PROCESS WRITING: EVALUATION OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN FOUR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

by

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DECLARATION

I, Joseph Thabang Mamabolo, declare that this research report entitled **'Process Writing: Evaluation of its implementation in four Limpopo schools'** is my own work and has never before been submitted at any other institution for degree purposes. This is my own unaided work and all sources consulted in this study have been duly acknowledged and fully cited.

Signature:_____**Date:**_____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research paper to my family, my parents (Maria and Maribe) who raised me from a humble background and contributed immensely to my achievement as an academic; my siblings, Thabo, Mpho, and Ofentse, for keeping me company along the way and giving me the space to study, regardless that they wanted to watch television; my maternal aunt (Johanna Monene) for playing a sister's role, and lastly, my late paternal uncle, Kgetša, who played the critical role of mentoring me. These people were always there to support me.

Rest in peace Kgetša!

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the application of the 'process approach' to writing in secondary schools in Limpopo Province; The initial plan was to involve two rural and two urban schools. However, the urban schools did not cooperate as initially promised when preparations were made. It is for this reason that the sample was made up of two rural and two peri-urban schools. The study investigated English writing as a basic language skill that second language learners needed to acquire, in a process writing context. Related literature was reviewed to develop knowledge in the area of writing as a process. An exploratory research design was employed and a qualitative approach was followed to mainly collect in-depth data in a Grade 12 English language classroom. The Grade 12 learners and their teachers were interviewed and observed in their writing classrooms. The process that learners followed when engaged in writing an assigned essay was scrutinized in line with what is required by Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in order to confirm the teachers' responses and the observations made during writing lessons. Thematic analysis was used for the data emanating from interview responses, an observation checklist and the learners' essay marking rubric. The study revealed that the method of teaching writing and the learners' writings resembled the process approach. This implies that teachers and learners implement process writing even though the teachers do so to a varying degree due to overcrowded classrooms and a lack of resources experienced more in rural schools than in the peri-urban ones.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AE	Advanced Education
BA	Bachelor of Arts
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CES	Contemporary English Studies
CT	Cape Town
DEM	Diploma in Education management
DoE	Department of Education
EC	Eastern Cape
EE	Equal Education
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English Second Language
FL	Foreign Language
HED	Higher Education Diploma
LP	Limpopo Province
L2	Second language
MoE	Minister of Education
NES	Native English Speaker
NNS	Non-native Speaker
PA	Process Approach
PTD	Primary Teachers Diploma
SA	South Africa
SADoE	South African Department of Education

SAG Subject Assessment Guideline

STD Secondary Teacher Diploma

TREC Turfloop Research and Ethics Committee

ZPD Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 THE PROBLEM DEFINED

Writing has been seen as a process involving several identifiable steps (Merriwether, 1997: 2). This contrasts with the traditional product-oriented method of teaching writing which used to be the dominant practice in Limpopo schools. As the title indicates, the product approach to writing focusses on the end result of the learning process (Brown, 2001: 336). Nunan (1991: 87) states that the Process Approach (PA) focuses on the steps involved in creating a piece of work. In terms of the writing process, no text can be perfect, however a writer will get closer to perfection by producing, reflecting on, discussing and reworking successive drafts of a text. In other words, following the above steps will more likely result in a perfect text. In this regard, Stone (1995: 232) claims that process writing is 'learning how to write by writing'.

The researcher's experience as a former mentor of students enrolled for modules in Contemporary English Studies (CES) and as a student assistant tutoring English language in written work, stirred his interest to conduct this study. The experiences gave him the opportunity to observe students' writing in an authentic environment. This exposed him to the challenges that English Second Language (ESL) students experience when writing. These are mostly grammatical errors; errors in logical thinking, organisation, coherence and cohesion. This persuaded the researcher to scrutinise how writing is taught in Limpopo schools.

There is much literature in the area of writing that suggests that the best approach to English writing or writing, in general, is the process writing approach (White & Arndt, 1991; Hedge, 2005; Bayat, 2014). Ferrari, Bouffard and Rainville (1998: 474) in their study differentiated between good and poor writers, and they highlighted the finding that good writers are active and they deliberately self-regulate the writing processes. This suggests that writers who treat writing as a process become better writers than those who merely present a product with facts.

Process writing is a writing approach, where language students focus on the process through which they produce their written tasks rather than on the tasks themselves. In the end, they need and are required to complete their task, but emphasise the writing

process itself more. By concentrating on the writing process, learners get to comprehend themselves more, and find enhanced skills that assist them to work through the writing. They may discover what strategies conform to their style of learning. Brown (2001: 336) states that writing is a thinking process, a writer produces a final written product based on their thinking after they shall have gone through the thinking process. Further, writing should be seen as an organic, developmental process, not as a method to convey a message but as a way to grow and prepare a message. Like other approaches, process writing has advantages and disadvantages (See 2.6).

Not only do researchers and scholars argue that the PA to writing is the preferred approach, but it is also recommended by the current Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The South African Department of Education (SADoE), through CAPS, states that writing instruction should involve working through the writing processes (Carriculum & Assessment Policy Statement, 2011: 36). This shows that CAPS acknowledges the significance of the process writing approach. The most challenging factor is ensuring that the curriculum is properly implemented in schools (See 2.10).

Most of the assessments administered to learners in schools, as well as to students in universities, need to be responded to through writing, hence the PA to writing is seen as a remedy to writing problems encountered by the students internationally. This has been argued by many researchers (Hedge 2005; Urquhart & McIver 2005; Fujieda 2006). Nevertheless, most students are still struggling to produce good texts and this is revealed by the unsatisfactory academic written texts of university students. This situation, therefore, underlines the fact that students are not following the step-by-step stages that form part of process writing which should have been taught in secondary school.

It is for this reason that the researcher decided to investigate the extent to which the PA to writing is implemented in Limpopo schools, particularly as set out in the CAPS policy document, to examine whether the teachers fully understand the nature of process writing and how they are supposed to teach it. Rural schools are possibly not

taught process writing adequately because of overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources and sometimes underqualified teachers.

The contexts of the above research studies differ from the scenario in Limpopo schools and consequently, the current study may produce similar findings or different results because of a dissimilar teaching and learning context. Hence this study will, as a final objective, determine whether there is a difference in teaching writing between rural and peri-urban schools.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to evaluate the implementation of the process writing approach in Grade 12 classrooms in LP.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To examine how Grade 12 learners are taught essay writing.
- To ascertain if process writing is actually taught in the Grade 12 English classroom as stipulated in the CAPS policy document.
- To determine if teachers understand process writing.
- To determine if there is a difference between how writing is taught in peri-urban schools and rural schools in Limpopo.

1.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

- Literature on process writing in English First Addtitinal Language was surveyed.
- In line with exploratory design, English language Grade 12 learners and teachers were interviewed and observed.

1.4 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Chapter 2 discusses the literature review in terms of core topics and key issues emanating from the title of the study.

Chapter 3 focuses on research methodology premised on classroom ethnography.

Chapter 4 presents an analysis of the results.

Chapter 5 concludes the study and makes recommendations for future research.

The next chapter discusses literature relevant to this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Although writing is the most important skill needed to successfully participate an academic arena, it is also a complex skill and challenging task for the students. For years, different approaches have been developed in the writing classroom. None of these approaches seems faultless. Recently, PA to writing has been developed and many scholars are in its favour (Brown, 2001; Bayat, 2014; Hyland, 2003; Hedge, 2005; Urquhart & McIver, 2005; White & Arndt, 1991) among others, compared to those who are still reluctant of its usefulness, for example, (Graham & Sandmel, 2011 and Barnhisel et al., 2012). This chapter presents in detail the literature on PA to writing. It begins with two theories that govern this study. After that, different themes wherein the PA to writing is discussed are then presented.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by the following theoretical frameworks: the process theory of composition and constructivism theory.

In this study, a process theory of composition will be applied according to guidelines found in Emig J (1971) and Hedge (2005: 52-54). Their work on process theory of composition is considered to be the most influential and comprehensive on pragmatic process writing. Scholars' first attempts to comprehend what is now entitled the writing process started in the early 1970s. Now a key concept in the research of composition studies and in the teaching of writing, process scholars were instrumental in shifting the focus of teachers' attention from learners' written products (final product) to learners' writing processes.

Ever since writing interconnects with external pressures, students benefit most from writing instruction when it provides them with a sense of how what they write can be connected to the world outside of the classroom in real world situation. According to Hedge (2005: 51), the role of an instructor is to design 'sequences of assignments' which will let students realise what language can do as well as what they can do with language.

According to CAPS, (2011: 10); Hedge, (2005: 51) it is presumed that the writing process commonly operated in some variation of three to five stages. The outline below is typical:

- Prewriting,
- Drafting,
- Revising,
- Editing: proofreading, and
- Publishing

Hedge (2005) further points out that what is now called 'post-process' research establishes that it is seldom accurate to describe these stages as fixed steps in a forthright process. Rather, they are parts of a recursive process that are repeated several times throughout the writing process or they seem more accurately conceptualised as overlapping parts of a complex whole. Thus, writers habitually discover that, for example, editorial changes trigger brainstorming and also a change of purpose; that drafting is provisionally interrupted to correct a misspelling; or that the boundary between prewriting and drafting is less than obvious. However, anecdotal evidence indicates that students are often reluctant to do much 'revising' and 'rewriting'. Teachers and lecturers frequently complain that their students correct only grammar errors and do not rephrase thoughts or arguments – a skill that should be taught by means of process writing. This may also be the view of teachers or learners in this study.

On the other hand, the approach to learning through the lens of the theory of constructivism will be examined according to the basic principles of constructivism. There are two versions of the constructivism approach, namely: Cognitive and Social constructivism. These are respectively developed by two different scholars and/or researchers, namely: Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky.

Jean Piaget believes that the learner constructs knowledge of the world with the aid of his activities in the world and this allows him or her to make assumptions and discoveries in his or her mind. Here the focus is on the learner's mental activities; and in Piaget's approach the teacher's role is to create activities or situations in which the learner can enrich his knowledge. In simple terms, Piaget's approach is cognitively

oriented, that is, the cognitive orientation to learning refers to where behaviourists looked to the environment while those that draw on Gestalt turned to the individual's mental processes. In other words, they were concerned with cognition – the act or process of knowing (Smith 1999). As stated by Hartley (1998:18), 'Learning results from inferences, expectations and making connections. Instead of acquiring habits, learners acquire plans and strategies, and prior knowledge is important'. Thus, the focus is on the learner and his or her previous experiences. Piaget stresses in his theory on cognitive constructivism that the foundation for constructivism is laid through an emphasis on the active role of the individual in learning, that is, learner autonomy or learner-centred teaching and the importance of developing higher order thinking skills that learners can use to construct arguments and counter arguments in their academic writing.

Alternatively, Vygotsky, the proponent of social constructivism, claims that the construction of knowledge is socially oriented. Vygotsky himself believes that learning occurs through interactions with the surrounding environment. One of Vygotsky's major claims is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which refers to the distance between the actual development level of a learner as well as the level of potential development under adult guidance or in collaboration with peers that are more capable (Vygotsky, 1978). In this kind of a situation, the more knowledgeable peers and mentors help those who are not sufficiently capable in a task (Bigge & Shemis, 1999: 129). The process of giving this kind of help is termed scaffolding and is provided by the more knowledgeable others (ibid). Thus, in a classroom, a teacher is the one who scaffolds the learning process. In other words, a teacher is the one who is responsible for bridging a gap between what is known and unknown by the learners.

It is clear that the versions of constructivism complement each other to some extent, largely because Piaget has not discounted the role of the social world in the construction of knowledge and Vygotsky also does not ignore the mental activity and reflection of the individual. The general principles of constructivism are explained below since it is believed that both psychological and social versions will contribute to students learning at any level. The PA to writing instruction incorporates many of these same principles as explained below.

2.2.1 Some theoretical principles to be applied in classrooms

As mentioned above, the constructivist approach to learning involves both the individual's mental activity and the interaction with the social context a person is dwelling in and intra-mental and inter-mental construction of knowledge occur concurrently (Wilson, 2003). Students are autonomous, have initiatives, become active problem solvers and thus create meaning which is bound to individual's experiences, both social and historical. This means that meaning will be created subjectively by the individual since knowledge is bound to its knower socially and historically. Hence, meaning is shaped by changes with experiences.

As learners are self-determining and have initiative; they are independent to frame questions, analyse and answer them, therefore become active problem solvers using metacognitive strategies. As a result, by taking responsibility, they develop their own intellectual identity. This feeds into their writing.

The learners can experiment with their ideas; they can test and retest their assumptions. This happens in the processes 'construction, deconstruction and reconstruction' (Watts, 1994: 52).

These basic principles of the constructivism approach to learning specify that the lesson planned in link with the PA will incorporate numerous activities which require learners to discover things by themselves, solve problems, cooperate with other learners or work in groups and also have comprehensive discussions on a given topic. These discussions are motivational, deductive in nature, relevant to learners (connected with their past experiences), flexible, practical, and apply scaffolding (making use of what learners are already familiar with or they are given). As a result, constructivism aims at providing the learners with an 'opportunity to facilitate learning' which is linked to previous knowledge and, therefore, likely to be long-lasting (Watts, 1994: 52). This kind of learning development should feed into the learners' language and writing skills and facilitate their becoming good writers.

2.3 HOW WRITING HAS BEEN TAUGHT

Until the 1960s, Second Language (L2) writing did not attract much attention, however, it has been receiving extra attention recently. As Harmer (1998: 79) points out, writing

is finally acknowledged as the most crucial skill for language learning. He emphasises the necessity of the writing skill in that the reasons for teaching writing to students of EFL include reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right (ibid).

Before the 1980s, writing was often treated as an orderly sequence of distinct activities. After that, studies were conducted which revealed that writing was made up of stages. Composing process research was first considered by scholars such as Eming (1971) in, Perl (1979) and Flower and Hayes (1981). All of the above mentioned researchers came to the conclusion that when approaching writing through the PA, the focus must be on various steps (process writing stages) that have to be followed when producing a text. Latterly, the post-PA to L2 writing has been presented by some researchers (i.e. Atkinson, 2003; Matsuda, 2003), an approach which adds more social dimensions to writers (Fujieda, 2006: 68), but the PA to writing appears to remain the accepted and approved approach.

According to CAPS (2011: 10), text-based, communicative, intergrated and PA can be used to teach writing.

Strömquist (2007: 17) writes that the traditional school of writing has been concentrating on the assessment of errorless written texts. Writing in terms of 'psychological text producing processes' has, according to Strömquist, been a relatively untouched research area for many years. However, much research has been conducted lately. The improvement over the traditional methods of teaching writing in recent years is believed to be the process writing approach. However, the efficacy of using the PA to the instruction of writing is still incomplete.

When debating on how writing can be taught, it is crucial to recognise that the instruction of writing has often been ignored by language teachers. Process writing "has tended to be a much neglected part of the language programme" (White and Arndt, 1991: 2). Therefore, while writing to directly relay intent or to replicate writing has been taught, the practice of writing as method of expression has not. This is mainly because of the implementation of the product approach. The product approach to writing "is a traditional approach to teaching writing that is based on the reproduction of models" (Nunan; 1991: 96). The implementation of the product approach has often

been based on certain factors: firstly, it is often how parents and teachers were taught; secondly, it is very easy to implement; and, lastly, it often enforces a minimal level of writing. Furthermore, it has been used widely and, therefore, it is easily acknowledged by teachers and parents. It probably remains the essay writing method applied by many teachers. This study may show this to still be the case in some Limpopo schools – the context of this study.

2.4 DEFINING PROCESS WRITING

Process writing is an approach to writing, where the main focus is put on the processes (also known as stages) which need to be followed by the learners, or any writer, to produce their written products rather than going straight to the final product itself without considering the process of writing, or composition as others would call it. In the end, they assuredly need and are expected to complete their pieces of writing, yet primarily the writing process itself is emphasised. By concentrating on the writing process, learners come to comprehend themselves more and find a good way of working through the writing. Strategies that conform to their style of learning may be explored. Brown (2001: 336) states that writing is a thinking process because a writer's final written product is produced based on their thinking after the writer goes through a process of thinking. Writing should be thought of as an organic, developmental process which is not necessarily a manner to express an idea or a message but a way to produce, grow and cook a message. PA provides a way to think about writing in terms of what the writer does, such as planning, revising and so on, instead of what the final product looks like such as patterns of organisation, spelling and grammar (Applebee 1986 in Kroll; 1990: 96). Here the emphasis is not on the final piece of writing, but on the processes which the writer goes through when composing a text. It is believed that the writing processes will give birth to the text which is perfect or close to perfection. Furthermore, there could also be some inputs or contributions from peers or the teacher in the form of peer review or peer editing. This clearly shows that the process writing approach allows assistance from other knowledgeable persons, hence synergy is always an ideal. This does not necessarily mean that these people collaboratively compose the text, but that they only come to the aid of the writer where needs be or as the writer wishes. What is most important is that good writers allow inputs from other fellows as suggested by process writing principles. Collaboration is also an underpinning principle of social constructivism.

In the PA, learners are considered as pivotal to learning, as a result, learners' expectations, needs, skills, goals, knowledge and learning styles are taken into consideration. Through the writing process, the abilities such as knowledge and skills have to be employed by the learners. They receive appropriate help from the more knowledgeable others, including the help from teachers and other learners or peers. This approach encourages learners to be flexible and free to express their own feelings or thoughts in written massages, by providing them with sufficient time and the chance to consider, reconsider, reflect on and sufficiently revise their writing, and at each step, seek support from outside resources like the teacher or peers. To better understand what the PA is and what it is not, one must first understand the two main approaches to the teaching of English writing. The two main approaches to the teaching of English writing in the classrooms are the product approach and the PA. Nunan (1991) differentiates these two approaches as discussed below: ging

Generally speaking, a product approach to writing, as the title indicates, focuses on the final result of the learning process. This includes the expectations of what one is required to be able to do as a competent and fluent language user. Alternatively, the PA to writing focuses more attention on the various classroom activities which are believed to encourage and promote the development of skilled language use (Nunan, 1991: 86). This approach is seen as following stages which will lead to a good final product. Just like building a house, one needs a clear plan before starting to build it. In writing, this could be compared with pre-writing activities such as brainstorming, mind mapping or any kind of planning method. There is no way in which one can start a piece of writing with a conclusion - just as it is impossible ti start to build a house by beginning with the roof. These steps seem to be extremely important to the perfecting of a text. The advantages of the PA to writing will be discussed after an understanding regarding how to deal with process writing stage is established.

2.5 HOW TO DEAL WITH PROCESS WRITING STAGES

Foremost, it is essential to know that the process writing approach is not a linear model. Instead, a writer gets to perfection by going through the stages in any manner (Nunan, 1991: 87); but what is important is that prewriting must be the initial stage. Below is a flow chat of the writing process:

Figure 1: Flow chart of the writing process

The above flow chart shows how a writer can move between the process writing stages. Process writing is actually more a problem solving method to deal with writing tasks than an act of communication, that is, writers go about a writing task as the remedy to a series of problems (White & Arndt, 1991:63). It does not matter how frequently a writer goes back to a certain stage, what matters is to achieve the text's perfection. Nunan (1991: 86) supports this by arguing that those who produce good final products do not treat writing as a linear process.

In the process writing approach, writing is more about discovering, putting into words, reflecting on and re-formulating ideas and thoughts as we create sense of what we are writing. The above flow chart shows that a writer needs to set goals and plan extensively. It further shows that writing is revised constantly, often even before any text has been produced. It is clear from the flow chart that some of the stages such as planning, drafting, revising and editing can be recursive and possibly simultaneous. Lastly, ideas on a paper are repetitively evaluated by the writer in a feedback loop either by the teacher or peers.

In the process writing approach, there are two stages which require major involvement of the teacher, namely, prewriting and feedback. They require dedication and enough time and enough effort to work. In a writing classroom, learners have to be taught how to brainstorm. Therefore, is of paramount importance because to start is what stops most people. White and Arndt (1991: 63) provide a good framework on brainstorming a writing task.

Figure 2. A spidergram brainstorming a writing task

Actions

Reactions ~~Personal~~
involvement

Feelings

Actions/sequence
of happenings

Characters
involved

Event

Effect on
characters

Personal
reflection

Place?

Background Time?

Social setting?

Why was it significant?

Why was it interesting?

White & Arndt (1991: 63)

The above model can help to explain the problems that L2 learners sometimes encounter due to the writing tasks and how lack of topic knowledge affects them. The point that the quantity and impact of the research into the writing process has been enormous cannot be denied (Hyland, 2008:101). The model could advise teachers on how to navigate through the pre-writing stage by setting pre-writing activities with the purpose of generating ideas about structure and content. As Yeung (2019: 50) argues, provision of multiple drafts gives rise to the increase in fluency in generating and evaluating ideas and arguments. The model could advise teachers to require and encourage multiple drafts which can lead to text perfection due to the fact that feedback on drafts will be given and also peer responses. The model could also guide teachers to delay surface corrections until the final editing.

Now that it has been seen how crucial prewriting is, the focus will now shift to feedback. It is important that teachers provide learners with corrective feedback. Deciding on the form, type and timing of feedback is another issue for research. When feedback is given, learners will be able to reflect on the propositions, comments and recommendations from peers or teachers or any knowledgeable persons to make corrections. This will lead them to a good final product.

Process-oriented research proposes that learners can be helped to further become competent L2 writers by unfolding and modelling for them the strategies and processes that lie beneath effective writing (e.g. planning, generating ideas, and revising) and also, provide them with corrective feedback on their performance to an extent to which they are capable of applying these processes and strategies independently and flexibly in relation to their goals and task requirements (Hyland 2003, Brown 2001, Hedge, 2005). If learners are taught, and they understand the processes on how to deal with the stages in the PA, they should be able to engage with them better, recursively, on their own (Hedge, 2005: 55) even in an examination hall.

The general criticism that the PA is unrealistic because it puts too much emphasis on multiple drafts which may cause ESL students to fail the academic exams with their restricted single draft could be challenged (Horowitz, 1986). This criticism is not true because one of the main aims of teaching learners the writing skill, besides writing in the real world- business correspondences, reports briefs, and so on, is to prepare them for examination or assessments in general, not only in writing classes but in all modules. In the case of writing, learners will be equipped with what will help them pass the exam. Learners must know how to brainstorm, for instance. Feedback which the teacher may have given them would have helped them to apply the stages of process writing automatically (which includes formulating logical arguments which are the result of appropriate organisation of the information collected) before the examination. In fact, process writing can be a framework to writing, thus, knowing how to apply this framework will result in a systematic and logically argued essay.

2.6 ADVANTAGES OF THE PA

Since the 1980s, the PA has been acknowledged and applied to ESL and EFL writing classes because of its usefulness. The efficacy of this approach can differ in several ways. First, in the product oriented approach, which is the traditional approach to writing, the emphasis is on the end result of the learning process, and it is therefore expected that the learner should perform satisfactorily as a competent and fluent language user. In contrast, the PA to writing places more emphasis on the process that writers go through in making up a text (Nunan, 1991: 87). Brown (2001: 335) states that in the product oriented approach, the focus was put on model compositions

that students would imitate. The essay was assessed on how well a student's final product measured up against a list of criteria that encompassed organisation, content, vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical considerations such as punctuation and spelling. With the PA students are allowed to manage their own composition by providing students the opportunity to think as they write (Brown, 2001: 336). That is, students' messages are communicated to the readers in a written form through the complex writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising and editing processes.

The following opinion is connected to what students have internalised and made their own. Brown (2001: 335) argues that the PA is of more assistance to students in language learning because students are the creators of language. "They need to focus on content and message and their own intrinsic motives are valued" (Ibid). This means that language skills are best learned when learners have their own intrinsic motivation that is, doing something because it is interesting and enjoyable or at least an expression of one's values and identity, rather than doing it because one feels controlled by internal or external forces. Raimes (1983: 10; Syarofi, Kuswahono, & Rizky, 2018: 352) indicate that in the PA, students do not compose their essays on a given topic in a limited time and submit their essays. Rather, they have an opportunity to explore a topic through writing. Further, through the PA, educators find that the writing process is a process of discovery for the students: a discovery of new ideas and new language forms to express those ideas. In addition, the approach is supportive of students because the approach focuses more on the various authentic classroom activities. This is believed to promote the development of skilled language use and a number of interesting classroom techniques, including conferencing (bringing learners together for different reasons, for example, for advice, assessment, discussion and so on), have emerged from the PA to writing (Nunan, 1991: 86).

Topic selection is another area which has to be looked at. Students could be asked to write on a self-selected topic which is another way of making them participate in the classroom activities, it is also a key factor in process writing approach. Topic selection is also of greater significance for improving their performance. Personal experience has proven that this aspect is taken seriously in Limpopo schools because it had been realised how crucial topic selection is when one is facing a composition task. Practising this part of the process writing approach before the examinations, allows students to write on any topic of their choice. In this case they should perform well because they

would have chosen a topic they are interested in. In the examination, for the sake of fairness, learners are usually provided with a list of essay topics to choose from. This has the advantage of allowing the learners to be able to choose a topic of their interest (Bonyadi & Zeinalpur 2014: 391). As Listyani (2018: 175) argues, if learners have an option of choosing from a list of topics, they will definitely choose a topic that interests them and fits their assignment. Process writing entails writing on a topic of one's own interest largely because learning must be interesting for learners for them to be motivated to learn. Bonyadi and Zeinalpur (2014: 389) argue that a teacher- assigned topic limits students' thinking and hinders whatever comes to their mind. In contrast to the teacher selected topic, learners' self-selected topic allows them to think freely and experience a sense of independent classroom atmosphere (Ibid).

The literature shows widespread agreement among scholars about the positive effects of the PA to writing. Imelda, Cahyono and Astuti (2019: 326) assert that the strategy of PA to writing is able to improve the learners' writing skills. Additionally, Muncie (2002) conducted a study which aimed at determining whether the PA to writing has an effect on learners' vocabulary development at a Japanese University. The outcomes of this study indicated that there was a positive correlation between vocabulary improvement and writing as a PA. In addition, Ho (2006) scrutinised two hundred upper and lower primary school learners to discover the extent to which process writing helps to develop writing skills. The results indicated that PA to writing is beneficial for both upper and lower level learners. Thus, the PA to writing is very useful for improving writing skills and nurturing positive attitudes and confidence towards writing. Moreover, Liao (2016), iexamined sixty three research participants' grammatical performance in essays, learner strategies and perception, and factors mediating learning in a process writing approach programme. The outcomes indicated that intervention through the PA appeared to mediate writing and that the repetition of the PA stages leads to a good quality final product.

Many studies seem to be in favour of the process writing approach and strong arguments and evidence have been provided to show its usefulness (Brown, 2001; Bayat, 2014; Hyland, 2003; Hedge, 2005; Urquhart & McIver, 2005; White & Arndt, 1991). Therefore, it can be concluded that there could be substantial positive effects on composition achievements in the traditional learning environment resulting from the

use of process based instruction, to the teaching and learning writing and/or specifically to the actual process of text composition. Specifically speaking, writing instruction based on the PA increases success in terms of content, organisation, vocabulary, sentence construction, discourse markers and mechanics of writing. In other words, in classrooms where the PA to writing is implemented, students' knowledge on the content matter should improve; they are likely to have good organisation skills encompassing the usage of punctuation and capitalisation, construction of better paragraphs and essay development techniques and methods; their usage of discourse markers may be more efficient, as well as appropriate usage of vocabulary; the construction of sentences and the mechanics of writing related skills are likely to improve. There is indeed no faultless approach but a better one among the available ones has to be identified. In this case the PA should be fully acknowledged, in addition to its limitations, until a better approach is developed.

2.7 CRITICISMS OF THE PA

Even though there are numerous studies in favour of process writing, some studies have found it objectively inadequate or having no contribution to development of writing skills. For instance, Graham and Sandmel (2011), with the purpose to see whether the PA to writing helps to develop students' writing skills and achievement, reviewed twenty-nine (29) quasi-experimental and experimental studies conducted on different school grades. They revealed that PA did not have any important effect on students' writing skills and motivation. Similarly, Barnhisel et al. (2012) conducted a research study on first entering college students at the University of Duquesne in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They also found that the PA has no significant effect on students' writing.

Ever since ESL writing started to receive more attention in the 1980s, a large number of studies from different areas of study such as psychology, pedagogy, sociology and so on were conducted. Subsequently, a large number of proposals and criticisms emerged.

It goes without saying that there is no such thing as a faultless approach or theory, and the process writing approach is no exception. The following are some representative and noteworthy opinions against the PA to writing.

The core concern that people have with the PA is that it pays less attention to grammar and structure and puts little importance on the final products. Reid (2001: 29), however, expounds on this phenomenon as follows:

An untrue dichotomy between product and process classrooms in the L2 pedagogy was developed in the 1980s. Students were inspired to make use of their internal resources and individuality by the process teachers. In favour of fluency, they neglected accuracy. It was argued that in contrast to advocates of process writing product oriented teachers concentrate simply on appropriate rhetorical discourse, accuracy and linguistic patterns while rejecting writing processes.

It is reasonable to argue that EFL and ESL students need to acquire fluency together with accuracy, to develop their language skills and become good conversationalists in English. Consequently, accuracy on its own is not something that should be ignored in language learning. By disregarding accuracy or grammatical elements the PA does not serve the learners' purpose. Formal, accurate writing is required in the corporate world.

There are other numerous concerns between those who are involved in EFL and ESL writing. Leki (1992: 88), for example, specifies three (3) core limitations:Firstly, specific training on teaching writing is received by only few teachers, secondly, traditional views are not likely to be abandoned by many ESL teachers, and third, the PA to writing is considered by both NNS and NES researchers and teachers to focus too insistently on personal experience. Adding to these core concerns, Horowits (1986) states, PA is thought to be unrealistic because a great deal of emphasis is put on multiple drafts which may cause EFL and ESL students to be unsuccessful in their academic examinations with their single draft restrictions. Criticism like this should not be ignored. Nevertheless, it can be resolved by ESL teachers and researchers' creativity as well as flexibility. As many academic books have adopted the PA, it has been found to be fairly advantageous for both ESL learners and teachers. Most of these criticisms are the results of overcrowded classrooms as they hinder full engagement between a learner and teacher.

2.8 PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE WRITING CLASSROOM

Overcrowded classrooms are a major problem in writing classes (Mustafa et al. 2014: 178; Opoku-Asare et al., 2014: 128.) Process writing by nature requires close attention to the written work by both learner and teacher, hence a low teacher-learner ratio will be ideal. The maximum recommended learner-educator ratio for South African primary schools is 40:1 and for secondary schools 35:1 (Motshekga, 2012).This shows that implementing this approach in overcrowded classrooms will not be easy. In South Africa (SA), overcrowded classrooms are a major problem in some schools, particularly rural government schools. This is evident in a memorandum from the organisation, Equal Education (EE), which was handed over at parliament in Cape Town (CT) and the Department of Education (DoE) in Pretoria in 2003 in which overcrowded classrooms where criticised. The memorandum states that it is impossible to learn and teach when there are 130 learners in a classroom and teachers have experienced this (Davis, 2013).

Teaching in overcrowded classrooms is a huge challenge – it prevents a productive learning classroom where effective instruction and assessment strategies are important (Marais, 2016: 2). In this case, teachers are confined to the 'chalk and talk' instruction method (Opoku-Asare et al., 2014: 128.) This is mostly practised in South African schools, particularly overcrowded rural schools. For example, some schools in the Eastern Cape (EC) have more than 130 learners squeezed into a classroom and the teachers are expected to present lessons with their backs pressed up against the chalkboard (Guardian African Network, 2013). One can imagine the difficulty and sheer impossibility when the teacher is supposed to give learners corrective feedback or assess them or when learners must submit several drafts before the final product when writing an essay or any piece of writing.

Mustafa et al. (2014: 178) point out that large numbers of learners in one classroom are an obstruction to classroom management in general and classroom discipline specifically. Thus, large classrooms tend to be noisier, prone to pushing, crowding and hitting to an extent that it can impact negatively on classroom discipline. Teaching writing in Limpopo classrooms will therefore also not be easy due to the large number of learners in classrooms. There are several drawbacks to overcrowded classrooms

and Limpopo schools are bound to suffer those drawbacks due to many schools in the province having to cope with overcrowded classrooms.

Time, on the other hand, is another factor which hinders the success in overcrowded writing classrooms. According to Mustafa et. al (2014: 178), and Imtiaz (2014: 251), teachers who face the task of teaching in overcrowded classrooms dedicate less time to integrated reading, instruction and writing tasks, largely because instruction time is frequently wasted by checking attendance lists, administrative tasks and also managing behaviour, thus leaving less time for instruction. This shows that overcrowded classrooms have a major negative impact in the writing classroom - on both teachers and learners. Writing classes will not be easy and enjoyable under the above mentioned conditions which often happen in South African schools, particularly rural government schools.

Although classroom size (the case of overcrowded classrooms) is seen as another factor which hinders students achievement, Meeks et al. (2014: 127) list other factors with the potential to impact students achievement, namely: curriculum, investment in education, compulsory instruction time, teacher salary, assessment programmes, and minimum academic requirements for admission into teacher education programmes.

Writing classes will not be easy and enjoyable under the above mentioned conditions which are common in South African schools, particularly rural government schools. My view is that overcrowded classrooms are what hinders success in writing classrooms the most.

2.9 CURRENT SITUATIONS IN ESL AND EFL WRITING CLASSES

Currently, the PA has been generally accepted, and has been extensively used, even though many researchers are still doubtful of its effectiveness. Hyland (2003: 22) states that in spite of substantial research into the writing process, a comprehensive knowledge of how students learn to write and how they go about writing a task is still incomplete. It is also asserted that it also remains undefined whether an exclusive emphasis on psychological factors in writing will provide the whole picture, either pedagogically or theoretically (ibid). Consequently, it is clear that more research should be done in order to offer learners improved teaching. In reality, lessons cannot be delayed until a faultless approach becomes available. Teachers should in the

meantime attempt to find a fairly balanced and eclectic approach to writing which can stimulate the students and ultimately improve their language abilities. In academia, a diversity of writing textbooks present the process writing approach and many writing educators use the PA to a varying degree. They implement this approach where reasonably practicable, depending on, but not limited to, the number of learners in a classroom, availability of resources, teacher experience and also the effort which the teachers put in their writing classroom. Teaching writing can be quite demanding. With the PA, the advantage is that it is possible to combine approaches and incorporate other language skills. That is why each experience has to be considered when assigning someone to teach writing. There are several aspects that may be considered by teachers in order to make the writing classrooms more effective, these include, but are not limited to the following: the educational needs of the student or what is necessary for them and the proficiency of each student. To exemplify, some students may need to learn how to organise their thoughts, focus on sentence-level practice or to organise opinions logically. Leki (1992: 103) refers to his study conducted with ESL students and points out that even if students did have a fairly good grasp of grammar, and even if students were able to do grammar-based guided compositions, they still produced unusual, non-English sounding texts when requested to write more creatively. Grammatical accuracy including sentence structure, spelling and punctuation does not seem to be enough to master the writing ability. Vocabulary or sentence level instruction in particular, generally tends to be given by the teachers to those who have low level of confidence and ability.

2.10 DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS OF THE WRITING PROCESS: A GUIDE TO PROCESS WRITING

Hedge (2005:52) provides a good guide on the process writing stages. Understanding these stages will enable the writer to better engage in the writing process. Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG) produced by the national DoE should be used to better understand how best one can engage in the writing process. This is a teacher's guide which is meant to guide teachers through the learning objectives for written work. This document touches on the stages of the writing process and on how they should be dealt with. It is essential that each writing teacher has it.

2.10.1 Prewriting

Learners brainstorm to generate ideas for writing. They use charts, story webs and graphic organisers to help develop a word list for writing, decide the type of writing, audience and determine the purpose for writing. This is actually planning. Learners use ideas and formulate a few paragraphs by putting related ideas together on their own mind map (Department of Education 2007:41). This is the stage during which Murray (2004:41) encourages the writer to just write, regardless of mistakes, to lose control and see what happens.

2.10.2 Rough draft

Learners put their ideas on paper. At this time, they write without major attention to punctuation, grammar, or even neatness. Some teachers may refer to this as a rough draft. The purpose of the rough draft is for the students to focus on their ideas and get them on paper without the distraction or fear of making grammar, punctuation, capitalisation, or paragraph structure mistakes.

2.10.3 Peer editing

Classmates share their rough drafts and make suggestions to each other for improvement. They help each other understand the story by asking who, what, when, where, why and how questions. They look for better words to express ideas and discuss among themselves how to make the writing clearer.

2.10.4 Revising

The learners use the suggestions and recommendations from classmates to make additions or clarify details. Learners try to improve their writing on their own. The teacher steps in at this stage and gives feedback where needed.

2.10.5 Editing

Learners work with the teacher and/or peers to correct all mistakes in grammar and spelling.

2.10.6 Final draft

Learners produce a copy of their writing with all corrections made from the editing stage and then discuss this final draft with the educator. The educator offers the last suggestions for improvement at this point.

2.10.7 Publishing

This is the final stage of PA to writing. Learners publish their writing by making a copy in their neatest handwriting or using a word processor. This is a time for students to celebrate. They may share their pieces with the class during story time, make a class book or a personal portfolio, or send their work to local newspapers or learners' magazines for publication or even to submit it if is an assignment.

The contexts of the above research studies differ from that of Limpopo schools, largely because many researchers have studied the process writing approach in the context of English as a home language. Therefore, the current study may produce similar findings or slightly different results because of a different teaching and learning context.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented and discussed literature on PA to writing through nine (9) different themes, beginning with the theoretical framework to the description of PA stages. What was discussed above gives an idea of different spheres of PA to writing.

The next chaper focuses on research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study adopted an exploratory design within a qualitative research approach. The appropriateness of qualitative research approach for this study is centred on the argument that qualitative research aims at explaining and clarifying complex phenomenon (cf Patton, 2002: 42). Writing is a complex phenomenon that needs to be discussed in detail in order to grasp its relevant meaning and the stages that must be followed when writing.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The primary goal of an exploratory research design is to gain a better understanding of an issue or situation (Cooper & Schindler, 2006: 23). Qualitative research has traditionally been regarded as an effective way of exploring new and uncharted territories (Dorney, 2007: 39). To balance this exploration, the learners were observed in writing while teachers and learners were interviewed about process writing (cf Richards, Ross, and Seedhouse, 2012 :308). In this study, two hours were spent on classroom observations in each school, about 15 minutes on individual interviews with teachers and about 10 minutes on group interviews with learners.

3.3 SAMPLING

Convenience sampling was employed in this study. Convenience sampling is described as a type of non-random or non-probability sampling where members of the target group that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy geographical proximity, accessibility, the willingness to participate, or availability at a given time, are involved for the purpose of the study (Dörnyei, 2007: 16).

Four schools in LP were the research area; two rural and two peri-urban schools. One Grade 12 classroom from each of the four schools formed the sample of this study. The schools were chosen according to accessibility and convenience. The sample for this study therefore consisted of 4 classes of Grade 12 learners and their teachers, from the 4 selected schools.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected from 2 rural and 2 peri-urban schools as urban schools appeared reluctant to participate. Research instruments used to collect data were individual interviews, group interviews, observation checkilist and a document analysis rubric.

3.4.1 Instrument 1: Interviews

Interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research as it leads to interaction and allows for the researcher to establish an understanding of what is happening in an individual's life (Spradley, 2016: 72).

3.4.1.1 Semi structured interview with teachers

Semi-structured interviews were used to interview 4 teacher participants on process writing (see Appendix A). The 4 teacher participants were intervied during the third term at Class-Mothapo, Makgongwana, Mountainview and Ditlalemeso secondary schools and the interviews were recorded and the data transcribed.

3.4.1.2 Focus group interviews with learners

The semi structured interviews were used again to interview learners during the third term, in groups of five, at their perspective schools mentioned in 3.4.1.1 (see Appendix B). They were interviewed with the purpose of determining their knowledge of process writing, how they have been taught and how they apply it.

3.4.1.3 Instrument 2: Observation checklist

An observation checklist is a list of things that an observer looks at when observing a class (Jamshed, 2014: 87). The checklist was used as an instrument to assess the learners' essays for evidence of process writing stages, as stipulated in the CAPS document and in conjunction with one focus group interview made up of 5 learners at each school (Appendix C). The checklist shows the stages that need to be followed in process writing, such as, brainstorming, first draft, review, second draft and so on (CAPS, 2011: 10). Additional traces of process activities were noted in a note book.

3.4.1.4 Instrument 3: Document analysis rubric

Document analysis is a qualitative method of data collection and is an important research tool in its own right. It is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation

and the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Bowen, 2009). Five essays from each school were sampled systematically from alphabetically arranged classroom lists. The selected learners' essays were reviewed to evaluate if they resemble the application of process writing (See Appendix D).

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was employed to analyse data. Thematic analysis is a form of analysis in qualitative research which emphasises the identifying, recording and examining of themes as well as patterns within data (Holloway & Todres, 2003: 347). Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a six-step thematic analysis process of mainly identifying, analysing and reporting qualitative data using thematic analysis. The steps involve familiarising oneself with the data collected, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes as well as producing the report. The researcher used the following guidelines for the analysis of data from qualitative research interviews as suggested by Kvale (1983: 174).

- The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed.
- The researcher listened carefully to a tape recording while simultaneously reading the transcribed interview in order to verify the contents.
- The researcher then identifed themes from the transcriptions relevant to the study.
- Selected themes from all sources of data were identified and analysed.
- A process writing guide was also used to shed light on the stages of process writing as well as what is entailed in it.

3.6 QUALITY CRITERIA

The criteria used to assure quality for naturalistic inquiry in this study were credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These elements are commonly applied to assess transparency and trustworthiness of qualitative research (Guba, 1981: 78).

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to how one can establish certainty in the truth of the results of a specific investigation into the respondents with which and the context in which the

investigation was carried out (Guba, 1981:79). It is the extent to which the study represents the actual meanings of the research participants, not the figments of the researcher's imagination. In this study, various data-collection techniques were employed to ensure triangulation of data which helped to ensure credibility when analysing and cross-referencing collected data from multiple sources of data.

3.6.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings of one study can be practicable to other situations (Guba, 1981:79). The sampling and the data collection method used in this study permitted the decision of the extent to which the findings may be transferred to other individuals such as teachers and learners in a writing lesson in similar contexts such as Limpopo.

3.6.3 Dependability

Dependability denotes how one can determine whether the findings of an investigation would be consistently repeated if the investigation was repeated with the similar subjects, in similar context (Guba, 1981:80). In this study, dependability was ensured by compiling the raw data, data collection and analysis products. Additionally, the supervisor of the study was responsible for examining the data, clarifications and recommendations in order to confirm that they were supported by data.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which the results of an investigation are a function solely of the respondents and conditions of the investigation but not of the motivations, biases,perspectives, interests and so on, of the investigator or research study (Guba, 1981: 80). Classroom observation, analysis of learners' essays and use of voice recordings supported the semi-structured one-on-one in-depth interview sessions in which data were collected from the participants themselves. Triangulation of data collection techniques were used to enhance confirmability.

3.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant in the sense that it yields valuable information about the importance of process writing. The results of the study could stimulate both teachers and learners' minds about the significance of writing as a process which follows

relevant steps before arriving at the final product. The results of this study could be used as an additional reference by other investigators to conduct further research.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations in this study consisted of permission to conduct the study, confidentiality and anonymity, informed consent and aftercare of the participants.

3.8.1 Permission for the study

Before embarking on this study, the researcher obtained permission from the University of Limpopo Turfloop Research and Ethics Committee (TREC). The researcher also submitted a letter to the principals of Class-Mothapo, Makgongwana, Mountainview and Ditlalemeso secondary schools to ask for their permission to conduct the research at their schools.

3.8.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

The participants were assured of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity which were maintained throughout the study. The information provided by the participants was shared with only the supervisor. The participants were not mentioned by name; anything which would reveal their identity was not mentioned. They were addressed as learners or teachers. The selected schools were addressed as School A, B, C and/or D.

3.8.3 Informed consent

Participants were informed about the reasons for undertaking the study before interviews were conducted. They were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so. Participants were given consent letters to sign before engaging in interviews with the researcher.

3.8.4 Aftercare of the participants

Participants' rights were not infringed upon and they were not harmed in any way, either physically or psychologically.

The following chapter presents the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research design, the methodology, data collection and data analysis applied in this study. This chapter presents the findings obtained by means of the data collection instruments: one-on-one interviews with teachers of the four schools, focus group interviews with Grade 12 learners of the four schools, a checklist for recording classroom observations, and another checklist based on the principle of a process writing guide used to analyse the learners' written essays.

For the purpose of anonymity, the four selected schools are referred to as schools A, B, C and D. Teachers from these schools are referred to as Teacher W, Teacher X, Teacher Y and Teacher Z from School A, B, C, or D. For readability purposes, analysis and interpretations come immediately after presentation of the source of information, for instance, one-on-one interview with teachers is followed by its analysis and interpretations.

4.2 INTERVIEWS

4.2.1 One-on-one teacher's interview
Question 1: *Biographical information*

Teacher W from School A

The teacher from School A has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) Honours degree in Education. She has been teaching English for 17 years. She is currently teaching the following grades:

Table 4.1: Teacher W's teaching responsibilities

GRADE	SUBJECT	NO. OF LEARNERS
12	English	37
11a	English	81
11b	English	89

| 10 | Geography | 86 |
| | | TOTAL: 293 |

Teacher X from School B

The teacher from School B has the following teaching qualifications: Diploma in Education Management (DEM) and Secondary Teachers Diploma (STD). He has been teaching English for 20 years. He is currently tasked with the teaching of English the following classes in his school:

Table 4.2: Teacher X's teaching responsibilities

GRADE	SUBJECT	NO. OF LEARNERS
12	English	37
11a	English	65
11b	English	30
		TOTAL: 132

Teacher Y from School C

The teacher from School C is in possession of a BA Degree in Advanced Education (AE) and a Primary Teachers Diploma (PTD). He has been teaching English for 34 years. He teaches English in different grades as presented in the table below:

Table 4.3: Teacher Y's teaching responsibilities

GRADE	SUBJECT	NO. OF LEARNERS
12	English	36
11e	English	70
8d	English	71
		TOTAL: 177

Teacher Z from School D

The teacher from School D has a BA Higher Education Diploma (HED) and she has been teaching English for 15 years. She is currently tasked with teaching the following grades in her school:

Table 4.4: Teacher Z's teaching responsibilities

GRADE	SUBJECT	NO. OF LEARNERS
12a	English	64
12b	English	37
12c	English	69
8a	English	98
8b	English	96
		TOTAL: 364

Analysis of biographic information of the teachers

It is highlighted from the above information that these teachers vary regarding their qualifications, work experience and work responsibilities. The work load in terms of teaching different grades, modules, and number of learners in their classrooms is

another element that differentiate teachers. These factors could affect the teaching and practicability of applying PA in writing classrooms. For example, the teacher learner ratio could affect teachers' individual attention on their learners, which is one of the things that hinders full implementation of PA to writing in rural schools where classes are often large – more than 30 learners for one teacher. The above table shows that teachers are burdened with very large classes. This makes teaching writing difficult, if not almost impossible.

Question 2: Do your learners like writing?

Teacher W	Teacher X	Teacher Y	Teacher Z
No	No	No	Some

None of the teachers agreed that their learners liked writing. It is only teacher Z who claimed that some of her learners like writing. The other three teachers (W, X, Y) openly stated that learners do not like doing classroom writing activities. Teacher Z, in contrast to her response, mentioned that no one, including teachers, learners, tertiary students and lecturers like spending time doing essay writing activities in terms of PA. Hence Teacher Z stated that only some of the learners like doing school work.

Question 3: How do you go about choosing a topic for the learners? What are the considerations?

Teacher W.

Firstly, the teacher's considerations for topic selection were looked at. Teacher W stated stated that her considerations for composition topic selection are what was trending at that moment. These include current affairs, topics appropriate for the learners' age group, the extent to which learners can relate to the topic.

Teacher X

Teacher X argued that he takes into account the following when selecting a topic for the learners: current affairs, topics which learners can relate to, which is within their immediate environment, breaking news and social burning issues.

Teacher Y

Teacher Y's considerations for topic selection are stated below: things learners experience on daily basis, their level of understanding, and the easiness or toughness of the topic.

Teacher Z

Teacher Z responded that she does not choose essay topics for the learners. Essay topics are given by the English department in their school.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses of topic selection

Teacher W

Teacher W has stated some considerations in her process of topic selection, i.e. the extent to which learners can relate to the topic and learners' age group. In addition, she presented several topics for the learners to choose. This seems to be a strategy to come up with topics which can be of learners' interest as PA entails writing on a topic of one's own interest, largely because learning must be interesting for the learners to have more interest (Bonyadi & Zeinalpur, 2014: 389) (see Chapter 2, Section 2.6).

Teacher X

The way Teacher X selected topics for the learners is satisfactory. He selected from issues of current affairs, topics which learners can relate to, topics about things which are within their immediate environment, breaking news and/or burning social issues. Such topics encourage learners to want to write or engage in activities related to topics they are interested in. This is in line with Bonyadi and Zeinalpur (2014: 391) as they maintain that a good self-selected topic is another way to make learners participate in the classroom activities (see Chapter 2, Section 2.6 on advantages of PA).

Teacher Y

Topic selection by the teacher for learners is very helpful. The considerations for topic selection can help to increase awareness of the topic to learners. For instance, this teacher's considerations for topic selection are things learners experience on daily

basis, their intellectual levels and easiness or toughness of the topic. These considerations are likely to help learners to brainstorm with less or no difficulties.

Teacher Z

The considerations of topic selection by Teacher W were not stated as she does not construct topics by herself, rather they are given by the English department in the school.

Apart from teacher Z who has no authority in topic selection, the consideration of topic selection by the other three teachers is satisfactory. These teachers' considerations could make learners more interested in writing about topics assigned based on the above mentioned teachers' considerations, i.e. writing about what is trending, things happening around our immediate environment and so on.

Question 4: How do you present assignment topics to your learners in a classroom?

Teacher W

The teacher stated that she conforms to the chalk and chalkboard method when presenting essay topics to learners in a classroom. As she explained, several topics are presented to the learners for them to choose and each topic is interpreted for them with the purpose of helping them to brainstorm. Learners are then given a chance to write.

Teacher X

When it comes to the presentation of topics in a classroom, the teacher X argued that he familiarises learners with the topic through discussion and then outlines the format of the essay. He maintained that he does not give learners information in preparation for writing. The responsibility lies with a learner to go to search for relevant information and come up with an effective piece of writing.

Teacher Y

This teacher responded that he provides learners with a list of essay topics in a classroom before learners engage in writing. In this case, learners have an opportunity to choose from a list of proposed and pre-discussed topics to write about.

Teacher Z

This teacher argued that due to the difference in learners' intellectual level, topics are interpreted and discussed with the learners. She further stated that she also used the learners' mother tongue for better clarification when discussing essay topics with the learners.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses on presentation of topic to the learners

Teacher W

Brainstorming is crucial, as to start writing is what stops most people progressing. The presentation and discussion of the topics by this teacher is likely to encourage learners to brainstorm. The interview with this teacher highlighted the role of this teacher helping learners to brainstorm – an important stage in assisting learners to write a good essay.

Teacher X

This teacher gives learners an open, more flexible choice by giving learners a list of essay topics to choose from. This is a good pre-writing practice implementation. The discussion of the proposed topics by the teacher with the learners allows familiarisation with the topics, which could help learners to select a topic they understand and feel they can write about.

Teacher Y

Proper presentation of topics developed with the above mentioned consideration further increases learners' comprehension of the proposed topics. This teacher gives learners an opportunity to choose one topic out of several presented and pre-discussed topics. Teacher-assigned topics limit learners' thinking and "prevents whatever comes to their mind" (see Bonyadi & Zeinalpur 2014 in Chapter 2, Section 2.6 on advantages of the PA). In the case on this teacher, presentation of several topics to the learners will allow a flexible choice of one topic from the list rather than to just be assigned one topic.

Teacher Z

This teacher's presentation of the topic is satisfactory as she stated to go an extra mile to interpret and discuss the proposed topic in the learners' mother tongue for more clarity as learners' proficiency in English differ. This kind of intervention through the PA appeared to try assist learners with their writng (see Liao, 2016 on chapter 2, Section 2.6 Advantages of the PA). The process of interpreting the topic to the learners in their mother tongue should help learners who are intellectually disadvantaged to understand the topic more clearly.

All of the four teachers responded that they present a number of topics for the learners to choose from. There is a more flexible choice as learners are able to choose topics of their interest. All respondent teachers had pre-discussed the topics with the learners which could enable learners to easily brainstorm. Further, the topics are pre-discussed with the learners which could enable learners to easily brainstorm. It is only teacher Z who goes the extra mile by interpreting the topics in the learners' mother tongue for better clarification, in particular to those who are disadvantaged in the English language. An overall presentation of topics to learners by these teachers is satisfactory and complies with the PA principles that emphasises discussion (Pre-writing).

Question 5: How do you go about determining how long an assignment (essay) should take to be completed? What are the considerations?

Teacher W

Looking at the time allocated to complete an essay, this teacher's time allocation was based on the marks allocated in an essay. In this case she argued that she normally gives 45 minutes for an essay allocated 50 marks.

Teacher X

This teacher maintained that there are pre-set guidelines for time allocation to complete a piece of writing. Based on these guidelines, time to hand over the final product was determined in relation to number of words of an essay.

Teacher Y

The teacher responded that the duration is determined by the examiners for the control tasks such as tests and examinations. When the determination of duration is in his hands, he gives learners the whole weekend to complete their essays because the longer the duration, the better the results.

Teacher Z

The teacher argued that in formal assessments like tests and examinations, some learners become victims of time limit because they are restricted by the allocated time, a factor over which teachers have no control. With essay topics given as an assignment or as a homework, time can be negotiated with learners, taking into account other school work they already have.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses on time allocation considerations

Teacher W

Practically speaking, the PA to writing needs enough time. Raimes (1983: 10) supported this view when arguing that in process writing, it is unlikely that learners compose their essays on a given topic in a limited time (see Chapter 2, Section 2.6 on advantages of process writing approach). The teacher stated that the duration to complete an essay is determined in relation to marks allocated, giving the example of 45 minutes for an essay allocated 50 marks. This is not enough for an effective final essay. There should be enough time which can enable learners to draft, re-draft if needs be, revise the contents of their drafts, edit and proofread their draft before writing the final product.

Teacher X

Time allocated to complete a given task is also important in a writing process. From the interview with this teacher and in terms of the process writing, it was revealed that time allocated to learners is not enough since a maximum of two hours to complete a two page assay was argued to be the ideal.

Teacher Y

A time limit to submit a final product is important. The longertime allocated to complete an essay, the better the results. Writing through using the PA entails a recursive participation of the writing activities (see Hedge 2005 on Chapter 2, Section 2.2 on theoretical framework). As mentioned above in the presentation of data under Teacher Y, it is interesting that he gives essay topics for the learners on Friday to complete writing throughout weekend, thus enough time is given. On the contrary, during controlled tasks the teachers have no control over the duration. This becomes a slight problem as limited time and the PA to writing is a contradiction.

Teacher Z

The teacher is well aware that writing through PA requires enough time as she argued that in formal assessments (tests and examination) some learners become victims of time constraints. Her claim that she gives learners essay topics as a home activity reflects a sound awareness of the PA to writing.

On the whole, Teacher W and X stated their considerations for essay deadlines. Duration was determined in relation to the marks allocation and also in relation to the number of words. The other two teachers, Yand Z stated that they do not have control over duration determination. Yet, it is revealed that a fixed duration to submit the final product in controlled assessments restricts learners to practise some of the writing processes such as producing drafts and peer-reviewing. Thus, in a formal assessment setting, it will only be fair if learners write and assessed with the same scale - time. Learners' knowledge should be tested within a specific given period of time. Besides the researcher's opinion, duration of time given to learners in a formal setting does not reflect a good application of PA to writing even though some teachers maintained its implementation by giving learners essay topics as weekend home activity.

Question 6: Questions of teachers' role in terms of PA to writing 'intervention'

Are the learners allowed to help each other in the process of essay writing? In what way?

Do you have any role to play? What is it?

How often do you intervene?

Teacher W

During the process of writing the teacher stated that she had no role to play as intervention could disturb the learners. Neither were the learners allowed to help each other in the process of writing.

Teacher X

This teacher stated that he had a role to play only if the writing was controlled, that is writing in a classroom, not as a home activity. His role was to maintain order and make sure that there were no disruptions in the classroom. This included ensuring that no learner was copying or helping others as classroom activities were controlled and every learner was on their own. CAPS (2011: 14) allows interference from peers or the teacher, but not in controlled assessments like tests and examinations. The teacher further argues that learners helping one another would result in similar work submission which is not allowed.

Teacher Y

The teacher argued that his role in a writing classroom was to make rounds to check if the learners were on the right track and gave guidance were possible and/or needed. Learners themselves were not allowed to help each other during the writing process except before the writing where discussion was allowed. The teacher said that in some instances, essay topics were given to the learners on Fridays to be completed throughout the weekend and submitted in classroom the following week. This is where group discussions were encouraged. He maintained that the assignments given to the learners as home activities were good and better than the ones written as class activities because learners had enough time to do research and collaborate to exchange information and ideas.

Teacher Z

The teacher replied that during the writing process, she did not intervene except when a learners raised a hand to ask a question. Her main role was to keep order and observe if learners were truly writing. Even learners themselves were not allowed to help each other in a formal writing task. On the other hand, they were encouraged to

help each other when tasked with informal writing as that would allow exchange of ideas.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses on teacher's role in terms of PA to writing

Teacher W

When learners are engaged in the process of writing, this teacher's role was to invigilate. The responsibility then lay with learners to call the teacher with questions if they needed clarity on something. No drafts were requested by the teacher due to a large number of learners in a classroom and the work load that the teacher had - taking into account that this teacher was not teaching one English classroom of 37 learners but also the other grades as presented in the table above (Table 4.1), hence they also had mark submission deadlines.

Teacher X

It was emphasised that when learners were engaging in the writing process, the teacher's role became minimal and optional. His main role was to maintain order in a classroom and check that no one was helping another in any other way as helping each other could result in submission of similar work which is not allowed. The prohibition to help each other hinders full implementation of process writing approach largely because sharing ideas among learners, peer editing and peer review are of paramount important in PA to writing, yet they were not allowed by Teacher X of School B. Hedge (2005: 53) underlined the importance of these stages as classmates share their rough drafts and make suggestions for each other for their improvement (see Chapter 2, Section 2.10 on description of the steps of the writing process). Thus, learners would then use the suggestions and recommendations from classmates to make additions or clarify details.

Teacher Y

Like teacher W and X, this teacher's role in the writing lesson ended with the presentation of the topics in a classroom. The only thing left for him was to make rounds in a classroom to check if learners were writing and no one was copying or helping another learner. This hinders the implementation of other process writing

activities that need involvements of the more capable peers such as peer editing and revising. Discussion among learners in the prewriting stage and peer editing is an important element (see Chapter 2, Section 2.10. on the description of the steps of the writing process). CAPS (2011: 67), on the other hand does not obligate teachers to practise all of the processes of the writing activity on every occasion. In formal tests and examinations, activities that require interference such as peer-editing and corrective feedback are prohibited as these kind of assessments are done under controlled conditions and they require moderation for quality assurance (ibid). Teacher Y seemed to implement PA in terms of CAPS document.

Teacher Z

When learners start to write, the role of this teacher s more like that of an invigilator because her presence in the classroom was to come to the aid of those who raised up their hands for clarification requests. Furthermore, learners were not allowed to help one another in any manner. This goes against the principles of the PA to writing that emphasises teacher feedback and intervention of peers. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011: 67) does not allow intervention from peers and/or teachers in formal tasks but intervention is allowed on informal tasks as a preparation for formal tasks. On the other hand, the encouragement for learners to help each other during informal task resembles good application of PA by this teacher, that is, allowing interaction to enhance learning, comprehension as well as exchange of ideas (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2 Theoretical Framework: Some theoretical principles to be applied in classrooms).

In a nutshell, the three question presented and analysed above as question 6 asked the question of intervention to mediation writing, it includes assistance from peers in the form of peer-review, peer editing and also assistance from a teacher in the form of corrective feedback. All of the interviewed teacher's main roles in the writing classrooms were to invigilate in order to maintain order and to ensure that no one was copying or helping others as this could lead to submission of similar work. This practise hinders implementation of process writing approach, i.e. peer-review. It could therefore be argued that PA to writing in not applicable in formal assessments, also known as controlled assessments.

Question 7: What guides you in your teacher of writing?

Teacher W

The teacher was asked what guided her in teaching of writing and she stated that she made use of textbooks and marking criteria.

Teacher X

The teacher argued that he made use of different guides and liaised with teachers within his school and from other school in preparation of self-constructed teaching material, which would cater for the learners' needs, taking into account their environment, their potential, and age group.

Teacher Y

This teacher maintained that he made use of the prescribed textbook.

Teacher Z

The teacher stated that they are given prescribed textbooks and manuals by the head of the department on what and how to teach. She further stated that the internet was used for additional material.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses on material used to teach writing.

Teacher W

The use of different books in her teaching of writing might be considered enough material for teaching writing.

Teacher X

Teacher X is on top of the list. Resources he used in his writing classrooms are likely to be good largely because he also liaised with other teachers to share and/or exchange material. Synergy is power.

Teacher Y

The response of this teacher implied that he had insufficient material to rely on rather than just relying on a prescribed textbook.

Teacher Z

The teacher's response indicated that she had adequate material to rely on. The use of textbooks, manuals and internet sounds to be enough as sources of information.

Despite teacher Y's lack of materials, other teachers seemed to have enough material to consult when preparing what and how to teach. Teacher Y seemed to have relied solely on prescribed textbooks which did not seem to be enough in terms of information provision.

Question 8: Questions to determine teachers' satisfaction

Do your learners perform to your satisfaction?

How do you feel about the way you tackle writing in your classroom?

Teacher W

With the use of the material stated above in question 7, the teacher maintained that most of her learners performed to her satisfaction and she did not feel bad with the way she dealt with writing in her classroom.

Teacher X

The teacher was satisfied with the way he tackled writing with the learners as he argued that most of the learners performed to his satisfaction.

Teacher Y

This teacher stated that he was not satisfied with the performance of the learners. He argued that in his Grade 12 class he only had 3 learners who he knew would do best; others would have to be guided throughout. He further stated that in some cases, learners who did not perform well were made to re-write their essays. He concluded that he was still battling in his teaching, particularly with writing lessons.

Teacher Z

This teacher responded that she was satisfied with the performance of the learners even though there will always be a group of the best and those who lag behind due to a lack of cognitive skills and difference in life experience. Even when there was a group did not perform well, she argued that she did not doubt the way she dealt with writing in a classroom.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses about their level of satisfaction to the question on how they deal with writing and learners performance.

Teacher W

Although this teacher was worried about grammar errors and mistakes in learners' writing, she was satisfied with the way she dealt with writing in her classroom.

Teacher X

This teacher was more confident and highly satisfied with the performance of his learners.

Teacher Y

This teacher was battling to get learners on the right track. He seemed to be waiting for a good approach to writing as he maintained that he would change the way he dealt with writing if there was an approach which could best help his learners. In reality, curriculae cannot be delayed until a perfect method becomes available. Educators must attempt to find more balanced and diverse methods which can stimulate the learners, and ultimately improve their language abilities. Various sources have to be consulted by this teacher for better results.

Teacher Z

The teacher was satisfied with the performance of the learners. She was also confident about the way she deals with writing.

Besides teacher Y, all the other teachers responded that they were satisfied with learners' performance and that they were not doubtful about the way they tackled writing in their classrooms.

Question 9: Would you like to teach writing in any other way than you do? Why?

Teacher W

This teacher was mostly concerned about grammar errors and mistakes in learners' writing and argued that she could change the way she dealt with writing only if there was an approach to writing which put more emphasis on grammar as it was what troubled her learners mostly.

Teacher X

On this question, the teacher confidently said yes and argued that he was flexible in his teaching and he would adapt to any approach where reasonably practicable. He mentioned that he did not have a favourite approach to writing. He made use of different methods as each and every method has its own advantages and drawbacks. He argued that what can work for some learners might not work for others due to geographic location and availability of resources.

Teacher Y

This teacher stated that if there was an approach which could best help his learners, he would definitely implement it. He did not mentioned the areas which his learners were struggling with.

Teacher Z

When the teacher asked if she would like to teach writing in any other way than she was currently teaching, she answered as follows:

"The one thing that makes teachers at townships and rural schools to lack behind is the working environment with no adequate resources. If we had the same working environment with adequate resources, including a proper teacher-learner ratio in a classroom, we would be able to meet the standards met by the urban teachers or schools. We have no libraries in our schools, no access to WI-FI, classrooms are overcrowded and we are tasked to teach many classrooms with many learners. If we had what urban teachers have, we would do much better. I wish I was working in town".

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses about willingness to change the way of teaching writing.

Teacher W

She complained that she could change the way she tackled writing in her classroom if there was a teaching method which put greater emphasis on grammar as it was what her learners had most difficulties with.

Teacher X

This teacher seemed not to be reluctant to change. The response that he could easily adapt to any useful approach highlighted the degree to which the teacher was flexible and willing to adapt to new things. Combining methods could help to create a specific method with less drawbacks as each method has drawbacks.

Teacher Y

Change requires initiatives. It is the path we can influence and it starts when we decide. He stated that if there was an approach which can best help his learners, he would definitely implement it. There seemed to be no initiatives for this teacher as determined by his responses to the other (above) questions. He was not ready to change waiting for something he was not sure of.

Teacher Z

This teacher was willing to change, but not in terms of approaching teaching writing but changing in terms of working environment, as she complained that the availability of resources including proximity of the library, internet access, teacher-learner ratio (the case of overcrowded classrooms, see chapter 2, Section 2.8 on problems affecting the writing classrooms) and the environment in general are what differentiate the quality of results between rural and urban schools. She personally responded "I wish I was working in town".

In cutting to the chase, people are not the same and they perceive things differently. Even in case of these four teachers, the extent to which they were willing to change was different. Teacher W was willing to change for the approach that emphasises grammar as was the area which her learners were struggling with. Teacher X was ready to opt for anything that emerged which could be helpful to his learners. With the PA, it is possible to combine different approaches to cater for learners' needs (see Chapter 2, Section 2.9 current situations in ESL and EFL writing classes. Teacher Y

seemed to be waiting or searching for the approach of his interest. Teacher Z was ready to change for a better working environment because of some reasons mentioned earlier.

Question 10: Questions to verify the knowledge of process writing approach.

Is there a specific approach you use in a writing classroom? Why?

Have you ever heard of PA to writing? What do you think of it as a way to teach writing?

Teacher W

Teacher W stated that she had never heard of process writing approach and that she used the chalkboard to write the topics and discuss them with the learners before they began to write. After being told by the researcher what process writing is, the teacher responded that the approach sounded fruitful but did not seem to be practicable because of the heavy workload that teachers had and the deadlines they were expected to meet. She also mentioned that it took a long time before learners complete their essays and that time was not on their side.

Teacher X

This teacher responded that he was well aware of process writing approach and most of the guides he used in his English teaching stressed writing as a process.

Teacher Y

To the last question, this teacher responded that there was no approach to writing included in their prescribed textbook. The teacher was then asked if he ever came across what was called PA to writing. Without being specific, he argued that as a teacher he came across many approaches.

Teacher Z

When the teacher was asked about the method she used in writing classrooms, she stressed that it was writing as a process and that she implemented it to the extent where it was applicable.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' responses about their knowledge of process writing approach

Teacher W

When concluding the interview, the teacher, who had 17 years experience of teaching English, a holder of BA Honours degree in Education responded that she had never heard of the process writing approach. After being told what the PA is, she responded that it sounded fruitful but not really practicable.

Teacher X

This teacher has demonstrated the knowledge of process writing approach and its binding constraints in practicalities such as availability of time, resources and workload faced by language teachers. With the drawback of each approach, the teacher used combined approaches to limit the drawbacks. This is advantageous because PA allows combination of other approaches (see Chapter 2, Section 2.9 on current situations in ESL and EFL writing classes). With 20 years of teaching, he seemed highly experienced in this field.

Teacher Y

This teacher had no approach that he made use of in his classroom as he argued that there was no approach to writing that was included in their prescribed textbook. Lastly, he stated that he was aware of the PA to writing, yet he failed to account for the principles of the process writing approach and he also failed to implement it.

Teacher Z

The teacher demonstrated an understanding of the PA and argued that she applied it where reasonably practicable.

Based on the interviews, Teacher W and Y seemed to have no idea about the PA to writing but some of the activities that they practised in their writing classroom reflected the PA implementation. On the other hand, the responses of Teacher X and Z indicated that they had a clear understanding of the PA to writing.

The basic principles of the constructivism approach to learning specify that the lesson planned in connection with the PA will incorporate numerous activities which require

learners to discover things by themselves, solve problems, cooperate with other learners by working in groups, have comprehensive discussions on given topics which are motivating, deductive in nature, relevant to learners (connected with their past experience), flexible, practical, and scaffolded (making use of what learners are already familiar with or they are given (Watts, 1994: 52)(see Chapter 2, Section 2.2 on some principles to be applied in classroom). These selected basic principles of constructivism approach form an integral part of PA to writing.

From the interviewed teachers of the four schools, it was revealed that the PA to writing was applied to the extent that teachers could cope with it, with constraints such as time limitations, heavy workloads and the examination rules that deny intervention. In controlled assessments, no rough drafts will be provided due to limited time given. The single draft which learners compose will be the final draft to be submitted. This leads to the prevention of peer editing as learners do not have an opportunity to share their rough drafts with their classmates to make suggestions to each other for improvements. Nunan (1991) points out that process writing allows the bringing together of learners for different reasons: for example, for advice, assessment, discussion and other reasons (see Chapter 2 Section 2.6 on advantages of PA). Peer editing is not allowed in a formal writing as the four teachers indicated. It would be better if learners used the suggestions and recommendations from peer editing by classmates to make additions or clarify details in a form of revising the peer edited draft. Hence, revision is not applicable or rather it happens individually such as in the case of self-editing.

It is not the will of teachers to disregard a recommended intervention in the controlled assessments. Neither do they wish to restrict learners in terms of time. It is CAPS (2011: 67) which states that every learner for himself or herself in controlled assessments. It is also CAPS that determines the length of essay that learners of a certain grade should meet depending on their NQF level, for example, 200-250 words long essay is proposed for Grade 12 learners (CAPS, 2011: 37). Mustafa et al. (2014: 178) argues that PA to writing requires constant teacher intervention to scaffold writing (see Chapter 2 Section 2.8 on problems affecting the writing classroom). In the context of this study it may appear that process writing is neglected (see White and Arndt 1991:2 in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, page 16). However, a teacher who teaches writing to over 200 learners may find it impossible to mark numerous versions of an essay

although he or she believes in the efficacy of process writing. Although this is in contrast with the rules of examination that every learner for himself or herself, that there should be no copying from or assisting of each other by learners, it is fair that when people are assessed, they have to be assessed according to the same scale, hence it is fair that learners' written essays which were completed in a controlled situation, within the same allocation of time, be marked using the same marking criteria.

4.2.2 Focus group learner interviews

After the teachers were individually interviewed, learners from each of the four schools were interviewed in focus groups of five learners per group.

Question 1: Do you enjoy writing classrooms?

Learners from School A

All six focus groups from School A responded that they liked writing.

Learners from School B

All learners agreed that they liked Paper 3 of English language which consists of composition and letters as they call it.

Learners from School C

Learners interviewed at School C agreed that they liked essay writing.

Learners from School D

The majority of Grade 12 learners from School D agreed that they liked composition writing.

Question 2: What is the first thing you do when given a topic to write about?

Learners from School A

They argued that the first thing they do when they are given an essay writing task was to understand the essay topic. They argued that they followed the topic analysis procedure which they were taught in the classroom to understand the topic.

Learners from School B

They mentioned that the first thing they dd when given a topic to write about was, according to the majority, to plan the writing whereas others maintained that they analysed the topic following a three step procedure which they were taught in the classroom.

Learners from School C

Learners from this school responded that they first attempted to understand the topic question as to what exactly are they were expected to do with a topic, i.e., whether to argue, describe, discuss, and so on. and they argued that this would help them to brainstorm.

Learners from School D

Their responses toward prewriting activities include finding new ideas about a given topic, mind-mapping and analysing the topic.

Question 3: How much time would you need to complete a two pages long essay?

Learners from School A

They maintained that they needed an estimated time (from 40 to 60 minutes) to complete an essay with an estimated scenario of two pages long.

Learners from School B

Their responses for this question ranged from 40 to 60 minutes.

Learners from C

Their responses ranged from 1hour 30 minutes to 2 hours.

Learners from School D

Their responses ranged from one hour to two hours.

Question 4: How much time do you think your teacher would allocate to complete a two pages essay?

Learners from School A

Within the same scenario of two pages long essay, they were asked how much time they thought their teacher would give them. Their responses ranged from 40 to 60 minutes.

Learners from School B

They responded that their teacher would allow them 40 to 60 minutes to complete the essay.

Learners from School C

They argued that their teacher would give them a maximum of an hour to complete an essay of the same estimated length. Two hours would be given when learners were writing in a double period session, as one period took an hour. They further stated that their teacher would give them several days when an essay was given as a home activity.

Learners from School D

They indicated that their teacher would give them one hour to two hours under the same scenario if an essay was written during school hours and several days if the activity was to be done at home.

Question 5: Where do you get material that help with essay writing?

Question 6: Do your schools have a library?

Question 7: Is there a library in your community?

Question 8: Can you access the internet when given a topic to write about? Where and how?

NB: These four questions asked about the availability of material to aid writing.

Learners from School A

Learners maintained that they made use of text books and internet as their sources of information. Some responded that they made use of library resources. The consultation of these resources was applicable if the task was completed out of school

as an assignment or home activity. Learners complained that they had no means of consultation on controlled tasks. They did not have an internet access or a library within the school premises or in their community. Learners complained that they had to travel long distances to access a library and internet café.

Learners from School B

Learners from this school stated that they accessed internet at their own costs as they did not have access to the WI-FI in their school, nor at the library. The had to travel a long distance to get to a library which is located in a far place.

Learners from School C

Learners responded that they made use of prescribed textbooks, the library and the internet for more information on a given topic. Although they mentioned that there was neither a library nor internet access in their school, the library is located a short distance from their school for a majority of them. They said that internet could be accessed at the library for free or with their personal gadgets at their own costs.

Learners from School D

Learners maintained that they made use of the library, the prescribed book and internet searches as their sources of information. For the majority of learners the community library is located right next to their school.The library was said to have plenty of material, including free Wi-Fi allocated for two hours per day for each individual who wanted to make use of it. Learners argued that they visited the library on weekends and after school before they went home. They added that sometimes teachers sent them to the library to search for information on a given topic during school hours. The proximity of the community library in their school was crucial largely because there was no library in their school yard nor an internet access.

Question 9: Summarise the activities that you go through when writing an essay, from the beginning to the end. That is, what is it that you do firstly, secondly and so forth?

Learners from School A

The configuration below was drawn:

- Understand the topic

- Mind-mapping
- Write a draft (on a separate page)
- Correct mistakes
- Write neatly

They mentioned that they got penalised for cancellations and spelling mistakes.

Learners from School B

The configuration below was drawn:

- Analyse and understand the topic,
- Plan the writing
- Write
- Check mistakes
- Re-write (cross the edited essay to show that is a rough draft)

Learners from School C

The configuration below was drawn:

- Brainstorm
- Write as much information as possible
- Remove unnecessary information
- Edit
- Re-write

Learners from School D

The configuration below was drawn:

- Brainstorming
- Draft
- Check if the content relates back to the topic and check mistakes
- Optional editing depending on the availability of allocated time
- Write the final essay copying from the draft

Analysis and interpretations for School A learners responses

Learners understand that writing has to be planned as they argued that their first writing activity was to analyse the topic using a topic analysis procedure that they were taught in the classroom. The response that they would need an estimated time of 40 to 60 minutes to complete an estimated two pages essay suggests that they were not fully applying PA to writing because their estimation was not enough for a great implementation of PA. Furthermore, the response that their teacher would give them the same duration for the given length indicated that learners could have never been exposed to full application of process writing. These learners were disadvantaged as they had no internet access and a library in their school or in their community. Internet could be accessed outside the school yard at learners own expenses. The drawn configuration resembles understanding of PA to writing, however, it was implemented to a lesser extent.

Analysis and interpretations of School B learners' responses

Learners from School B were aware of the pre-writing activity and some practised it through topic analysis table procedure to understand the topic and also to plan the writing through mind-mapping. The response of learners and the teacher of School A in terms of time allocated to complete a two pages length essay (40-60 minutes) were similar to School B learners' response. This estimated duration promotes a restriction in terms of time and thus hinders the application of other process writing stages. Learners of School B are disadvantaged like those of School A as they are in the same situation as those of School A in terms of resources- no library in their school premises nor in the living community of the learners. Their drawn configuration highlighted an understanding of PA to writing however, they implement it to a less extent.

Analysis and interpretations of School C learners' responses

Learners of this school understand the initial stage of process writing and they exercise it by firstly understanding the topic question, that is, discuss, describe, and so on, as well as brainstorming ideas. Raimes (1983: 10) indicates that in the PA, students do not compose their essays on a given topic in a limited time and submi their essays rather, after they had an opportunity to explore a topic through writing. These learners suggested an estimated time of 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours to complete an essay of

two pages in length which is enough compared to the time suggested by learners of School A and B. This does not mean 2 hours is enough to exercise all process writing stages but it is reasonable when writing is controlled (examinations and tests). Furthermore, the issue of being given several days for assignment topics as a home activity is a good practise of PA to writing.

These learners are advantaged in terms of study material. Although they do not have internet access nor a library within their school, a community library is located a short distance from their school where they can access books and internet for free. The configuration outlined by learners of School C resembled an understanding of process writing approach, hence it is implemented to a large extent.

Analysis and interpretations of School D learners' responses

These learners demonstrated a clear understanding and application of pre-writing activities. This includes topic analysis, research and brainstorming. A minimum of 1 hour to maximum of 2 hours as suggested by learners on what they thought the teachers would allocate to complete a two pages essay is reasonable when writing is controlled. Furthermore, the period of several days allocated to learners to complete essays as home activities resembled a good application of process writing. These learners benefited more in terms of study materials. They do not have a library and internet access at their school, but luckily they have a library right next to their school with plenty of material, including free Wi-Fi and computers. Hence, they implement PA to a large extent. Lastly, a table showing each school's application of the process writing stages and which indicates their understanding of the process writing approach is provided below.

Table 4.5: An outline of the activities learners go through when facing an essay writing task, as provided by learners when they were interviewed.

School A	School B	School C	School D	Process writing approach activities
Understand the topic	Analyse & understand the topic	Brainstorm	Brainstorm	Pre-writing
Mind-mapping	Plan the writing			
Write a draft	Write	Write as much information as possible	Draft	Rough draft
		Remove unnecessary information	Check if the content relates back to the topic and mistakes	Revising
Correct mistakes	Check mistakes	Edit	Optional editing depending on the availability of allocated time	Editing

Re-write neatly	Re-write (Cross the draft with a pencil)	Re-write	Write the final essay copying from the draft	Final draft

In general, the PA was applied and treated differently by the teachers investigated and their respective learners. The teachers' approaches to writing lessons were influenced by different reasons, such as, the school environment, experience, allocated writing time, among others. Table 4.5 shows that pre-writing as the first stage of PA to writing seemed to be applied by the interviewed learners of the four schools to a different extent. Learners of School C and D (peri-urban schools) demonstrated a better application of PA to writing than those of School A and B (rural schools). Secondly, the time allocation to complete an essay of about two pages differed between the four schools. Schools A and B allocated lesser time to complete a two page essay than Schools C and D. This does not resemble a good application of the PA to writing because writing according to this approach requires enough time, for example, pre-writing when one has to conduct research on a given topic and analysing the resources for accuracy, relevance and credibility. This is time consuming. In terms of resources, learners from schools A and B are more disadvantaged in terms of availability of resources with no libraries and internet access in their school nor in their community. Although learners from schools C and D have no internet access nor a library in their schools, these can, however, all be found nearby their schools in their local community where they live.

The spotted difference in terms of the implementation of process writing, and factors which can affect writing, can include the proposed time to complete the essays. The two peri-urban grade 12 teachers gave learners essay questions as home activities, which is a good application of the PA (see Chapter 2, Section 2.6 on advantages of the process writing approach). Again, the availability of resources which can aid the writing process pertaining to research, remains a problem in schools A and B.

4.3 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND LEARNERS' ESSAY ANALYSIS

This table is a summary of the results from the classroom observation checklists of the four schools' writing lessons and the evidence traced in learners essays.

Table 4.6 shows results of classroom observations per school

	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C	SCHOOL D
PRE-WRITING	Good brainstorming. Evidence shows the use of brainstorming through mind-mapping.	Good brainstorming. Evidence shows the use of brainstorming through mind-mapping.	Good brainstorming. Evidence shows the use of brainstorming through mind-mapping.	Good brainstorming. Evidence shows the use of brainstorming through mind-mapping.
DRAFTING	None of the learners attempted to draft before writing the final piece. They focused on one draft as their final product and most of them submitted long before the allocated time	None of the learners attempted to draft before writing the final piece. They focused on one draft as their final product and most of them submitted long before the allocated time	None of the learners attempted to draft before writing the final piece. They focused on one draft as their final product and most of them submitted long before the allocated time	Draft includes few ideas from the prewriting session.

REVISING	There was no time spent on revision and there were no changes made on learners' essays. Some ideas expressed in the prewriting stage are not covered in the body paragraphs	No evidence of revision. Some essays consisted of ill-formed paragraphs and sentences. The order of ideas does not flow well in some essays	Learners spent little to no time revising. Little to no changes were made to the piece based upon the class directions or learner's revising goal. Peer revision did not take place.	Learner revision shows adequate changes made to content and ideas in writing. Evidence shows that learners worked on a personal revising goal. Details were added to enhance writing.
EDITING	Few errors were made in spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. Appropriate paragraphs were used. learners spent ample time working on identifying	Frequent errors made in spelling, capitalisation, paragraphing, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. An attempt to correct these errors is evident in	Frequent errors made in spelling, capitalisation, paragraphing, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. An attempt to correct these errors is evident in	Few errors were made in spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. Appropriate paragraphs were used. learners spent ample time working on identifying and

		learners' essays.	learners' essays.	correcting editing errors
	and correcting editing errors.			
PARTICIPATION	The teacher came to the aid of those who asked for it	The teacher came to the aid of those who asked for it	One question asked by an individual is addressed to the whole class by the call of attention. A short discussion on topic selection took place before writing	Topics were interpreted for the learners and thereafter everyone was on their own
PUBLISHING OR FINAL SUBMISSION.	The final product was submitted on time and was easy to read. Some PA stages which were not practised affected the quality of the final product	The final product was submitted on time and fair to read. Disengagement with some of the process writing stages affected the quality of the final product	The final product was submitted on time and fair to read. Disengagement with some of the process writing stages affected the quality of the final product	The final product was submitted on time and fair to read. Disengagement with some of the process writing stages affected the quality of the final product

What learners stated in the focused group interview did not fully match what the researcher observed in the classrooms. Neither was there much similarity in the different schools' learners' written essays. There were also contradictions. For instance, only a few learners from School D attempted to revise their work, yet learners of all four schools claim that revising was one of the activities they partook in when writing. It seemed like learners knew that essay writing entailed drafting, editing and revising but did not necessarily apply this procedure. The more obvious reason why learners did not follow the writing processes could be limited time. By looking at the table that presents a configuration of the activities learners go through when writing (Table 4.5), one can tell that it resembles the PA, yet learners did not fully follow what they said they went through when writing. Their planning entailed only mind maps which, for some, did not match with the content. Secondly, they conformed to only one draft as the final one. There was little evidence of editing and revising in individual essays because learners' essays contained many errors and mistakes.

The comparison of learners' performance in four schools was made with the purpose of identifying which school applied the PA best and why this was so. The graph showing the comparison of learners performance per schools based on a decided upon scale is provided below the following marking rubric.
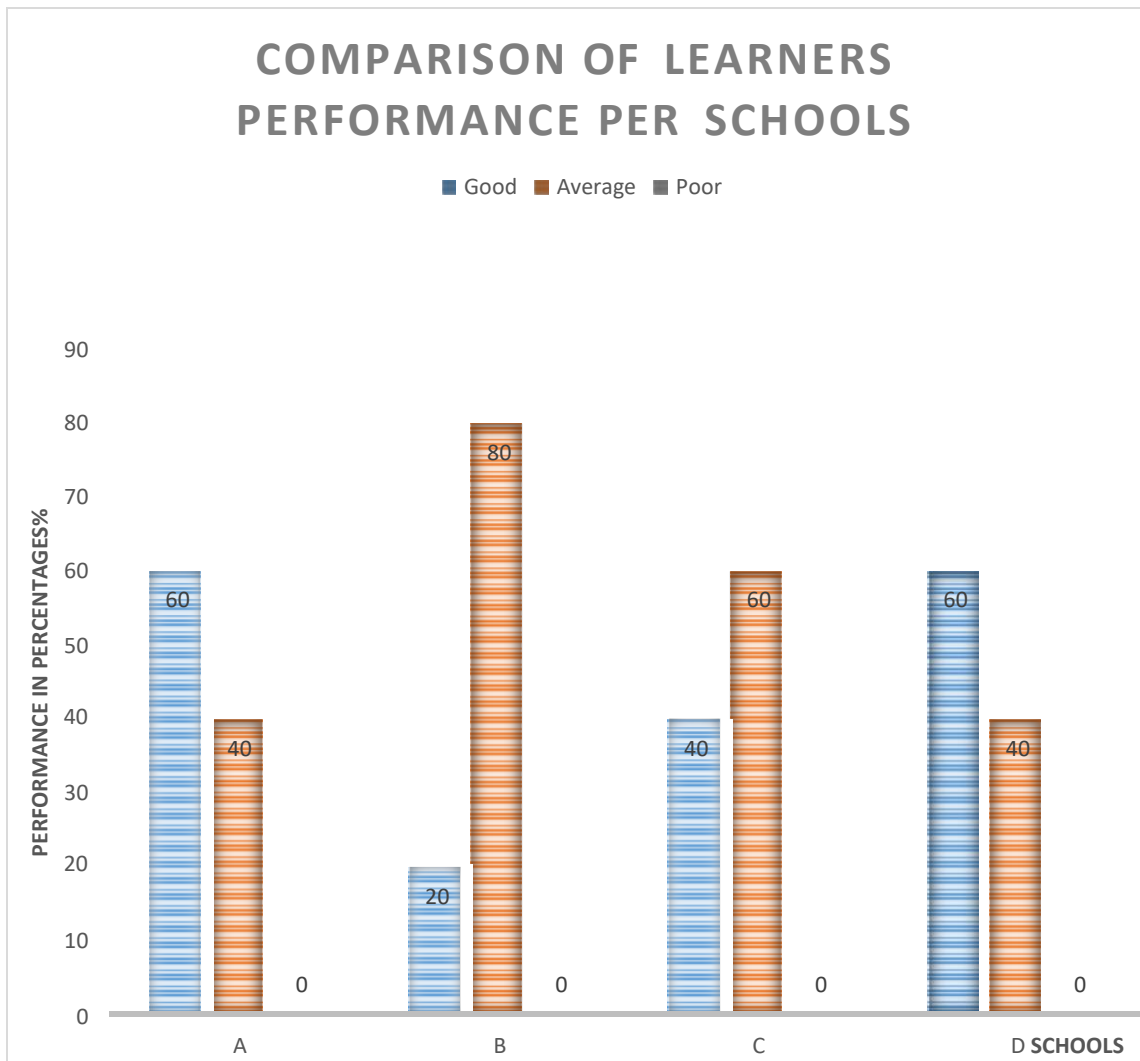
Table 4.7. Rubric used to allocate marks:

Scores	1-5: Below Basic	6-10: Basic	11-15: Proficient	16-20 Goal
Steps	1	2	3	4
Planning or Brainstorming	No or limited key words or ideas were recorded and organised on paper to support this piece of writing	Few words or ideas were recorded and organised on paper but lacked parts to support this piece of writing	Numerous key words or ideas were recorded and organised on paper to support the piece of writing	Detailed ideas were listed and highly organised on paper to support this piece of writing
First Draft or Rough Copy	No or limited key words or ideas were used from the planning stage.No or weak organisation and structure in the first draft.	Few key words or ideas were used from the planning stage. Beginning to show organisation and structure in first draft.	Numerous key words or ideas were used from the planning stage. Most of first drafts were organised and structured.	All key words or ideas were used from the planning stage. Additional ideas were used too. First draft was highly organised and structured.
Revise	No or limited key words or ideas were added, deleted, and/or	Few key words or ideas were added, deleted, and/or rearranged in	Adequate key words or ideas were added, deleted and/or rearranged in	Numerous key words or ideas were added, deleted, and/or

	rearranged in first draft. Details were not specific and clear.	first draft. Details were beginning to be specific and clear.	first draft. Most details were specific and clear.	rearranged in first draft. Details were specific and clear.
Edit	No or little attention to sentence structure. No or little attention to spelling No or little attention to punctuation No or little attention to capitalisation	Some attention to sentence structure Some attention to spelling Some attention to punctuation Some attention to capitalisation	Adequate attention to sentence structure Adequate attention to spelling Adequate attention to punctuation Adequate attention to capitalisation	Full attention to sentence structure Full attention to spelling Full attention to punctuation Full attention to capitalisation.
Final Copy or Publish	The final copy was not written correctly in the best handwriting. Sentence fluency is poor	Parts of the final copy were written correctly in the best handwriting. Sentence fluency is	Most of the final copy was written correctly in the best handwriting. Sentence fluency is	The final copy was written in best handwriting. Sentence fluency is strong throughout.

		strong in some parts.	strong in most parts	

Figure 3: A comparison of learners' performance per school based on a decided upon scale

A scale was decided whereby learners who performed below 49 were considered to be poor writers, 50-69 as average writers, and above 70 as good writers. The total number of those who performed below 49, 50-69, or above 70 in each school were added and converted to percentages. None of the schools have learners who scored below 49 (poor writers). The results on the graph further show that the school that performed best was School A (rural) and D (peri-urban). They appeared to have equal
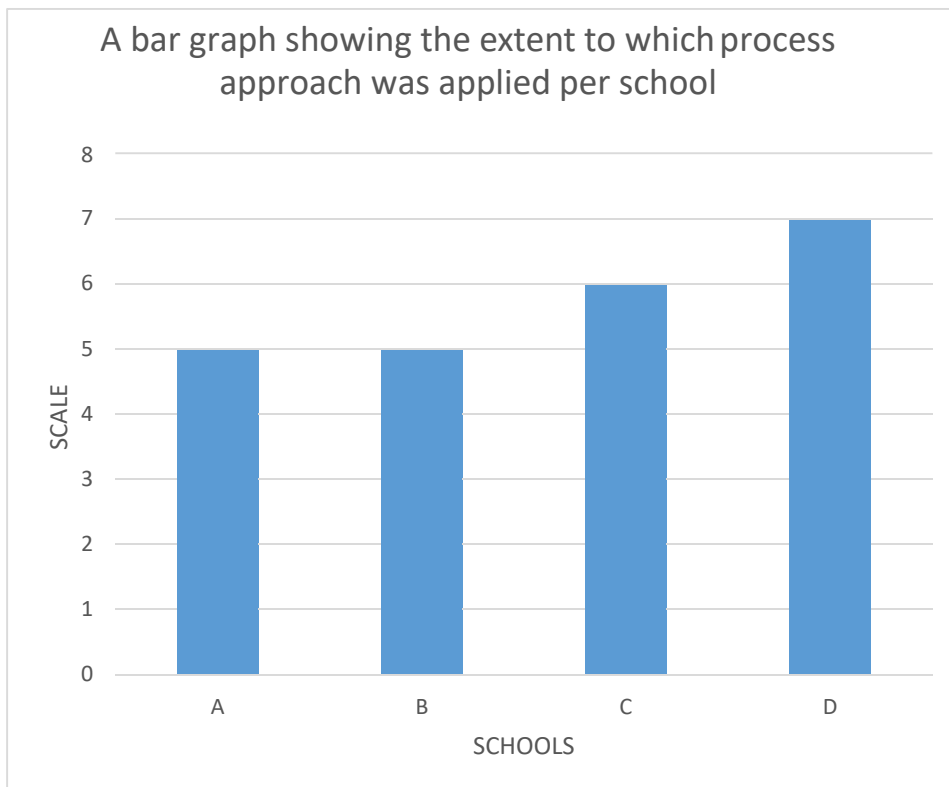
percentages of good (60) and average (40) writers. School C (peri-urban), although it performed below School A and D, performed better with 40 percent of learners who are considered good writers and 60 percent of average writers. School B (rural) performed the least, with 20 percent of good writers and 80 percent of average writers.

For consistency and to avoid subjective differences from four different markers, the researcher evaluated the essays himself. This difference was not influenced by the locations of these schools in terms of peri-urban or rural. School A is located in a rural area of the LP, whereas School D is in a peri-urban area. It is likely that the learners were generally of similar ability. The factor which could have led to the difference in performance seemed to be the difference in the application of the process writing approach. Misapplication or no application of some of stages could be the result of this difference. This misapplication of some stages is due to lack of knowledge in teaching writing, teacher-learner ratio, teaching environment, resources and workload faced by teachers. These elements are believed to influence the performance of learners.

It could be argued that the schools applied the PA to writing to varying degrees. The following bar graph shows which school applied the process the most and which one the least. From the scale of 1 to 10, the following items were looked at:

- Brainstorming (2 Points)

- Drafting (2 Points)

- Checking if the content relates back to the topic and check mistake (2 Points)

- Optional editing depending on the availability of allocated time (2 Points)

- Writing the final essay copying from the draft (2 Points)

Figure 4 showing the extent to which PA is applied:

A bar graph showing the extent to which process approach was applied per school

The bar graph shows that the schools that implemented PA better were School D followed by C, they are both peri-urban schools. The two rural schools are ranked 5 on the scale. The results were based solely on the above 5 points and the writing was deemed formal and controlled such as in examinations and tests. This indicates that the peri-urban schools may have an advantage with regard to access to resources.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the results were presented, analysed and interpreted. These results show the extent to which the four selected schools implement the PA to writing, taking into account the stipulations by CAPS (2011) and other elements that influence the quality of education and the performance of the learners such as classroom capacity, teachers' workload, knowledge PA and time allocation to complete essays.

The following chapter aims at providing the summary of this study, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings of this study which investigated the implementation of process writing in four Limpopo schools are summarised in this final chapter and conclusions are reached. Chapter 1 outlined an overview of the study, after which the theories that underpin the study were discussed, as well as previous research into process writing. Chapter 3 covered the methodology followed, the instruments used to collect data and how the data was analysed.

The previous chapter dealt with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results. This chapter aims at providing a summary of the findings and determining if the objectives were met, after which conclusions were drawn from the findings. Lastly, recommendations are made to improve the teaching of process writing as prescribed by CAPS.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study evaluated the application of the process writing approach in four Limpopo schools: two rural and two peri-urban schools. Low performance of learners with regard to what is called Paper 3: composition and letters, prompted this study. Learners continued to produce poor essays even after teachers were given the CAPS guidelines, which provided a good framework on the writing PA. The CAPS document was introduced by the Minister of Education (MoE) in 2011. This is what led to this investigation. The study wanted to ascertain the cause of ineffective learners' essays. Are the results a lack of teachers' knowledge or inadequate application of the PA? Or is it because of the learners' poor English language proficiency, lack of cognitive skills or language difficulties because English is an additive language? For this study, the following objectives were drawn:

- To examine how Grade 12 learners are taught essay writing.

- To ascertain if process writing is actually taught in the Grade 12 English classroom as stipulated in the CAPS policy document.

- To determine if teachers understand process writing.

- To determine if there is a difference between how writing is taught in peri-urban schools and rural schools in Limpopo.

Before the actual field research, literature on the process writing approach was reviewed to see what other researchers are saying about this approach. Firstly, the two theories of constructivism were selected to govern the study, namely: socio-cultural constructivism and cognitive constructivism. Based on the principle of these theories, (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2 on the theoretical framework) knowledge is gradually constructed in the same way as an essay is composed through the PA, a gradual composition approach in constructivism terms.

The literature reviewed for this study starts with the history of writing approaches, that is, how writing has been taught. This theme looks at how writing was taught before the emergence of PA to writing. The literature went further to clarify what is and what is not process writing by defining it in more detail. Furthermore, the description of each stage of PA was clearly discussed and also how to deal with the writing stages was made clear in the literature. The advantages and the criticisms of this approach were also discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2). In addition, problems which are affecting writing classrooms were also looked at. Lastly, current situations in ESL and EFL writing classes were reviewed in the literature. The manner in which the research objectives were met is shown below:

Objective 1: To examine how Grade 12 learners are taught essay writing

In order to examine how Grade 12 learners are taught essay writing, teachers and learners were interviewed. There was no evidence that Grade 12 learners were taught essay writing per se, rather they are provided with instructions to apply key questions, that is whether to argue, discuss as well as the required format. Two teachers stated that they did not teach learners how to write at Grade 12 level arguing that that skill is thought to be acquired from the lower grades, not in Grade 12. Yet there was some evidence of poor essay construction. This indicates that these teachers may feel that they are not responsible for teaching process writing, either because they actually believe it is not part of Grade 12 work or they realise that they do not have the required know-how to teach it and do not want to show this.

Objective 2: To ascertain if process writing is actually taught in the Grade 12 English classroom as stipulated in the CAPS policy document

This objective was tested through classroom observation, individual teachers interview and focus-group interviews. It was revealed that process writing was applied differently by individual teachers. Although some of the teachers who participated in this study were not familiar with the term "PA", the way they described how they tackled writing resembled the PA. The responses from teachers that they interpret topics for their learners was not seen during classroom observation, neither the submission of first drafts nor the process of proper editing were satisfactorily dealt with. These processes occurred to a very small extent. This approach is not actually taught in the researched Limpopo schools. In fact, writing is not taught in Grade 12 classrooms as it is a skill which is thought to be acquired at lower grades as interviewed teachers argued.

On the other hand, if process writing were to be taught in Grade 12 classroom, it was going to be hard or impossible to implement due to the workload faced by the teachers (see the responsibility of teachers of each school on tables : 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4). Teachers have many responsibilities, including teaching large classes, as well as teaching other grades and other subjects. Marking versions of the different stages of process writing, such as mind maps to show planning, a draft version (or two), before handing in the final version, can be very difficult with classes of 50 to 80 learners. Alternatively, they may not have received a copy of the CAPS document to read and apply the guidelines for process writing.

Objective 3: To determine if teachers understand process writing

Some teachers do not really understand the term "writing as a process", rather they practise its principles to an extent where reasonably practicable. For instance, there was evidence of planning through mind mapping in learners' essays. Spelling corrections in learners' essays resembled editing even though it was poorly done at an individual level. There was no peer assistance in terms of peer editing and peer review. This is against the protocol of individual formal assessment of the classrooms. Some teachers (in the peri-urban schools) demonstrated a better understanding by going an extra mile by giving learners essay topics as home activity to allow a better construction of the final product.

Objective 4: To determine if there is a difference between how writing is taught in peri-urban schools and rural schools in Limpopo

As stated above, writing was not taught in Grade 12 classrooms observed. Thus it was not possible to determine if there was a difference between how writing is taught in peri-urban and rural schools in Limpopo. From learners' written essays, looking at the learner who scored highest marks per school, is a learner from School D (peri-urban), followed by a learner from School A (rural), then School C (peri-urban) and the last one was School B (rural) as shown in 4.3.1. There was no big difference in terms of marks. There are many factors that could have led to differences in terms of performance as teacher from School D complained:

"The one thing that makes teachers at townships and rural schools to lack behind is the working environment with no adequate resources. If we had the same working environment with adequate resources, including a proper teacher-learner ratio in a classroom, we would be able to meet the standards met by the urban teachers or schools. We have no libraries in our schools, no access to WI-FI, classrooms are overcrowded and we are tasked to teach many classrooms with many learners. If we had what urban teachers have, we would do much better. I wish I was working in town".

Grade 12 EFAL learners and teachers will benefit from this study in that the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and the findings in chapter 4 their writing endeavours can be supported (See 3.7).

5.3 CONCLUSION

Teachers and learners are not familiar with the term PA, but the way they described how they embarked upon writing resembled the PA as described by CAPS. From the four researched schools, it was evident that planning was the first step learners went through when facing an essay writing task. Their planning was not a real representation of their content. They seemed to draw the mind-map as a formality as they were expected to show their planning but did not connect it to their essays. All of the learners showed their planning through mind mapping . The observed learners did not manage to write a draft before the final essays, except for a few learners at School D. This might be due to limited time to complete the essay. Revising and editing were done at an individual level with no peer allowed to come to the aid of fellow peer(s).

The teachers' attention to the learners was not satisfactory; their involvement in the process writing was very minimal. Although this is against the protocol of individual formal assessment, it could have affected the learners' performance because it lacked individual attention between teacher and learners as required by the PA. It goes without saying that without corrective feedback on learners mistakes and errors, and without individual attention, improvements are not likely to take place (Myles, 2002: 15). Individual attention might bring about improvements in learners' essays. That is to say PA is implemented to an extent where reasonably practicable and applicable. Thus, the objectives of the study have been met.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- As stated by the teacher from School A (Chapter 4) during the one-on-one interview, the PA to writing sounds fruitful, but is not practically applicable in its complete form. This teacher was more concerned with things that hindered the full application of the process writing approach for example formal assessment rules such as examination rules that do not allow for external assistance, thus every learner is for himself or herself. This therefore makes it impossible to apply the PA stages that need intervention, such as peer-review, teacher's corrective feedback and peer-editing. It can therefore be recommended that longer or shorter transactional writing (Paper 3 as it is called) sbe given special attention. Enough time and enough assistance to mediate writing should be made available as these are the essentials required by the PA. The question is how this would be possible because teachers have no additional time and they also have a heavy workload from overcrowded classrooms and extra teaching responsibilities.

- Another burning issue is the teacher-learner ratio. The maximum recommended learner-educator ratio for South African primary schools is 40:1 and for secondary schools 35:1 (Motshekga, 2012). Overcrowded classrooms are a major problem in writing classrooms. Teachers find it difficult to mark many versions (drafts) of essays in general. Some teachers are tasked with many responsibilities, including administration work and are also responsible for other grades and subjects.The responsibility lies with the DoE to make sure that there is an adequate teacher-learner ratio in the classrooms. Teaching a

language is labour intensive and for it to be effective needs manageable class sizes.

- The learners' intellectual level could affect the quality of final product. Teachers should make sure that learners understand the topic, by interpreting topics for them, and perhaps (as done by teacher from School D) discuss the topics and let learners share what they know in their mother tongue.

- Process writing could perhaps serve the role of showing learners what a good essay must consist of, including well-structured, organised and logical arguments, an introduction and conclusion, and so on as well as what one must look at. Although a learner is on his or her own and writes within a limited time in an exam he or she may remember previous comments and suggestions by peers and the teacher and apply them.

- Training is required for teachers who are tasked with teaching writing. The training should focus on treating writing as a process.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

After obtaining permission from the higher authority to collect data in urban schools, these schools remained reluctant to give the researcher permission to collect the data. Peri-urban schools replaced the urban schools. This caused a delay in collecting data.

5.6 OVERALL CONCLUSION

Although researchers and scholars do not always agree that the PA to writing is the best approach to good writing, it overall appears to be an effective approach. It is recommended by the current CAPS. Despite this, the challenge is to ensure that the curriculum is properly implemented in schools as it is vital that learners learn to write logically and coherently to achieve success at school, at the tertiary level and eventually in the world of employment. From the interviews with the teachers and observations it is clear that language teachers have the best interests of the learners at heart but are limited by constraints of overcrowded classrooms and lack of resources.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview with the teachers

- How large are your writing classes? (Icebreaker)

- How long have you been teaching English paper 3?

- What teaching qualifications do you have?

- Do your learners like writing? (Icebreaker)

- Does your school have a library?

- Are your learners able to find material on the topics they write about?

- Can they access the internet?

- How do you go about choosing a topic for the learners? What are the considerations?

- How do you present assignment topics to your learners in a classroom?

- How do you go about determining how long an assignment (essay) should take to be completed? What are the considerations?

- Are the learners allowed to help each other in the process of essay writing? In what way?

- Do you have any role to play? What is it?

- How often do you intervene?

- What guides you in your teaching of writing?

- Do your learners perform to your satisfaction?

- How do you feel about the way you tackle writing in your classroom?

- Would you like to teach writing in any other way than you do? Why?

- Is there a specific method or approach you use in a writing classroom? Why?

- Have you ever heard of process approach to writing? What do you think of it as a way to teach writing?

Appendix B: Focus group interview protocol with the learners

- Do you enjoy writing classrooms?

- What is the first thing you do when given a topic to write about?

- How much time would you need to complete a two pages long essay?

- How much time do you think your teacher would allocate to complete a two pages essay?

- Where do you get material that will help in essay writing?

- Do your school have a library?

- Is there a library in your community?

- Can you access the internet when given a topic to write about? Where/ How?

- Summarise the activities that you go through when writing an essay, from the beginning to the end. That is, what is it that you do firstly, secondly and so forth?

Appendix C: The checklist to assess learners' essays and stages that they follow when composing their essays.

STAGES	THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS APPROACH IS PRACTISED			
Prewriting/Writing First Step in the Writing Process	Poor Little to no time spent brainstorming, organising and writing out ideas for this piece of writing.	Fair Some evidence that shows time spent brainstorming, organising, and writing out ideas for this piece of writing.	Good Evidence shows the use of brainstorming, organising (use of graphic organisers) and writing out ideas for this piece of writing.	Excellent Detailed evidence showing time spent brainstorming, organising (use of graphic organisers) and writing out ideas for this piece of writing.
Ticks indicating frequency & notes				
Drafting Second Step in The Writing Process	Poor Draft includes little to no ideas from the prewriting session. Little to no information from prewriting is evident in draft.	Fair Draft includes limited ideas from prewriting session. An attempt was made to include the information from prewriting in draft.	Good Draft includes ideas from prewriting session. Evidence shows that learner used	Excellent Draft clearly includes ideas that were brainstormed and organised during prewriting.

			prewriting to write draft as information from the prewriting in the draft.	
Ticks indicating frequency & notes				
Revising Third Step in The Writing Process	Poor learner spent little to no time revising. Little to no changes were made to piece based upon the class directions or learner's revising goal. Learner did not take peer revision seriously.	Fair learner attempted to make changes to their writing; however the changes were minimal and focused on editing verses content and description presented in writing. Few changes were made based upon the learner's revising goal.	Good learner revision shows adequate changes made to content and ideas in writing. Evidence shows that learner worked on personal revising goal. Details were added to enhance writing.	Excellent learner made numerous changes to writing, changing/adding details and description to make writing more attractive to reader. Learner met personal revision goal.
Ticks indicating frequency & notes				
Editing	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent

Fourth Step in the Writing Process	Numerous errors in spelling, capitalisation, paragraphing, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes, found in writing. These errors made it hard to understand the meaning/message of the writing due to these errors.	Frequent errors made in spelling, capitalization, paragraphing, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. These errors made it more difficult to understand the message or meaning of the writing. Evidence in draft shows that learner attempted to make corrections to errors.	Few errors were made in spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. Appropriate paragraphs used. Learner spent ample time working on identifying and correcting editing errors.	No errors were made in spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation, including commas and apostrophes. Appropriate paragraphs used in writing.
Ticks indicating frequency & notes				
Participation The use of time during writing class	Poor Learner frequently had to be reminded to work on writing, revising, and editing during class. Learner did not use class time	Fair Learner sometimes used class time wisely; however, learner had to be refocused and reminded to work on writing. learner conversations/actio	Good Learner mostly used class time wisely, meeting with a peer to revise and edit. The majority of	Excellent Learner always used class time wisely, meeting with a peer to revise. All conversations during class

	wisely or frequently was not prepared for class.	ns focused on other topics instead of writing. learner may not have been prepared for class a couple of times.	the times the learner was focused and only one or two times did the learner get off-task.	were focused on revising/editing work.
Ticks indicating frequency & notes				
Publishing Fifth Step in The Writing Process	Poor Final copy not turned in on time. More than one part of writing (prewriting, first draft, second draft, etc) were not turned in with final copy.	Fair Final copy was easy to read. Parts of writing such as first draft, prewriting, second draft, etc., may have been missing.	Good Final copy was easy to read. All parts of writing were turned in but were out of order OR final copy was composed and turned in on time but other parts of writing were turned in late.	Excellent Final copy was easy to read. All parts of writing - prewriting, first draft, second draft, and any other notes needed were turned in with draft.
Ticks indicating frequency & notes				

Process stages adopted from CAPS (2011: 10) and Hedge (2005: 52).

Appendix D: Portfolio Analysis Checklist (Rubric used to allocate marks)

Scores	1-5: Below Basic	6-10: Basic	11-15: Proficient	16-20 Goal
Steps	1	2	3	4
Planning/ Brainstorming	No or limited key words/ ideas were recorded and organised on paper to support this piece of writing.	Few words/ ideas were recorded and organised on paper but lacked parts to support this piece of writing.	Numerous key words/ ideas were recorded and organised on paper to support the piece of writing.	Detailed ideas were listed and highly organised on paper to support this piece of writing.
First Draft/ Rough Copy	No or limited key words/ ideas were used from the planning stage. No or weak organisation and structure in the first draft.	Few key words/ ideas were used from the planning stage. Beginning to show organizstion and structure in first draft.	Numerous key words/ ideas were used from the planning stage. Most of first drafts were organised and structured.	All key words/ ideas were used from the planning stage. Additional ideas were used too. First draft is highly organised and structured.
Revise	No or limited key words/ ideas were added, deleted, and/or rearranged in first draft. Details are not	Few key words or ideas were added, deleted, and/or rearranged in first draft. Details are beginning to be	Adequate key words/ ideas were added, deleted and/or rearranged in first draft. Most details are	Numerous key words/ ideas were added, deleted, and/or rearranged in first draft. Details are

	specific and clear.	specific and clear.	specific and clear.	specific and clear.
Edit	No or little attention to sentence structure. No or little attention to spelling. No or little attention to punctuation. No or little attention to capitalisation.	Some attention to sentence structure. Some attention to spelling. Some attention to punctuation. Some attention to capitalisation.	Adequate attention to sentence structure. Adequate attention to spelling. Adequate attention to punctuation. Adequate attention to capitalisation.	Full attention to sentence structure. Full attention to spelling. Full attention to punctuation. Full attention to capitalisation.
Final Copy/ Publish	The final copy was not written correctly in the best handwriting. Sentence fluency is poor.	Parts of the final copy were written correctly in the best handwriting. Sentence fluency is strong in some parts.	Most of the final copy was written correctly in the best handwriting. Sentence fluency is strong in most parts.	The final copy was written in best handwriting. Sentence fluency is strong throughout.

Appendix E: Faculty approval letter

University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Executive Dean
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 4895, Fax: (015) 268 3425, Email:richard.madadzhe@ul.ac.za

DATE: 14 November 2017

NAME OF STUDENT: MAMABOLO, TJ
STUDENT NUMBER: 201212803
DEPARTMENT: English Studies
SCHOOL: LANGCOM
QUALIFICATION – MA Coursework

Dear Student
FACULTY APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (Mini Dissertation)
I have pleasure in informing you that your MA proposal served at the School Senior Degrees meeting on 9 November 2017 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: PROCESS WRITING: EVALUATION OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN FOUR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
Requires no ethical clearance Proceed with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	√
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully

Prof RS Maoto
Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities

CC: Dr JR Rammala
Supervisor: Dr RV McCabe

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix F: Ethical clearance certificate

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: Anastasia.Ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING:	07 March 2018
PROJECT NUMBER:	TREC/23/2018: PG
PROJECT:	

Title:	Process Writing: Evaluation of its implementation in four Limpopo Schools.
Researcher:	JT Mamabolo
Supervisor:	Dr RV McCabe
Co-Supervisors:	N/A
School:	School of Languages and Communication Studies
Degree:	Masters in Applied Linguistics

PROF ZAB MASHEGO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

> **Note:**
> i)   Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
> ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
>   PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

School of Languages and Communication Studies
Department of Languages
University of Limpopo
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2586, Fax: (015) 268 2868, Email: Rose-marie.Mccabe@ul.ac.za

8 May 2018

The Circuit Manager: Pietersburg Circuit
Limpopo Department of Education

Dear Sir/Madam

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT

Mr Joseph T. Mamabolo (Student number: 201212803) is conducting research for his Master's degree in English Studies. I am Mr Mamabolo's supervisor and would greatly appreciate it if you would allow him to collect data at four of the schools in the Pietersburg circuit.
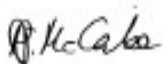
He is investigating the application of process writing in the grade 12 First Additive Language classroom.   His research report is entitled **Process Writing: evaluation of its implementation in four Limpopo schools.**

He is fully aware of the ethics involved in his study and will assure the confidentiality and anonymity of all the participants.

I thank you in advance for your assistance. It will be greatly appreciated.

Should you have any further questions please feel free to phone me at 0827730282 or Mr Mamabolo at 0767640698.

Yours faithfully

Dr Rose-marie McCabe
Senior Lecturer
Department of Languages: English Studies

Appendix H: Permission request letter to DoE

University of Limpopo
Education Studies
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2928 Email: Mahlapahlapana.themane@ul.ac.za

To: Dr M C Makola

        Research Office

        Limpopo Provincial Department of Education

From: Mr J.T Mamabolo

Master of Arts (English Studies)

Date: 8th May 2018

Subject: Request for permission to conduct research

Dear Dr Makola

The matter above bears reference

1. I Mr Mamabolo J.T hereby requesting a permission to conduct a research for my Master's degree in English Studies. The research is focusing on: **Process Writing: Evaluation of its implementation in four Limpopo schools.** The research is done to fulfil the requirement for the Master's degree in the University of Limpopo. I am well aware or the research ethics and it is guaranteed that the confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout the study. The information will only be used for academic purposes and will only be shared with the study's supervisor.

2.

    I thank you in advance for your assistance. It will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any further questions please feel free to phone the researcher on 0794035500 or the supervisor on 0827730282.

....

Prof MJ Themane

Research Chair: VLIR Project 3

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix I: Permission letter from DoE

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ref: 2/2/2   *Enq: MC Makola* PhD, *Tel No: 015 290 9448 .E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za*

Mamabolo J.T
Private Bag X1106
SOVENGA
0727

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Proposed research topic: **"Process Writing: Evaluation of its implementation in four Limpopo schools"**

3 The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.

3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
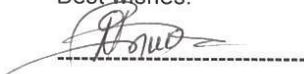
REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MAMABOLO JT

Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!

4   Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend to conduct your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5   The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

MUTHEIWANA NB

Acting Head of Department.

14/05/18

Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MAMABOLO JT

Appendix J: Permission request sample letter to school principal

Box 2307
Segopje
0744
31 July 2018

~~██████████~~ Secondary School
P.O. Box 4016
Sovenga
0727

Subject: **Request for permission to conduct research**

Dear Principal

The matter above bear reference

I Mr Mamabolo J.T hereby requesting a permission to conduct a research for my Masters degree in English Studies. The research is focusing on: **Process writing: Evaluation of its implementation in four Limpopo schools**. The research is done to fulfil the requirement for the Masters degree in the University of Limpopo. I am well aware of the research ethics and it is guaranteed that the confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout the study. The information will only be used for academic purposes and will only be shared with the study's supervisor.

I am asking to interview one grade 12 teacher in one on one interview and 20 grade 12 learners in a focus group interview of four learners per group. Lastly, I would like to observe grade 12 learners writing essay (a half to one page essay). Their scripts will be collected and review by the research for data analysis purposes.

I thank you in advance for your assistance. It will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any further questions please feel free to phone the researcher on 079403550 or the supervisor (Dr R.V McCabe) on 0827730282.

_____

Mr Mamabolo J.T

Appendix K: Consent sample letter to the teachers

30 January 2018

Consent Letter: Teacher

Dear Sir/Madam

RESEARCH STUDY ON THE APPROACH TO ENGLISH WRITING IN SOME LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

I am Mr J.T Mamabolo, a masters student at the University of Limpopo conducting a research study in the field of English Studies and Education, particularly writing. I have requested permission to conduct a study at your school (with one grade 12 English writing classroom). The study is being done in order to fulfil the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts: Masters in English language studies in the Faculty of Humanities (School of Languages and Communication Studies) at the University of Limpopo. My study is being supervised by Dr. R.V McCabe in the Department of Languages.

I would like to ask you in your capacity as a grade 12 English teacher of a Limpopo school to take part in this study of writing as this study might contribute some crucial and valuable information in the field of English language studies, particularly writing. Kindly be informed that your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without being questioned about your decision for withdrawal. Also be aware that your participation will be kept anonymous and the information given will be shared only with the researcher's supervisors.

Should you feel dissatisfied with any action in the course of your participation, please contact the researcher's supervisor on 0827730282. Should you consent, please sign below as proof of agreement?

Surname and initials:_____ Signature:_____ Date:...../...../......

Best regards

Researcher: Mr Mamabolo J.T   Supervisor: Dr R.V. McCabe

(0794035500)

Appendix L: Consent sample letter to the learners

Consent Letter: Learner

30 January 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

RESEARCH STUDY ON THE APPROACH TO ENGLISH WRITING IN SOME LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

I am Joseph T. Mamabolo, a masters student at the University of Limpopo (Student number: 201212803) conducting a research study in the field of English Studies and Education, particularly writing. I am requesting permission to conduct a study at your school (with one grade 12 English writing classroom). The study is being done in order to fulfil the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts: Masters in English language studies in the Faculty of Humanities (School of Languages and Communication Studies) at the University of Limpopo. My study is being supervised by Dr. R.V McCabe in the Department of Languages.

I would like to ask you in your capacity as a grade 12 English learner of a Limpopo school to take part in this study of writing as this study might contribute some crucial and valuable information in the field of English language studies, particularly writing. Kindly be informed that your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without being questioned about your decision for withdrawal. Also be aware that your participation will be kept anonymous and the information given will be shared only with the researcher's supervisors.

Should you feel dissatisfied with any action in the course of your participation, please contact the researcher's supervisor on 0827730282. Should you consent, please sign below as proof of agreement? I greatly appreciate your assistance.

Surname and initials:_____ Signature:_____ Date:...../...../......

Best regards

Researcher: Mr Mamabolo J.T   Supervisor: Dr R.V. McCabe

(Mobile: 0794035500)