

**THE USE OF THE PROCESS ORIENTED  
APPROACH TO WRITING AMONG THE  
CHINESE STUDENTS**

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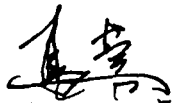
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material in this dissertation is my own concept for quotations, experts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

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## **ABSTRACT**

English is a foreign language in China. Students writing in English faced social and cognitive challenge related to literacy acquisition. Students are exposed to various kind of writing approaches. This research intends to study the effectiveness of using Process Oriented Approach to writing in improving the Writing Proficiency. 40 Chinese students undergoing IELP in UMS participate in the study, and a Pretest and Posttest control Group design was employed. 20 learners made up the Controlled Group to receive the traditional method (the Product Based Approach) as opposed to the Experimental Group who receive the Process Oriented Approach. The Pretest and Posttest being the main instruments of research to collect data and the efficacy of instructional strategy was further supported by a questionnaire during research. The results indicated statistically significant difference between the Controlled Group and Experimental Group on the variables of posttest scores, meaning that Process Oriented Approach to writing can be a useful means of helping students to improve their writing skills.



## **ABSTRAK**

*Bahasa Inggeris merupakan bahasa asing di negara China. Pelajar yang menulis dalam bahasa Inggeris menghadapi cabaran sosial dan kognitif yang berkaitan dengan perolehan literasi. Pelajar diperkenalkan kepada pelbagai kaedah penulisan. Kajian ini bertujuan mengetahui keberkesanan penulisan 'Process Oriented Approach' untuk memperbaiki kemahiran menulis pelajar. Seramai 40 orang pelajar China yang mengambil kursus IELP di UMS terlibat dalam kajian ini manakala reka bentuk pra-pasca kajian experimental benar telah digunakan. 20 pelajar dari kumpulan terkawal diajar teknik menulis menggunakan kaedah tradisional iaitu 'Product Based Approach' dan kumpulan eksperimen diajar menggunakan kaedah 'Process Oriented'. Ujian pra-pasca yang merupakan instrumen utama untuk mengumpul data dan menjadi efikasi kaedah pengajaran disokong dengan penggunaan soal selidik. Perbezaan statistik yang bermakna pada skor pasca di antara kumpulan terkawal dan kumpulan eksperimen menunjukkan bahawa kaedah penulisan 'Process Oriented Approach' berkesan untuk memperbaiki kemahiran menulis pelajar.*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- L1:** The first language
- L2:** The second language
- CG:** The Controlled Group
- EG:** The Experimental Group
- IELP:** International English Language Programme
- PPIB:** Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa

## LIST OF SYMBOLES

P.	Punctuation
○	Word missing
Cap.	Capitalization
vt	Verb tense
agr	Subject-verb agreement
↪	Make one word or sentence
sp	Spelling
pl	Plural
Q	Unnecessary word
wf	Wrong word form
ww	Wrong word
ref	Pronoun Reference error
u	Wrong word order
Ro	Run-on
cs	Comma splice
Frag	Fragment
Ⓣ	Add a Transition
s	Subject
v	Verb
prep	Preposition
conj	Conjunction
art.	Article



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Writing is among the most complex human activities. It involves the development of a design idea, the capture of mental representations of knowledge, and of experience with subjects. The interlocking processes of writing by novice and expert authors have been studied by such diverse disciplines as cognitive psychology, stylistics, rhetoric, text linguistics, critical literary theory, hypertext theory, second language acquisition, and writing pedagogy. From such a wealth of approaches and themes, this research was concerned with what is immediately relevant to the teaching and learning of writing in EFL at advanced levels.

The researcher will present the theoretical framework and then review the literature that has shaped the present project to identify whether Process Oriented Approach to writing can contribute to better writing products in relation to particular aspects of second language acquisition and theory of the writing process in L2. The researcher argues that the Process Oriented Approach to writing, with its emphasis on the writing process, meaning marking, invention and multiple drafts (Raimes,1991), is effective for second language learners if they are both able to get sufficient feedback with regarded to their error in writing, and are proficient enough to implement revision strategies.



## **1.1 Background Study**

### **1.1.0 Introduction**

Writing occupied in almost every curriculum—that of an “academic exercise”. Sentence-composing and sentence-combining exercises, exercises for practicing grammar, and vocabulary, were the dominant (and sometimes the only) forms of writing in English classes. In many curricula, writing was explicitly proclaimed not an aim in itself but only a means of teaching, most useful for reinforcing grammar, vocabulary, and reading, speaking skills, as in the Grammar Translation method, or to support the memorization of language structures, as in the Audio-Lingual Method, Until the communicative approaches, with their emphasis on oral proficiency, have intended to deemphasize writing.

If some objectives in teaching writing were set in a curriculum, they were always extremely limited, like writing “a letter to a foreign pen-friend” (in secondary schools) or a summary of a professional text just read (in higher schools). But in practice, implementing even such extremely restricted objectives was usually reduced to teaching students how to find relevant sentences in texts that they were reading, how to transform these sentences, and how to combine them into a new written text (a letter or a summary).

#### **1.1.1 Background of Teaching of Writing in China**

Before prescribing a specific approach to the teaching of writing for the Chinese students, the researcher will examine and define the background and the needs of the target population.

The problem in China is heavy emphasis on preparing for college entrance exams and the inability of many graduates of Chinese schools to write English well. General descriptions of Chinese instructional methodology indicate that learning

English in China is very different from learning English in England. That is, there is a high reliance on translation from English into the native language in order to understand the rules of grammar and in order to pass the basically reading types of examinations. Vocabulary was memorized with Chinese definitions. Little use of language for normal communication was required, which result in Chinese students being short of skills of writing. Therefore, the suggested research purpose was seen as a helpful way to revitalize the methods of teaching English for Chinese students.

### **1.1.2 Intensive English Language Program in UMS**

The open policy in China has led to a significant increase in the number of Chinese people traveling abroad to study. The last five years has seen a rapid increase in the number of Chinese learners coming to Malaysia. Students usually come here for accredited under-graduate or post-graduate degree opportunities – English often forms part of those studies. They need preparing for university study in Malaysia. Such students found that they were being short changed by more traditional writing courses which simply were not preparing them for the rigor of academic writing in English in Malaysia.

Foreign students in UMS have an option provided to meet the English language requirement. Students are allowed to attend about three months' English language training program in PPIB (Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa which means the Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning) in UMS. From the year 2003, PPIB started to offer IELP (Intensive English Language Program) for international students. It is a preparatory course to equip international students for the Certificate of English Language Competency Examination that will enable them to continue their Degree studies at UMS.

IELP is designed for students of all language proficiencies, as the students will be streamed and taught according to their English language competency identified through a general English Placement Test (EPT) which is conducted at the beginning of the program study. Students will be categorized to different groups based on the reference of the EPT result. Students attend five core modules: Speaking Skills, Listening Skills, Reading Skills, Writing Skills and Grammar Skills.

Writing courses are essential because no matter what major the students choose, they will be responsible for numerous papers in most of the classes. The purpose of the writing program in IELP is to teach some basic academic writing skills. They include a variety of organizational patterns, selected grammatical structures and sentence structures and steps in the writing process. The writing program contains nine units, each requiring eight to twelve hours of class time.

## **1.2 Statement of Research Problems**

In early years as an English teacher, the researcher came across with two issues: 1) the students were extremely not motivated whenever asked to write in English; 2) the end product was fairly disappointing, and did not seem to correlate with the students' abilities as displayed in other aspects of their language ability. According to Kern (2000), knowing how to write a "summary" or "analysis" in Mandarin or Spanish does not necessarily mean that students will be able to do these things in English. Some students are capable of understanding both spoken and written Writing English. And maybe speak well enough, but writing remains one of the most difficult areas for them. The typical problems that Chinese writers encountered are related to format and appropriateness of language lexicon-grammatical errors, erroneous use of logical connectives and insufficient planning:

1. They use L1 in generating ideas and controlling the whole process positively, and utilized L2 to generate sentences in English writing, but their L1 operates in a quite different system from that of the English language, and they learn English as a foreign language in a pure Chinese environment. As a foreign language, the first language style influence in writing come across when the students begin to write. This can be seen in the choice of the words used, the pattern of the sentences and ideas that mingle around the environment of the students
2. Chinese and English is different in the way of thinking, which results in the difference of organizing an essay. Chinese prefer more implicit in expressing oneself, than being direct and obvious.
3. The students do not care much the writing process. They typically begins a paper late, working under deadline pressure, and produces one draft of the text, runs the spellchecker, prints, and turns in the paper without editing and revision, and the teacher read and mark without feedback. So writing is tested rather than taught. It is very slow to improve students' writing skills.

Therefore, in this study the researcher try to solve these problems by using Process Oriented Approach, to move away from the idea that writing was simply another way of practicing grammar, to showing learners that successful writing is much more about generating ideas, structuring those ideas, drafting, and revising. In short, learners moved from writing in order to learn to learning how to write.

### 1.3 Conceptual Framework

The research was based on a framework illustrated in following figure:

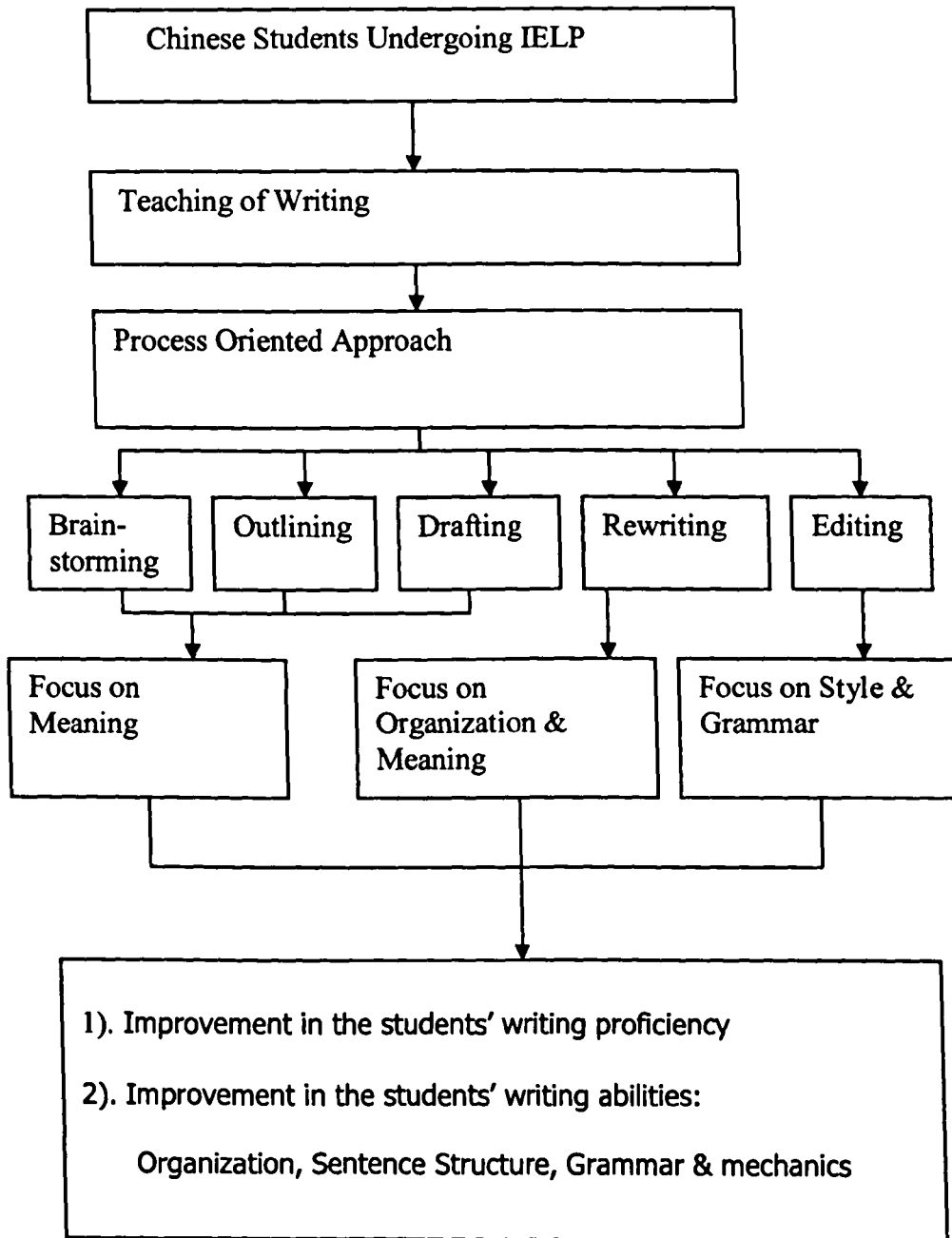


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

The research was conducted in PPIB in UMS. And teach writing to the Experimental Group using Process Oriented Approach, encourage the students to engage in brain-storming activities, outlining, drafting (focusing on meaning), rewriting (focusing on organization and meaning), and editing (focusing on style and grammar). It is assumed that the use of Process Oriented Approach helps to improve the students' writing proficiency, and the students' writing abilities, such as: Organization, Sentence structure and Grammar use.

#### **1.4 Objective of Study**

This research invited 40 students to take up the role as participants to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To identify whether Process Oriented Approach to writing enhance the Experimental Group students' Writing Proficiency compared to Controlled Group's?
2. To identify whether Process Oriented Approach to writing improve the Experimental Group students' writing abilities (organization, sentence structure, grammar use) compared to Controlled Group's?

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

Based on the statement of the problems, this research intends to provide the following research questions:

1. Does Process Oriented Approach to writing Improve the Experimental Group students' Writing Proficiency compared to that of Controlled Group's?
2. Does Process Oriented Approach to writing improve the Experimental Group students' ability of discourse organization compared to that of Controlled group?
3. Does Process Oriented Approach to writing improve the Experimental Group students' ability of sentence structure construction compared to that of Controlled Group?

4. Does Process Oriented Approach to writing improve the Experimental Group students' ability of grammar use compared to Controlled Group's?

### **1.6 Research Hypotheses**

Since this is an experimental research, some hypotheses made reflect the research questions. The hypotheses for this research are as following:

- a. Ha1: There is a significant difference between the Experimental Group and the Controlled Group in terms of Writing Proficiency.
- b. Ha2: There is a significant difference between the Experimental Group and the Controlled Group in terms of the ability of Organization
- c. Ha3: There is a significant difference between the Experimental Group and the Controlled Group in terms of ability of Sentence structure.
- d. Ha4: There is a significant difference between the Experimental Group and Controlled Group in terms of ability of Grammar use.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is following:

- a. There are possibilities by using the Process Oriented Approach students will be more exposed and guided in their writing. Of the four basic language skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing, writing occupies an important and indispensable position. Writing, as well as speaking, is normally considered as a productive or creative skill. Therefore, acquiring this skill seems to be more laborious and demanding for the Chinese students, whose L1 operates in a quite different system from that of the English language, and who learn English as a foreign language in a pure Chinese environment. The researcher wants to solve the problem in using Process Oriented Approach, to

examine the effectiveness of the Process Oriented to teaching of writing for the Chinese students. The premise of this study is on the idea that if there is significance difference in the Post-test scores of the Experimental Group and the Controlled Group, perhaps this finding will be helpful to identify Process Oriented Approach as a suitable approach in teaching writing in English for the Chinese students. This is important, because there are other alternatives and choices to use in teaching writing.

- b. The result of the study is hoped to give some suggestions and solutions for language teachers in their writing classrooms .It goes without saying that the writing skill needs special training. In classroom, students can be exposed to essay models in a variety of styles, and taught detailed writing techniques. Teacher can use activities like drafting, revising, and editing, multiple drafts and peer-group editing and so on, which is not used in Product Based Approach.
- c. This research will be useful to the language teachers of UMS who are interested in improving writing proficiency of students from China. Because Chinese students have their own particular culture background and language learning experience, so maybe the existed curriculum for the local students is not suitable for Chinese students from China. The findings of this study may be taken as reference for the language teachers of IELP. The information will be helpful for the development of IELP curriculum and design of writing course. More suitable teaching methods especially for international students from China can be implemented in teaching of writing.



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