to go through a process of planning, organizing, composing, revising and publishing. This is necessary for better texts to result as reviews of research have shown that skilled writers went through this process of composing. On top of this, the practice of multiple drafts should be emphasized as it is necessary for creating and reformulating ideas. (Murray, 1984a)

- 2) Students need more classroom time for writing. According to Murray (1984), (Raimes 1985), (White and Arndt, 1991) time is needed to incubate, sift and shape ideas. Besides, classroom time is necessary to create a stimulating, conducive, appropriate environment which promotes writing (Murray,1984a)
- 3) Teaching and learning involve both teacher and student to work as partners and play equally important parts in the enterprise (White & Arndt, 1991). The teacher is neither an authoritative knowledge-giver nor a linguistic judge, but a facilitator and a reader ready to provide the necessary instructional scaffolding within the ripening zone of proximal development (Applebee 1986). Students are given more control of their tasks by finding their own subjects and by shouldering the responsibilities of revising (Murray, 1984a, Hedge,1989).
- 4) Group discussion or group work in the composition class generates discussions, interactions and activities which encourage an effective process of writing (Hedge 1988)
- 5) Mechanical errors are to be attended to last. Writers should concentrate on meaning at the early stage of writing. To produce good texts, the smooth flow of thoughts should not be truncated by premature attention to surface features.
- 6) Students' drafts are used as texts in the writing classroom. Student generated teaching materials is more effective since it meets students' needs. Besides, good models when shared among peers motivate both writers and readers (Rosen,1987).

To date, there is still an absence of one well-established and widely recognized model of process writing. Different models were developed by different composition theorists like White and Arndt (1991) Hedge (1988) etc. Nevertheless, according to Applebee (1986) in general, these models are marked by instructional activities designed to help students think through and organize their ideas before writing and rethink and revise their initial drafts. Usually, they are characterized by features and practices like brain-storming, journal writing, focusing on the students ideas and experiences, the provision of audiences other than the teacher, multiple drafts, delayed attention to mechanical errors, elimination or deferment of grading. For convenience of instruction, activities are partitioned and carried out into 'stages' i.e pre-writing, drafting, revising and publication. However, it should be noted that the entire process of composing is recursive. Planning does not occur in prewriting alone. It occurs throughout the stages of writing and revising. As Flower and Hayes (1981 : 375) said " planning is not a unitary stage but a distinctive thinking process which writers use over and over again during composing." Revising, too, occurs throughout the composing process. According to Zamel (1983:173) " Students rewrote as they think, some revising entire chunks of discourse, some attending to the clarification of a previously stated idea."

2.4 Stages of the Process Approach

2.4.1 Pre-Writing

Ebbitt and David (1978 : 5) remarked that " Pre-writing is discovering what you think and feel about your subject; it's finding the perspective from which you'll write about

it. It includes whatever goes on before you make the purposeful effort to produce a first draft."

It is a stage of planning whereby the writers address the 'what', 'who' and the 'how' of composing a text (Murray, 1984a). It is crucial because it is the preparation period for writing whereby ideas are generated and organized. Murray (1980) suggested that it may take as much as 85% of the time spent building a piece of writing. As shown by research, professionals and skilled writers are aware of the importance of pre-writing which is evident from the amount of time they spend on understanding, planning and organizing the written task before they pen their first words on paper. Hillocks (1982) found out that time spent on pre-writing instruction is more worthwhile than labouring on extensive evaluation. The importance of pre-writing is also stressed by Singh (1998) in his study on using mind-mapping as a pre-writing activity to help students' composition writing. The Students strongly feel that teachers should be aware of the importance of pre-writing instruction in stimulating their thoughts, and guidance should be directed to aspects like purpose, audience and organization. Thus teachers should be sensitive to students need and interests and plan instructional activities accordingly.

2.4.2 Writing

Emig (1971: 33) refers to this stage of composing as " what occurs between the writing of the first word on paper and the final" and " it includes the selection and arrangement of elements- lexical , syntactic,... " According to Hedge (1989), with good writers this phase

consists of making the first draft. It is often interrupted as the writer stops to read over and review, to get an idea of how the text is developing, to revise plans and bring in new ideas or rearrange those already expressed. Teachers should train students to focus on meaning instead of form at this stage.

3) Revising

Murray (1984a: 90) refers to revising as " reconsideration of subject, forms and audience. It is researching, rethinking, redesigning, rewriting and finally line by line editing." With no exception from pre-writing and writing, revising is also recursive. It begins during the pre-writing stage and continues through to the final draft. Murray (1984a) and Van Dijk (1980) cited by (Goh 1986 : 34) concur that revising is surface as well as meaning-based; and microstructure and macro-structure-related. Furthermore, in Beach and Bridwell's (1984) model of revision, revising includes both the mental process and the actual writing processes. Scardamalia and Bereiter's (1983,1986) explanation of revision give us a better overview of what revision. According to them, revision is making changes at any point in the writing process. It involves identifying discrepancies between intended and instantiated text, deciding what could or should be changed in the text and how to make desired changes. Changes may or may not affect meaning of the text, and they may be major or minor. Also, changes may be made in the writer's mind before being instantiated in written text, at the time text is first written and/or after text is first written.

Revising is an important part of composing. Skilled and professional writers engage in extensive revising (Stallard, 1974, Emig 1971, Sommers,1980). Thus, it is imperative that the teaching of revising skill should be incorporated into the composition curriculum. Hedge (1988 : 24) even proposes that its importance should not only be made known to students by structured activities but also through explicit talk.

2.4.4 Publication

This is the last stage of the process approach. It is the stage of making one's voice known to others by sharing. Murray (1984 b) agrees that the need to share with others is natural. According to Murray (1984b : 3) " Most of the time, writing is a private act with a public result. We write alone to discover meaning. But once that meaning is discovered, once we understand what we have to say, then we want or need to share it with other people." Carter (1979) cited by Lim (1994 : 36) comments that one of the factors that people write is to "seek recognition". They like to see "their work in print." Carter (1979) commented that one factor which resulted in the success of his composition programme was the motivation force derived from the numerous publication opportunities he created for his students through the establishment of a writing community and the publication of news, newsletter etc. Indeed, the pride of accomplishing is a driving force to writing. It is highly stimulating and contribute significantly to the development of the writer. According to Rosen (1987), the urge to see oneself in print is a powerful drive toward revision and proof-reading. He further stresses that teachers should take advantage of this

“human to be heard, to leave a physical imprint on the world by offering numerous opportunities for sharing and publishing.”

2.5 Studies on Process Writing

In the last three decades or so, there has been a lot of interest generated in the composing processes of students, which refers to "all the processes out of which a piece of written work emerges" (Bizzell, 1986 : 49). This surge of interest came about as teachers and researchers were aware that the product-based approach to writing seemed to cramp and hinder the development of their students as writers, and because of an increasing awareness that writing involved several complex processes which has long been ignored. Bizzell (1986 : 52) writes,

“Until very recently, most language arts instruction in American schools had lost a sense that composing requires complex processes. Instead, students brought their finished products to the teacher for correction and evaluation. The composing of these products was something students had to manage on their own. Whatever, process they used remained a "black box" to the instructor; the assignment went in at one end, and out came the final paper at the other.”

From studies on composition writing, there exists a gap between research and practice in the teaching of writing. Burhan's (1983) survey of the teaching of writing in university reflected the persistence of current-traditional concepts, methods and goals. The same

problems were noted in the training of writing teachers indicating that in whatever measure student writing problems are the result of the inadequacies of the still dominant current-traditional ideas, most writing teachers are still being trained to become part of the problems not their solutions. In addition, Applebee (1986:101) commented that many commentators have pointed out that " the concern with process in the college writing curriculum may run wide but does not run deep."

Studies of writing in schools further reinforce the view that research has not informed pedagogy. Most teachers' instructions in school still follow the model approach with very few opportunities for students to actually write. For example, the National Assessment of Education Progress (cited by Applebee, 1986 : 101) found that younger students were even less likely than seventeen year-olds to have engaged in any sort of extensive writing process. According to him, a typical pattern of instruction was to give an assignment, allow the students to complete it, and then to comment extensively on the students' works. Average pre-writing time was recorded to be over 3 minutes and was devoted almost exclusively to the inevitable classroom routines. Students were expected to plunge right into the task without any ideas stimulating or generating activities. Typical activities of process approach were practised in a minority of the classrooms. It was noted that few papers went beyond a first draft, and even on the first drafts 60% showed no revision of any kind. Likewise ESL classes are of no exception in their pattern of writing instruction. Hudelson (1984) has pointed out that ESL literacy is dominated by procedures that strictly control writing; language skills are hierarchically sequenced, and writing is reduced to a limited range of exercises and activities.

Studies on responding behaviours reveal that product emphasis still prevailed. Teachers still approach students' work as final products to evaluate and base their evaluation on their perceptions of good writing. (Sommers, 1982; Zamel, 1985). Zamel commented that ESL teachers are so distracted by language-related problems that they often correct these without realizing that there is a much larger meaning-related problem that they have failed to address. (Zamel, 1985)

Zamel (1987) after reviewing some related literature, comments that textbooks also seem to influence and reflect this practice. In the case of ESL writing texts, restrictive and rigid assumption persists. Hudelson (1984) comments that writing is still considered to be the highest order skill and is to be controlled strictly to avoid error. A survey of ESL composition textbooks conducted by Raimes (1986) found that the impact of process research was very minimal. Consequently, it is expected that the prescriptive model of writing instruction will still dominate the scene in ESL classrooms.

What then are the factors that affect the implementation of the process approach in the classroom?

Applebee (1986 : 101) in his paper, "Problems in Process Approach: Towards a Reconceptualization of Process instruction" gives a detail account of two factors which affect the implementation of process instruction.

First, the misconceptualization of process instruction. He analyses that process instruction designers have “ misinterpreted what experts do and failed to consider how process might best be taught”. He emphasizes that “ the choice of strategies was driven by the tasks at hand - not by a generalized conception of the writing process that the writers used in all contexts.” This means the writer’s composing process differs from task to task. As a result, process instruction that requires students to go through all the four stages for all tasks may not be appropriate since classroom composition varies in its degree of difficulty.

Second, a conflict of goals between the process approach and the traditional-current notion of instruction is another problem observed by Applebee. According to him, process approach advocates student centredness and require teachers to co-work with students in the teaching-learning endeavour. Whilst, the role of the teacher in traditional approach is that of an information transmitter and evaluator.

Zamel (1987) brings up another factor which to a great extent is affecting the implementation of the process instruction – the environmental factors. He cited Kantor’s words (1984 : 72),

“ What has been lacking in many composition studies is a picture of the educational context: the condition under which students write, the methods and styles of teachers, the personalities, attitudes and learning processes of student and the many interactions among these variables. ”

He further comments that previous experimental research involve writing about contrived topics in artificial settings, which fail to reflect the true picture of classroom situations. Obviously, the implementation of process instruction involves many variables. In order to examine how it can be best implemented, in-depth classroom research which investigates the situational factors that promote or impede writing development should be revealing. Classroom research in this line is gaining popularity in recent years. Subjects studied comprise children, high school students, college freshmen and second language learners.

During the eighties, Graves (1983) and Calkin (1983) carried out a series of ethnographic studies of the writing classroom. Their findings provided us insight into how the classroom environment and situational factors affected children's development in writing. Activities typical of process instruction like revising, conferencing, editing etc were incorporated into the writing programmes. Young children who have not much idea about writing learn the skill under a supportive and, conducive writing atmosphere. Teachers who understood the composing process followed well-structured programmes to guide students in gaining ownership and confidence in their tasks. Students learned the techniques of composing and group-work skill through teachers' constant modeling. It should be highlighted that a lot of time and patience were devoted to scaffolding in the early stage. The result was encouraging as students were not only found to be independent but also willing and able to help others during the course of composing. In short, it is more student-centred.

Reinforcing Graves' and Calkin's works, Kantor's (1984) study aims to investigate teacher-student interaction in the writing classroom and how students' developing intuitions about writing are dealt with. The encouraging and non-directive stance of the teacher and the supportive, comfortable atmosphere of the particular writing classroom-a classroom that functioned as a community of writers helped students establish a trusting relationship with their teachers. This enabled students to develop through the challenging process of writing and emerge as confident writers.

Similarly, Clark, Dunn and Florio-Ruane (1985) reported what happened to the writing and writing attitudes of high school students in a classroom in which an environment for writing was established. The teacher concerned made an effort to motivate and coach students, thus creating an open interaction among the students. Students were given responsibilities in their role as writers and were provided lots of opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. This kind of environment promotes the development of authorship among the students.

Newkirk's (1984) study on a college freshman that examined the extent of teacher instruction in the college freshman was encouraging. It revealed a good understanding of the 'discovery' nature of the process approach. Her positive attitude towards the student, enabled her to allow the student to be responsible for her writing by choosing her own topics. Owing to this, a breakthrough in the student's performance was possible.

To ESL students whose proficiency in English is lower, the process approach can be effective under certain circumstances. Diaz's (1985) ethnographic study of the writing development of ESL community college students whose proficiency in English are lower, showed that they were able to make progress in her own process-oriented classroom. Her writing classroom is characterised by free-writing, daily journal entries, writing groups that provided instructive feedback, conferences, drafting and redrafting, emphasis on purpose and audience, content-based compositions and attention to error during the final stages of composing. The multitude of process activities carried out indicated the teacher's enthusiasm in her role. It was the teacher's deep concern with process, her ability to create a student-oriented environment and willingness to provide extensive opportunities to write meaningfully that not only promoted more and better writing but also helped her students to feel more confident about writing.

Narayanan's study (1991) also revealed that the pressure of preparing for examination to a great extent prevented many teachers from carrying out process instruction. As contented by Narayanan, examination-conscious teachers were afraid that students would not have enough exposure to the wide range of topics demanded of them by the examination syllabus. Moreover the process approach required more time to complete one topic compared to the traditional approach .

Another study carried out by Sola and Bennet (1985) also shows a lack of success in the implementation of process instruction. Their research revealed how curricular constraints hinder the implementation of the process approach. Through observation, the teacher who

had received process training but was syllabus concerned, revealed an inability to involve students in meaningful and motivating writing experience.

Finally, the teacher plays an important part in the implementation of any new curriculum. Being the key personnel, the teacher must not only be well-tuned to the new concept but also be well-versed in the new craft. Only with the appropriate perception of the approach and the right tool will they be geared to solve the numerous problems encountered during the early stages of implementation. With their positive attitude, they will be more willing to scaffold students in gaining control of their writing gradually through well-structured activities; enthusiastic in fostering a conducive climate for extensive, meaningful, communicative-based writing; put in effort to adapt process model according to the ability of students and the nature of the tasks. In order to achieve this goal, plenty of time should be allotted to both teachers and students to “unlearn what they have learnt” and to be fully immersed in the new experience.

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, these two approaches – the process-based and product-based approaches to writing represent much more than different orientation to teaching and learning of writing. Hairston (1982) described process writing as a revolutionary paradigm shift realizing a conceptual break with product-based practices. The difference between process and product approaches that can be observed in the classroom is only the tip of the iceberg separating what in reality are two entirely different teaching cultures

(Pennington 1995). Process and product orientation to the teaching of writing incorporates Barnes and Shemidith (1974) distinction between interpretation and transmission modes of teaching and learning, are in fact linked to very different views of the nature of writing, of language and of education. These approaches are therefore underpinned by different conception of teaching and the teacher's role, and of learning and the student's role.