A REVIEW OF THE PROCESS-BASED WRITING AS A MODEL TO IMPROVE ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH WRITING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The Process-Based Approach to writing instruction is one of the effective methods for teaching writing. This method has commonly been used in Western contexts for a long time. However, in most schools in Vietnam, including Dong Nai University (DNU), students are often instructed with learning English writing as a foreign language (EFL) through Product-Based Writing. Therefore, this Conceptual Paper aims to identify patterns in EFL research on writing skills to understand better the advantages and disadvantages of using the Process-Based Approach for language learning. This research uses the literature review method to synthesize several previously published publications to help understand the notion of process-based writing as it relates to students' writing abilities. This paper can be used as a reference for EFL lecturers in DNU and other schools who show their interest in the Process-Based Approach to teaching writing. The findings of this study can be used as a reference to future empirical research to determine whether the Process-Based Writing Technique has an impact on students' ability to produce paragraphs.

Keywords*: ZPD (Zone Proximal Development), Scaffolding, Process-Based Writing, Product-Based Writing, Paragraph Writing, English major students*

1. Introduction

Writing, as a skill of output, is one of the four basic skills in English study. This skill is considered the heart of academic life and the convenient mode of judging the students' performance. In the current trend in non-English speaking countries including Vietnam, the International English tests like TOEFL, IELTS, etc. all cover this skill in compulsory sections. White (1987) views that, of the four skills in standardized tests, writing remains a popular way to evaluate learners' proficiency in English, especially for academic purposes.

However, the results of writing tests, up to now, have not met expectations for learners and society. Of the four language skills, achieving the expected results in the written test is an obsession and a challenge for EFL students, including English major students.

Despite such growing recognition of the importance and necessity of EFL writing, writing is still not being focused on in Vietnamese school settings. EFL education continues to focus on "practical communication proficiency", and does not put much emphasis on communication through writing. Most learners themselves tend to think that speaking is more important and more

necessary than writing in foreign language learning. The causes of the results may come from inefficient and inappropriate teaching and learning ESL/EFL writing, and the solution for this problem places a lot of demands on any teacher and learner of EFL.

Recently, English language education has seen developments in writing pedagogy, gradually moving from a product-based approach to a process-based approach. However, teaching EFL students how to write in English is still lagging behind these growing developments. The product-based approach is commonly seen as domination in EFL writing classes in the Vietnamese context.

The teaching and learning of English writing, paragraph or essay for English major students of the Foreign Language Faculty in Dong Nai University (DNU), is captured by courses namely: Writing I, Writing II, Writing III, Writing IV, Writing V, Writing VI, in which, the first-year students take the course of Writing I with writing a paragraph. In this school year, the researcher is assigned to teach Writing I for the three first-year classes of English major students at the school. *Great Writing 2: Great paragraphs* (Folse, 2020) is used as the official material. This book follows the curriculum framework set by the Foreign Language Faculty of Dong Nai University and is first introduced to teach the first-year students of English major in the academic year 2022-2023, which means it is used in the first year at Dong Nai University. The book is designed with the orientation of teaching and learning with a new method,

process-based writing. EFL lecturers, therefore, have the responsibility of taking students through the rudiments of these write-ups, and one of these rudiments is paragraphing. However, at DNU, there has been no research on the field of process-based approaches, including process-based paragraph writing. Therefore, this paper, which aims to review Process-Based Writing as a model to improve students' writing ability, can be thought necessary and urgent.

2. Method

In this study, the research method employed was known as a literature review in terms of searching, selecting, analyzing, elaborating, and synthesizing previously published papers relating to the process-based approach of teaching and learning EFL writing skills. This study particularly used a literature review and features of a process-based approach to improving students' ability in performing writing. The findings from the analysis results of the study are hopefully used to pave the way for both instructors' perspectives in shifting their teaching methods and conducting future research in the field.

3. Discussion

3.1. Paragraph writing

3.1.1. Definition of paragraph writing

Hedge (2005) defines writing as the production of communication, linking ideas, and information development, or giving arguments to a particular reader or a group of readers. This assumption is in line with Kellogg's ideas that writing is a major cognitive challenge because it is at once a test of memory, language, and thinking ability (Kellogg, 2018).

However, before mastering writing skills, it is necessary for a writer to master paragraph writing skills, and producing a paragraph is an essential skill in writing (Wali and Madani, 2020).

Paragraph writing is indicated at the beginning of paragraph writing skills (Utamiet al., 2021). In addition, Nordquist (2019ᵃ) points out that the purpose of every paragraph is to give an indication of a swing in thinking, and also give readers a rest. Thus, a paragraph is created to signal an introduction of a new line of thinking in a discourse.

3.1.2. Paragraph structure

In process of writing a paragraph, paragraph structure should be identified. In paragraphing, structure refers to components, namely *topic sentences*, *supporting sentences*, and *concluding sentences*. The *topic sentence* is the sentence in the paragraph that presents the main idea, which all the other ideas in the paragraph support or explain (Rolls & Wignell, 2013). The function of a topic sentence is to describe what the paragraph will be about so that the reader has clear expectations about what will follow. An effective topic sentence typically contains only one main idea. The remainder of the paragraph then develops that idea more fully, offering supporting points and examples. A topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. Sometimes referred to as a focus sentence. The topic sentence helps organize the paragraph by summarizing the information in the paragraph. However, a good paragraph should contain one topic sentence that should be neither too specific nor too general. Topic sentence that is too specific usually has issues with supporting sentences that cannot establish the topic sentence.

The *supporting sentences* also called the body of the paragraph, are used to support, explain, illustrate, or provide evidence for the idea expressed in the topic sentence. Supporting sentences help expand and explain the topic sentences more clearly. The supporting sentences are the structures that develop the key idea of a paragraph and help the paragraph reach high persuasion. In a paragraph, supporting sentences may be developed with *examples*, *details*, *facts*, *reasons*, and *incidents*.

The *concluding sentence*, the third component, concludes the paragraph. This is the sentence that gives a paragraph a sense of completeness; it emphasizes the main idea by restating the idea in different words (Warriner, 1988). So, in concluding a paragraph, it is important for the writers to recapitulate the core idea stated in the topic sentence; and this will be well-written if synonymous words and/or paraphrases are used to state the idea in a different way.

3.1.3. Paragraph elements

Apart from paragraph structure, a successful paragraph must meet 3 characteristics: *unity*, *coherence*, and *completeness* (Warriner, 1988; Forlini et al., 1987).

Unity refers to the extent to which all of the ideas contained within a given paragraph "hang together" in a way that is easy for the reader to understand. Warriner (1988, p. 48) argues, "Every sentence in a paragraph should be directly

related to the main idea." By this, we say the sentences are united. Also, Forlini et al. (1987) posit, "a paragraph has unity when all of the supporting ideas in the paragraph work together to develop the topic sentence" (p. 447).

Coherence refers to the extent to which the flow of ideas in a paragraph is easily understood by the readers. For this reason, coherence is closely related to unity. When a writer changes the main ideas or topics within a paragraph, confusion often results. To achieve coherence, then, a writer should show how all the ideas contained in a paragraph are relevant to the main topic. Halliday and Hasan (1976 as cited in Carrell, 1982) define the concept of cohesion as a semantic one; it refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text. "In a coherent paragraph, ideas are arranged in a clear order and are connected smoothly" (Warriner, 1988, p. 50). Coherence, consequently, is the trait that makes the paragraph easily understandable to a reader.

Completeness is achieved when the idea is fully supported and developed. A paragraph is sufficiently developed when it describes, explains, and supports the topic sentence. Regarding this point, Rosen & Behrens (1997 as cited in Owusu, 2020) define, "every idea discussed in the topic sentence should be adequately explained and supported by evidence and details that work together to explain the paragraph's controlling idea" (p. 58).

3.1.4. Types of paragraph writing

When considering the types of paragraphs to write, a few different questions need to be considered like - the purpose of the paragraph, which is what is trying to be communicated to the readers. The answers to these questions are the guides for both the content of a paragraph and the achievement of a paragraph. There are many different types of paragraphs. Each of these has a different purpose, and writers make use of different means in achieving each purpose. According to Wali and Madani (2020 as cited in Maulida et al., 2022), there are 3 types – Narrative paragraphs, Descriptive paragraphs, and Expository paragraphs.

As defined by Wali and Madani (2020 as cited in Maulida et al., 2022), a *Narrative paragraph* is "a paragraph that typically speaks of events that have taken place in the past" (p. 64). True narrative paragraphs, however, are like short stories in that they feature characters, follow a plot line, including a conflict that is resolved, and are told from an identifiable point of view. They may also establish a setting or include a moral.

According to Sari and Wahyuni (2018 as cited in Maulida et al., 2022), "a descriptive paragraph describes a specific person, item, place, or object. It also explains how this paragraph has generic structures, identification, definition, and conclusion" (p. 64). The purpose of a descriptive paragraph is to allow the readers to experience the item, phenomenon, or event being described as vividly as possible without physically sensing it. That is, the reader cannot see it, but knows what it looks like; cannot taste it, but knows whether it is salty or sweet; cannot touch it, but knows its

texture. Descriptive paragraphs typically include modifiers (ex., adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases) and figurative language (ex., metaphors, personification, similes) to help enrich the "experience" for the reader.

An expository paragraph explains something; its purpose is to help the readers understand. Wibowo and Febrinda (2019 as cited in Maulida et al., 2022) define, "the expository paragraph as a paragraph that provides the readers with details. To offer information is to share something that readers need" (p. 64). Exposition often includes techniques such as the use of examples or illustrations to support a point or the use of some kinds of ordering (chronological or numerical, for example) to help a reader follow a process. Exposition needs to be clear; language is often quite direct although sometimes a writer may use language devices to help illustrate a point.

3.1.5. Problems related to teaching and learning paragraph writing skills

In reality, teaching and learning writing is still far from satisfying. Regarding the teachers, they used to learn writing in traditional ways like translation-based or product-based from schools of all levels. Consequently, they have almost no experience in teaching process-based writing, and they tend to teach writing in the ways they have gained from their school. According to Rajesh (2017 as cited in Maulida et al., 2022), teaching paragraph writing is a challenge for a teacher who is also a second-language learner but must teach students how to write appropriately and acceptably. So, some reckless teachers

even ignore it because they find it challenging to teach. For students, they lack motivation and their English proficiency is low. From a very young age, students attend EFL classes with the motivation of being good at speaking and listening skills. All of these reasons lead to students finding it difficult to produce a written version, and they often get bored and indifferent in the writing lessons. Another fact that should be taken into consideration is the teaching and learning culture. In relation to the form and content of the education system in Vietnam, Confucian values have still remained clearly evident (Pham, 2015; Pham & Bui, 2019; Truong et al., 2017 as cited in Pham et al., 2020). Particularly, in teaching writing, the teacher often analyses the model for a particular type of writing, presents the main structures used in this model, and after that discusses with students what is required for the writing exercise that they will do as their homework. In this way, it is the product-based writing approach in use that challenges students in writing while their process of writing is neglected (Tran & Le, 2018 as cited in Nguyen & Trinh, 2021).

More specifically, the learning problems students encounter in EFL writing classes are varied. The majority of the students face numerous problems with English writing at their different learning stages. These major problems can be classified as linguistic, cognitive, cultural, and pedagogical problems.

For linguistics, some of these difficulties are sentence-level problems with grammar and vocabulary. In reality, students have been introduced to

grammar lessons since junior high school, and yet, writing has always seemed to be the most difficult part even when they are at the university level. Wee et. al (2009) states that most EFL learners tend to commit errors in writing regardless of a long period of English study. According to Lalande (1982), despite the fact that the students have studied certain rules of grammar, "some students exhibit remarkable consistency: they commit the same types of errors from one essay to the next" (p. 140). Such writing problems produce confusion among the various students at their academic levels. The use of inappropriate words and lack of transitions from one main idea to the next main idea within the paragraph in writing also seems very difficult for students who write in a second language.

In terms of cognition, *punctuation, capitalization* and *spelling* are considered to be commonly encountered by students. The role of punctuation marks is perceived as very crucial to comprehend the meanings of the written text. Capital letters are used before the beginning of any important topic, or word, and even before important headings. Yet, EFL learners face problems while using capitalization appropriately (Hajar, 2019 as cited in Sarwat, S. et al., 2021). Spelling is a very important component in reading and writing which helps in learning to read and write properly; this practice is useful, especially for young children.

Considering aspects of *culture and language learning*, language cannot be separated from culture. In pedagogical practice, cultural differences should be introduced to the students to increase the contrastive language categories, explore the different rules developed in different languages, and enable students to understand the conflicts and discrepancies between the two languages. In this way, the negative transfer of native culture would be reduced or avoided in English learning (Sun, 2010). But in reality, it has been found that most instruction follows a very traditional model, consisting of exercises on drills, with very few opportunities for students to actually write.

3.1.6. Teaching paragraph writing skills

The teaching of writing to L2 learners, including EFL students undertaking English courses, has been the subject of an investigation by many researchers (Choi, 2013), and while they generally agree about the complexity of writing and its crucial role in supporting other skills in L2 learning, the teaching of it is not nearly as settled as an issue.

Writing must not be thought of as a solely productive skill. It is rather a three-stage discovery process that involves *pre-writing*, *while-writing*, and *post-writing* (Harmer, 2001). Lindsay and Knight (2006) supposed that the *pre-writing* stage can be addressed through brainstorming, collecting data, and planning an outline of the content. The *writing* stage is where learners do the task of writing such as writing a story, a report, a letter, etc., either individually or collaboratively. The *post-writing* stage is where teachers follow up on students' work and provide sufficient feedback on how flourishing their work has been. These stages help students complete the

writing task successfully and foster the process of writing.

Specifically, writing is more than just the communication of ideas and presentation of ideational meaning; rather, it is viewed as a social engagement that involves writers' and readers' interaction. However, due to little awareness of the interactive and interactional aspects of the target language, many of the students' writings seem uncontextualized and incoherent. Therefore, students need to be aware that focusing on surface feature accuracy by itself cannot guarantee effective writing, and producing well-written texts necessitates a focus on organization, coherence, development of thoughts, and effective expression of ideas as well (Kern & Schultz, 1992). Nevertheless, many teachers and learners still see writing as an exercise in mastering grammar and vocabulary ignoring the process and also the interactive and interactional aspects of writing.

In order to meet this trend, the instructor should consider factors affecting students writing success to help them develop better writing skills in the paragraph. Alsmari (2019) argued that teachers have a significant role in seeking to boost students' achievement. In other words, it is the teachers who must be aware of what influences paragraph writing skills in teaching and learning. They need to identify useful techniques and select appropriate methods to help EFL students develop their writing competence. One method suggested for teaching writing to EFL students is process-based teaching. For this approach, writing is seen as a social

and collaborative activity compared to the traditional approach which sees writing as a silent and solitary activity.

3.2. Process-based writing

3.2.1. The definition of the process-based writing

Although there is no universally agreed-on definition for the process approach to writing, there are a number of underlying principles that are common to it. In this process, students engage in cycles of planning (setting goals, generating ideas, organizing ideas), translating (putting a writing plan into action), and reviewing (evaluating, editing, revising) (e.g.; Nagin, 2006; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006 as cited in Graham & Sandmel, 2011). The process-based approach to teaching is concerned with the various stages from pre-writing, drafting, responding, revising, and editing, to evaluating that allow students to go through such stages so as to complete particular writing tasks (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). Further, Terrible (1996) defines process-oriented writing, when it is implemented in the classroom, it will incorporate another stage externally imposed on students by a teacher.

Process-oriented approaches to writing instruction first appeared during the 1970s (Graves, 1983). Over the years, process approaches such as the Writers Workshop (Atwell, 1987) have become increasingly popular with teachers, due largely to the dissemination efforts of the National Writing Project. Since the early 1970s, writing instruction has made a steady turn from emphasizing the finished writing process. By the late 1980s, 40%

of teachers reported using the process approach to teaching writing (Applebee, 1989). In recent years, process-based writing has been implemented in English language composition, and ESL teachers have adopted it as an innovative method of teaching writing in foreign language classes (Deng, 2005).

3.2.2. The features of the process-based writing

Harmer (2007 as cited in Widodo, 2008) posits,

"In process-based writing, a teacher and students play pivotal roles. As a teacher, he/she serves as a resource, facilitator, motivator, feedback provider, and evaluator. First, as a resource, the teacher provides some inputs that are learnable or comprehensible for the students by selecting useful tasks or activities for the students. As a monitor, the teacher is required to monitor students' activities because there are varied activities that are to be done by the students. As a motivator, the teacher needs to motivate the students to complete the writing tasks assigned. As a feedback provider and evaluator, before the teacher evaluates the student's performance, he or she provides feedback on the students' work or responds positively and encouragingly to the content of it" (p. 102).

As students, they serve as competent *planners*, *writers*, *feedback* providers of their peer's work in a peer review activity, and *editors* for their own compositions. In other words, students can serve not only as planners and writers but also as feedback providers in addition to the teacher. Students' involvement in providing feedback means not only empowering them in thinking critically but also objectively providing constructive feedback to their peers as well. As editors, they are encouraged to edit their own pieces of writing upon the completion of the revision phase (Brown, 2007). In addition to such four roles, since the students are encouraged to reflect on what they have learned during the class periods, the students are trained to be reflective students so that they are aware of their own learning practice.

To sum up, process-based writing is an approach that involves step-by-step activities that enable students to complete their writing tasks assigned where the teacher and students play crucial roles in working on such tasks.

3.2.3. The characteristics of the process-based writing

Teaching writing involves identifying the features of effective text; outlining these for students; asking them to practice producing texts with these characteristics; and giving them feedback about how effectively they had managed to do so. Learning to write involves learning how to transcribe language in a written form, learning to spell, and grammatical conventions; learning the principles of a good style by examining exemplary models; and learning conventional text structures. This set of practices and assumptions is emphasized in terms of the underlying functions of different kinds of writing

rather than the superficial features of the texts themselves (Britton, et al., 1975).

The key ingredients of the new process approach to writing are the emphasis on the goals which texts are designed to satisfy rather than the linguistic characteristics which texts have, and on the variety of processes that are involved in trying to satisfy those goals, including in particular the construction and evaluation of ideas, rather than on the translation of preconceived ideas into text. For characteristics of process-based writing, a huge variety of activities have been designed to give students the experience of the process of writing and its separate components, including such activities as *journal writing*; *peer conferencing*; *collaboration in small groups*; *brainstorming*; *outlining*; *free writing*; *multiple drafting*; *peer revision*; *writing for different audiences*; *class publication.* Within this variety of activities, according to Galbraith and Rijlaarsdam (1999), "it is essential that one can distinguish three complementary approaches to teaching writing: (i) developing the ability to direct writing towards communicative goals; (ii) developing the ability to coordinate and manage the different processes which make up writing; (iii) developing an understanding of the social context within which the writing process is embedded and of the social process of writing" (p. 94).

3.2.4. *Process-based writing vs. product-based writing*

According to Nunan (1995), the product-based approach means that teachers are simply leading the students to the final product of their essays. The product-based approach emphasizes mechanical aspects of writing, such as focusing on grammatical and syntactical structures and imitating models. This approach is primarily concerned the correctness and form of the final product, and "highlights the learner's final piece of work instead of how it is produced" (Hasan & Ahkand, 2010, p. 81). Saeidi and Sahebkheir (2011) believe that the product-based approach helps learners use the same plan in different situations. The product approach focuses on writing tasks in which the learner imitates, copies, and transforms teacher-supplied models. In this approach, students first pre-write, then compose, and finally correct it.

However, teaching writing is a complex process with different approaches. The large sources of the literature review related to product-based writing have investigated the distinction between employing the product approach and other approaches. To have an effective performance-oriented teaching program would mean that we need to systematically teach students problem-solving skills connected with the writing process that will enable them to realize specific goals at each stage of the composing process.

Accordingly, the term process writing has been bandied about for quite a while in ESL classrooms. Harmer (2007ª) defined, "The process-based approach emphasizes how the writing emerges as the result of a distinct process which advances through several stages until the writing is complete" (p. 326).

Particularly, most of the process-based studies have paid their focus on the application of metacognitive strategies. In a metacognitive study, Bengisu and Seyit (2016) concluded that teaching these skills could improve the students' narrative writing progress. In another study, Lam (2015) investigated the effect of direct teaching in process-oriented pedagogy on learners' writing improvement, metacognitive information, and self-regulation. He showed that the students' level of self-regulation improved in fulfilling several writing tasks. Mourssi (2013) found that instructors' metalinguistic feedback in process-based writing helps learners write more accurately and fluently. More specifically, Safari and Bagheri (2017) examined second language learners' writing performance on the strategies they employed in IELTS writing and proved the process's effectiveness over the product strategy.

3.2.5. The advantages and disadvantages of using process-based writing in promoting paragraph writing skills

There are many potential advantages to the process writing approach (Graham & Harris, 1997). First, students are encouraged to plan, draft, and revise. The cognitive activities involved in these writing processes account for close to 80% of the variance in the quality of papers produced by adolescent writers (Breetvelt et al., 1996). Second, instruction in writing through minilessons, conferences, and teachable moments should result in improved quality of writing. These teaching tools also provide mechanisms for addressing the instructional needs of individual students. Third, motivation for writing should be enhanced as collaboration, personal responsibility, personal attention, and a positive learning environment are stressed. These types of activities are thought to facilitate the value that students place on specific academic tasks (Wigfield, 1994).

Specifically, one of the potential advantages of the process writing approach is that students spend more time writing. In this approach, there is a considerable emphasis on students learning to write as a consequence of frequent and meaningful writing. Another potential advantage of process writing is that many of the principles underlying these approaches, such as choice, ownership, self-evaluation, peer collaboration, and a supportive environment, are aimed at creating environmental conditions believed to foster self-regulation and self-confidence (Corno, 1992). Self-regulated learning occurs when one uses personal processes (such as goal setting or self-evaluation) to strategically regulate behavior or the environment.

Despite possible advantages, the process approach to writing is not without its critics (Baines, Baines, Stanley & Kunkel, 1999). Some have charged that the instruction provided in process writing classrooms is not powerful enough to ensure that students, especially students experiencing difficulty with writing, acquire needed writing skills and processes (Graham & Harris, 1997). Critics argue that not enough attention is devoted to mastering foundational skills, such as handwriting,

spelling, and sentence construction (Nagin, 2006). Moreover, a considerable amount of research demonstrates that many students with special needs do not acquire a variety of cognitive and metacognitive strategies unless detailed and explicit instruction is provided (Brown & Campione, 1990).

From the above arguments, it is, therefore, recommended that the process writing approach needs to undergo experimentation and change is not a radical idea. Perhaps the greatest experimentation takes place in schools, where more teachers combine process writing and traditional skills instruction together than just teach the process writing approach alone. High-quality research is needed to examine the effectiveness of the most promising hybrids.

3.3. Theoretical framework of research

"Social constructivism, a social learning theory developed by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, posits that individuals are active participants in the creation of their own knowledge" (Schreiber & Valle, 2013 as cited in Sarhan, 2022, p. 1).

Social Constructivism is an approach that believes in active learning. Through this approach, learners build their understanding by actively engaging with the world, teachers, classmates, and family members. This principle focuses on active experiences that help students develop their learning skills. There are two concepts of this Vygotsky theory, ZPD (Zone of proximal development) and Scaffolding. Vygotsky (1978) defined the zone of proximal development (ZDP) as,

"The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more knowledgeable others. ZPD is a dynamic construct addressing the issue of not only learning but cognitive development. The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state. Usually, these functions could be termed the 'buds' or 'flowers' of development rather than the 'fruits' of development" (p. 86).

Accordingly, ZPD is a way to improve students' skills by editing and correcting by using the position of teachers and other students. Polly and Byker (2020) agree that Vygotsky advanced the concept that each individual had a personal ZPD in the theory of social constructivism. They also state that these aids help individuals accomplish activities beyond what they can do on their own.

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) may be used to provide a theoretical base from which to understand the process-based approach. The zone of proximal development provides a basis from which to discuss this interdependence.

Usually, each child has their own zone of proximal endowment for each

social context in which they will find themselves to develop. Development of the child involves presenting activities that stimulate the child within their zone of proximal development. Thanks to this zone, if teaching includes presenting activities, stimulating, and providing the necessary resources, it will certainly help the child work and develop.

Consequently, a child develops cognitively by first being exposed to tasks or situations in the upper end of the zone of proximal development. However, the tasks or situations should at first require a significant amount of assistance in order to be completed; as the child learns to complete the task with less and less assistance, and eventually, with no assistance, the child's cognitive skills develop. The essence of the zone of proximal development is the social system in which the child learns; a social system that is actively constructed by both the child and the teacher. It is this interdependence that is central to a Vygotskian view of the educational process.

However, to what extent the zone proximal development can work may rely on its scaffolding, in other words, the development of a child/individual must depend on his/her ZPD and scaffolding. According to Finnegan and Ginty (2019), scaffolding is a concept that is closely associated with the philosophy of social constructivism.

In the learning process, scaffolding helps students correct and edit their mistakes on their own by determining problems and directing them to solve them. As teachers, scaffolding is considered a frame where they can provide support and facilitate students' learning as well as instruct them on how to solve a problem. In other words,

"the scaffolding techniques provided are activities and tasks that (1) motivate or enlist the student's interest related to the task, (2) simplify the task to make it more manageable and achievable for a student, (3) provide some direction in order to help the students focus on achieving the goal, (4) clearly indicate differences between the child's work and the standard or desired solution (5) reduce frustration (6) model and clearly define the expectations of the activity to be performed" (Bransford et al., (2000) as cited in Stuyf, 2002, p. 3).

Moreover, educators with a constructivist orientation contend that when learners construct their own knowledge, they understand it and can apply it (Harris & Pressley, 1991). Therefore, in practical teaching and learning activities, EFL teachers should create opportunities and time for students to build their knowledge and skills by themselves. In this way, students can complete their writing tasks throughout by performing the pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing in a collaborative way where students play the role of scaffolding for each other, and the teacher has the same role for every student. In other words, every individual who is always in his/her ZPD will rely on the available scaffoldings from the teacher and peers to climb up by

themselves (to learn/produce drafts by themselves).

3.4. Previous studies on the process-based writing

There have been numerous studies regarding process-based writing. According to Nunan (1999), the proponents of process writing assert that there would never be the perfect text, but that one could get closer to perfection through producing, reflecting on, discussing, and reworking successive drafts of a text. Concerning this trend, Chenoweth and Hayes (2003) conclude that in the process approach the linearity of text is seriously under question in that producing a text involves several recursive procedures.

Based on the early studies that have defined the field, several EFL teachers as researchers have investigated the process-based approach in the hope to investigate whether it could be implemented in their own settings.

First, Sun and Feng (2009) carried out research on Process Approach to Teaching Writing Applied in Different Teaching Models. In a discussion about the two classroom teaching models by using the process approach, namely, teaching models with minimal control and maximal control to different English-level students, the experimental study shows that the subjects were all making significant progress in their writing skills with Process Approach.

In order to learn how to achieve better results in English teaching and how to develop students' writing competence, VanderPyl (2012) experimented with the process approach as writing instruction in two greatly varying contexts and found the process approach is effective on several levels. In this study, the author also presented a concept course: an illustration of the process approach in the form of practical applications that should appeal to educators interested in the process approach as writing instruction.

Sarhady (2015) conducted research at the University of Kurdistan under the title "The Effect of Product/Process-Oriented Approach to Teaching and Learning Writing Skill on University Student Performances". The 44 male and female junior university students majoring in English language and literature at the University of Kurdistan were selected as the sample. The participants are divided into two groups: the control group and the experimental group. The two groups are manipulated with distinctive techniques. The study concluded that a process-oriented approach to teaching writing is more effective than the product-oriented one.

Finally, a study titled *Can students benefit from process writing* by Goldstein and Carr 1999, showed,

"Process writing refers to a broad range of strategies that include pre-writing activities, such as defining the audience, using a variety of resources, planning the writing, as well as drafting and revising. These activities are collectively referred to as "process-oriented instruction" approach writing as problem-solving. Furthermore, this study demonstrated that "The NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) report

emphasizes these aspects of writing. The assessment included writing assignments that encouraged sustained involvement over a period of time, allowing multiple drafts and time for reflection and revision" (p. 1). "Evidence from the 1992 NAEP assessment in writing supports research in the field that several process writing techniques are associated with higher writing proficiency skills" (p. 5).

4. Conclusion

Writing skill is very crucial for a student's future career, especially for English major graduates. The main problem faced by students is their inability to write appropriately and correctly. Even basic writing, such as Paragraph Writing, is still hard work for them. The paper aims to discuss the effectiveness of process-based writing in Paragraph Writing. Studies have shown that researchers have extensively used process-based writing to improve writing skills, including Paragraph Writing. Because of that, the researcher expects to know whether process-based writing is effective for students in Paragraph Writing. In addition, EFL lecturers of DNU will get benefit from this approach after finding this report on the advantages and disadvantages of process-based writing. EFL lecturers of DNU may want to use this model to improve students' achievement in Paragraph Writing skills, and the Foreign Language Faculty can use it to supplement their Curriculum. Since this model offers a learning model, the lecturer might need more time to design the process-based writing more effectively. Finally, this paper is hopefully to be a useful reference for other researchers, maybe including the author himself, to carry out deeper studies into the field of teaching and learning English paragraph writing.

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ĐÁNH GIÁ VỀ PHƯƠNG PHÁP DẠY VIẾT DỰA TRÊN TIẾN TRÌNH NHƯ MỘT MÔ HÌNH NHẰM CẢI TIẾN KỸ NĂNG VIẾT ĐOẠN VĂN CỦA SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGÀNH TIẾNG ANH

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TÓM TẮT

Phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên tiến trình là một trong những phương pháp dạy viết hiệu quả. Phương pháp này đã được áp dụng phổ biến từ lâu ở các nước phương Tây. Tuy nhiên, tại hầu hết các cơ sở giáo dục ở Việt Nam, trong đó có Trường Đại học Đồng Nai (DNU), sinh viên được dạy viết tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ thông qua phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên sản phẩm. Do đó, bài báo khái niệm (conceptual paper) này mục đích xác định các mô hình trong nghiên cứu dạy và học tiếng Anh về kỹ năng dạy viết để hiểu rõ hơn những ưu điểm và hạn chế của việc sử dụng phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên tiến trình cho việc học ngoại ngữ. Nghiên cứu này đã sử dụng phương pháp tổng quan tài liệu để tổng hợp một số bài nghiên cứu đã xuất bản trước đây giúp hiểu khái niệm phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên tiến trình vì nó liên quan đến khả năng viết của sinh viên. Bài báo có thể làm tài liệu tham khảo cho các giảng viên dạy tiếng Anh ở Trường Đại học Đồng Nai và các trường học khác quan tâm đến phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên tiến trình. Những phát hiện của nghiên cứu có thể được làm tham khảo cho nghiên cứu thực nghiệm trong tương lai để xác định xem kỹ thuật viết dựa trên tiến trình có tác động lên khả năng viết đoạn văn của sinh viên hay không.

***Từ khóa**: ZPD (vùng phát triển tiệm cận), khung đỡ, phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên tiến trình, phương pháp dạy viết dựa trên sản phẩm, viết đoạn văn, sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh*