

**THE TEACHING OF THE ESL WRITING SKILL IN AFRIKAANS SECONDARY
SCHOOLS: A DIDACTIC EVALUATION**

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ABSTRACT

Writing in a second language is a very complex process. A great deal of research has been done to determine effective teaching methods in this regard. The problem, however, is that researchers' recommendations do not correlate with what is happening in the classroom.

A literature study on various methods of teaching creative writing was done in order to establish didactic criteria for the effective teaching of creative writing in ESL.

An empirical study was undertaken at five Afrikaans Secondary Schools in the Brits/Rustenburg area. A questionnaire was used to ascertain whether teachers of ESL meet the didactic criteria.

It was found that teachers prepare pupils for the writing they intend to do but seldom assist or give feedback to pupils during the writing process. Almost 80% of teachers mark only the final draft. The final product and not the writing process is emphasized. The literature study indicates that this approach is likely to be unsuccessful.

In contrast to this approach, an approach which involves the teacher in the whole writing process is recommended. Pupils are given more time to discuss and refine their ideas with the teacher and with their peers before they start writing. The teacher gives continuous feedback while pupils are busy writing so that they can revise their writing until they are satisfied with it.

The evaluation procedure for creative writing in ESL should be adjusted so that pupils receive support throughout the writing process.

OPSOMMING

Om in 'n tweede taal te skryf is 'n ingewikkelde proses. Heelwat navorsing is al gedoen om effektiewe onderrigmetodes in hierdie verband vas te stel. Die probleem is egter dat navorsers se bevindinge en die klaskamerpraktyk nie korreleer nie.

D.m.v. 'n literatuurstudie is verskillende onderrigmetodes bestudeer. Daaruit is didaktiese kriteria opgestel waaraan onderrigmetodes moet voldoen om effektief te wees.

'n Empiriese studie is daarna by vyf Afrikaanse sekondêre skole in die Brits/Rustenburg area uitgevoer. 'n Vraelys is gebruik om te bepaal aan watter van die vasgestelde didaktiese kriteria onderwysers van Engels Tweede Taal voldoen.

Bevindinge toon dat onderwysers werk doen om leerlinge voor te berei om te skryf, maar dat hulp selde verleen of terugvoering gegee word terwyl hulle besig is om te skryf. Ongeveer 80% van die onderwysers evalueer 'n skryfstuk slegs eenmaal. Daar word dus op die eindproduk gekonsentreer en nie op die skryfproses nie. Die literatuurstudie bewys dat hierdie benadering waarskynlik onsuksesvol sal wees.

In teenstelling hiermee, word 'n benadering voorgestel waarin die onderwyser by die hele skryfproses betrokke raak. Leerlinge word meer tyd gegun om hulle idees met die onderwyser en ander leerlinge te bespreek en te verfyn voordat hulle begin skryf. Die onderwyser gee dan voortdurend terugvoering terwyl die leerlinge skryf sodat hulle die werk by herhaling kan hersien totdat hulle daarmee tevrede is.

Die evalueringsprosedure van skryfwerk in Engels Tweede Taal sal heraangepas moet word sodat leerlinge soveel as moontlik ondersteun word gedurende die skryfproses.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of problem

Writing specialists agree that writing is an immensely complex process (Daigon, 1986:11; Holt, 1989:6; Byrne, 1988:1). The skill of writing the second language is regarded as being especially difficult (Kilfoil and Van der Walt, 1989:155) and cannot be achieved by chance (Rivers and Temperley, 1978:263). It requires special teaching (Byrne, 1979:29; Pincas, 1982:110).

Useful research to assist teachers in using the most effective methods has been conducted in recent years, however, Farris (1987:28) has noted a "widening gap" between composition researchers and teacher practitioners.

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:158) observe that the writing of composition usually occurs at the end of a cycle of work. The topics are generally set on the material presented in the cycle. Many teachers, however, regard the work done in the cycle as adequate preparation for composition writing. According to Byrne (1979:24) learners are abandoned at a stage somewhat short of the final goal. Having been trained how to write and combine sentences, the learners are expected to produce texts without further assistance.

Writing is thus seen as a product, and only the final draft is evaluated (Kilfoil and Van der Walt, 1989:158; Lewitt, 1990:2; Chandler et al., 1989:1). This method, however, has caused frustration and failure (Silver, 1989:24; Daigon, 1986:9; Byrne, 1979:24; Lewitt, 1990:2; Chandler *et al.*, 1989:1).

In contrast to this approach, researchers advocate a pupil-centred approach in which writing is seen as a process. Pupils are given time to think and discuss their ideas on a specific topic and are only then expected to write a draft or framework of what they want to account. This is often discussed and refined again. The teacher is involved in every step of the process and continuously provides feedback (Kilfoil and Van der Walt, 1989:158; Nolan, 1988:2; Holt, 1989:2).

Empirical studies undertaken in the USA and the UK have already proved the success of the process method of teaching writing (Dudley, 1989:28-32; Hernandez, 1987:1-14; Lewitt, 1990:2-4; Silver, 1989:24-27).

The following questions could be asked in this regard:

- Which didactic criteria must be met in the teaching of writing?
- To what extent are these criteria met in practice?

1.2 Aims of the study

The aims of the study are to:

- establish the didactic criteria which the teaching of writing must meet;
- establish to what extent the teaching of writing in practice meets the criteria;
- make recommendations for the teaching of writing in secondary schools. ✓✓

1.3 Research design

1.3.1 Literature study

A literature survey concerning methods in the teaching of the writing skill in ESL will be undertaken.

1.3.2 Empirical research

The study is a descriptive one.

1.3.2.1 Research design

A questionnaire will be sent to teachers at certain Afrikaans Secondary Schools to determine which methods they use to teach writing.

1.3.2.2 Study population

English teachers at Afrikaans Secondary Schools in the Rustenburg and Brits areas.

1.4 Programme of study

Chapter 2 deals with the characteristics of writing as well as the relationship between speech and writing. It is also concerned with the methods of teaching the writing skill and the advantages and disadvantages of each. In **Chapter 3** the process method of teaching the writing skill is explained. **Chapter 4** focuses on the didactic criteria necessary for the development of the writing skill. **Chapter 5** gives an account of the empirical investigation. **Chapter 6** contains a didactic evaluation of the writing skill. Recommendations for the teaching of the writing skill are also made. In **Chapter 7** the study is summarized and concluded. Recommendations for further research are also made.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS IN THE TEACHING OF THE WRITING SKILL IN ESL

2.1 Introduction

In order to study the teaching of the writing skill, one first has to look at the characteristics of writing. In this chapter writing will be defined and attention paid to difficulties learners experience in developing the writing skill. The relationship between writing and speech is of the utmost importance and will also be studied.

Methods of teaching the writing skill will then be discussed and the advantages and disadvantages of each will be indicated.

2.2 A definition of writing

According to Byrne (1988:1), writing is more than the mere production of graphic symbols; it also involves the encoding of a message or messages of some kind, in other words, the translating of thoughts into language.

Walshe (1987:23) maintains that writing is to take thoughts from the invisible mind and make them visible on paper. These can then be contemplated and revised until the best thinking a person is capable of, is produced.

Writing specialists agree that writing is an immensely complex process and the most difficult of all the language skills (Daigon, 1986:11; Holt, 1989:6; Byrne, 1988:1). According to Holt (1989:1-6) one reason for this is that writing can never be taught in isolation. The writing of a composition, for example, involves thinking, as well as the listening, speaking and reading skills, since all language skills are inherently interdependent. He further argues that when one wants to express one's thoughts, the first natural step is verbalization. When these ideas have to be transcribed in writing, however, one is involved in a much slower process and confronted with problems not encountered previously, such as, for example, the use of correct spelling and punctuation.

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:155) point out that the skill of writing the second language is especially difficult, since apart from the normal difficulties involved in writing, it also requires knowledge of the second language.

2.3 Writing and speech

Peacock (1986:12) states that it is tempting to think of writing as simply speech written down. He points out, however, that although writing and talking are parallel language modes with essential features in common, there are also important differences between the two language modes. The latter accounts for the problems children experience with writing.

According to Byrne (1988:2) a comparison between speech and writing could help the understanding of some of the difficulties experienced in writing. He purports that speech always takes place in context, whereas writing creates its own context. Brown and Hood (1989:3) similarly point out that the teaching of writing does not always take place in context, but is sometimes practised in disconnected sentences. An example of this is where pupils have to follow instructions such as "Rewrite into the negative" or "Change the following sentences into questions." Pupils find writing out of context even more difficult than writing in context.

Pupils are often expected to write on a topic irrelevant to their interests, and this is far more difficult than dealing with a situation where communication takes place spontaneously by addressing other people (Rivers and Temperley, 1978:316). Peacock (1986:13), Rivers and Temperley (1978:316) and Byrne (1986:13) further argue that speech is easier in the sense that the speaker is in interaction with others. Immediate feedback is given by listeners, so that the speaker knows whether what he has said is clear and understood or not. In speech learners are allowed to use short and sometimes incomplete and unorganized sentences. The speaker, in addition, also has stress, intonation, speed, pitch and body movement to help convey the message.

In contrast to speech, writing is a much more solitary and formal activity (Peacock, 1986:316; Byrne, 1980:3). Rivers and Temperley (1978:316) point out that the writer does not experience the involvement and support from listeners, but is, instead, faced with a blank paper. Brown and Hood (1989:3) note that writing is a more permanent record of language proficiency and pupils are often expected to produce

perfect writing the first time they attempt to write something. Learners find this demand for unrehearsed production threatening.

Byrne (1980:3) points out that speakers usually address someone specific, while writers do not necessarily know who might read their work. According to Rivers and Temperley (1978:316) pupils therefore often see no purpose in the writing activity and convey a lack of interest. They emphasize the fact that learning to write is no natural development like learning to speak. Byrne (1980:4) states that people grow up learning to speak and spend much time doing so. They normally speak because they want to and about matters which are of interest to them. Writing, on the other hand, is learned through a process of instruction. Learners are obliged to learn structures which are less frequently used in speech, and they also have to learn how to organize their ideas in such a way that they can be understood by some reader. Writing, most of the time, is not done out of free choice, but is imposed on the writer. In the school situation, for example, pupils have no choice as to whether they want to write or not. They, furthermore, have hardly any choice about the topic they have to write on. Writers are also often unfamiliar with the topic, and this could leave them discouraged.

Byrne (1979:29) warns against the assumption that learners who are mature and have acquired some proficiency in the spoken language, have the natural ability to write. Rivers and Temperley (1978:316) point out that everyone who is a native speaker, is not necessarily a native writer.

Byrne (1979:29) suggests that writing be taught by the use of special techniques and forms of practice. The techniques used to teach oral skills are inappropriate for the teaching of the writing skill, and special attention should be paid to the development of efficient teaching strategies in this regard.

2.4 Methods in the teaching of writing in ESL

Different methods in the teaching of the writing skill in ESL have been proposed by researchers and methodologists. However, these methods are not easily categorized.

Broughton *et al.* (1978:118) divide writers and researchers into three schools: those who

- advocate controlled writing;
- propose free writing;
- are in favour of progression from controlled to free writing.

2.4.1 Controlled writing

Spencer (1983:80 & 87) views writing as the sum of separately taught sub-skills. According to this approach all the separate qualities required in a good piece of writing are isolated and pupils have to practise these rhetorical devices in sentences until they have mastered them. They will then be able to recall and use them when they are needed in a piece of writing.

According to Pincas (1982:91), as well as Bright and McGregor (1970:130), pupils must not write what they want to, because this will result in a large number of errors. Contrary to other approaches they do not believe that pupils learn from the errors they make in their writing. If this were true, pupils who make more errors, would learn more. It is suggested that teachers control the writing done by pupils and that they design writing exercises in such a way that errors are eliminated from written work.

According to Broughton *et al.* (1978:118) controlled writing consists of exercises in which the final product is linguistically determined by the teacher. A paragraph with blanks to be filled, for example, can be considered a controlled composition.

Exercises such as the following, in which pupils are taught how to write and combine various sentence types, are proposed (Byrne, 1979:25):

Choose an answer from those provided and complete the following paragraph:

A (1) man (2) walked (3) down the street. A (4) girl (5) was waiting for him outside a (6) shop. As he approached, she smiled (7) and said, "Hello. How are you?"

(1) tall, young, well-dressed

(2) with a beard, in a black hat, with sunglasses

(3) rapidly, hurriedly, impatiently

(4) pretty, fair-haired, dark-skinned

(5) in high-heeled shoes, with an umbrella, in a pink hat

(6) chemist's, grocer's, bicycle

(7) *pleasantly, attractively, in a friendly manner*

Byrne (1979:24-25) does not approve of such procedures because they are too manipulative and pupils are expected to learn how to write correctly by being obliged to write correctly.

Supporters of the accuracy-oriented approach, however, argue that such an exercise is just the starting point. Emphasis should be on step-by-step learning and formal correctness. The amount of control should gradually be reduced till pupils are expected to exercise meaningful choices (Byrne, 1988:22).

An example of such an exercise, as illustrated by Byrne (1979:24), is the one below where the pupils merely have to choose one answer from those provided:

Last (Tuesday/Friday/Saturday) afternoon, my wife and I went to (visit/see) Donald and Hilda (my brother and his wife/our eldest daughter and her husband/our nephew and his wife) in their new (house/home).

Researchers who oppose this method point out that even if there is sometimes freedom of choice at lexical level, only correct sentences can be written down (Bright and McGregor, 1970:131).

Researchers who propose the accuracy-oriented approach, however, believe that learners should gradually and systematically be led towards free expression (Byrne, 1979:24). According to Broughton *et al.* (1978:118) exercises can be adjusted as soon as pupils become more confident in working with controlled composition exercises. They can then be given exercises in which more alternatives are available regarding the choice of language. At a later stage learners may be given a good deal of guidance with language and content, but also be allowed some opportunities for self-expression (Byrne, 1988:22).

Byrne (1979:27) upholds the notion that the fundamental principle of guiding pupils towards the mastering of the writing skill, and perhaps controlling what they write, should not be dismissed lightly. According to him, the principle has, however, been misapplied and pupils simply cannot develop a writing skill by doing exercises in which no errors can be made. To do exercises in order to practise and develop a formal skill, rather than to attempt to communicate something, is writing for the sake of writing. He agrees that pupils should receive guidance when learning the

writing skill, but warns that there is too large a gap between the exercises proposed by the accuracy-oriented approach and the texts pupils are eventually expected to produce.

Teachers have lost faith in a structured approach because it does not enable the learners to master the writing skill to the extent that they can write without continuous assistance by the teacher (Peacock, 1986:8).

2.4.2 Free writing

Pincas (1982:110) states that in free writing learners are presented with a topic and are free to write as they please. Silver (1989:24) points out that when she was at school, she had to hand in a composition every Monday morning, on anything and of any length. No instruction or guidance was given, nor were any information, suggestions or support offered. The teacher's task was to mark the papers and to make sure that no error was left uncovered.

From Spencer's (1983:81) discussion it is clear that this method is supported by the idea that writing has to be the expression of personal meaning. Pupils are free to make choices in respect of content, style and language forms and thereby create their own growing selves. The imagination of pupils receives primary attention, and they have the opportunity of expressing and exploring their own perceptions and feelings.

According to Daigon (1986:9) teachers sometimes intervene before pupils start writing, but only by discussing general aspects like the use of introductory and concluding sentences, the need for examples and detail, and punctuation and capitalization. The advice, however, is so vague that it has little effect on the pupils' way of writing. He also points out that the assignments often come out of the blue, disconnected from any earlier event.

This approach has commonly been used in most schools in South Africa throughout the years. Lately there has been a change in the sense that pupils receive more guidance to prepare them for the topic they have to write on. They receive, for example, comprehension tests, language exercises and poems which are linked to the topics which they eventually have to write on.

Researchers such as Pincas (1982:110), Tiffen (1969:67-97), Bright and McGregor (1970:130) and Rivers and Temperley (1978:316-321) are of the opinion that a task which is not connected to any other work that the pupils have done is unrealistic. It is usually far too difficult for the average pupil who is not always imaginative, and often has not mastered the writing skill fully yet. Pupils become discouraged when they are rushed into free writing when they are not ready for it yet and have not been prepared sufficiently by means of pre-writing activities. They usually make numerous errors and receive their papers covered in red ink. They are, ironically, further expected to produce original expressions and thoughts, while they can probably only express themselves haltingly in the language. Teachers, likewise, become discouraged because they are overloaded with marking, while little progress in the pupils' work is observable. Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:158) regard this approach as a sink-or-swim attitude.

Lewitt (1990:2) and Daigon (1986:18 & 19) indicate that the teacher's marking and responses to the final product handed in by pupils do not contribute much to the improvement of their writing. Remarks such as "rewrite" and "your ideas are not clear", do not explain to the pupils what the teacher actually wants. Sometimes the teacher corrects the work and expects the pupils merely to copy the corrections. The pupils seldom know why they are writing down what they are, and how to improve their writing skill in the next assignment. Although pupils want their work to be marked, they take little note of the teacher's red pen. As a result many marking hours are wasted. Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:156) consider this the reason why many language teachers cut down on writing. Consequently learners do not get enough opportunities to exercise their writing skill.

Pincas (1982:110) points out that although pupils should not be rushed into free writing too soon, it is, nevertheless, the undoubted goal of all writing lessons. She agrees with Broughton *et al.* (1978:118) that no writing in school should be seen as truly free writing comparable to the normal writing of everyday life. It is still a classroom exercise in which the teacher is proposing the writing. The pupils should still be guided to an extent and they ought to be assisted in getting started and in organizing their ideas.

2.4.3 Guided writing

Pincas (1982:102) describes guided writing as a bridge between controlled and free writing. It involves writing for which the learners are given assistance, such as models or outlines to expand from.

According to Bright and McGregor (1970:131), as well as Byrne (1979:24), there are different stages and a whole range of possibilities between the extremes of rigidly controlled writing and completely free writing. The same subject can be presented so that what the pupils write is either controlled so rigidly that every answer is identical or so that pupils are completely free to do what they like with it. They maintain that the art of composition teaching is to select the right point on the scale from which to start. Initially exercises in which pupils do not have too many options can be given, for example:

Fill in the correct form of lie and lay.

Every afternoon I _____ down and close my eyes for a while. Yesterday I _____ down again, but I had hardly _____ down, when I heard a crash outside the window. I jumped up, and saw a stranger _____ in the flower bed. (Kuhn et al., 1987:152)

At a later stage pupils should be expected to do exercises which require a more sophisticated knowledge of the language, such as the following extract from a letter to a penfriend:

Supply the correct form of the word in brackets and fill the gaps with suitable words.

*" My brother (come) home for Christmas. He (station) in California. I (not see) him since the beginning of June, so I (look) _____ to his arrival.
Give my _____ to your family.*

*Yours _____
Peggy" (Kuhn et al., 1987:18)*

Pupils have to be led, by means of well-designed exercises, through the different stages, and at the right pace, so that they can eventually write without assistance. Pincas (1982:110) also advocates that pupils be provided with enough opportunity to

practise their writing skill under control, until it can at last be accomplished without any control.

Pupils' vocabulary range can also be expanded in this way. Before they have to write a descriptive essay, for example, an exercise such as the following can be done:

Write out the passage, inserting the correct adjectives:

fierce, shaven, quick, searching, massive, tanned, arching, brown, robust, extraordinary.

He was a middle-sized man of most m_____ and r_____ build, with an a_____ chest and e_____ breadth of shoulder. His sh_____ face was as b_____ as a hazel nut, t_____ and d_____ by the weather. His eyes were b_____ and s_____, with a touch of menace and authority in their q_____ glitter, and his mouth was f_____ and set hard, as befitted one who was accustomed to face danger. (Powell, 1986:74)

At a later stage the first letter can be omitted. If pupils have already reached an advanced stage, the passage can be given without providing the adjectives so that they can use their own words.

Byrne (1979:24) observes that a common complaint is that learners are abandoned at a stage somewhat short of the final goal, which is the production of extended pieces of work. Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:158) support this and state that teachers in most second language classrooms in South Africa regard the work done in a cycle as adequate preparation for the piece of writing pupils have to do at the end of a cycle. According to them pupils often receive assistance in the form of comprehension tests, structured grammar and vocabulary exercises, as well as models which they can use as background when they write. However, they do not receive any further guidance and are expected to produce good writing pieces on their own.

It is obvious therefore, that although teachers sometimes assist pupils to some extent, pupils too often find themselves in a situation very similar to that proposed by supporters of free writing.

Byrne (1979:27) suggests that careful attention be paid to what kind of guidance pupils need in relation to the various problems they have when writing. He argues that text should be used as the basic format for practice, since writing a text is the

aim of teaching the writing skill. Sentence practice for the mastery of certain types of compound and complex sentence structures can be taught within the framework of a text. It is not necessary to separate features of the written language which naturally go together. The use of text as the basic format, instead of detached sentences or even paragraphs, will make writing a meaningful activity for learners and will increase their motivation to write well. Carroll (1981:307), however, warns against mindless exercises.

The TED English Second Language Syllabus (1986:12) stipulates that the purpose of writing is to communicate. Pupils should be able to do this by means of various written forms such as letters, reports or minutes. However, assignments ought to be undertaken according to a predetermined objective relating to a particular aspect of language use (TED English Second Language Syllabus, 1986:3). By concentrating on the specific objective, pupils could be made aware of their particular problems.

Researchers such as Nolan (1988:2), Holt (1989:2), Walshe (1987:25), Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:159), Keh (1990:10), Farris (1987:28-33) and Moss (1988:22) advocate a shift from the finished writing product to the actual process the pupils go through to reach the end product. According to them, support to the pupils should continue far beyond the point where they start writing. Pupils should be guided and helped until they have finished the final product. The teacher should be available during the writing process, so that immediate feedback on what is done can be provided. What the pupil writes down the first time ought not to be considered the end product. Pupils should be given the opportunity to revise their writing and to make alterations as they contemplate and reconsider certain ideas, structures or word choices. Feedback will also result in further changes and pupils need to work on their writing pieces until they are satisfied with their work.

These researchers also believe that the writing process itself is a learning activity. Pupils should be provided opportunities to discover things for themselves and to develop through their own experiences. According to Walshe (1987:23-26), *writing* is learning at its best, because it is a thinking-out and discovery procedure. The learner is exposed to a deeper kind of thinking when given the opportunity for pondering, cutting, extending, putting aside, returning and revising again until he is satisfied with his writing. Through this process, the pupil is learning how to learn. He emphasizes the fact that writing is never only writing. Behind the "write to learn sub-process" is an even larger achievement, namely *maturing*. Holt (1989:1 & 2) points out that writing is a total learning process. Pupils think, feel and experience

as they produce a piece of writing. It provides for the growth of each pupil's self-esteem as pupils experience success with expressing their thoughts creatively and effectively. Therefore, writing skills should grow *along* with learning and thinking in every classroom.

The policy and aims of the TED syllabus for English Second Language (1986:2) stress that pupils should *learn by doing*. The teacher's task is to study closely what the pupils are doing when they are writing, so that they can be assisted in solving the problems they are experiencing. The emphasis should be on the pupil as writer, and on how he is maturing in the learning process. Pupils would then get the opportunity to learn to think for themselves and to connect their learning to their own experience.

2.5 Conclusion

The process of writing is by no means simple. In contrast to speech, which is a natural activity, writing is much more formal and often imposed on the writer. It should not be assumed that the ability to write in a language comes naturally to pupils who can speak the language. The teacher should therefore teach the writing skill by means of planned exercises and special techniques.

It is evident that researchers do not approve of teaching the writing skill by means of structured exercises only, because pupils then seldom reach the point where they can write fluently and independently. On the other hand, it has been proved that pupils' writing does not improve if they are forced into free writing where they do not receive any assistance during the time they are writing.

It would appear that most researchers favour an approach in which pupils receive guidance during the writing process, so that they can be assisted up to the point where they have fully mastered the writing skill. There is proof, however, that teachers guide pupils to a certain extent, but do not always know how to maintain assistance during the writing process.

The process method of teaching the writing skill offers some valuable assistance in this regard. The next chapter will be devoted to a more detailed discussion of the process method in which the goal is to assist pupils from the moment they start

preparing themselves to do a writing task, until they eventually produce the final product.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROCESS METHOD IN THE TEACHING OF SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING

3.1 Introduction

Researchers who propose the process method of teaching writing emphasize the fact that pupils have to work through different stages before they eventually produce the final draft of their writing. It is necessary for teachers to know which stages writers are expected to go through, because they play an important role in each of them. An exposition of these stages will therefore be introduced in this chapter and the teachers' role in each will be indicated.

Since evaluation in the process approach differs from that in other methods of teaching writing, it will also be discussed in this chapter. The role of group work, which is a cardinal principle in the process method, will be discussed too. In turn the importance of the role of the pupil in the writing process will be emphasized. Teachers should realize that their role will of necessity be minimized to give the pupils the opportunities of developing their writing skills.

3.2 The different stages in the process method

Glatthorn (1981:1) points out that although theorists agree about the general nature and order of these stages, they have reached no consensus on the terms used in identifying them. For the purposes of this discussion the division as proposed by Adams (1989:19) will be used. He divides the process of writing into the pre-writing stage, the stage when the first draft is written, and the rewriting stage.

3.2.1 Pre-writing

According to Brown and Hood (1989:7) most writing requires some preparation. How long you spend on this preparation, and what you do, largely depends on you *reader*, your *purpose*, the *content* and the writing *situation*. The pre-writing stage is an important one, because it determines the development of the rest of the writing process.

Holt (1989:11) cautions that it is important to take pupils' prior knowledge into consideration in the planning of pre-writing activities, so that what the pupils do has meaning for them.

The following activities are proposed as effective pre-writing activities:

3.2.1.1 Brainstorming, mapping and sequencing

a) Brainstorming

Adams (1989:20), Brown and Hood (1989:7 & 9) and Keh (1990:10) contend that brainstorming is an activity of idea generation, when the learners have to search for useful ideas on given topics. The pupils receive a limited time to write down as rapidly as possible any word or phrase that comes to mind, regardless of whether it will be of any value in the final product. These ideas are jotted down on a piece of paper, in list-like fashion, by all learners, regardless. Neatness and correctness are inconsequential here.

To help pupils come up with ideas, the NCTE (1983:3) and Glatthorn (1981:83-95) suggest that visual stimuli, such as pictures, be used. This will provide a good starting point for idea generation.

b) The Mapping process

This stage follows the *Brainstorming* activity. According to Adams (1989:12) the learners have to take the information obtained during the previous stage and organize it under main topics and various sub-topics. Brown and Hood (1989:10) suggest that arrows and numbers be used to facilitate the process.

The *Mapping* stage is almost similar to the *Clustering* stage proposed by, for example, Parker (1989:92) and Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:161). When "clustering" is done, a circle with the main idea written in it is drawn in the centre of the paper, and associated ideas are clustered around it in circles and linked with it.

c) Sequencing

Adams (1989:13) suggests that the pupils next have to sequence the topics so that they have an order to follow when starting with the different paragraphs.

A brief example to illustrate how the different activities of the pre-writing stage can be applied is the following:

Topic: Planning a trip to Europe

a) Brainstorming

traveller's cheques	brochures
plane ticket	visas
rucksack	insurance
"Let's go Europe"	medicine
traveller's bureau	padlocks
money belt	energy bars
camera	thick socks
passport	ID photos
hiking shoes	student's card
umbrella	cup a soup
windbreaker	warm clothes
Youth Hostel Card	map
Eurail	films
visa card	addresses

b) Mapping

Money: traveller's cheques, visa card
Transport: plane ticket, Eurail
Equipment: rucksack, umbrella, camera, films
Safety precautions: money belt, insurance, padlocks, medicine
Clothing: hiking shoes, windbreaker, thick socks, warm clothes
Documents: passport, Youth Hostel Card, visas, ID photos, student's card, addresses
Information: "Let's go Europe", traveller's bureau, brochures, map
Food: energy bars, cup a soup

c) Sequencing

- 1) Transport
- 2) Documents
- 3) Information
- 4) Money
- 5) Clothing
- 6) Equipment
- 7) Safety precautions
- 8) Food

After pupils have planned the piece of writing according to these pre-writing activities, they will have enough information to continue with the actual writing itself.

3.2.1.2 Models

According to Brown and Hood (1989:11) and Dahl (1988:173) pupils can be assisted further by the provision of models of the writing they must do. If they have to write a letter to the press, for example, they must receive a model to follow. This will give them an idea of how to attempt the writing they must do. Models can also be incorporated with structured exercises where pupils have to fill in open spaces by using their own phrases and vocabulary, or by substituting existing ones.

3.2.1.3 Oral work in pairs and groups

Abbott (1989:50), Ike (1990:41), Kasten and Clarke (1986:26), and McManus and Kirby (1988:79) assert that pupils need to share their ideas with one another by discussions in pairs or groups. This is an excellent learning opportunity for them, because they get a chance of expressing themselves orally before they have to put their ideas onto paper. They also receive immediate feedback from their peers so that they know whether what they have said is clear or whether it needs further clarification.

3.2.1.4 Reading pieces

Main (1984:25) suggests that teachers use additional reading pieces related to the topic pupils have to write on as a starting point. If pupils have to write on "The sea",

for example, they can read about sealife in a science book or they can read a poem about the sea.

3.2.1.5 Visual material

Byrne (1989:26), Main (1984:25) and the NCTE (1983:3) advocate the use of visual and audio-visual material to generate ideas at the beginning of the writing process. Pictures and films tend to make topics more realistic for pupils.

3.2.2 First draft

Brown and Hood (1989:14) regard the first draft as the time when the pupils really begin their writing. According to Meyer (1989:42), who calls this the "free-writing stage", the writers should write down whatever comes into their heads. He emphasizes, like Keh (1990:10), that grammar, punctuation, neatness or best wording should not receive attention during this stage. Karnowski (1989:462) refers to it as a "sloppy copy".

Brown and Hood (1989:14) recommend that the learners do not linger on the beginning of their writing tasks, and that they should not correct themselves too much during their first attempts. They should rather concentrate on getting their ideas onto paper, without any unnecessary interruptions. Enough space should be left, however, for changes to be made as the writing process proceeds and the pupils' ideas develop. Pupils can write on every second line, for example, or they can write on every second page so that corrections can be done in open lines or on opposite pages.

3.2.3 Rewriting

After the pupils have finished their first draft, they have to revise their writing to see if they are satisfied with what was written. If not, they should start making changes in order to improve on what they have already done. This stage, which is called the rewriting stage, can be divided into the following sections:

a) Revision

Lewitt (1990:2 & 3) describes revision as a process in which pupils think and see, again and again, until they reach the final product. Adams (1989:13) and Brown and

Hood (1989:20) advise that during revision pupils should check whether they are satisfied with the content of their papers and whether the purpose is clear. They then have to make changes by adding, deleting and substituting where necessary.

Pupils can be motivated to write purposefully by creating real readers, other than the teacher and classmates. Carroll (1981:307) and Edwards (1987:3) suggest that pupils' writing be published. This can be done by means of a class or school newspaper, for example. Magazines or publishers can also be contacted in this regard. Pupils can furthermore be encouraged to write to penfriends, or older pupils can be asked to write stories to younger pupils.

Dudley (1989:29) considers the revision stage the most difficult of all the stages. Both he (ibid) and Silver (1989:29) have observed that pupils are reluctant to apply this stage of the process approach, because they consider the neatness of their papers more important than the content. They will correct spelling and punctuation, but very few change the content of their paper. Pupils should, however, be guided and encouraged to revise the content of their writing as well.

b) Editing

During this stage pupils have to check the correctness of the grammar, capitalization, spelling and punctuation (Adams 1989:13). Since the content has already received attention during the previous stage, the pupils can now devote their time to see that the mechanics are in order.

c) Final copy

Adams (1989:13) recommends that after the pupils have completed the previous two stages, they should proceed to the final copy. He stresses the fact that the final copy need not be the second draft. The pupils may sometimes write numerous drafts before they decide to write the final one.

d) Proofreading

Adams (1989:13) considers the process of proofreading essential to pick up careless errors that may have been overlooked in the previous stages.

It should be clear by now that the production of a piece of writing is much more than the writing of one draft on the topic provided. Silver (1989:25) points out that when the process method of teaching the writing skill is followed, much thought and effort are required from the writers. Although he (ibid) and Pratt (1990:464) have found that pupils are sometimes reluctant to go through the different stages proposed, numerous researchers have detected that pupils are motivated positively towards writing after the introduction of the various stages of process writing (e.g. Edwards, 1987:2; Main, 1984:100; Nolan, 1988:3). Hernandez (1987:1) undertook a 36-week writing programme in which the writing process was introduced. He found that 70% of the learners improved their writing results notably, and 80% of them displayed more confidence and enjoyed the writing process.

Pratt (1990:458) also found that after introducing the different stages of the writing process to matric pupils, she could identify and offer solutions to pupils' writing problems much easier.

It seems that pupils find it less demanding to produce a writing task when they are given the opportunity to go through the different stages of process writing. They are not expected to produce a perfect piece of work with their first attempt and are therefore not inhibited by the idea that the teacher is going to criticize everything they produce. They are motivated by the idea that they are not expected to produce something on their own. Instead the teacher guides and assists them through all the different stages.

Since the teacher's role as guider in the writing process is very important it will now be discussed in greater detail.

3.3 The teacher's role in the process method

Moss (1988:8) maintains that the implementation of the process approach requires teachers to make new decisions about teaching and learning, to use new teaching strategies and to look at their own role and that of their pupils in a different way.

As pointed out in the TED English Second Language Syllabus (1986:20), pupils should *learn by doing*. The teacher's role as leader and controller is reduced; he is there to assist pupils in what they are actively involved in. This policy correlates with the procedures of process writing.

According to Nolan (1988:7), Glatthorn (1981:8) and Lewitt (1990:2), the teacher should concentrate more on his role as guider and facilitator when it comes to developing the writing skill. They are of the opinion that correcting pupils' work and merely writing remarks are not sufficient to enhance the developing process of the pupils' writing, because such actions take place after the writing process has already been completed. Teachers should focus on and be actively involved in all the different stages of the writing process if they want to have an effect on the pupils' writing.

Glatthorn (1981:2) points out that the teacher can help the pupils deal with the complexities of the writing process by emphasizing the different stages and by helping them to deal with one stage at a time. Silvers (1986:685) suggests that all the different stages, from pre-writing to editing, be modelled to the pupils.

Researchers such as Angelil-Carter and Thesen (1990:587), Karnowski (1989:462), Adams (1989:19-24) and Dudley (1989:28-32) state that pupils should receive unlimited time to plan, draft and revise their writing, until they are satisfied with it. Unskilled writers tend to see writing as an unpleasant chore which they have to rush through as soon as possible. Teachers often reinforce this activity by giving assignments without providing enough time for the pupils to go through all the processes.

Although teachers should keep close control over the writing process, both Adams (1989:17) and Byrne (1988:26) warn against usurping the learners' initiative. It is necessary for teachers to give pupils opportunities to write what they want to. Errors, for example, should be allowed to an extent during the pre-writing stage and while the pupils are still working on their first drafts, since the making of errors is a natural part of learning a language. Although the aim is to teach the pupils to the point where they can communicate proficiently through writing without making errors, thorough attention to language structure and usage should only be given when pupils feel satisfied with the content of their writing. Only the final draft is expected to be error-free.

Since teachers are involved in every stage of the writing process, a further look at their specific contributions to every stage is necessary.

3.3.1 The planning stage

The planning phase is often undervalued and pre-writing activities do not receive enough attention in secondary schools. Even the most able classes may find it difficult to begin a task without some kind of preparation and guidance (Peacock, 1986:57).

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:160) maintain that teachers should at least initially provide the pupils with examples of how to plan the writing they intend doing. Opportunities to interact with material and have discussions on their own ideas should be created for them. It is essential that teachers stimulate ideas and help with their logical arrangement during this stage. The fact that children are curious about what is going on around them could be used effectively to generate ideas at the beginning of an assignment (Main, 1984:25).

It is clear that teachers' roles in getting the pupils started are essential and go much further than the mere giving of a topic on which they must write. The quality of the writing pieces depends mainly on the efforts teachers put into encouraging the pupils to start looking for information on the topic they have to write on.

3.3.2 The first draft

Once the pupils have gathered ideas on what they are going to write on, they will have to organize these ideas into a logical order. Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1990:162), and Holt (1989:6) point out that most pupils find this difficult. Teachers should teach them cohesive devices and appropriate techniques to assist them when they start arranging their ideas. They need to learn, for example, how to sequence ideas and to distinguish between main sentences and supporting details of a paragraph.

According to the NCTE (1983:85) the main problem pupils experience when writing their first drafts, is that they want to acquire perfection at once. They suffer, as Keh (1990:10) puts it, from the once-written-can't-be-changed syndrome. He states that it is the teacher's responsibility to convince the pupils that they should not attempt to work towards perfection in their first draft and that spelling and punctuation, for example, should not receive primary attention at this stage.

Interaction with teachers when the pupils actually start putting their ideas onto paper is of great help to them. They feel that they are not alone in facing a task they cannot accomplish and therefore are not discouraged when they get stuck. They feel free to try new approaches and play with novel ideas, because they will not be condemned if their attempts do not succeed at first.

It is important that teachers ensure that all pupils trust them to such an extent that they feel free to rely on them for support in their writing when they need it. Silver (1989:25-27) emphasizes the importance of establishing a pleasant atmosphere in class so that those pupils who feel less competent do not feel threatened.

Teachers should motivate pupils by making them feel that what they have written down is worthwhile (Poos, 1981:5). They should not give the impression that they are there to criticize and judge the pupils' writing, but rather that they are collaborators who want to assist the learners in their task.

3.3.3 Rewriting

Jones (1989:85) emphasizes that the different stages of rewriting are of the utmost importance when the pupils start re-reading their first draft. Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:165) and Lewitt (1990:3) make it clear that the pupils should not only be told about the different stages, but that they should be guided to deal with them. They ought to be taught how to read, for example, for purpose, audience and mechanical errors respectively.

All the phases should be modelled to the pupils before they attempt to work on their own (Silver, 1986:685). Revision, for example, can be done with the class as a whole before they start revising their own writing. All pupils will then first receive the same piece of writing to revise. Under the supervision of teachers they will learn exactly what is expected of them during each stage. Pupils will gain confidence in this way and will be encouraged to go ahead with the rewriting, since they will then know how it should be done.

Balajthy (1986:2) concludes that teachers who want to implement the writing process need to understand the basic philosophy and theory underlying process approaches. Teachers ought to assume the role of "researchers" in their classrooms in order to understand the writing needs of their pupils successfully and to determine how their strategies meet or fail to meet those needs.

Nolan (1988:2) points out that teachers might experience difficulty when forced into using the process writing approach if they have not been prepared for it. Those who begin to use a process approach are implementing an innovation in their classrooms (Moss, 1988:5). They are submitted to changes, both in materials and activities used to teach writing. Many problems accompany these changes and most teachers accordingly find the implementation of innovations stressful (Moss, 1988:6). She suggests that teacher educators prepare teachers for the difficulties they might face when implementing the process method and help them deal with the problems which accompany this innovation.

One such project in which teachers were assisted in their new role was observed by Winsky (1985:11). In this project, teachers who were beginning to implement the process method were accompanied by trainers who could supervise and encourage them. In this way teachers were trained while teaching pupils. It is of great help to teachers if they are assisted in this way and all teachers who start implementing the process method should preferably be supported likewise.

Programmes and courses which introduce teachers to and thoroughly train them in the procedures of the process method would be of great significance. Teachers should then be assisted in changing old approaches and teaching methods, in order to implement process writing. Problems that teachers might experience ought to be discussed, so that they would be prepared to address them when they are encountered.

3.4 Evaluation

According to Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:174) language teachers have always been regarded as the ones with the heaviest marking load. They point out, like Freedman (1987:36) and Daigon (1986:18), that there is little value in the traditional correction of errors, the writing of comments and the grading of a final draft, as research results have revealed no improvement. Pupils apparently pay little attention to teachers' red pens, because they see the marking of their writing as the end of the process (Chandler *et al.*, 1989:9). Daigon (1986:15), Nolan (1988:7), Freedman (1987:36), Glatthorn (1981:8) and Lewitt (1990:2) also found that teachers' remarks on the writing completed by learners were mostly vague and ineffectual. When pupils receive writing tasks with remarks such as "Poor" or "Pay

attention to sentence structure", they are offered no effective guidance on how to solve the problems experienced.

According to Daigon (1986:17), Lardner (1989:93) and Dudley (1989:29), this traditional way of evaluating pupils' work has a demotivating effect on many pupils who can not cope with what is expected of them. They often feel inadequate to perform the task they are forced to do, and fear that they will again receive their writing, punished for the errors they have made.

Keh (1990:11) suggests that feedback be given to the pupils from the moment they start writing, and especially between the different drafts. After the teacher has evaluated a draft, the pupil should work on the writing again and pay attention to the weaknesses pointed out by the teacher.

Nolan (1988:4) also advocates that teachers look at what pupils "do" while writing, by studying the process they go through and by providing help where needed during the process. This is no easy task, however, because the writing process is essentially a hidden one. Although the learner can be observed while writing, the real action is hidden inside the mind of the writer. Teachers can only find out about the hidden processes in the writers' mind if they are told about them. One method suggested and applied is to encourage pupils to compose aloud and to examine what they say. By doing this, teachers will be able to pick up problems the pupils are experiencing during the writing process (Nolan, 1988:6).

Abbott (1989:50) proposes a similar method in which pupils pair up and discuss, for example, the topics they have chosen to write on, the ideas they are considering and the organization of the writing they intend doing. In the first place she points out that writing is made less threatening through this process, because pupils have already gone through most of the writing processes orally by the time they start writing. In the second place she states that this method provides opportunities for teachers to analyse the thinking processes of the pupils, in order to identify problems the learners might experience when they start writing.

The practical application of these two methods calls for the installation of sensitive microphones so that teachers can pick up, or even record, what the pupils are saying, without inhibiting them by their presence. The availability of monetary resources could have a constraining effect on the successful implementation of this suggestion.

Another method advocated by various researchers is the one-to-one conference during which the teacher discusses with individuals what they have already completed up to a certain stage in the writing process. Silver (1989:25 & 26), Freedman (1987:37) and Keh (1990:11) found that pupils value these discussions, because their primary needs receive attention. It is important that pupils experience teachers as an ever-present supporting system; they need to know that they have produced something of value. Byrne (1979:31) also agrees that teachers should concentrate on what pupils have succeeded in doing, rather than on what they have failed in achieving. In so doing, pupils will not be discouraged by what they cannot do, but will be motivated by their achievements.

In most TED schools, however, teachers do not have enough class time to have individual discussions with all the pupils. English teachers are obliged to work through certain work schemes within specific time limits and also have a lot of administration to complete. The number of pupils per class tends to increase nowadays and individual attention suffers as a result. If teachers want to have meaningful individual discussions with pupils, they would have to make use of additional time.

The question of how to address the actual evaluation of the pupils' writing remains a crucial one and there is still much controversy about it. Pratt (1990:465-466) points out that the problem of implementing a process approach is that in examinations pupils are prevented from using the good writing habits they have learned in class. They are writing under rigid time constraints and do not have sufficient time to go through all the different stages of the writing process.

Freedman (1987:35) advocates a grading system which most traditional teachers will find peculiar and difficult to implement. According to him, it is not necessary to evaluate every piece of writing. He suggests that pupils' writing be collected over a period of time, and a mark can be awarded to the portfolio rather than to individual pieces. Another approach is to select only certain pieces from the portfolio for evaluation and revision. In this way, students can receive a formal evaluation of their best attempts.

Freedman (1987:35) suggests that pupils' *progress* be evaluated and not how well or poorly they do on one essay in comparison to others in the class.

There are still many problem areas regarding evaluation in the process approach. Further study in this regard is needed, so that teachers who want to break with the traditional way of evaluating the writing skill will know exactly what kind of evaluation procedures to follow this process.

3.5 The role of group work in the writing process

3.5.1 Oral work in pairs and groups

The use of group work is regarded as being effective at different stages in the writing process.

Karnovski (1989:464) points out that the quality of the discussion which precedes writing has a significant effect on the quality of the writing. During this discussion, ideas concerning the writing which must be done are exchanged.

According to the NCTE (1977:2) group work can be implemented right at the beginning of the writing process, when brainstorming is done. All the ideas emanating from the group can be written on the chalkboard in order to make the starting process easier for the pupils.

It has been suggested (Abbott, 1989:50) that pupils discuss their choice of topic with a partner and then continue to talk about the ideas they have and how they intend organising them. All of this should happen before any writing takes place.

Group work can also be used most effectively when the pupils have already written their first drafts and have to revise them. Peer-group editing is recommended by many researchers (e.g. Dahl, 1988; Sun, 1989) and is already generally used with appreciable results by some teachers.

Researchers' opinions about peer-editing will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

3.5.2 Peer-group editing

Dahl (1988:173) found that pupils prefer writing in peer-response groups to relying on self-evaluation and they also expect peers to lend them substantial help.

Sun (1989:87) points out that pupils might be reluctant to participate in revision programmes if they do not know exactly what to do. They must therefore be taught how to respond to one another's writing. It is the task of teachers to serve as model and adviser in this regard (Silvers, 1986:685). Pupils will inevitably use the remarks that teachers write when they evaluate writing tasks as models to guide them in their own responses when they evaluate their peers' work.

Parker (1989:89 & 90) suggests that teachers should use an overhead projector to demonstrate the revision process to the whole class. Going through the editing techniques step by step will help pupils see how editing takes place and what they should look out for in their own writing and in that of others. When pupils start doing their editing themselves, teachers should ensure that the pupils progress gradually so that each task is always manageable. Teachers should assist and advise pupils when they initially start with the editing programme. Jones (1989:86) advise that teachers ought to continue with this training of the pupils until they have reached the stage where they can work on one another's writing on their own.

It is prudent (NCTE, 1983:68) that when this method is used, every piece of writing is first read and evaluated by a classmate before it is handed to the teacher. Markers should compliment writers on good points and offer criticism on weaknesses. The writers then start working on their writing again. Only after the writers have revised their work to their satisfaction, is it handed to the teacher. Ike (1990:43) concludes that although teachers are expected to mark more than one draft per person, they have more "straightforward" writing to mark. The weaknesses in written expression of all the pupils are summarized since they all, in one way or another, contribute to the writing and checking of each paper.

Parypinski (1989:76) argues that pupils are more aware of what they write when they know that their peers, and not only the teacher, are going to read their work. It becomes a challenge for them to produce writing that is so well constructed and detailed that their peers have difficulty suggesting changes. He also observes, like the NCTE, (1983:67), that pupils become more critical evaluators of their own work.

They should realize that errors are not only visible to teachers, but that they also have the competence to recognize errors made by peers.

Parker (1989:86) is convinced that the reading of one another's work is beneficial to both readers and writers. Pupils learn more about writing when they read the ideas proposed by other learners. Writers also benefit from the questions and suggestions of their peers. This method gives the weaker pupils the opportunity of learning from the brighter ones, while the bright ones are obliged to teach the weak ones how to write good essays (Ike, 1990:43). During this process they become aware of the kind of errors they make.

The arrangement of groups could be varied, so that there is interaction with different pupils in the class. At the beginning of the implementation of peer-editing, pupils would probably prefer to work with partners of their own choice until they are more familiar with what is expected of them. When they have obtained a degree of confidence, however, groups could be rearranged so that they have the opportunity of working with other partners. Working in pairs can also be alternated with working in bigger groups.

Another feature of peer-group evaluation (Ike, 1990:43) is that active class participation on the part of all pupils is ensured. Pupils who would previously have been overlooked by teachers, cannot be disregarded by their peers when they work together in pairs or groups.

Teachers can use all kinds of techniques to motivate pupils to do their best. One of them, as proposed by Parker (1989:87), is to get pupils to sign their names at the end of the paper they edit. If errors are then discovered, the editor is equally responsible.

It is evident why researchers see many advantages in peer-group editing.

3.6 A pupil-centred approach

According to McManus and Kirby (1988:78), Jackson (1988:11) and Adams (1988:16), teachers must abandon the attitude that pupils are only taught when the teacher is conveying information to them. Teachers should minimize their role as

leaders and allow pupils to learn through exploring, sharing and discovering for themselves.

Peyton and Seyoum (1989:313) remark that teachers can either stimulate or restrict pupils' initiative. They argue that most teachers use questions to get the pupils involved. This technique, however, results in restricted replies and often an unwillingness to participate is detected.

In Holt's (1989:1) opinion, the process method provides more opportunities for individuals to be involved actively, because it is more pupil-centred. He suggests that the pupils ought to be involved in the entire writing process, from the selection of the topic to the editing of the final product.

3.7 Integration of language skills

The writing skill should never be practised in isolation (Glatthorn, 1981:69, Kilfoil and Van der Walt, 1989:156 and Holt, 1989:1). The development and practice of the other skills, listening, speaking and reading, invariably determine the quality of the writing skill.

Byrne (1989:25) suggests that teachers should take real-life situations as examples to create similar meaningful settings in class. Many activities in everyday life involve all the language skills. When one has to apply for a job, for example, one first *reads* the advertisement for it. *Speaking* and *listening* are incorporated when the person who wants to apply for the job phones in order to obtain more information. When the person decides to apply for the job, a letter of application is *written*. In this way all four language skills are naturally integrated.

The TED English Second Language Syllabus (1986:3) stresses the fact that teachers should try to design activities involving the interplay of the four language skills wherever possible.

There are countless opportunities to integrate the other language skills with the writing skill during the process approach. When a topic has been selected, the teacher can provide reading material related to it in order to facilitate idea generation. The *reading* skill will be practised then. When pupils work in pairs or groups during pre-writing activities, *speaking* and *listening* are involved. When the pupils put their hands on paper, even during the planning stages, they are practising

the *writing* skill. The *reading* skill is integrated throughout the writing process, because pupils have to read and re-read their own attempts. The *reading* skill is also exercised when pupils start editing one another's work. The *speaking* and *listening* skills are again involved when pupils discuss their respective writing attempts for clarification during the editing-stage.

It is virtually impossible to follow the process-writing approach without integrating the four language skills.

3.8 Conclusion

The process method provides opportunities for minimizing difficulties teachers often experience when teaching the writing skill. The division of the writing process into different stages apparently facilitates the task for both pupils and teachers.

Pupils find writing less demanding when they are thoroughly prepared for it and receive assistance from both their peers and the teacher during the writing and editing processes. The fact that they have abundant opportunities to interact in pairs or groups about what they intend to write, also facilitates the writing process.

Teachers, on the other hand, are now involved in all the stages pupils go through when they are working on a writing task. With only the final drafts in front of them, teachers will not be able to know exactly during which stage problems are experienced by the pupils. It is easier to identify these problems when the process method is followed, because teachers have contact with the pupils from the time they start writing until the final draft is handed in. Specific problem areas could be identified with greater ease in this way. The marking of the writing is also less discouraging for teachers, since the pupils' work is edited by themselves and their peers before it is handed to the teacher. Many errors are eliminated before the writing reaches the teachers.

Moss (1988:30) points out that the gap between the new writing theory and classroom practice is, nevertheless, quite wide. According to Lewitt (1990:4) there are, no doubt, still many problems that need to be solved and questions regarding the writing process that cannot be answered clearly yet. He points out that no method, however, is perfect.

One problem addressed by Rosen (1986:19) is the fact that it will take time for teachers to master the new approach, even if they are willing to implement it. Apart from the fact that training institutions will have to adjust their training programmes, the introduction of courses and in-service workshops to instil new concepts, and encourage teachers to use them, will have to be realized.

Another problem highlighted by Angelil-Carter and Thesen (1990:586-588) is that there are certain reservations about the applicability of some of the principles of the process approach to existing education systems. The time aspect, for one, is problematic. In process writing pupils receive unlimited time to plan, draft and revise their writing. In TED schools there are time constraints when it comes to performing a writing task, especially in examinations. Another hurdle which must still be overcome is the one of evaluation. In process writing assessment is done throughout the writing process, by the pupils themselves, their peers and teachers. In TED schools there is a once-off assessment of the final product only.

In order to incorporate all the different elements of the process approach into writing programmes, several adjustments to existing education systems need to be done. Before this can happen, much more research on the implementation of the process method is required. Before educators can be expected to apply this method, they should be convinced of its inherent advantages, as well as of its feasibility in school systems.

CHAPTER 4

DIDACTIC CRITERIA FOR THE TEACHING OF THE WRITING SKILL

4.1 Introduction

The literature study in chapters 2 and 3 reveals that there are different methods to teach the writing skill. However, not all of them have been applied with equal success. If pupils, for example, practise the writing skill under too rigid control, they never reach the point where they can write without assistance. They, on the other hand, find it difficult if rushed into free writing too quickly and many errors are consequently made. It is apparent that certain didactic criteria are necessary to enhance the development of the writing skill. These criteria will be identified and discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Criteria

4.2.1 Preparation

It is essential that teachers prepare pupils thoroughly for each writing event. Pupils find it difficult to write on a topic if they have not done any work related to it beforehand. They can be introduced to the topic by means of the following pre-writing activities:

a) *Structured exercises related to the topics pupils intend to write on (par. 2.4.3)*

Language skills should be practised under various degrees of control until pupils have mastered them. Pupils should initially do exercises in which they do not have much freedom of choice and in which specific language elements are practised. At a later stage more complicated exercises in which pupils have a variety of options can be introduced. Learners are thus gradually led towards free writing and they should eventually reach the point where they can write without any control at all.

b) *The provision of models of the writing pupils have to produce (par. 3.2.1 (d))*

By studying the models provided by teachers, pupils get a fair idea of what is expected of them. If they have to write a formal letter, for example, they should

receive a model so that they can become acquainted with the appropriate format of the address, the salutation and conclusion. They will also see in what manner the style and register of a formal letter differ from that of a friendly letter.

A model paragraph can be used to illustrate to the pupils what a topic sentence is and how to build the supporting ideas around it.

This approach could facilitate the writing process for the pupil.

c) Comprehension exercises and additional reading material connected to the topic pupils have to write on (par. 2.4.3 and par. 3.3.1)

It is necessary to stimulate pupils' ideas on given topics. This can be accomplished by making use of comprehension exercises and additional reading texts based on chosen topics. For example, when pupils have to write a composition on "An eyewitness to a crime", a comprehension exercise related to the theme could be provided. For more background pupils could read newspaper reports about crimes.

d) The provision of audio-visual material, for example, pictures and video-tapes (3.3.1)

Audio-visual material provides worthwhile opportunities for generating ideas about topics. Pupils can use this material as a starting point. They would find it easier, for example, to write a descriptive passage with an accompanying picture provided rather than trying to visualize the picture and generate ideas by themselves. Video-tapes related to the topic pupils have to write on can also provide useful ideas which pupils can use in their writing.

e) Oral work in pairs and groups connected with the creative writing topic (3.3.2)

Oral work can be used effectively throughout the writing process. If pupils first share their ideas orally before they start writing, they have the opportunity to formulate and develop these ideas, and then also receive immediate feedback from their peers. If the ideas they wish to use are irrelevant or not clear, for example, their peers will immediately respond to them. Writers will then have the opportunity to revise their ideas. By the time pupils start with the actual writing, they will already have sorted out many of the problems they usually experience when they start with a writing task.

(f) *Brainstorming, mapping and clustering (par. 3.2.1)*

Brainstorming: When pupils are expected to make a quick list of ideas they intend to use when writing on a certain topic, they are compelled to start searching their minds for ideas. They will not be able to linger too long before they come up with something they can use in their writing.

Mapping: During this activity pupils receive the opportunity to organize ideas which belong together into paragraphs. When pupils start writing on a topic, they will not have to delay the actual writing by spending time on arranging their thoughts.

Clustering: During this stage pupils arrange the different paragraphs into a logical order, so that their writing can develop fluently once they start.

4.2.2 The writing process

The following criteria are proposed for the actual writing process:

- a) *Pupils should have the opportunity to work in the presence of teachers in order to ask for assistance (par. 3.3)*

Pupils should learn **while** they are writing. It is therefore important that teachers are available to guide them during the writing process.

- b) *Teachers should give feedback to the pupils while they are working on their writing (par. 3.3.2 and 3.4)*

Immediate feedback given to pupils during the writing process provides them with the opportunity to improve their writing before they hand in the final copy for evaluation. Pupils are motivated to proceed with their attempts when they receive positive comments from the teacher while they are writing.

- c) *Pupils should be encouraged to write more than one draft on a topic (par. 3.3.2)*

Pupils find it difficult to concentrate on content and language use simultaneously. They often neglect the content of their writing because language use commonly receives more emphasis. When they write three, four or more drafts, they are able to pay attention to the content during the first drafts. Language use, structure and

style can receive attention during subsequent drafts when pupils have already refined the content of their writing to their satisfaction.

d) Teachers should mark drafts other than the final one (par. 3.4)

When teachers mark pupils' initial drafts and write comments on them, they guide the pupils on how to improve the writing they have already done. Pupils do not always pay attention to teachers' marking of the final drafts. If they know that they have the opportunity of improving their writing before it is evaluated, they will take care to analyze the teachers' marking and comments in order to benefit optimally.

e) Teachers should give feedback on both the language use and content of the writing pieces (par. 3.4)

Teachers have traditionally emphasized language use in writing more than the development of ideas on a topic. Teachers should orientate themselves to analyze the content of the pupils' writing as well, so that they can guide pupils to develop their ideas.

f) Teachers should encourage pupils to revise not only the language, but also the content of their writing (par. 3.2.3)

Because teachers have mostly tended to concentrate more on the correctness of pupils' papers than on the content, pupils tend to do the same. Teachers should therefore convey to pupils the importance of the content of their writing and direct them to revise and expand it.

g) Teachers should create opportunities for the pupils to revise their work in class and at home (3.2.3)

When pupils revise their work in class, they have the opportunity to ask teachers for assistance when they are not clear on something. Because class time is limited, pupils should also be given the opportunity to revise their work at home. After they have completed the first draft, for example, they should be instructed to revise their writing at home. Teachers should then check whether this was done effectively. The pupils should then be given opportunities to ask teachers for assistance and to discuss problems with them.

h) Teachers should have individual discussions with pupils on their writing (par. 3.4)

Although remedial work on errors commonly made by pupils might have value, individual discussions on specific problems in pupils' writing are even more effective. Pupils then have the opportunity to ask teachers for guidance in the problem areas they experienced. When teachers have large classes they may find that they do not always have enough time to talk to each pupil individually during class time. The best that can be done is to make optimal use of the time available, or alternatively, individual discussions could take place outside class time. This could be a problem though, because there are many practical problems in this regard. Teachers as well as pupils, for example, are generally very busy and will not necessarily have time for individual discussions in their free time. It seems that teachers would sometimes have no other option but to select only a few individuals for discussions after each piece of writing has been completed.

i) Teachers should create opportunities for pupils to evaluate one another's writing in class and at home (par. 3.5.2)

Peer-group editing has proved to be very effective because pupils are more sensitive to what they are writing when they know that their peers are going to evaluate it. Pupils become more conscious of errors in their own writing once they are expected to identify weaknesses in their peers' writing. They also benefit when they read novel ideas presented by their classmates. Teachers' marking is facilitated as well, because many errors are eliminated before the tasks are returned to them for evaluation.

j) Teachers should motivate pupils by ensuring that their writing is read outside the classroom (3.2.3)

Pupils' attitudes towards writing will inevitably change if they realize that there is purpose to it. Much more attention will be paid to a letter which is going to be read by a penfriend than to one which will be evaluated only by the teacher. A writer will also put more effort into a report on "Smoking habits among teenagers" if it is not only read in class, but also published in a school newspaper.

(k) Pupils should receive the opportunity to work on writing pieces in pairs or in groups (3.5.1)

Interaction with peers facilitates the writing process for pupils. They get the opportunity of discussing their ideas with friends and useful advice is often obtained during the process. Pupils do not get the feeling that they are left alone to accomplish a task they cannot cope with, because they may rely on peers for help.

l) Teachers should motivate pupils by giving positive feedback on what they have already written (par. 3.3.2)

Pupils are discouraged when their writing is always criticized and corrected. It is important that teachers give pupils credit for what they have achieved. If pupils have produced some interesting ideas on a topic despite numerous language errors, they should be complimented on their creativity. Pupils' negative attitudes towards writing might change if they realize that teachers are not there only to criticize their writing.

m) Teachers should integrate the four language skills as far as possible (par. 3.7)

The writing skill is seldom practised in isolation and it is therefore virtually impossible to develop it on its own. The incorporation of the other language skills, listening, speaking and reading, plays an important role in the quality of the pupils' writing. If pupils discuss their ideas in groups before they start writing on a specific topic, they are practising the speaking and listening skills. The reading of material related to the topic gives pupils the opportunity to practise the reading skill while they are obtaining ideas which can be used in their writing. It is therefore important that teachers design activities in such a way that all the different language skills are involved.

4.3 Conclusion

The criteria discussed above are based on the literature survey in Chapters 2 and 3. Whether English Second Language teachers comply with these criteria, is a dubious question. An empirical investigation undertaken to determine to what extent the criteria listed are met in practice, is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter methods used by a group of teachers to teach the writing skill will be evaluated didactically. First the aims of the investigation will be pointed out and the method of research will be explained. The findings of the research project will then be analyzed and discussed in detail.

5.2 Aims of the investigation

As pointed out in Chapter 1, the aims of the empirical study are to:

- a) establish to what extent the criteria established in the previous chapter are applied by English Second Language teachers, and
- b) determine whether teachers are trained to meet these criteria.

5.3 Method of Research

5.3.1 Study population

A study population consisting of 40 ESL teachers from seven Afrikaans Secondary Schools in the Rustenburg and Brits areas was used. Their experience ranges from a few months to 25 years. The findings of this study apply to this group only and cannot be generalized to other schools, although the results can be regarded as typical.

5.3.2 Research design

The research consists of a descriptive study of the study population. A questionnaire (see appendix) was used to obtain information about the methods used by teachers to teach writing. Information about the training teachers received in this regard was also obtained.

The questionnaire contains 46 questions. These are based on the criteria identified in Chapter 4. The aim is to establish which methods teachers use to teach writing and whether they have been trained sufficiently in this regard. The questions are divided into the following sections:

Section 1 - Respondents have to indicate on a five point scale how often certain pre-writing activities are used (9 questions).

Section 2 - Respondents have to indicate on a five point scale how often the actions listed are part of their teaching (11 questions).

Section 3 - Respondents have to choose an answer from three possibilities to indicate which of the methods is most often used in their teaching situation (10 questions).

Section 4 - Respondents have to agree or disagree with statements to establish what their opinions are concerning certain aspects of teaching the writing skill (6 questions).

Section 5 - Respondents have to indicate on a five point scale how well they were trained in certain aspects of teaching creative writing (10 questions).

5.3.3 Research procedure

a) Pilot study

A pilot study was done with a group of English Second Language teachers to determine whether teachers would experience any problems when completing the questionnaire. No changes were made afterwards since the pilot group indicated that all the questions were clear.

b) Distribution of final questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed among seven Afrikaans Secondary Schools in the Rustenburg and Brits areas during September 1992. Forty questionnaires were completed.

5.3.4 Practical problems experienced during research

- a) Some teachers did not answer all the questions.
- b) A few teachers responded by giving two answers instead of one to some questions.
- c) Teachers who had completed their studies a while ago, indicated that they could not recall to what extent they had been trained in applying certain elements of teaching the writing skill.

5.4 Findings

As pointed out, the questions in the questionnaire are arranged in nine different groups containing related questions. The number in brackets at the end of each underlined sub-heading refers to the corresponding question in the questionnaire (see appendix). The findings will be discussed accordingly. Tables on the statistics are included to facilitate interpretation. The different groups deal with:

5.4.1 Preparation for writing

5.4.2 Opportunities pupils are given to work in class

5.4.3 Group work

5.4.4 Evaluation by teacher

5.4.5 Pupil revision

5.4.6 Remedial work

5.4.7 Peer-editing

5.4.8 Integration of skills

5.4.9 Purpose in writing

5.4.1 Preparation for writing

5.4.1.1 Pre-writing activities

Structured exercises connected with the writing to be done (1a)

Although 30.8% of the respondents indicated that they **seldom** use structured exercises, more than half of them (64.3%) claimed that they do so on a regular basis. The results are summarized in **Table 1**. It is thus evident that the respondents

quite often make use of structured exercises to prepare pupils for the writing they have to do.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
15.4%	10.3%	38.6%	30.8%	5.1%

Table 1 Structured exercises

The provision of models pupils can follow when they have to write (1b)

Almost a third of the respondents (30.8%) revealed that they **often** make use of models, while the highest percentage (38.8%) revealed that they do so **very often** (see **Table 2**). Teachers therefore frequently make use of models.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
5.1%	38.5%	30.8%	23.1%	2.6%

Table 2 Models

The use of oral work in pairs (1c)

Half of the respondents indicated that they make use of oral work in pairs **very often**. A further 22.5% reflected that they make use of it **often**. The responses are indicated in **Table 3**. Most respondents apply this technique regularly.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
5.0%	50.0%	22.5%	10.0%	2.6%

Table 3 Oral work in pairs

Oral work in groups (1d)

Table 4 points out that 35.0% of the respondents **often** make use of oral work in pairs and the same percentage introduce it **very often**. Apparently most respondents frequently make use of oral work in groups, although it is not used as often as oral work in pairs.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
15.0%	35.0%	35.0%	7.5%	2.6%

Table 4 Oral work in groups

The use of additional reading pieces (1e)

Table 5 indicates that 55.0% of the respondents use additional reading pieces **often** to **almost always**. Almost just as many of them (44.0%) **seldom** make use of such reading matter. It is therefore obvious that just more than half of the respondents make use of additional reading pieces.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
2.5%	17.5%	35.0%	42.5%	2.5%

Table 5 Additional reading pieces

The use of pictures (1f)

45.0% of the respondents indicated that they **often** make use of pictures while 25.0% use them **very often**. The results appear in **Table 6**. It appears that this technique is used on a fairly regular basis.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
7.5%	25.0%	45.0%	22.5%	0%

Table 6 Pictures

Video-tapes (1g)

Half of the respondents declared that they **seldom** use video-tapes and 15% said that they **never** make use of them. Only 25% said that they do so **often** (see **Table 7**). Most respondents do not use video-tapes to prepare pupils for the writing they have to do. The reason might be a lack of facilities in schools. Very few schools have enough video machines available.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
0%	10.0%	25.0%	50.0%	15.0%

Table 7 Video-tapes

The use of audio-tapes (1h)

53.8% of the respondents indicated that they **seldom** use audio-tapes during pre-writing activities. Merely 20.5% reflected that they **often** introduce audio-tapes. The reason might again be attributed to a shortage of equipment in schools. The results are summarized in **Table 8**.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
0%	12.8%	20.5%	53.8%	12.8%

Table 8 Audio-tapes

Brainstorming (1i)

It is evident that respondents do not use brainstorming on a regular basis. Most of them (64.1%) claimed that they **seldom to never** use it (see **Table 9**). It might be that the respondents are not familiar with the technique.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
0%	8.2%	27.7%	45.6%	18.5%

Table 9 Brainstorming

5.4.1.2 Pupil preparation

Time to prepare pupils for the writing (4a)

The majority of respondents (55.3%) admittedly have enough time to prepare pupils for the writing they have to do. A large percentage (44.7%), however, revealed that they would like to have more time to do so (see **Table 10**). Findings reported above revealed that respondents make use of pre-writing activities quite frequently (consult **Tables 1 - 6**), but it seems that quite a number of them, nevertheless, are not satisfied with the time available to prepare pupils before the latter start writing.

Yes	No
55.3%	44.7%

Table 10 Sufficient time for preparation

5.4.1.3 Teacher training in pre-writing activities

Teacher training regarding pre-writing activities (5a)

31% of the respondents were trained **satisfactorily** in pre-writing activities, although an equal number indicated that they had received training only **to a degree**. The results are summarized in **Table 11**. Teacher trainers need to pay attention to this matter. Findings however indicate that teachers apply pre-writing activities fairly regularly (see **Tables 1-6**). This could be ascribed to the fact that the respondents received in-service training at courses they attended later during their careers.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
0%	18.4%	31.6%	31.6%	18.4%

Table 11 Teacher training - pre-writing activities

Teacher training regarding the use of models in the teaching of writing (5b)

30.8% of the respondents are of the opinion that they were **satisfactorily** trained to use models. The same number, however, indicated that they had only been trained **to a degree** in this regard. The results are indicated in **Table 12**. These findings correlate with the findings of the previous question.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
7.7%	15.4%	30.8%	30.8%	15.4%

Table 12 Teacher training - models

Teacher training in assisting pupils to organize their ideas (5c)

The findings reveal that most respondents were either trained **satisfactorily** (35.9%) or only **to a degree** (30.8%). The responses appear in **Table 13**. These correlate with the findings of the previous two questions.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
0%	12.8%	35.9%	30.8%	20.5%

Table 13 Teacher training - the organization of ideas

beginning of cycle	during cycle	end of cycle
0%	39.5%	60.5%

Table 16 Time that writing takes place

SUMMARY

From the findings it is evident that quite a number of the respondents frequently make use of most of the pre-writing activities. In most cases, however, the highest percentage of respondents indicated that they **often**, rather than **very often** or **almost always** use that particular activity. It seems that although respondents regularly make use of pre-writing activities, they could include them more often. Some of the suggested activities, namely the incorporation of video and audio-tapes and brainstorming, are used very seldom.

It is clear that respondents do not expect pupils to produce extended pieces of writing before work related to the topic has been done during the cycle. This kind of approach is beneficial to the learners because most of them would find it very confusing to attempt a topic if they have not received some background material on it.

Almost half of the respondents, however, indicated that they do not have enough time in class to prepare pupils for the writing they have to do. This might account for the fact that respondents did not make use of pre-writing activities more often. Apparently respondents didn't receive sufficient initial training in this regard. According to teacher particulars obtained, the respondents had studied at various universities all over South Africa. In other words it seems that there is inadequate training regarding pre-writing activities at most universities in the country. This might also explain why respondents do not make use of all the pre-writing activities on a more regular basis

5.4.2 Group work

Opportunity to work on a piece of writing in pairs or groups (3d)

The majority of respondents (75%) indicated that pupils work on their writing both individually and in pairs and groups. Very few respondents (17.5%) are still confined to individual work only. The findings are summarized in **Table 17**.

individually	pairs	both
17.5%	7.5%	75.0%

Table 17 Working in pairs or groups

Sufficient training to use group work (5e)

The largest percentage of respondents (35.9%) indicated that they had not been trained to use group work at all. A further 38.4% indicated that they had been trained only **satisfactorily** or to a **degree** (see **Table 18**). **Table 4**, however, indicates that 85% of the respondents make use of group work **often** to **almost always**. It may be possible that they were trained in this regard at refresher courses later during their teaching careers.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
7.7%	15.4%	30.8%	30.8%	15.4%

Table 18 Teacher training - group work

5.4.3 Opportunity to work on writing in class

Do pupils receive the opportunity to write in class in order to ask for assistance?
(2a)

It is encouraging to observe that almost all the respondents give pupils the opportunity to work in class to an extent. 35% do so **often**, the largest percentage (37.5%) **very often**, and a further 25% **almost always** (see **Table 19**).

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
25.0%	37.5%	35.0%	2.5%	2.5%

Table 19 Opportunity to write in class

Do teachers have enough time in class to assist pupils? (4d)

Although almost all the respondents indicated that pupils receive time in class to write (see **Table 19**), an extremely high percentage (86.8%) of them revealed that they do not have enough time in class to assist pupils with the writing they have to do. The results are contained in **Table 20**. Although pupils have opportunities to

write in class, teachers cannot always assist them effectively because of insufficient time.

Yes	No
13.2%	86.8%

Table 20 Time to assist pupils in class

Where do pupils do most of their writing? (3c)

Only 5% of the respondents revealed that pupils do their work **mostly at home**. An overwhelming percentage (85.0%) showed that pupils do their work **both in class and at home**, which shows that pupils have the opportunity to ask teachers for assistance during class time. These findings are tabulated in **Table 21**. Compared with the results of the previous question (see **Table 20**), however, it is evident that the respondents do not have enough class time to assist pupils with the writing they have to do. In other words, assistance cannot always be given effectively.

in class	at home	both
10.0%	5.0%	85.0%

Table 21 Where do pupils write?

Do teachers give feedback to pupils before they hand in the final copy? (2c)

35.0% of the respondents **often** give feedback to pupils before they hand in their final copies, while 42.5% of them **seldom** do. Only 10.0% indicated that they provide feedback **very often**. The results appear in **Table 19**. It is clear that not many pupils receive feedback on a regular basis **while** they are writing, although most respondents specified that they give pupils opportunities to work in class in order to ask for assistance (see **Table 22**).

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
5.0%	10.0%	35.0%	42.5%.....	7.5%

Table 22 Feedback

Do teachers receive sufficient training to assist pupils while they are writing? (5g)

More than 60% of the respondents revealed that they had not received adequate training to assist pupils while they are writing. Only 23.7% indicated that they had been trained **satisfactorily**, while a mere 5.2% felt that they had been trained **well** or **thoroughly**. The responses appear in Table 23. Teachers evidently require more training in this regard.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
2.6%	2.6%	23.7%	42.1%	28.9%

Table 23 Training to assist pupils

SUMMARY

The findings show that respondents often give pupils opportunities to work on their writing in class so that they can ask for help. The majority of respondents, however, indicated that they do not supply regular feedback to pupils while they are writing and that they do not have enough time to do so. It seems that although pupils often work on their writing in class, they do not receive effective support due to a shortage of time. There is also clearly an inadequacy in teacher training when it comes to preparing teachers to assist pupils in the writing process.

5.4.4 Evaluation

5.4.4.1 Evaluation by teachers

Do teachers mark any drafts written by pupils other than the final one? (2b)

It is evident that most respondents mark only the final draft. Almost 80% indicated that they **seldom** or **never** mark other drafts (see Table 24).

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
2.6%	10.3%	7.7%	48.7%	30.8%

Table 24 Marking of different drafts

Do teachers evaluate pupils' work during the time they are writing or is only the final copy evaluated? (3e)

The findings here do not correlate with the results of the previous question which probed the same aspect of evaluation. Although a high percentage (79.5%) indicated that they mark the final draft only (consult **Table 23**), 47.5% of the respondents indicated that they evaluate the writing during the writing process as well (refer to **Table 25**). Teachers apparently have a problem with the concept of evaluation and might think that occasional feedback can be equated with evaluation.

during writing	final copy	both
0%	57.5%	42.5%

Table 25 When does evaluation occur?

Do teachers receive adequate training to evaluate pupils' writing? (5i)

More than half of the respondents believe that they were trained **satisfactorily to well** in this regard. A slightly lower percentage (43.5%) revealed that they had not been trained appropriately. The findings are outlined in **Table 26**. Again it is not clear what teachers consider to be proper evaluation, since it is evident that pupils' writing is mostly marked after they have completed their final copy.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
5.1%	20.5%	30.8%	17.9%	25.6%

Table 26 Teacher training - evaluation

SUMMARY

Although almost half of the respondents indicated that they evaluate pupils' writing during the time that they are preparing their drafts, the accuracy of these responses is questionable. Most teachers intimated that they mark pupils' writing only after the final copy has been handed in. When evaluation during the writing process is done effectively, respondents mark pupils' writing after one draft, or part of it has been completed. Pupils then revise what has been evaluated and a second draft, in which attention is paid to shortcomings pointed out during evaluation, follows. Teachers then mark another draft and pupils continue with the revision process if necessary.

If evaluation is to be done in this manner, the marking of only one draft by teachers means that they are not involved in the writing process. It must be assumed then that the respondents did not fully understand what evaluation implies.

5.4.4.2 What do teachers concentrate on when they evaluate pupils' writing?

Do teachers write comments on the content of pupils' writing? (2d)

Most of the respondents professed that they write comments on the content of their pupils' writing (95%). The results appear in **Table 27**.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
22.5%	40.0%	32.5%	5.0%	0%

Table 27 Teacher comments - content

Do teachers write comments on the language of pupils' writing? (2e)

Table 28 illustrates that almost all the respondents write comments on the language of pupils' writing (97,5%).

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
25.0%	35.0%	32.5%	7.5%	0%

Table 28 Teacher comments - language

Do teachers write comments mostly on the content or mostly on the language of pupils' writing? (3f)

The results of this question confirm the answers to the previous two questions. Most of the respondents (89.7%) indicated that they write comments on both content and language. The results are illustrated in **Table 29**.

content	language	both
7.7%	2.6%	89.7%

Table 29 Teacher comments - language and content

Do teachers write positive or negative comments on pupils' writing? (3g)

Apparently no respondents write only negative comments on pupils' writing. A high percentage (67.5%) revealed that they write both positive and negative comments. A further 32.5% indicated that they more often write positive comments (see **Table 30**).

positive	negative	both
32.5%	0%	67.5%

Table 30 Teacher comments - positive or negative

SUMMARY

Most respondents evidently commented on both the content and language of pupils' writing. It is encouraging to observe that neither was neglected at the expense of the other. It is equally pleasing that respondents tend to write positive rather than negative remarks on pupils' writing. Positive comments motivate pupils and benefit the development of the writing skill.

5.4.5 Revision

Do pupils receive the opportunity to revise their writing in class? (2f)

A large percentage (85.0%) indicated that they **often** to **almost always** create time for pupils to revise their writing in class. According to this finding, pupils quite regularly revise their writing in class. The responses are presented in **Table 31**.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
17.5%	40.0%	27.5%	12.5%	2.5%

Table 31 Pupil revision - in class

Do pupils evidently revise their writing at home? (2h)

It seems that pupils do not revise their writing at home as frequently as they do in class. Only 28.2% reflected that pupils **often** do so. More than half of the respondents specified that pupils **seldom** to **never** revise writing at home (see **Table 32**).

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
2.6%	17.9%	28.2%	23.9%	15.4%

Table 32 Pupil revision - at home

Do pupils mostly revise the content or language of their writing? (3h)

Apparently pupils concentrate more on language use (42.5%) than on content (7.5%). Half of the respondents, however, noted that pupils pay attention to both content and language when they revise their writing. The results appear in **Table 33**.

content	language	both
7.5%	42.5%	50.0%

Table 33 Revision - content or language

Do pupils write more than one draft on the writing they have to do? (4c)

An overwhelming percentage (92.1%) of respondents revealed that pupils write only one draft when they have to write on a topic. The responses are presented in **Table 34**. This result causes concern because it does not correlate with previous findings on revision done by pupils where the respondents indicated that pupils quite often do revision in class (see **Table 31**) and that they revise both content and language (**Table 32**). It is, however, questionable how pupils could revise their work if they write only one draft on a topic.

Yes	No
7.9%	92.1%

Table 34 Number of drafts

Are teachers trained to teach pupils to revise their writing? (5h)

Most respondents (77.7%) felt that they had not been prepared **satisfactorily** in this regard (refer to **Table 35**). This result might account for the discrepancy in the previous findings. It seems that the respondents did not know exactly what was implied by revision, since they had not been properly trained in the matter.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
2.8%	0%	19.4%	33.3%	44.4%

Table 35 Teacher training - revision

SUMMARY

There is clearly a contradiction in the findings on revision done by pupils. Respondents indicated that pupils do revision of their work quite often, but the majority revealed that pupils write only one draft on the writing they have to do. The literature study revealed that pupils should revise their writing after their first drafts have been completed and then a second draft should be written (par. 3.2.3). They should then continue in this manner until they are satisfied with their writing, no matter how many drafts they have to write. The respondents apparently do not clearly understand the concept of revision. The fact that teachers were not trained adequately in this regard might explain the inconsistency of the findings to a degree.

5.4.6 Remedial work

5.4.6.1 Individual discussions

Do you have individual discussions with pupils about their writing? (2g)

The highest percentage of respondents (37.5%) expressed the fact that they **seldom** talk to individuals about their writing. More than half of the respondents (57.5%), however, reflected that they do so **often** to **almost always**. Refer to **Table 36** for a percentage breakdown.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
7.5%	15.0%	35.0%	37.5%	5.0%

Table 36 Individual discussions

Do teachers do remedial work by means of class or individual discussions? (3j)

Table 37 indicates that 36.8% of the respondents do remedial work only with the class as a whole. It is encouraging, though, to observe that twice as many respondents (63.2%) indicated that they do not do remedial work only by means of general class discussions, but that they have individual ones as well.

class	individual	both
36.8%	0%	63.2%

Table 37 Remedial work

Do teachers have enough time in class to have individual discussions with pupils?
(4f)

Although respondents indicated that they have individual discussions with pupils (see **Table 37**), the results as indicated in **Table 38** prove that most respondents (94.7%) do not have enough time in class to spend on individual discussions. Limited time available to teachers will definitely influence the quality and number of these discussions and it is clear that individual discussions cannot be applied effectively in this way.

Yes	No
5.3%	94.7%

Table 38 Time for individual discussions

Do teachers receive adequate training to do remedial work on pupils' writing? (5j)

The respondents evidently did not receive sufficient training to do remedial work on pupils' writing. Almost 70% of them contend that they were not trained satisfactorily in this matter. The responses appear in **Table 39**. Shortcomings in teacher training again prove to have an effect on the application of certain elements of teaching the writing skill.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
5.1%	7.7%	17.9%	30.8%	38.5%

Table 39 Teacher training - remedial work

SUMMARY

Although most of the respondents reflected that they do not have sufficient time for individual discussions with pupils, quite a number of them indicated that they talk to pupils individually. It can be assumed that they do not have these discussions during

class time, or conversely that they are not satisfied with the quality of the discussions they are able to fit into the limited time available.

5.4.6.2 Remedial work done by pupils

How do pupils respond to the marking of their work? (3i)

According to most respondents (60.5%) pupils do not pay attention to teachers' marking at all. 36.8% of the respondents indicated that pupils correct all the errors that have been stipulated by the teachers (see **Table 40**), but a mere 2.6% of them revealed that pupils discuss the errors with them before they correct them. The fact that a high percentage of respondents admitted that they have individual discussions with pupils about their writing should be examined more closely. It might be that individual discussions referred to by teachers take place **during** the writing process, because it is evident that pupils do not consult teachers **after** their writing has been marked. **Table 24**, however, indicates that most respondents do not give feedback on a regular basis before final drafts are handed in. The only explanation for the discrepancy in these findings could be the fact that the respondents did not answer Question 3j of the questionnaire objectively (see **Table 40**).

correcting	discussing	not correcting
36.8%	2.6%	60.5%

Table 40 Pupils' response to marking

Does pupils' writing improve when they correct the errors indicated by the teacher? (4e)

The majority of respondents (75.7%) obviously felt that pupils' writing improves when they correct errors marked by the teacher (**Table 41**). The respondents, however, observed that most pupils do not do any corrections at all (**Table 40**). It is remarkable that teachers do not make correction of errors a compulsory part of the writing process, since they clearly consider it invaluable in improving pupils' writing.

Yes	No
75.7%	24.3%

Table 41 Improvement of writing

SUMMARY

Apparently teachers' marking is in vain because the respondents indicated that most pupils do not pay any attention to the specified errors. If pupils do not do remedial work on the errors they have made in a writing task, they are likely to repeat the same errors in successive attempts. Most teachers feel that pupils' writing improves when they correct the errors that teachers have indicated. Teachers, however, do not place pupils under any obligation to do corrections. It is also evident that the few pupils who do corrections do not discuss them with the teachers. In other words, they accept the teacher's marking without question. They furthermore do not ask for any clarification or explanations on things which have been altered by the teacher either. It seems as if the writing process mostly comes to an end when the teacher has marked pupils' first and only drafts.

5.4.7 Peer-editing

Do pupils evaluate each other's writing in class? (2i)

The highest percentage of respondents (32.5%) reflected that pupils do not get the opportunity to evaluate their peers' writing in class. More than half of them (52.5%), however, indicated that pupils do so **often** to **very often** and 10% **almost always** create such opportunities. The results are summarized in **Table 42**. It is apparent then that more than 60% of the respondents allow time in class for peer evaluation.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
10.0%	27.5%	25.0%	32.5%	5.0%

Table 42 Peer evaluation in class

Do pupils evaluate each other's writing at home? (2j)

The pupils in the respondents' classes hardly ever evaluate their peers' writing at home. More than 90% of the respondents confirmed that it is not done (refer to **Table 43**).

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
2.6%	0%	5.1%	23.1%	69.2%

Table 43 Peer evaluation at home

Are teachers trained to teach pupils to evaluate each other's writing? (5f)

Teachers clearly did not receive training to teach pupils to evaluate their peers' writing. The highest percentage (48.7%) of respondents showed that they had not received such training **at all**, while a further 30.8% reflected that they had only been trained **to a degree**. The responses appear in **Table 44**.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
0%	0%	19.4%	30.8%	48.7%

Table 44 Teacher training - peer evaluation

SUMMARY

According to the above findings, pupils are afforded opportunities to evaluate one another's writing in class, though they seldom do so at home. The efficacy of the evaluation done in class is doubtful though, since the pupils generally write only one draft on a topic. It seems that pupils evaluate their peers' final drafts in order to allocate marks. Peer evaluation is thus not done effectively, since pupils do not write successive drafts to improve on the first one. This inadequacy can yet again be partially attributed to a lack of training in this regard.

5.4.8 The integration of skills

Were teachers trained to integrate the four language skills? (5d)

43% of the respondents indicated that they had been **satisfactorily** trained to integrate the four writing skills (refer to **Table 45**). A further 17.9% revealed that they had been trained **well** and 7.7% of them felt that they had received **thorough** training. On the whole respondents were satisfied with the training they had received in this regard.

thoroughly	well	satisfactorily	to a degree	not at all
7.7%	17.9%	43.6%	15.4%	15.4%

Table 45 Teacher training - integration of skills

SUMMARY

Table 3 and **4** indicate that the respondents quite often make use of oral work during which the listening skill is also involved. The reading skill too is integrated during the writing process. Although just more than half of the respondents use additional reading texts to prepare pupils for the writing they have to do, they presumably do a comprehension exercise in each cycle. In this way the reading skill is also involved. The reading skill is further incorporated when pupils have to evaluate their peers' writing. Teachers consequently integrate the language skills to a degree and according to them also received sufficient training in the matter.

5.4.9 Purpose in writing

Is pupils' writing read by any one else but the teacher or classmates? (2k)

A percentage of 80% of the respondents revealed that the pupils' writing is not read outside the classroom. The results are presented in **Table 46**. In other words, pupils do not have any motivation to write, other than that their writing is going to be marked by the teacher and sometimes by a classmate or two.

almost always	very often	often	seldom	never
5.0%	0%	15.0%	42.5%	37.5%

Table 46 Writing read outside the classroom

5.5 Conclusion

It is evident that the respondents meet quite a number of the criteria discussed in Chapter 4. There are, however, a few aspects that are misunderstood by teachers and that need attention. The shortcomings in teacher training are apparently partly responsible for these misconceptions. It should be taken into consideration though that many of these concepts, for example those connected with regular feedback and evaluation, are fairly new. They are mostly based on the process method of teaching

the writing skill, an approach which originated fairly recently and is still developing. Recommendations will be made in the last chapter in order to introduce new ideas which have been obtained through the literature study presented in Chapters 2 and 3. These innovations have already been applied successfully by a number of researchers.

CHAPTER 6

THE TEACHING OF THE WRITING SKILL: A DIDACTIC EVALUATION.

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter all significant findings mentioned in Chapter 5 will be addressed and discussed. Recommendations for the teaching of the writing skill will also be made where necessary.

As pointed out in Chapter 5, the findings of this study apply to the study population only. This population, however, can be regarded as a typical one, and many of the findings and recommendations may apply to other ESL teachers as well.

6.2 A didactic evaluation

It is encouraging to observe that the respondents make use of most pre-writing activities on a fairly regular basis and that pupils' writing is seldom unrelated to previous work (par. 5.4.1.1). Pupils find it much easier to write on a topic if they have been prepared for it by means of related work. The fact that respondents do not often use video and audio-tapes can most likely be ascribed to a shortage of such materials or a lack of facilities at schools. A further problem indicated by respondents is that textbooks prescribed at TED schools do not provide sufficient guidelines on pre-writing activities (par. 5.4.1.4). English teachers are very busy with preparation and evaluation, and textbooks with proper guidelines regarding pre-writing activities will definitely facilitate their work. It also seems that teachers will spend more time preparing pupils before they start writing provided they have more available time. The problem is that teachers are pressurized into completing a certain amount of work indicated in a scheme of work within certain time limits. As a result they do not always have enough time to apply pre-writing activities as often as they would like to.

The respondents evidently make use of pair and group work which give pupils opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills (par. 5.4.1.1). Working in groups also ensures that the writing skill is not practised in isolation. Pupils find it easier to work on a writing task when they have the opportunity to discuss the topic

with their peers first. The informal situation plus the fact that they can rely on peers for support make the writing process less strenuous.

Although respondents indicated that they give pupils opportunities to work on their writing in class in order to give assistance and regular feedback, there seems to be limited value in it (par. 5.4.3). It is evident that pupils write only one draft on a topic (par. 5.4.5). This finding reveals that pupils do not receive effective feedback and furthermore that teachers do not evaluate pupils' writing before the final copy is handed in. Evaluation during the writing process should result in more than one draft. Pupils ought to rewrite their first draft in order to improve on shortcomings indicated by the teacher. Interaction between the respondents and pupils appears to be restricted to the provision of information by the respondents regarding content and language problems pupils might experience. This interaction apparently comes to an end as soon as pupils have completed one draft.

It is doubtful whether pupils revise their writing (cf. par. 5.4.5) since it cannot possibly be done effectively when only one draft is written. The respondents apparently do not know what revision implies. There is no sense in this activity if the intention is not to rewrite what has been revised in order to improve on it.

Although the respondents indicated that they do remedial work by means of class and individual discussions, the vast majority do not have enough time for individual discussions in class (par. 5.4.6). It can be concluded then that the respondents either have individual discussions with pupils in their own time or that the respondents did not answer the question objectively.

Comments on both the language and content of pupils' writing is given by teachers when it is marked and most of them tend to write positive rather than negative remarks (par 5.4.4.2). It nevertheless seems that the effect of the evaluation done by teachers is limited, although it takes up much of their time. Pupils seldom revise the writing which has been evaluated in order to improve on weaknesses (par. 5.4.6.2). If pupils do not take note of the teachers' marking, the same kind of errors will inevitably be repeated in the next piece of writing. There is clearly no purpose in the effort teachers put into evaluation if the writing process ends as soon as the first and only drafts have been controlled. Peer-marking probably has no effect on the development of the pupils' writing either since no revision is done after evaluation.

It would appear that teaching methods applied by teachers in the schools where the investigation was conducted meet the criteria introduced in Chapter 4 to a certain extent; pre-writing activities are used; pair and group work too are part of the writing process, and peer editing takes place. The fact that pupils write only one draft causes concern. Revision, remedial work, evaluation and peer-editing will not have any significant effect on the development of pupils' writing if the writing process is not continued afterwards. Pupils need to write and rewrite in order to refine their writing. More than one draft, therefore, is inevitable. Alterations in the current evaluation system, as used by teachers, are definitely necessary since its limitations are obvious. The process method, however, is very time-consuming and it might not be easy to incorporate it into TED schools.

Recommendations will be made now in an attempt to introduce new ideas suggested by supporters of the process writing approach. These ideas proved to be successful by researchers who have tried them out in the classroom.

6.3 Recommendations for the teaching of writing in secondary schools.

Teachers should use a variety of pre-writing activities in order to stimulate pupils' ideas regarding the topics they have to write on. The importance of this stage can never be overemphasized and teachers should attempt to devote more time to prepare pupils for the proposed writing (par. 3.2.1).

Pair and group work should also be implemented as often as possible since it affords pupils opportunities of exercising the different language skills (par. 3.5).

When pupils get the opportunity to work on their writing in class the time should be used effectively. Pupils must ask the teacher for assistance if they need it, but the teacher should not do the pupils' thinking for them. Pupils should not be allowed, for example, to ask for ideas if they run out of them or to ask for the spelling of a word if it can be looked up in a dictionary. The purpose is rather to provide feedback to pupils when they have already produced some writing (par.3.3).

Teachers also ought to control some of the pupils' first drafts as often as possible (par. 3.4). A time problem might be experienced, though. Classes tend to become bigger and the teachers' marking loads might become too much as a result. If the teachers cannot mark all the first drafts they ought to see to it that pupils revise

their own writing adequately. Pupils must realize that they cannot produce a perfect piece of writing the first time they put their pens to paper. They should not try, for example, to concentrate on language use and content simultaneously. The first draft is only the beginning of the production of text and pupils should revise it critically after completion. Teachers play an important role in guiding pupils in this regard. Although they do not mark each pupil's writing individually, they are involved in the evaluation of the first draft (par. 3.3.3).

Peer marking can also be used effectively to solve the time problem teachers might have. Pupils should be taught how to evaluate one another's work and how to give useful feedback to their peers. After peer-marking has been done, pupils can discuss the writing with one another and then work on it again. This also creates an excellent opportunity for interaction with teachers, because pupils will not always agree with their peers' marking. Teachers can be consulted for opinions and explanations and advice ought to be given where necessary. This involves teachers in the evaluation process although they do not mark each draft (3.5.2).

After the first draft has been evaluated, the process of evaluation and re-writing should continue until the pupils are satisfied with their work (3.2.3). After the final drafts have been revised and evaluated remedial work can be done with the class as a whole where general problems occur. However, attention should also be given to difficulties experienced by individuals by means of individual discussions. If teachers do not have enough time to discuss each pupil's writing, they should at least attempt to do so occasionally (par.3.4).

Teacher training should also receive attention. Many of the respondents apparently do not know, for example, how evaluation during the writing process should be done because they did not receive training in this regard. New ideas concerning process writing should be brought to teacher trainers' attention and they should become acquainted with these. They, in turn, should see to it that teachers are thoroughly trained in this respect. Teachers cannot be expected to use new methods in classes if they have not been trained to do so (par. 3.3).

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter the study will be summarized and concluded. The aims of the study as well as the main findings will be discussed, and suggestions for further research will be made.

7.2 Summary and conclusion

The aim of the literature study in Chapters 2 and 3 was to explore different methods in the teaching of the writing skill in ESL in order to establish didactic criteria for the teaching of writing. These criteria are discussed in Chapter 4. The following important guidelines should be taken into account when the writing skill is taught:

- Teachers should be actively involved in the whole writing process which starts as soon as pupils start planning their writing and ends with remedial work on the final copy.
- The writing skill should never be practised in isolation. Teachers should endeavour to integrate all the language skills.
- Pupils should be provided with opportunities to work in pairs and groups as often as possible during the writing process so that the different language skills can be practised.
- Pre-writing activities are essential to prepare pupils for the writing they intend doing. There is a variety of activities from which teachers can choose.
- Pupils should receive opportunities to write in the presence of teachers so that they can render assistance where necessary.
- Teachers should give feedback to pupils while they are writing.
- Pupils ought to write more than one draft of a piece of writing. As soon as the first draft has been completed, it should be revised by the pupils themselves. Alternatively, the first draft could be marked by peers or else it could be evaluated by teachers.
- Teachers should motivate pupils to develop their writing skill by giving positive feedback.
- Equal attention should be given to the content and the language of the writing.

- After the first draft has been evaluated, it should be rewritten to sort out weaknesses.
- Revision should be continued until the pupils are satisfied with their work.
- Remedial work should be done after the final copies have been evaluated. General problems can be discussed with the class as a whole and specific problems can be sorted out by means of individual discussions.
- Pupils' writing should be read outside the classroom as well. This will motivate them to work towards perfection.

An empirical investigation was undertaken to establish to what extent the teaching of writing in practice meets these criteria. The following findings were made:

- Evaluation is not done effectively and apparently has no significant effect on the development of the pupils' writing.
- Pupils do not do revision of their own work and write only one draft on a topic.
- Respondents seldom provide feedback during the writing process and evaluation is restricted to the final and only copy.
- Pupils do not pay much attention to the teachers' marking and no significant remedial work is done of the writing after it has been evaluated.
- Respondents seldom have individual discussions with pupils to sort out specific problems they are experiencing.
- Although peer-marking is used, no revision is done of the writing afterwards.
- The writing process evidently stops as soon as the pupils' one-and-only-drafts have been controlled.
- It seems as if the respondents do not meet all the specified didactic criteria because they did not receive adequate training to do so.

The evaluation and revision systems used by most respondents undoubtedly need to be altered to ensure greater efficiency. There is no point in spending many hours marking the pupils' work if it does not contribute to the development of their writing skill. The writing process should continue after the evaluation of the first draft and pupils should write several drafts until they are satisfied with what they have achieved. Remedial work also plays an important role and should receive attention after the final draft has been marked.

7.3 Recommendations for further research

The fact that the writing process takes up considerable time calls for concern. Teachers usually have no option but to complete a certain amount of work within specific time limits. It is not clear as yet how current school systems could be adjusted to accommodate the writing process. Further research to investigate and sort out the practical implications is necessary. Teachers cannot be expected to apply new ideas if there are still many unsolved problems.

The proposed evaluation system is also complicated and teachers would have to receive clear-cut guidelines to facilitate the changing process for them. The fact that pupil numbers tend to increase constantly complicates the application of the writing process additionally. Researchers will have to investigate the matter so that viable suggestions in this regard can be formulated.

Further research concerning the practical application of the process method of teaching the writing skill is essential. Only then can teacher trainers be introduced to it and can teachers be expected to apply it profitably.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

For office use

No.

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1-2

1. Indicate on the five point scale how **OFTEN** you include the following elements when pupils are being prepared to do a piece of creative writing

5. almost always

4. very often

3. often

2. seldom

1. never

a *Substitution* Structured exercises connected with the creative writing to be done, such as substitution drills, fill in the missing words, give the correct form of words, complete the following sentences.

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

3

b Models of the writing which pupils have to produce, for example model paragraphs, model letters, model dialogues.

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

4

c *Researching the topic* Oral work in pairs connected with the creative writing topic

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

5

d Oral work in groups connected with the creative writing topic

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

6

e Additional reading pieces, apart from the comprehension done in the cycle

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

7

f Pictures to assist pupils in the creative writing to be done

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

8

g Video tapes to assist pupils in the writing they are doing.

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

9

h Audio-tapes to assist them in the writing which they must do

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

10

2. Answer the following questions by indicating on the five point scale how **OFTEN** the actions listed below are part of your teaching:

5. almost always

4. very often

3. often

2. seldom

1. never

a Do pupils receive the opportunity to work on writing pieces in class in order to ask for assistance?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

11

b Do you mark any other drafts written by the pupils but the final copy?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

12

c Do you give feedback to the pupils on the writing they are doing, **before** they hand in their final copy?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

13

d Do you write comments on the **content** of the pupils' writing when you evaluate their work?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

14

e Do you write comments on the **language** use of the pupils' writing when you evaluate their work?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

15

f Do you create the opportunity for pupils to revise their own writing **in class**?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

16

g Do you have **individual** discussions with pupils about their writing?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

17

- h Do pupils evidently revise their work **at home**?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

 18
- i Do you create the opportunity for pupils to evaluate each other's writing in class?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

 19
- j Do you create the opportunity for pupils to evaluate each other's writing **at home**?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

 20
- k Is pupils' work read by any one else but the teacher or classmate, for example published in a school paper or sent to a newspaper or penfriend?

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

 21

3. Choose the answer which is most appropriate in your teaching situation:

- a *Creative writing pieces are*

1	2	3
---	---	---

 22
1. mostly related to a topic covered during a cycle
 2. mostly disconnected from any previous work done
 3. sometimes related to a topic done and sometimes not
- b *The writing of extended pieces mostly occur*

1	2	3
---	---	---

 23
1. at the beginning of a cycle
 2. during the cycle
 3. at the end of a cycle
- c *Pupils do their creative writing*

1	2	3
---	---	---

 24
1. mostly in class
 2. mostly at home
 3. both in class and at home
- d *When pupils work on a piece of writing they work*

1	2	3
---	---	---

 25
1. mostly individually
 2. mostly in pairs or groups
 3. sometimes individually and sometimes in pairs or groups

e *You evaluate the pupils' writing*

1. during the writing process
2. when they hand in the final copy →
3. during both the writing process and when they hand in the final copy

1	2	3
---	---	---

26

f *When you write comments on pupils' writing it is*

1. mostly about the content
2. mostly about the language use
3. about both the content and the language use

1	2	3
---	---	---

27

g *When you write remarks on pupils' writing, it is*

1. mostly positive
2. mostly negative
3. both positive and negative

1	2	3
---	---	---

28

h *When pupils revise writing pieces they concentrate*

1. mostly on content
2. mostly on language use
3. on both content and language use

1	2	3
---	---	---

29

i *Pupils mostly respond to the marking of their work by*

1. Correcting all the errors
2. discussing the errors with you and then correcting them
3. not doing any corrections

1	2	3
---	---	---

30

j *After pupils' writing has been marked and handed back, remedial work is mostly done by means of*

1. class discussions about general errors
2. individual discussions about errors that occurred
3. individual and class discussions about errors that occurred

1	2	3
---	---	---

31

4. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a Teachers have enough time **in class** to prepare pupils for the writing they have to do

1	2
Yes	No

32

b Prescribed textbooks supply sufficient information and exercises to prepare pupils to write on specific topics

1	2
Yes	No

33

c Most pupils write more than one draft on a piece of writing they have to do

1	2
Yes	No

34

d Teachers have enough time **in class** to assist pupils with their writing

1	2
Yes	No

35

e Pupils' writing improves when they correct the mistakes as indicated by the teacher

1	2
Yes	No

36

f Teachers have enough time **in class** to have individual discussions with pupils about their writing

1	2
Yes	No

37

5. Indicate on the five- point scale how well you were trained at college or university in the following aspects of teaching creative writing

5. very thoroughly

4. well

3. satisfactory

2. to a degree

1. not at all

a Preparing pupils for the writing they have to do

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

38

b The use of model pieces, for example model dialogues, letters etc.

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

39

c Teaching pupils how to organize their ideas about the topic	5 4 3 2 1	40
d Integrating the writing skill with the other language skills (reading, listening and speaking)	5 4 3 2 1	41
e Organizing pupils so that they can work efficiently in groups	5 4 3 2 1	42
f Teaching pupils how to evaluate each others' work	5 4 3 2 1	43
g Assisting pupils with their writing while they are working on it	5 4 3 2 1	44
h Teaching pupils how to revise their own work	5 4 3 2 1	45
i Evaluating pupils' writing	5 4 3 2 1	46
j Doing remedial work on errors made in pupils' writing	5 4 3 2 1	47