2.1 Second Language Writing Research: A Historical Overview

Second Language Writing has grown into a vast area of research and gained wide recognition as a distinct, specialized field of study. Over the years, L2 writing research has emerged from a disciplinary to an interdisciplinary field of enquiry comprising numerous dimensions rather than a single aspect. Different fields have contributed to its development and research ranging from L1 composition, applied linguistics, and psychology etc. The field continues to expand with researchers exploring it from various practical, pedagogical, methodological, and theoretical standpoints.

However, viewed historically, second language writing has a short history as previously it was subsumed into second language studies with L2 writing not given due emphasis. Before the 1940s, mainly Spanish speakers received education in ESL classrooms with almost negligible attention paid to ESL pedagogy and its further development. For English instruction and development of pedagogical materials for the Spanish learners of English, English Language Institute (ELI) was founded at the University of Michigan in 1940 with Charles C. Fries as its director. Language theory of those times was grounded in scientific theory as defined by descriptive linguists like Bloomfield, Sweet, and Fries being himself a prominent linguist. These linguists favored audio-lingual approach to teaching ESL along with the phonological awareness of sound structures. Dominated by the behaviorist theory of language learning, it was believed that language learning was a habit formation activity and emphasized the mastery of oral proficiency than writing ability. Writing, therefore, assumed a secondary position and was marginalized in favor of spoken form. The curriculum developed at the Michigan ELI (English Language
Institute) reflected Sweet’s and Fries’s strong belief of applying descriptive linguistics in teaching language. (Allen, 1963).\textsuperscript{19} As a result, written discourse had no place in the instructional goals of the ELI.

The ELI also provided a platform for teachers to specialize in teaching ESL courses thus, enhancing the professional development of teachers. However, teaching writing was not given much attention until after 1950s. It was only after World War II that the large number of international students began to enroll in the US higher institutions and universities that L2 writing instruction to non native speakers began to receive attention. Between 1940 and 1950, the number rose from 6, 570 to 29, 813 (IIE, 1961). Special freshman courses were developed for these non-native speakers who lacked L2 writing skills. The differences between native and non native learners of English became apparent and captured the attention of teachers and administrators who began to develop ways to teach writing to these international students. With this, teaching L2 writing became an important component in ESL studies which previously ignored it. Soon ESL writing pedagogy began to develop and the differences of teaching writing between native and non-native writers resulted in the establishment of the “disciplinary division of labor” between L1 and L2 composition classrooms. Thus, L2 writing came under ESL studies. Subsequently, it was realized that L2 writing should be taught by trained teachers who specialized in teaching L2 writing. TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) was founded to provide professional development of writing teachers where L2 writing teachers and composition scholars discussed various issues concerning the field.

Since then many L2 writing theories have been developed in ESL studies. In the beginning, the L2 writing pedagogy found guidance in the L1 composition studies which viewed writing prescriptively as a skill that could be acquired through the mastery of certain structures in a controlled environment. Guided by L1 composition ESL pedagogy focused on teaching writing at the level of sentence, thereby, focusing on grammar and structure of language. Then followed a number of different pedagogical approaches with different conceptions of the nature of writing like controlled composition, contrastive rhetoric, process approach, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) approach etc.

### 2.1.1 Writing at the level of Sentence Structure

Before the 1950s, ESL writing pedagogy followed the structural approach to writing focusing on teaching writing at the level of sentence. Thus, the mastery of the grammatical structure of the language was the aim of L2 writing instruction. L2 writing context applied an audio-lingual approach in teaching writing to non-native speakers. Dominated by the behaviorist view of teaching writing, it regarded writing as a habit formation activity to be taught in a controlled environment. Good writing was the result of internalizing certain fixed grammatical patterns and rules. Consequently, repetitions, rote memorization, and substitution exercises comprised classroom activities. Teachers controlled the entire writing class and no flexibility was provided to students in the teaching learning process. At the end of the course, the students were able to master the formal accuracy in writing.

However, people like Edward Erazmus (1960) and Briere (1966) attempted to introduce free composition in ESL writing pedagogy i.e., writer-originated discourse to

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emphasize fluency in writing and give the charge of writing to students. But the view ‘language as speech’ as advocated by the prescriptive behaviorist theory was so strong, at that time, that such attempts were rejected altogether. Linguists of those times instead preferred teaching writing through controlled composition. Pincas (1962: 185), for example, dismissed free composition believing it to be a “naive traditional view… in direct opposition to the expressed ideals of scientific habit-forming teaching methods.” Pincas (1962: 186) states further that “the reverence for original creativeness dies hard. People find it difficult to accept the fact that the use of language is the manipulation of fixed patterns; that these patterns are learned by imitation; and that not until they have been learned can originality occur in the manipulation of patterns or in the choice of variables within the patterns.”

Dismissing free composition, writing at the level of sentence advocated controlled composition focusing on formal accuracy and correctness. Accordingly, students were not allowed to make errors which were considered as barriers to learning. Writing was not a vehicle of expression but was a mechanical skill. Therefore, Rivers (1968) pointed out that writing was reduced as “the handmaid of the other skills” (listening, speaking, and reading) and one “which must not take precedence as a major skill to be developed”. It was to be “considered as a service activity rather than as an end in itself”.

Providing little flexibility to students in writing, guided composition was introduced. Guided composition was not as fixed and rigid in its approach to teaching writing. Pincas

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defining guided composition states that, it “includes any writing for which students are given assistance such as a model to follow, a plan or outline to expand from, a partly-written version with indications of how to complete it, or pictures that show a new subject to write about in the same way as something that has been read”. The shift from controlled to guided composition paved the way for the progressive development of other pedagogies to explore writing through new perspectives.

2.1.2 Current traditional rhetoric

Current traditional rhetoric deals with writing at the level of discourse. This ESL pedagogy deals with writing beyond the grammatical structures and focuses on the logical organization of ideas in the form of a paragraph or an essay. In the late 1960s, a consciousness began to develop among the researchers that the discourse patterns of non-native speakers learning to write in English is different from native writers. This difference could be attributed to cultural factors of non native writers which are very different from native speakers. Writing is a culturally situated activity and the influence of culture on writing is inseparable. L2 writers, when learning to write in a new language, bring their knowledge of previous language which interferes with the smooth learning process leading to errors in writing.

Kaplan’s (1966) pioneering research discussed the role of culture in writing who claimed that the discourse patterns of languages are different from each other. Kaplan (1967:15) defined rhetoric as “the method of organizing syntactic units into larger patterns” and informed that ESL writers “employ a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate

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the expectations of the native reader” (1966). This may be the reason for the non-native writers written texts which may appear vague and unclear to native speakers. So, learning to write in L2 is not just mugging some grammatical rules or producing some chunks of written discourse but actually familiarizing with the values and culture of the target language which may be vastly different from the native culture. Arapoff (1967: 33) recognized that Kaplan’s study changed the perspective towards writing as “much more than an orthographic symbolization of speech; it is, most importantly, a purposeful selection and organization of experience”. Kaplan’s research gave new initiatives to L2 researchers who began to analyze the written texts of different writers in various languages and compared it with the native writers’ texts.

2.1.3 The Process Approach

In the late 1970s, L1 composition instructors and theorists shifted their attention from the written products to the writing processes that shaped those texts. L2 composition, being influenced by L1 composition soon adapted this shift of attention in L2 writing theory. Researchers now began to investigate the process underlying the written discourse rather than the final product. Vivian Zamel (1976) was one of the proponents who introduced the concept of writing as process in L2 studies. Analyzing ESL writers’ writing processes, she found that advanced L2 writers employed strategies similar to L1 writers.

Unlike previous approaches, the cognitive or process approach gave autonomy to students by involving them into the actual writing process through various techniques such as brain-storming, peer feedback, self-assessment, revision, multiple drafting and teacher-student conferencing etc. The students, as a result, became active participants in

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the composition classrooms and the role of teacher also changed from being a sole authority to a facilitator easing the learning process of the writers. Zamel (1983)\textsuperscript{30} suggested that the process approach discovered writing as a “non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning.” Soon L2 writing process was explored from various perspectives and the range of diversities between L1 and L2 writing became apparent. Differences between skilled and unskilled writers were also explored and studied to attain greater insights into the composing patterns of L2 writers. Two distinct views emerged in this pedagogy- an expressive and product-process approach. The expressive view gives value to the writer’s individual voice. Expressivists viewed writing as a personal and private endeavor. Writers express their personal feelings through diary writing and reflective journals. Writers put their feelings on paper without worrying for audience. Targeting individual development through self-detection, the expressivist trend concentrates on adequate writing procedures rather than on a final product (Elbow, 1973\textsuperscript{31}, 1981\textsuperscript{32}; Zamel, 1983\textsuperscript{33}). Whereas, product process approach focuses on appropriate written discourse that is the result of cognitive effort.

The process approach advocated that ESL writing should put greater emphasis on learners’ ideas and creativity rather than on the teaching of grammar. Research on the writing process of L1 and L2 writers revealed mixed results. Findings by Zamel (1983) revealed similarities between the skilled L2 writers and native writers whereas Raimes’s

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findings revealed differences in the writing processes of skilled L2 writers and native writers. A study by Hirose and Sasaki (1994) found that experienced writers pay attention to macro (planning, organization) and micro (cohesion, vocabulary) levels when writing in L1 and L2. The process pedagogy was a breakthrough in ESL writing theory broadening the horizons of the researchers. However, like previous approaches it came under criticism. Firstly, although the writers’ writing processes are important, the intended audience for which it is written is not addressed. Separating writers with readers leaves writing as an isolated activity separating it with the context. Further, it does not take into account different genres of writing. Without the knowledge of genre, writers fail to work successfully in academic writing. For example, an argumentative essay requires the reader to take a stand, argue in favor or against it, provide evidence and support it with examples, illustrations, data and survey. Without such knowledge, the writer would end up in producing an abrupt or unorganized essay. After 2000, a more comprehensive approach to ESL pedagogy, i.e., post process began to develop. The post process recognizes the social context as an important component. Atkinson (2003) states that in the post-process “we seek to highlight the rich, multifocal nature of the field” and “go beyond narrow traditional views of L2 writing research and teaching.”

2.1.4 English for Academic Purposes

The shortcomings of process approach led to the emergence of a theory of L2 writing that considered writing in its context. An alternative approach was proposed, i.e. English

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for Academic Purposes. This approach emphasizes that writing is not done in a vacuum but is meant for specific readership in a context. In doing so, it recognized writing as a context specific activity meant for specific audiences. Unlike process approach, which overly focused on cognitive psychology ignoring context, audiences and different genres of writing, this pedagogy focused writers to function successfully through writing in real world academia. Horowitz (1986: 459)\textsuperscript{37} informs that while focusing on academic discourse genres, academic writing needs and tasks, the aim of this approach is to familiarize student with appropriate and suitable academic context ensuring that “student writing falls within… [the] range… of acceptable writing behaviors dictated by the academic community”. Native English speaking academic audience should find the non-native written text as acceptable and appropriate to the context. Non-native writers should, therefore, adhere to acceptable writing behaviors. Silva (1990)\textsuperscript{38} summarizes that “from an English for academic purposes orientation, writing is the production of prose that will be acceptable at an American academic institution, and learning to write is part of becoming socialized to the academic community- finding out what is expected and trying to approximate it”.

These developments indicate that second language writing research has emerged as a multidisciplinary field of inquiry that is complex and vast and open to inspections. Johnson and Roen (1989)\textsuperscript{39} pointed out that a “broader, multidisciplinary base is important in examining issues in L2 writing” as “no single theory from a single discipline can account for the complex and interacting social, cultural, cognitive, and

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linguistic processes involved”. Further Kroll (1990)\(^{40}\) explains that “for those engaged in teaching second language learners, what is needed is both a firm grounding in the theoretical issues of first and second language writing and an understanding of a broad range of pedagogical issues that shape classroom writing instruction.” Consequently, a large number of studies examining various aspects of L2 writing have grown substantially. Like L1 composition, second language writing research has increased in scholarship and has incorporated thoughtful insights and vast reserves of knowledge from various related fields, such as composition studies, applied linguistics, foreign language education, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), etc. This progressive development is paralleled with the establishment of various journals devoted exclusively to second language writing such as the *Journal of Second Language Writing* established in 1992. Tannacito (1995)\(^{41}\) mentioned that it signified “the maturing of scholarly communication in the field”. The journal provides the opportunities to L2 specialists and instructors to discuss various theoretical, pedagogical, and methodological issues concerning L2 composition. Various textbooks and journals exclusive to second language writing have increased over the years. Monographs and bibliographies, especially annotated bibliographies have been compiled and published to provide a systematic historical background of the origin of L2 writing to novice researchers and a theoretical understanding on which to base their research. A Guide to Writing in English as a Second or Foreign Language: An Annotated Bibliography (Tannacito, 1995) published annotations of articles, books, and conference presentations that were published before 1994. An online bibliography focusing on teaching and

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learning of writing in second languages other than English was developed by Polio and Mosele (1998). The first conference on second language writing, called Second Language Acquisition and Writing: A multi-disciplinary Approach was held in 1996 at the University of Southampton (United Kingdom). Archibald and Jeffrey (1997) published papers presented at that conference. Additionally, first symposium on second language writing was held at Purdue University in 1998. Since then a number of conferences have been held at various universities at various points of time. Not only second language writing issues have been discussed in these specialized conferences devoted exclusively to serve the field but issues concerning second language studies have been widely discussed and argued in other related conferences such as the Conference on College Composition and Communication, American Association for Applied Linguistics, and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages etc. Professional development opportunities have also increased over the years in L2 writing with special courses designed to train teachers for the teaching of ESL composition courses to non-native writers. Such attempts enable classroom teachers to update themselves with latest discoveries and developments in the field.

However, as the field continues to expand, research has begun to look beyond international students at immigrant and refugee students in the US. Research on L2 writing instruction outside the United States has increased. More contexts other than US

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and more languages other than English need to be researched to enrich the scholarship in the field. Matsuda (2006)\textsuperscript{44} states that “for second-language writing instruction to be most effective in various disciplinary and institutional contexts, it needs to reflect the findings of studies conducted in a wide variety of instructional contexts as well as disciplinary perspectives.”

2.2 The L2 writing Process

Writing is a complex skill involving multiple strategies and complex processes to produce a text. The inquiry into the nature of writing led researchers to examine the composing processes of writers in their native language and in other languages known to them. The research has explored varied questions pertaining to the relationships between the English as a first and English as a Second Language. Research findings have revealed that the first language influences the composition in second language and that L2 writers consciously or unconsciously transfer their L1 writing strategies while writing in L2. Wang & Wen (2002)\textsuperscript{45} points out that writing in L2 is a challenging task “because L2 writers have more than one language at their disposal.”

The most common researched area in the field is the role or use of L1 in L2 writing. L1 plays an important role in L2 writing. L2 writers frequently switch to their L1 while writing in L2. This use of L1 either facilitates or hinders the L2 writing process depending on various variables and contexts in which the transfer has been made.

L1 and L2 writing often exhibits similar composing processing patterns. Both L1 and L2 writing processes are recursive in nature and require writers to plan and revise for idea


development and its appropriate expression (Silva 1993). L2 writers function like L1 writers (Leeds 1996). Writing protocol studies reveal that L2 writers revert to their L1s while they compose in English (Leeds: 1996). Berman (1994: 30) states that “writers’ thoughts are not tied to a particular language but are transferable across languages”. Planning patterns in L1 and L2 are found to be very similar (Armengol-Castells, 2001; Hirose & Sasaki, 1994), though only quality of planning, not the quantity being transferred to L2. Both L1 and L2 had similar level of abstraction of the planning process (Jones & Tetroe, 1987). No elaborate initial plans were made in L1 and L2 writing (Kelly, 1986).

Think-aloud data in Lay’s (1982) case study investigating the composing processes of Chinese ESL writers revealed that L1 use facilitated in developing a strong impression and association of ideas for the essay. In producing L2 compositions, Lay’s subjects relied on their L1 for varied purposes like idea generation, planning etc. Lay’s study

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revealed that, first, “when there are more native language switches (compared to the same essay without native language switches), the essays in this study were of better quality in terms of ideas, organization and details” also that, “certain topics induce more native language switches.”

Likewise, Zamel’s (1983) study of six advanced ‘ESL’ students completing a course-related writing task revealed thoughtful insights into the L2 composing process. The holistic assessments of their writing by experienced readers identified four writers as skilled and two as unskilled writers. Zamel (1983) did not use ‘think-aloud’ data in her study to gather evidence of the writers’ processes as they write because “there is some doubt about the extent to which verbalizing aloud one’s thought while writing stimulates the real composing situation”. The results of her study revealed interesting findings. Firstly, the composing strategies of her skilled L2 writers were found similar to skilled L1 writers. In other words, skilled L2 writers composed like skilled L1 writers. Further, differences were found in the composing processes employed by skilled L2 writers and unskilled L2 writers. Like skilled L1 writers in Pianko’s (1979) and Sommers’s (1980) study, Zamel’s L2 skilled writers planned and revised in detail, gave priority to idea development, exhibited recursiveness in their writing process and edited at the end. However, the unskilled L2 writers planned and revised less, wrote short essays in length, had fewer ideas to incorporate and edited their work as they began to write. Zamel

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investigating the influence of second language on the composing process in general found out that her subjects “did not view composing in a second language in and of itself [as] problematical” hence, indicating that writing in a second language did not affect the composing process in general. Zamel (1983) noted that unlike unskilled writers, skilled writers “clearly understand what writing entails.” L2 writers employ similar composing processes in L2 and L1; however, they reach goals with different efficiencies (Moragne de Silva, 1989) with L2 writers being less proficient compared to their L1 counterparts. Less skilled writers paused often to translate ideas into English while more skilled writers spent more time to refine English expression.

Hall’s (1987) study dealt with the revision process of L2 writers. Having interviewed her four participants and followed by post-writing questionnaire, Hall analyzed the video tapes and multiple drafts and concluded that there exists a single system for revision across languages. Hall also discovered that L2 writers bring their L1 and L2 experience and knowledge as they write in L2. Similarly, Brooks’s (1985) study of five unskilled college writers with different L1s found that those writers who were extensive readers and writers in their L1s easily transferred those competencies when composing in English, demonstrating “a sense of audience, a variety of composing strategies, and a fund of implicit models.”

Arndt (1987) who studied the academic written texts of six Chinese subjects in both their L1 and L2 (English) concluded that “the composing strategies of each individual writer were found to remain consistent across languages.” Edelsky (1982) analyzed the written texts of Spanish ESL writers in Spanish and English. As Cahyono (2001) states, Edelsky’s (1982) findings suggested that “what a young writer knows about writing in the first language forms the basis of new hypotheses for writing in another language.” Furthermore, Edelsky claimed that L2 writers used certain L1 writing processes when writing in L2. Cumming (1989) investigated the writing processes of 23 Francophone students found that students constantly made switches from L2 to L1 when completing an L2 writing task. As Zhang (2008) informs learners employed L1 for various strategic purposes “to search out and to assess appropriate wording, to compare cross-linguistic equivalents, and, sometimes, to reason about linguistic choices in the L2.” Likewise, Roca et. al.’s (1999) study of five intermediate Spanish EFL writers revealed that these writers relied heavily on L1 as they composed in L2. Roca et al., (1999:27) found that these L2 writers needed to “expand, elaborate, and rehearse ideas through their L1” and “produce the pretext in L1”

Wang & Wen (2002)\(^6\) found that L2 writers made use of both L1 and L2 composing processes for varied purposes. L2 writers controlled their writing processes, generated and organized ideas while relying on L1 while they switched to L2 for task-examining and text-generating activities. Their further investigation led them to suggest that low proficiency writers directly translated from L1 to L2 as they composed while advanced L2 writers were found to use their L1 strategically for planning and generating ideas, monitoring the writing process and searching for appropriate lexical equivalents.

L2 proficiency was a variable in determining the amount of L1 use in L2 writing. Numerous studies examining the role of L2 proficiency in L1 composing process have found mixed results (Sasaki & Hirose, 1996).\(^7\) Some have found that L2 proficiency had no affect on L2 writing performance (e.g., Cumming, 1990\(^8\); Jones & Tetroe, 1987\(^9\); Raimes, 1985\(^10\) and Zamel, 1982\(^11\)). Others revealed that L2 writing proficiency does influence writers’ L2 writing performance (e.g., Cumming, 1989\(^12\); Pennington and So, 1993\(^13\) and Sasaki and Hirose, 1996\(^14\)). Wang’s (2003)\(^15\) study showed that “L2


proficiency determines the writer’s approaches to and qualities of thinking while composing in L2”. Wang (2003)\textsuperscript{79} further states that “more research needs to be done to show clearly whether L-S findings resulted from L2 proficiency or L1 writing expertise”. Woodall (2001) pointed out that there were more L1 switches by intermediate L2 proficiency writers as compared to high L2 proficiency writers, depending on whether the writers’ L1 and L2 were cognate (Spanish/ French) or non- cognate (Japanese/ English). Woodall (2002)\textsuperscript{80} concluded that:

“The duration of L-S appears to have been affected by a significant interaction of L2 proficiency and language family. The intermediate level non- cognate learners tended to use their L1s more than four times longer than their advanced learner counterparts did. This was not true for cognate learners; in this group, the advanced students used their L1s nearly twice as did their intermediate- level counterparts.”

The results of the study conducted by Siti Hamin Stapa and Abdul Hameed Abdul Majid (2009: 46)\textsuperscript{81} on sixty lower proficiency level students revealed that “generating ideas using L1 among students with low English level proficiency helps them producing higher quantity of ideas compared to the use of L2 in generation of ideas.” Likewise, Pappamihiel (2001)\textsuperscript{82} claimed that the use of the L1 supported in the acquisition of the L2.


Cumming (1989)\textsuperscript{83} pointed out that improved L2 proficiency results in the production of more effective texts. Wen Yu Wang and Qi Fang Wen (2002)\textsuperscript{84} discovered that less proficient L2 writers overwhelmingly use their L1 to manage their writing processes, generate and organize ideas, however, as their proficiency develops, L1 use gets reduced, but the amount of L1 decline in individual activities differs. Studies also examined the role of tasks on L1 switches. For example, Qi’s (1998)\textsuperscript{85} study on a highly proficient Chinese English bilingual found out that tasks requiring high cognitive effort resulted in more L1 switches. More difficult L2 tasks required more cognitive effort, ESL learners made use of more of L1 in L2 writing. Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) who analyzed the 48 Japanese ESL students’ writing processes. The participants were asked how much Japanese they used in their minds while they wrote directly in English. Jun (2008)\textsuperscript{86}, reported that “on average, 48% of the students reported using 50-75% Japanese, 27% of the students felt they used 25-50% Japanese, and 17% students reported using more than 75% Japanese while only 8% reported using less than 25% Japanese.” Hence, L2 writers used L1 with different amounts. This difference can be attributed to the L2 proficiency level. That is, as proficiency in language increases, the amount of L1 use decreases as writers switch less to L1 and vice versa.

Studies concerning L1 use in L2 writing process not only revealed striking similarities but researchers also noted some key differences in them. Most such studies found that L1 use was a source of error and interfered in the L2 writing process which led some researchers to believe that L2 and L1 writing processes are different than similar to each

other (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). In the words of Raimes (1985: 243), “all of us who have tried to write something in a second language … sense that the process of writing in an L2 is startlingly different from writing in our L1.” Further, Kroll (1990: 2) states that “it should not be presumed that the act of writing in one’s first language is the same as the act of writing in one’s second language.” Silva (1993: 669) stresses that “L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in important ways from L1 writing.”

It was Contrastive Analysis theory as represented by James (1980) which advocated that negative L1 transfer was more influential and causes interference in the L2 composing process and the thinking pattern in L1 culture paradigm influenced the way L2 writers organized their written texts, so L1 influence should be reduced as much as possible (Kaplan, 1966). Language is closely tied to culture. So, the affect of culture in writing is inseparable. Non-native writers unconsciously transfer the discourse patterns they had mastered in their L1 in the L2 composing process. Their L2 writing is rhetorically and linguistically affected by native schemata that is vastly different from English speaking cultures and may not be considered as appropriate by native readers of their texts. Thus, writing in a second language is not the blind application of some newly learned linguistic rules but familiarizing oneself with the whole set of new social and cultural schemata.

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cultural values (Bells, 1995). Hence, L2 writers need to acquire the social and cultural knowledge of L2 contexts important in the acquisition of the L2 writing skills. This knowledge enable writers to gain insights of how and at what points does their native language differs from second or foreign language helping them to avoid transfer of L1 discourse patterns as rooted in their native cultures. English speaking academic community assigns value to originality, coherence, critical thinking, logic of argument, individual voice and audience. These are fundamentally important for L2 writers in encountering the academic curriculum beyond the L2 writing classroom.

The researchers interested in dealing with differences were sure that differences between languages caused difficulty, and difficulty caused errors in L2 learning and writing. More differences lead to more possibility of errors. English being a second language, L2 writers are comparatively and naturally less fluent and efficient than native writers. Less exposure, limited linguistic knowledge and vocabulary, no or less previous contact with L2, native discourse patterns, attitude and motivation towards L2 writing, distance between the native language and L2 etc. are some factors that influence the L2 writers’ performances. L2 writing demands more effort from non-native writers who due to their limitations concentrate more on sentence construction at the expense of idea generation, planning, and goal setting. Not just there were differences in the L1 and L2 composing processes but differences also appeared in the written texts of L1 and L2 writers and of L2 writers writing in L1 and L2. First of all, the L1 and L2 planning patterns exhibited differences. From a textual perspective, the number of goals generated in the L2 seemed to decrease (Skibniewski, 1988) with more attention paid to morpho- syntactic and lexical levels than to the

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rhetorical and textual concerns of the composing process (Whalen & Menard, 1995). Besides, L2 texts incorporated less ideas than the writers actually planned in the L2 task inspite of the similar level of abstraction of plans across languages (Jones and Tetroe, 1987). L2 writers often find it difficult to use appropriate L2 expression for the ideas generated during the planning process resulting in the ‘reduction’ of plans actually planned.

Differences in the revision patterns were also noted. Writers revised their L2 written texts differently than their L1. Writers generally revise more in the L2 to confirm that their texts reflect their writing goals, or because writers lack familiarity with the L2 writing material leading them to revise more.

Additionally, the lack of command in L2 writing skills resulted in the production of fewer drafts by L2 writers and less editing as compared to their L1 counterparts (Raimes, 1985). L2 writers tended to use more clauses than L1 writers (Hu et. al., 1982). Writers could not be classified as skilled or unskilled depending on the number of clauses used in the written text (Kameen, 1980).

Connectors were used more by L2 writers than L1 writers; L2 writers overused some connectors and underused others (Granger & Tyson, 1996). Errors in the use of

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connectors resulted in problems. L2 writers faced difficulty in encoding relationships between rhetorical elements (Pelsmaekers et al., 1998) which stemmed from errors in the use of connectors.

Regarding sentence complexity, L2 writers reportedly used simpler sentences (Hu et al., 1982; Huie & Yahya, 2003). L1 and L2 writers demonstrated similar sentence complexity (M. Lee, 2003), however, in one case, L1 sentences were more complex than sentences produced in L2 (Khuwaileh & Al Shoumali, 2000). L2 learners demonstrated greater sentence complexity in writing than in speech (Wald, 1987).

With reference to passives, improved writing ability was associated with more use of passives in L2 written texts (Ferris, 1994). Skilled L2 writers made more use of passives as opposed to unskilled L2 writers (Kameen, 1980). In a study by Hinkel


L2 writers made use of fewer passives than did L1 writers. However, Hinkel’s (1997) study revealed that L2 writers reportedly used more passives.

Frequent verb tense errors occurred in L2 texts (Bryant, 1984). Less verb tense errors occurred in L1 texts (Benson et al., 1992), with fewer variations on the use of present tense (Reynolds, 2005). L2 writers used inappropriate verb forms as grammar errors (Ghrib-Maamouri, 2001).

Writers incorporated fewer nouns while writing in L2 than they did in L1 (Lanauze & Snow, 1989). More nouns were incorporated with the increase in the writing level (Grant & Ginther, 2000) and grade level (Yau & Belanger, 1985).

Studies on punctuation revealed interesting results as well. One study on the use of punctuation by adults reported that L1 writers made more errors in punctuation as compared to L2 writers (Hu et al., 1982). Another claimed that basic L1 and L2 writers used similar punctuation patterns (Benson et al., 1992).

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L2 writers were not as sensitive to audience as the L1 writers (Johnson, D. 1992). More advanced L2 writers modified their content and presented stronger and weaker opinions keeping in mind the intended reader. Less advanced L2 writers showed less concern with audience.

The above review is a brief insight into the research in second language writing process. It is clear that the studies and research till date have focused on the similarities between L1 and L2 writing process. Although it is clear that composing in L2 writing is similar as composing in L1. However, it is not exactly the same as unlike the L1 writer, L2 writer has two languages at his disposal. To enhance the understanding in the field, it is recommended that the researchers should focus on the differences rather than the similarities. Further, as the two languages have different set of strategies and patterns, blind implication of L1 writing models in a L2 writing classroom is a great blunder. Therefore, the differences have to be recognized and respected to explore better ways of teaching and research.

2.3 The Cognitive Approach to Writing

2.3.1 Writing as a process

Vivian Zamel (1976) was one of the proponents to introduce the notion of writing as a process to second language context. She emphasized that pedagogy rooted in the process writing would benefit the second language learners. The process approach to writing instruction has gained enormous support and popularity during the past two decades in the English academic community in many western universities. The process approach to writing recognizes writing as a complex process which extends itself in various ways.
facilitating preparations, drafting, revising, editing and planning in a non-linear recursive manner. The failure of the product approach in the teaching of writing both to native English speakers and to ESL students lead to the birth of new, comprehensive, learner-centered approach to teaching writing i.e. the process approach. Unlike the product approach, which restricted students’ freedom in actively participating in the learning process, the process approach liberated the learners in becoming autonomous and taking charge of their own work, making them the owners and creators of their writing rather than mere passive recipients in the writing classroom.

Many features distinguished both approaches to teaching writing. The product approach which preceded the process approach unduly over emphasized the mastery of grammatical and syntactical structures and advocated imitating models. In doing so, it overemphasized “correctness” and form of the finished product. Moreover, neglecting audiences as an important element, it diminishes writing as a purposeless activity which can be carried out through repetition and imitation. Rooted in behaviorist theory of learning, writing was viewed as a habit-formation activity not going beyond sentence and paragraph level. Form was more important than content and errors were discouraged. Richards and Rogers (1986)\textsuperscript{118} states that “good habits are formed by giving a correct response rather than making mistakes.” Pincas (1962: 185-86)\textsuperscript{119} informed that “The learner is not allowed to ‘create’ in the target language at all… [T]he use of language is the manipulation of fixed patterns; those patterns are learned by imitation; and … not until they have been learned can originality occur…” Students accordingly were not...


meaningfully involved in the writing endeavor and as Silva (1990: 13) explains that the act of writing was reduced as “an exercise in habit formation” resulting in “mindless copies of a particular organizational plan or style” (Eschholz 1980). Product-oriented approach to writing instruction strongly advocates the use of a model approach in writing classrooms. Mindless, repetitive mimicking of these models leaves the students powerless and paralyses them. White (1988) defines these models as “too long and too remote from student (writers’) own writing problems.” Ignoring the process, the finished product gets priority. Moreover, style is sacrificed over form of the written product. Eschholz (1980) puts it in this way “By studying forms and organizational patterns first students come to see form as a mould into which content is somehow poured… [S]tudents have no commitment to what they are writing, and care only for how they write it.” Flower and Hayes (1977) were dissatisfied with the modeling as a problem-solving technique and asserted that “… we help our students analyze the product, but we leave the process of writing up to inspiration”. Eschholz (1980) viewed model based

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http://www.hltmag.co.4k/sepo2/index.htm p. 38


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approach as to be “stultifying and inhibiting rather than empowering and liberating”. Watson (1982: 9) further adds that the classic ‘product approach’ to writing involved students more or less copying or manipulating the model in various ways: turning declaratives into interrogatives, for example. As a result, not only is the language produced patently inauthentic, but ‘the risk of boredom is great’.

The teacher dictates much of the classroom activities and is the sole authority correcting students’ work. There is no flexibility in the way students worked. Johns (1997: 7) gives the portrait of such a classroom where “the learner is a passive recipient of expert knowledge and direction. Not surprisingly, the role of the teacher is that of expert and authority, the person who directs all students learning for traditional theories, language and textual forms are central”.

In sharp contrast, process oriented approach views writing as a thinking activity which involves writers making choices and decisions reflecting on the ownership of their work. Thinking is central to learning to write. In fact, writing and thinking are interwoven. Writing is a non-linear, recursive, developmental process that engages the writer in creating meaning. The process approach to writing gives writers the autonomy to make choices as they write and focuses upon the awareness of what writers actually do. Unlike its precedent which overly concerns itself with the mechanical aspects of writing, this approach requires writers to think of such elements as purpose, audience, experience, meaning, voice in making informed choices and sound decisions in communicating. Fluency, creation of meaning, expression of thought, and communication are important concerns of this approach to teaching pedagogy. Therefore, what is written is more important than how it is written. Writing is a purposeful activity during which ideas are


developed and formulated in writing. Writing as a process involves many fluid and overlapping stages like pre-writing, rewriting, revising and publishing. The writer not only writes meaningfully but also organizes his ideas into coherent and logical forms. Writing is not isolated from other communication skills but integrates itself with speaking, listening, and reading.

The process approach empowers its students by involving them into whole writing process from start to end. The activities associated with such an approach like group discussion, peer-editing, brainstorming, clustering, etc. requires students to actively participate in the composition classroom. Errors are tolerated or ignored and students are not penalized for the mistakes that they commit as they learn to write. Errors are not seen as hindrance to learning but they point out the efforts the students make in learning to write along with informing teachers with the areas of weaknesses that they need to focus. Accordingly, with such change in attitude and practices, teachers’ role also transforms from being an authoritative figure to a guide facilitating the writing process for the student-writers providing them timely and formative feedback during the process of each students’ composition. The teacher not only corrects and rates the students finished products but also becomes a concerned reader assisting, conferencing and interviewing students each time they find something difficult. The teachers positively respond to students’ work in the form of marginal and end comments. The process approach to writing provides positive environment in which students collaborate and cooperate willingly. In this way, writing becomes much of an interaction and builds on a positive attitude in students. Flower and Hayes (1981)\textsuperscript{128} states that writing is best understood as

“a set of distinctive thinking process which writers organize or orchestrate during the act of writing.”

Importantly, the students are taught to write for an audience: who is he writing for? What is important for the reader to know? The students are free to choose their own topics and genre, bring in their own experiences and observations in the writing assignments.

The EAP literature advocates the application of the process approach owing to its recursiveness and cyclical nature that the writers employ as they compose in which writers constantly plan (pre-write), and revise (re-write) while they write. Planning being a distinct thinking process is used by the writer over and over again during composition. After planning, ‘good writers’, according to White (1988)\(^{129}\), write their first draft without worrying about detail and accuracy. After the first draft is written, students read it for fluency and meaning before rewriting their papers.

Therefore, research has changed its gears and focuses more on process than on product, more on composing than on composition. The process approach emphasizes the cognitive processes that writers employ as they compose a text. Two different trends emerged within the process movement, each trend defining the process in its own way: the expressivist and the cognitivist (Faigley, 1986). The expressivist view writing as a personal endeavor in which the writer freely expresses his/her feeling without worrying about the form. For the cognitivist, writing is a refined skill which is acquired in the later stages of the process of learning. It concerns itself with the study and investigation of the mental operations that writers make use of in order to generate, express and refine ideas for the text production.

Second language learners are very different than native English speakers. To begin with, they already have their mother tongue at their disposal. They come from different educational backgrounds, social classes, speak different languages, have different literacy skills in their first language, and have varied contact with and exposure to English etc. Characteristically, the process approach is ideally suited to the second language learner as it integrates other important skills with it and accommodates a number of variables in it making it a dynamic teaching pedagogy.

2.3.2 Stages in Writing Process

Describing the stages of the writing process, Gardner and Johnson (1997)\textsuperscript{130} writes:

“Writing is a fluid process created by writers as they work. Accomplished writers move back and forth between the stages of the process, both consciously and unconsciously. Young writers, however, benefit from the structure and security of following the writing process in their writing”.

There are three stages to process writing which the writer may use in a non-linear manner:

STAGE 1: Prewriting

Pre-writing stage is the most important stage in which the writer draws a rough plan on which he shapes his draft. Most of the ideas are created, discovered, and developed in the pre-writing stage. The teacher assists the students in collecting all the prior memories, experiences, observations, and interactions that can help him to identify, develop ideas and ease his thinking process. The teacher may assist students to free write or to discuss in groups or may give students some brainstorming exercises to motivate them and trigger their thinking. Ideas keep flowing into the writers’ mind.

2.3.2.1 Pre Writing Techniques

A number of techniques and ways correspond to each stage to nurture the writing skills in students and develop them as good writers. Below are mentioned some of the pre writing techniques for thinking and planning activities.

2.3.2.1.a Free writing

Free writing is a great technique to generate ideas without stopping to correct mistakes or errors. Here, the writer is in the state of “stream of consciousness” and his sole purpose is to write for himself without being concerned with any other thing. Free writing as defined by Tucker and Costello (1985)\(^{131}\) is “non- stop writing” that “can be compared to warm up exercises athletes do before a competition” and that free writing’s “purpose is to loosen up the muscles of your brain, while encouraging you to relax and to see that writing is a process that includes many stages”. Chastain (1988)\(^{132}\) points out that “the goal of free writing is to write. The writer should entirely concentrate on the creative process. He should not even consider criticizing what he is saying because criticism hinders the flow of ideas and results in hesitation and blockage of ideas. Free writing stimulates the flow of thought and encourages it to continue uninterrupted”.

Elbow (1981: 13)\(^{133}\) appreciating free writing mentions that “free writing is the best way to learn… to separate the producing process from the revision process” and further elaborates that “free writing is the easiest way to get words on paper”, where the writer writes for five to ten minutes.

2.3.2.1.b Brainstorming

Teacher assists students to brain storm as many ideas as possible within a short time period. Unlike free writing, this is personal and meant for the writer himself/ herself, the


teacher brainstorms with students to generate quality and creative ideas using which the writer writes his/ her draft. Raimes (1983)\textsuperscript{134} informs that “Brainstorming can be done out aloud in a class or a group, or individually on a paper”. Messenger and Taylor (1989)\textsuperscript{135} adds that “Even just two or three people bouncing ideas off one another can generate an astonishing amount of material in short time”. The teacher stimulates students’ thinking using some leading questions about the concerned topic. Like free writing it is an apt technique to keep ideas flowing without being concerned about organization or grammar. Not only does it ease idea development but also breakdown mental blocks and barriers to thinking resulting in some really useful chain of ideas woven by each student participant. In this way, students collaborate as they write and writing becomes a thinking activity granting ownership to each student and making writing a joint venture. Brain storming can take many forms:

2.3.2.1.c Bubbling

A great technique for visual learners in which a word or a phrase is picked from the topic and ideas are generated. The teacher puts the phrase in a circle and soon related ideas began to generate. For example, the topic “Harmful effects of video games” can be explored using the technique of bubbling.


Soon, multiple circles are drawn containing varied ideas produced during the discussion radiating from the main circle.

Figure 1: Bubbling diagram on the topic “Harmful effects of video games.”

And so on. Not only helpful for generating ideas, bubble “maps” helps in organizing ideas as well, because things that should be linked together in the paper will be linked on the bubble map.

2.3.2.1.d Clustering

Very similar to bubbling, Pica (1986)\textsuperscript{136} defines clustering as “non-linear brain storming process that generate ideas, images and feelings around a stimulus word until a pattern

becomes discernible”. The main idea is written on the centre of the page and the associated ideas are arranged around the first word.

### 2.3.2.1.e Looping

Looping is another great technique which student writer uses to generate ideas and resembles much free writing. Like free writing, the student-writer rapidly and freely writes on a given or chosen topic for five to ten minutes ignoring grammaticality or accuracy. After authentic free writing, he/she reads the finished product, underlining important points in his/her writing.

After the main or controlling statement is derived, student-writer repeats the same process—this time expanding the new concise controlling statement. Following the similar process, many loops can be formed resulting in new important controlling ideas and its elaborations. Spack (1984: 656) defines loop writing as an “invention technique” in which the writer abides by “a non-stop writing in the absence of self censorship”.

**STAGE 2: Drafting**

After the students have generated sufficient ideas in the pre-writing stage, they set to write their draft using some of the ideas, languages and structures generated during the pre-writing activities. The first draft does not necessarily need to be perfect and that its’ purpose is to get words on paper without worrying much about form. Spellings and grammatical accuracy are not paid much attention. Students may add or delete a certain sentence or idea, refine or modify the existing ones or they may stop to change the order of their main support or rearrange their ideas in a new way. However, the writing process being recursive, student-writers may explore and discover new ideas—thus re-engaging in pre-writing. The focus of the drafting stage is to concentrate on meaning.

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Organization or mechanics are taken care of once the meaning or content are clear. The writer checks to see whether the ideas are coherent, all the necessary details have been included, the major point is efficiently supported by the minor ones etc. Hence, the first draft is not the final draft and this takes us to the third stage of the writing process.

**STAGE 3: Revising/ editing and proof reading**

After writing the first draft, the writer reads it for revision, proof reading and editing. This stage is primarily devoted to check the quality of the finished product. In other words, the form of the finished product is focused and formal accuracy, organization, and mechanics are the areas that are dealt with. Teachers help students with revision and proof reading and may also give organizational advice.

There is a difference between revision and editing. Whereas revision is done at the level of ideas to see “what you write”, proof reading, on the other hand, confirms the grammatical accuracy, i.e., “how you write”. Students edit/ revise for ideas, content, logical unity, coherence and organization, introductory and ending sentences. Students proof read for spelling, punctuation, capitalization, lack of parallelism, flaws in the style (formal/ informal), structure and grammar mistakes etc. Students may exchange their drafts with that of their peers. Students should be provided with a self-assessment checklist on which they can read and analyze their written work.

**2.3.3 Models of the Process Approach to Writing**

Second language writing research and theory has derived valuable insights from first language context. The writing models developed in L1 contexts have been extremely useful to L2 researchers attempting to explain the cognitive processes employed by second language learners in arriving at the finished product. These L1 models do not exactly measure the complex cognitive processes that the writers employ but they do give an accurate picture of students’ mind as they write. These models describe the cognitive processes employed by writers, sources of knowledge that the writers bring in
to incorporate in their writing, and the factors influencing the writing process. These models clearly distinguish between the types of writing that expert and novices produces. They employ methods such as think-aloud protocols, and retrospective interviews to indicate that good writers extensively plan and revise their work whereas weak writers are busy with the surface features of the text such as grammatical forms and structures. Expert writers know that their writing is meant for a particular readership. They are aware of their audience expectations and needs in trying to adjust their writing according to their mental level. Besides, they take care of the logical organization of their work.

2.3.3.a Hayes and Flower (1981)

A model that exerted influence in L1 writing context was that of Hayes and Flower (1981) model. Hayes and Flower’s model focuses on what writers do as they compose. Hayes and Flower’s model explained the writing process in terms of the task environment, the writer’s long term memory, and a number of cognitive activities like planning, translating, reviewing etc. to drive the individual’s writing process. The task environment comprised the writing assignment and the text produced so far. The writer’s long term memory included knowledge of the topic, knowledge of audience and stored writing plans.

The Hayes- Flower model revealed the fact that writing is not a linear process but recursive in nature and does not necessarily use the writing process in a linear way but move back and forth to produce a written text. Hence, an inquiry into the writing process can develop the pedagogy rather than providing models of rhetorical forms to imitate and follow a particular structure. However, it lacks explanatory power. It does not recognize cross- cultural differences and socio- cultural factors that influence written language (Kern, 2000). Unlike native speakers who are more fluent and familiar with the conventions of expository discourse (Kogen, 1986), L2 writers struggle in the process of acquiring these conventions and need more instruction and practice about the language.
2.3.3.b Hayes (1996)

Hayes (1996) model is an extension of the Hayes and Flower (1981) model. Hayes (1996) model takes into account the complexities involved in the writing process. Accordingly, Hayes (1996) model divides the writing process into two main parts: the task environment and the individual. The task environment, further, comprises the social environment and the physical environment. The social environment includes the audience (real or imagined) for one’s writing, as well as any collaborators in the writing process. The physical environment, on the other hand, comprises the text written so far, along with the composing medium, i.e., hand writing or word processing. The individual part being the central focus of the Hayes model consists of the four components each interacting with each other. These four components are the working memory, motivation and affect, cognitive processes, and long-term memory. Working memory includes the phonological memory storing auditory/verbal information along with the visual/spatial sketchpad, storing the visuals or spatially coded information as written words or graphs, and a semantic memory storing conceptual information. Hayes model recognizes the importance of motivation and affect in accelerating the writing process. Hence, motivation and affect inspires goals, predispositions, beliefs and attitudes, cost/benefit
estimates influencing the way the writer perceives the writing task. The cognitive processes in the Hayes model comprise the text interpretation, reflection, and text production. Writers interpret text through listening, reading, and scanning graphics thereby, creating internal representations using linguistic and graphic input. Reflection enables the writers to create new internal representations from existing internal representations. The writer produces new linguistic or graphic output from internal representations in the text production process. Using all the three processes, not only one creates a draft but also revises one’s writing as well. Long-term memory— the fourth individual aspect stores the relevant task information and knowledge. Long-term memory includes task schemas, topic knowledge, audience knowledge, linguistic knowledge, and genre knowledge. Hayes (1996)\textsuperscript{138} defines task schemas as “packages of information stored in long-term memory that specify how to carry out a particular task”. The individual student should have some topic knowledge to write about. Knowledge of the audience would pertain to considering many social and cultural issues. Linguistic knowledge includes the knowledge of the language forms and structures that the writer uses to accomplish the writing process. Finally, genre knowledge consists of the knowledge about socially and culturally appropriate forms that the writer uses in particular situations for a given purpose. However, this model has certain limitations as well. First of all, it does recognize that writing is a social act; it does not specifically define the situational variables involved in writing. It merely lists audiences and collaborators rather in a vague manner. That is, how social factors influences writing are not explained in detail. Further, it pays little attention to linguistic knowledge. Linguistic or language knowledge is essential in developing L2 proficiency, ignoring it becomes a key shortcoming of the Hayes (1996) model.

Another influential and more developed model is that of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). They draw a two-model description of writing thus defining and differentiating between knowledge telling and knowledge transforming processes. According to Bereiter and Scardamalia, the novice writers follow a simple writing process often resembling to the spoken form of language which is so ‘natural’ and unproblematic to any native speaker. The knowledge telling model involves little revision and planning. Beginning writers find it difficult to plan, generate content and revise their work. In order to generate sufficient content, the beginning writers rely on three sources of input to ease and facilitate the writing process. The first input to drive the content is the topic of the assignment itself. Next is the writer’s discourse schema which enables the writer
to choose the appropriate forms of writing needed to respond a given writing assignment. Finally, the writer uses the text produced so far to reflect on his work and generate adequate response to reach a given target. Thus, knowledge telling follows the straight ahead form of ordinary speech production and does not require any greater amount of planning or goal setting than does every day conversation.


The model of knowledge telling process as followed by the unskilled writers is simple to draw and understand. Here, the writer draws the mental representation of the writing assignment uses content knowledge and discourse knowledge. Topic and genre identifiers search relevant content necessary for the writing task. The searched content if found appropriate and suitable is accepted and written down. This way the content is generated regularly by making use of the text written so far in order to probe the working
memory. The process repeats itself and ends till the writer’s working memory are exhausted and the writer cannot generate any new content. The quote from a 12-year old is provided by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)\(^ {139}\) to describe the process:

“I have a whole bunch of ideas and write down until my supply of ideas is exhausted. Then I might try to think of more ideas up to the point when you can’t get any more ideas that are worth putting down on paper and then I would end it.”

Different to ‘natural’ and ‘simple’ knowledge-telling process, the knowledge transformation involves a great deal of cognitive effort and requires much practice on the part of the writer. This process being complicated, demands effort and expertise in completing a task of writing. Expert writers usually involved in such processes and revise and plan extensively both at the local and global level. In this manner, it incorporates the knowledge-telling process with it. In this process, writing creates new knowledge and thus facilitates the writing process. The knowledge transformation model opens up the idea of multiple processing which is revealed through writing tasks that vary in processing complexity. Bereiter and Scardamalia’s (1987)\(^ {140}\) research on graduate students led to the observation that the students “generated goals for their compositions and engaged in problem solving involving structure and gist as well as verbatim representations.” Moreover, Bereiter and Scardamaila (1987)\(^ {141}\) criticized formal schooling that encourages the more passive kind of cognition by “continually telling students what to do,” instead of encouraging them “to follow their spontaneous interests and impulses… and assume responsibility for what becomes of their minds”


It is evident from the diagram that in the beginning the writer analyses the problem and sets goals for his task. The problems are solved in the two domains, called the content problem space and the rhetorical problem space. The content problem space searches memory for content relevant to the topic while the rhetorical problem space takes care of the forms of writing necessary to complete an assignment. Thus, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)\textsuperscript{142} describe the complete process as ‘a two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text’. Once the content and rhetorical problems are solved, the knowledge-telling process is used for composing the actual text.

(Source: Weigle, 2002: 34)

Bereiter and Scardamalia’s (1987) two-model process is appreciated widely and largely accepted by researchers and scholars. First of all, it provides a satisfactory explanation of the complex process of expert writers thus drawing the distinction between the thought processes of skilled and unskilled writers. Even skilled writers face difficulty in comprehending a task of writing. This mostly happens if the task requires more information processing and the writer is inexperienced in a particular genre. Also, it gives a hierarchical account of the processing involved while writing. Besides this, it is also based on hypothesized empirical evidence collected through techniques like retrospective interviews, think-aloud protocols and questionnaires. Complete in many respects, this model too suffers from certain limitations. Like other models, this model lacks the explanatory power in that it does not explain how and when the writers move from knowledge telling to knowledge transforming phase in a writing process. Moreover, it does not give an account of the hierarchy of process models for writing nor any extensive research has been done on the task types that specifically engage one processing model or other setting further limitations to the much recommended model (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996).

2.3.4 Advantages of the Process Approach to Writing

The process writing approach offers several important advantages in a composition classroom. Some of them are as follows:

1. Process approach emphasizes on function rather than form. Meaning or creation of meaning is more important rather than surface structures. In doing so, it focuses on what students write rather than how they write it.

2. Process approach offers a more comprehensive view of writing that is more close to the real world. Writing is not a purposeless activity but it actually communicates ideas, feelings, opinions and experiences. Process approach reflects the real essence of writing.
3. Following process approach in the writing classroom makes students smarter. Writing is not taught as a separate isolated activity but is integrated efficiently with other skills where students read each other’s work, discuss in groups, and exchange ideas with their partners.

4. Process approach improvises on the roles of teachers and learners. Teachers’ role transforms from that of a marker to the reader focusing more on content than on form. Teachers become the facilitators and torch bearers guiding students to produce effective texts. Students, on the other hand, concentrate on meaningful content of their writing and constantly re-plan, re-write, and re-edit it. The classroom thus becomes a learner centered place.

5. Process approach provides students with constant and regular feedback. Formative in nature, it is mostly given in between drafts as students keep writing. Further, students are encouraged to become readers and critics of their writing and participate in the assessment of their own work. Accordingly, students exchange their compositions with peers. Students edit and proofread their own work reflecting on their weaknesses and overcoming them. It respects the writer’s creativity and autonomy in the expression of thoughts, moods and knowledge.

6. Students are taught to write for a specific audience in the process writing classrooms. James (1993) suggests that the process approach promotes individual awareness in which the writer feels his responsibility to be a part of the actual writing process through pair or group discussion in “working one’s way to a written product that is to be made acceptable to the new (or newly re-entered) discourse community”.

2.3.5 Shortcomings of the Writing Process Approach

Many controversies surround the process approach to writing.

1. Students are required to write several drafts before they actually produce the finished product. Writing and re-writing may cause frustration and boredom among students. Therefore, teachers should set up supportive environment and be patient.

2. Process approach focuses less on accuracy. It gives minimal treatment to accuracy, i.e., grammar and structure.

3. Writing and teaching of writing can overburden the teacher who already has a lot of assignments on her desk for evaluations. Moreover, a teacher needs to organize the lessons efficiently to train students in different stages of the writing process. For this, a teacher needs to introduce a variety of activities for each stage and set clear objectives. Her responsibility does not end with it. She has to tolerate, bear patiently and tactfully a lot of bad writing that students generate in order to teach them the essentials of good writing.

4. Further, the process writing approach overemphasizes the cognitive aspect of the writer, i.e. individual student’s psychological functioning. In doing so, it neglects the relevant demands of the real academic world as process writing classrooms bear little resemblance to the situations in which [a student’s writing] will eventually be exercised. Such an approach poses serious problems in an EAP type of teaching where the writing is source-based, examinable and fiercely time-constrained.

5. Besides, it gives less attention to genre knowledge. Swales (1990)\textsuperscript{144} assert that process approach overemphasizes “the cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer’s internal world.” It results in a failure to look into the social nature of writing which enables them to construct the different kinds of texts they have to write.