

# Effectiveness of Process Approach in College Basic Education

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this qualitative research study is to understand the relationship between learning English writing through the process approach and the perception of this approach among future teachers. To achieve this objective, the study utilized a questionnaire design that was analyzed through the lens of constructivism. Ten participants completed the questionnaires for the study of first- and second-year students in the education program. The 20-question questionnaire was divided into five sections to reflect the stages of the writing processes and the intention to use this process in future practice. The findings of the study indicate that there is a positive perception of the process approach, with a few minor outliers, and a strong intention to utilize the approach in their future practice. Recommendations emerged from the challenges that were identified to include a need for additional feedback and increased direction for some students. Recommendations for further research are included to strengthen the findings of this study.*

**Keywords:** English writing, process approach, future teachers, teaching strategies

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## INTRODUCTION

Learning English writing involves vocabulary, grammar, structure, and organization (Rashid et al., 2022; Siddiqui, 2020). Achieving an end-product with complex sentences and well-organized thoughts can seem insurmountable for language learners (Siddiqui, 2020). Yet, it is often the case that students are provided with writing assignments, provided information about grammar and organization, and expected to produce an appropriate writing sample that demonstrates their grasp of the content (Kadmiry, 2021). Process-oriented writing provides students with a breakdown of steps from pre-writing to presentation, that allows for free-flowing ideas to lead into a well-

organized paper (Safitri, Tari, & Lindawati, 2020; Turkben, 2021). Understanding how students experience this process can offer insight as to what elements are effective and what, if any, areas of opportunity for improvement exist.

### **Overview of the Study**

This qualitative research study draws from current literature and questionnaires distributed to first- and second-year students in the education department. These future teachers have experienced English writing learning through the process approach and, thus, are in a unique position to express their perceptions and intent to utilize these methods in their future practice. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher through the lens of constructivism and analyzed in the context of positive and negative aspects to resolve the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study.

### **Objectives and Research Questions**

The objective of this study is to understand what elements of learning English writing through the process approach are beneficial and what concepts are challenging. To achieve this objective, the study addresses the following research questions:

**RQ1:** What elements of the process approach do students find beneficial?

**RQ2:** What elements of the process approach do students find challenging?

**RQ3:** How do future teachers plan to utilize the process approach for teaching English writing?

### **Scope and Purpose of the Study**

Although previous literature has presented insight as to the outcomes of the learning experience and the perception of educators, there is a lack of knowledge as to how future teachers perceive this process through experience and how these perceptions impact their future teaching practice. Understanding how teachers experience learning and the implications on their future practice can significantly impact policies and the educational environment (Göçen, Eral, & Bücü, 2020). In fact, the cognitive constructivist theory explains that knowledge builds from previous experiences (MacLeod, Burm, & Mann, 2022). Thus, their knowledge of effectively teaching through the process model can be influenced by their experiences learning in the same manner. In other words, the two experiences, learning and teaching, cannot be evaluated independently from one another but rather as a construct of one leading into the other. For instance, Van Katwijk, Jansen, and Van Veen (2023) found that pre-service educators who had a positive experience with quality research

had a more positive perception of teaching research methods to future students. Thus, the results of this study have implications for both teacher education and teaching methods.

### **Literature Review**

The purpose of the literature review is to position the current study into the context of the discourse regarding English writing learning and pedagogical approaches. The chapter begins with a discussion of the theoretical foundations, followed by the relevant literature. The review of the literature is organized thematically to include a description of the process writing approach, benefits of the processing writing approach, challenges of the process writing approach, and alternative approaches. The chapter closes with a brief synthesis and justification for the current study through gaps that were identified in the literature.

### **Theoretical Foundations**

Cognitive constructivism has served as the foundation for educational research in a number of studies (Efgivia et al., 2021; Gao, 2021; Rahmat, 2022). The core constructs of the theory hold that “students who learn to use the metacognitive constructivist model will be guided to plan, monitor, and evaluate the achievement of learning objectives and strategies” (Efgivia et al., 2021, pp. 208). Formulation of new knowledge is then constructed through building upon previous knowledge and experiences, interactions, and adaptations (Gao, 2021). Furthermore, MacLeod, Burm, and Mann (2022) explained that the theory holds that students are active participants within the learning process, consistently seeking new knowledge from their experiences.

As a research framework, MacLeod, Burm, and Mann (2022) explained that constructivism acknowledges that there are multiple ways of seeing the world, which indicates the subjective role of the researcher. Methodologically, constructivism approaches are qualitative and seek to understand how individuals construct meaning or knowledge (MacLeod, Burm, & Mann, 2022). Furthermore, the theory recognizes that “while there is general agreement about many things that are ‘known’, it is also recognised that individuals construct or represent their knowledge in different ways” (MacLeod, Burm, & Mann, 2022, pp. 26). Thus, the theory informs this research in the context of different perceptions on the role of the process writing approach for learning English writing.

## **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **Process Approach Description**

The writing process model is described throughout the literature with varying specifications while maintaining a general consensus as to the purpose of each stage. For instance, Turkben (2021) described the 4+1 Planned Writing and Evaluation Model as a process-based writing approach to include five steps. The first of these steps is preparation or brainstorming ideas for the writing assignment. This is followed by the planning or drafting phase in which students acknowledge the process of writing (Turkben, 2021). During the review/development phase, students share and receive feedback on their draft and then edit, accordingly in the fourth phase (Turkben, 2021). Students are then prepared to present their finalized draft (Turkben, 2021).

Safitri, Tari, and Lindawati (2020) offer similar descriptions of the process approach in two models. Firstly, the four step model approach is described as creating ideas, organizing, drafting, and polishing (Safitri, Tari, & Lindawati, 2020). The second model presented by Safitri, Tari, and Lindawati (2020) involved prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, while adding a fifth stage of proofreading. Notably, prewriting and creating are aligned with preparation, organizing and drafting are aligned with planning across the models. The primary point of differentiation is the peer review process, which can be indicative of collaborative learning models. Yet, this is notable due to the experiences of feedback that are associated with the cognitive constructivism framework.

### **Process Approach Benefits**

According to Albeshar (2022), the process approach engages and motivates students in the learning environment, especially during the prewriting process and collaborative communication with their peers. The students explained that this allowed them to be creative in their learning, providing them with a more positive experience. Hassan, Kazi, and Asmara Shafqat (2020) added that students feel less anxious about writing assignments when they are broken down into the steps of process writing. In fact, Hassan, Kazi, and Asmara Shafqat (2020) asserted that students feel less overwhelmed and more confident in their ability to meet deadlines successfully. This, according to Abdullah et al. (2020), is because the process is more flexible, which can help students to overcome writer's block that comes from looking at the project as a whole. Granted, Suprpto et al. (2022) found that students still experienced some degree of writer's block in the early stages of the process writing but found the latter stages easier due to the preliminary writing process.

Martínez, López-Díaz, and Pérez (2020) found that the transition into the later stage is more focused, resulting in greater organization and better paragraph structure than exhibited without following process writing stages. In brief, the benefits within the reviewed literature involve motivation, creativity, and improved writing outcomes.

### **Process Approach Challenges**

As noted by Suprpto et al. (2022), the process approach is not without some challenges. For instance, some students have reported difficulties collecting their ideas or organizing in the beginning (Suprpto et al., 2022). Elbouri (2022) explained that this can occur when the students anticipate how their paragraphs will come together rather than fully engaging in the prewriting process. Li (2022) stated that such challenges can lessen motivation for gaining new knowledge and, instead, creating more of a repetition than an engaged student. Kadmiry (2021) also considered the potential for students to gather ideas that are not relevant to the intended writing project or the end-product. Thus, it becomes important that the students are directed by the intended product, which can hinder the creativity benefit of the process approach (Pilegaard & Philipsen, 2023). On the one hand, according to Pilegaard and Philipsen (2023), this direction is necessary. However, with the primary benefit of motivation and creativity, these concerns counter the assertions presented by Abdullah et al. (2020). The challenge, then, can be identified as providing direction towards the end product while encouraging creativity and flexibility in the writing process.

### **Alternative Approaches**

With continued research in education, alternative approaches have been developed and studied across the field. Kadmiry (2021) differentiates between process and product-oriented methods for teaching writing. While process writing engages the students in the learning process, moving from ideas to a polished product, product-oriented teaching focuses on the formal structure of writing as an extension of teaching grammar. While grammar is an important element, Kadmiry (2021) found that process-oriented teaching yields better outcomes for English language learners. Other methods focus more on helping to establish creativity or generate ideas using virtual reality (Li, 2022), artificial intelligence (Shidiq, 2023), or previous writing samples (Pilegaard & Philipsen, 2023). Both Li (2022) and Shidiq (2023) considered the role of technology in the contemporary education environment. However, these recommendations did not directly disrupt the continuum of the writing process. Instead, they offered additional elements for brainstorming. Pilegaard and Philipsen (2023), on the other hand, considered the previous work not only in terms of creating

ideas but also in the ability to review and improve. Thus, editing and revising previous work allows the students to improve their own writing capabilities (Pilegaard & Philipsen, 2023).

### **Synthesis and Gaps in the Literature**

It was interesting that the literature regarding the challenges appeared to counter that of the benefits associated with process writing. For instance, motivation and flexibility were notable benefits while also challenging in the early stages of the writing process. Thus, the alternative methods identified aimed to address these challenges with the use of technology. However, these approaches did not fully dismiss the writing process apart from the product-oriented approach. The literature varied significantly in outcomes measured ranging from motivation and engagement to writing structure and organization, which could account for the lack of consensus on benefits and challenges. Thus, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge by incorporating perspectives on these diverse measures across the stages of the writing process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This qualitative study was conducted through a questionnaire developed by the researcher through the constructs of constructivism and the elements identified in the review of the literature. According to Turale (2020), qualitative designs are most appropriate for studies that aim to understand the phenomena of lived experiences. Additionally, Turale (2020) explained that “Qualitative description is well suited to studies that involve mixed methods or questionnaire design, or where there is a need to develop straight forward and first hand description of the facts of the phenomena” (pp. 289). Thus, the questionnaire was designed to allow for descriptive analysis associated with each stage of the process writing approach.

### **Settings and Participants**

The sampling process was purposeful given the focus on future teachers and the learning experience. Thus, first and second year students were recruited through a snowball approach with the first three students agreeing to recruit three additional students, yielding twelve initial participants who met the criteria for inclusion. According to Turale (2020), sampling in qualitative research should continue until saturation has been achieved, meaning no new information is emerging from the participants. Twelve participants were considered sufficient for this aim and saturation was determined achieved during the data analysis. However, the researcher had planned additional participants in the case that saturation was not achieved.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection took place via email. Each participant was emailed an informed consent form (Appendix A) to explain the purpose of the study and notify them of the volunteer nature of their participation. Upon returning the electronically signed informed consent form, the participants were then emailed a copy of the questionnaire (Appendix B) for completion. The participants were asked to return the document within one week. Two participants were sent a reminder email but did not respond, resulting in a total of 10 participants that submitted fully completed questionnaires. The questionnaires included 20 questions divided into 5 sections. The first four sections align with the writing process of prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. The final section relates to the intentions for future teaching practice.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis process was completed in two stages. Firstly, each question was coded as benefits and challenges or positive and negative by the researcher and one outside reviewer. Secondly, as recommended by Turale (2020), the data was examined descriptively through the researcher's reflexivity to incorporate the participants' voice in the narrative. This process allowed the researcher to be transparent in the coding process and identify any potential areas of researcher bias.

### **Ethical Considerations**

To mitigate ethical concerns in the study, the researcher did not collect any personally identifying information from the participants. The participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would remain confidential in the final report. The researcher utilized a secondary reviewer to reduce the potential for research bias in the coding process and descriptive narration to ensure transparency in the presentation of the findings.

### **Limitations**

Although the researcher asserts that saturation was achieved, this study is limited by the small number of participants and the single location for sampling. While the findings of this study could be generalizable, a larger research study should be considered to strengthen the findings of the study. Additionally, as with any qualitative study, the study is limited by the researcher's perspectives. However, all efforts have been made to address these limitations within the scope of the study.



## **FINDINGS**

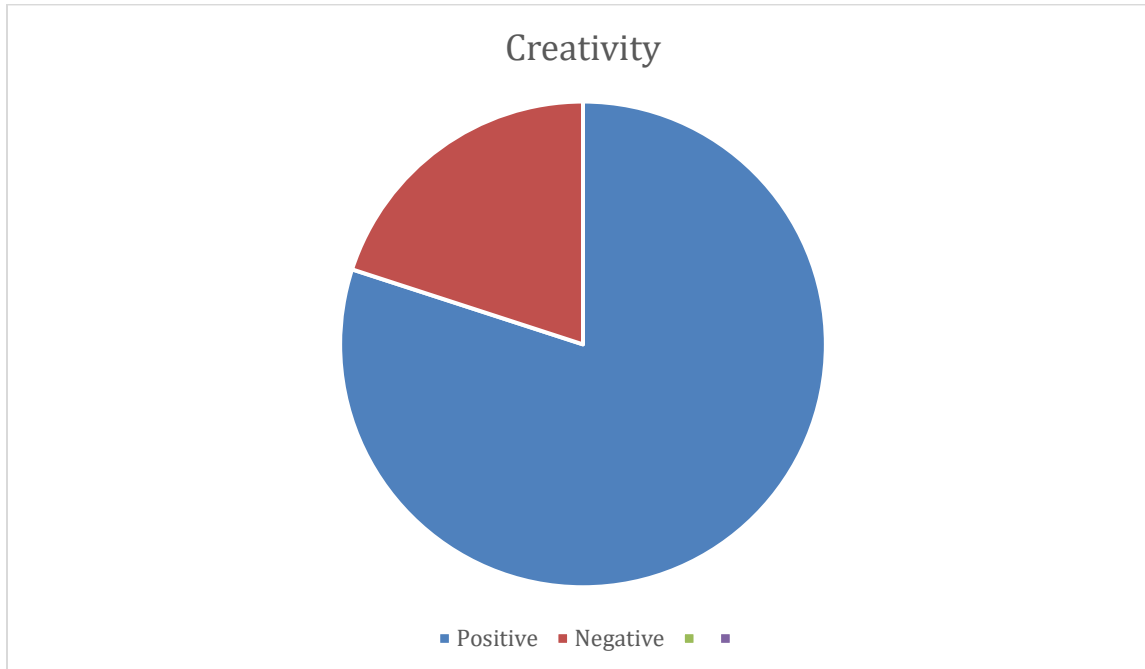
The sampling for this study yielded 12 participants who completed the consent form and 10 participants who completed the questionnaire and returned it. The participants varied in the length of their responses, but there was sufficient information in all 10 to achieve saturation and resolve the research questions. The presentation of the findings in Chapter 4 follows the same pattern within the questionnaire with five sections. Firstly, each subsection will present the coded analysis of each question followed by the narrative description to include reflexivity and the participants' voices to establish triangulation and strengthen the code selections. This will lead into Chapter 5 which includes the resolution of the research questions and the conclusions of the study.

### **Section One: Prewriting**

The first section of the questionnaire focused on the prewriting stage of the process approach. The first question referred to the impact of prewriting on creativity. Eight out of ten participants, as shown in Figure 1, responded positively such as "I was able to consider different ways to approach the topic" and "I could get ideas from my fellow students." Two participants, however, responded negatively as "I had a hard time narrowing down a topic," and "I prefer more direction during this stage." Yet, the overall perception was positive for this question. From a researcher's standpoint, it was notable that there was agreement with the outside reviewer, which substantiated the findings.

### **Figure 1: Impact on Creativity**

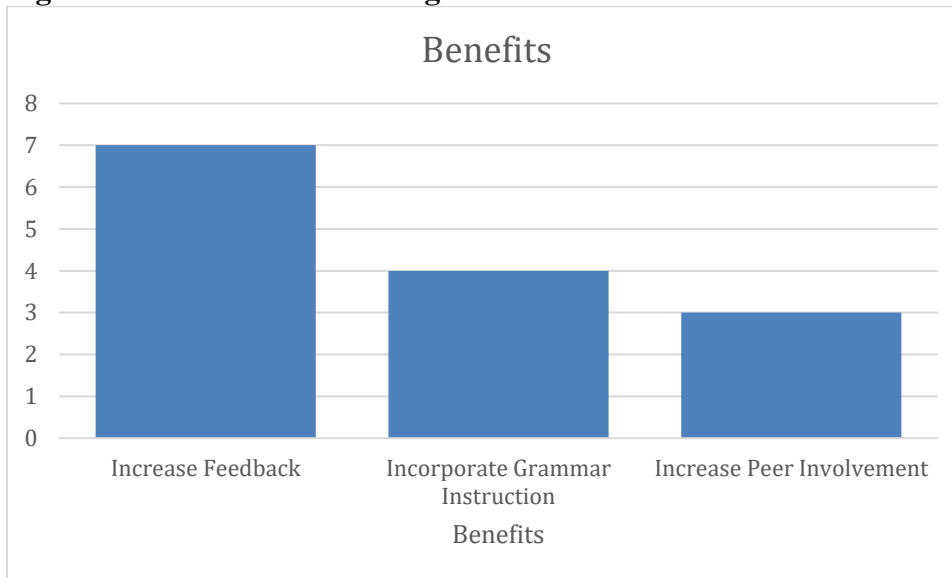




For the second question, regarding motivation, there was an overall positive response from nine participants, while one participant led to a discussion with the outside reviewer. Inevitably, the statement “I am typically not motivated until I see the work coming together” was coded as negative. However, it remained unclear if this was related to the writing process. Positive statements were primarily related to “getting excited once a topic was selection” and “enjoying feedback about approaches from my peers.” There were no significant inconsistencies that were noted, suggesting a positive impact on motivation.

The third question directed the participants towards positive responses, which was noted throughout the questionnaire. Benefits, as shown in Figure 2, identified focused on the ability to explore different approaches to the subject, understanding the foundation of the writing process, and being able to plan ahead for each stage based on the ideas created. There were no negative aspects discussed in this area of the section as it related specifically to the benefits of prewriting. However, it was notable that time management was mentioned three times while motivation and creativity were not mentioned as benefits. This could be because these aspects were already discussed.

**Figure 2: Benefits of Prewriting**



The final question allowed the participants to consider any challenges associated with prewriting. Overall, the results highlighted that the prewriting was challenging during the initial part of creating ideas. For instance, one participant stated, “the hardest part is getting started” and another mentioned “getting the ideas narrowed and onto the paper.” One participant stated that “it felt a bit too broad,” which indicated that they had difficulties getting started.

### **Section Two: Drafting**

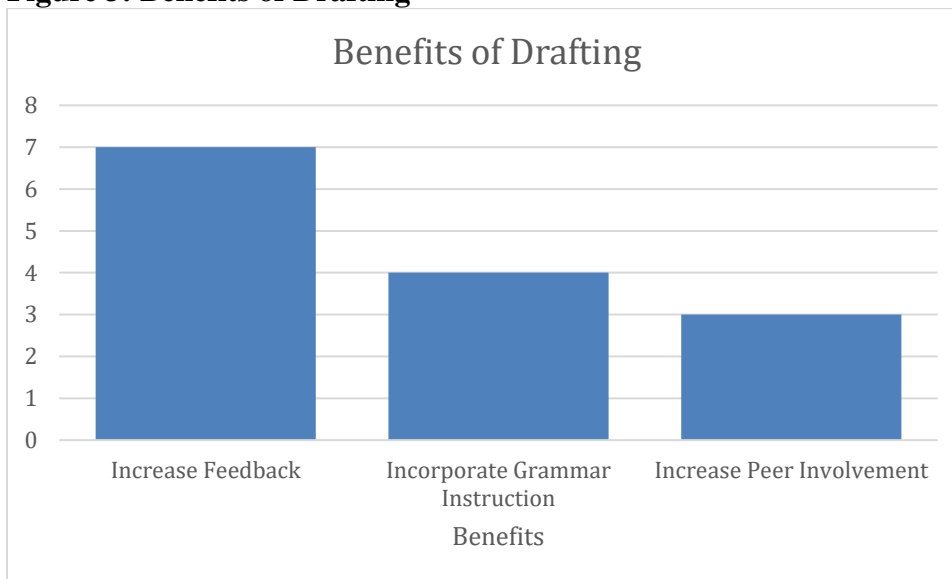
The first question of section two asked how the process affected their understanding of the larger project. Nine participants provided positive statements such as “I could see how it would all come together after getting down my initial ideas.” Another participant stated that they had “a greater understanding of their plan for completion and how to balance their time.” However, one participant response was coded negative as they stated, “drafting felt rushed, which is not how I like to learn.” This was interesting as time management and planning were notable benefits in the previous section.

The second question asked the participants how the transition from prewriting to drafting was experienced. All participants acknowledged that prewriting had helped them to get their ideas onto paper and begin to organize the ideas into a logical order. More specifically, one participant stated, “I found it much easier to see the paper coming together as I moved ideas around.” There were no

areas of disagreement with the external reviewer as the statements were all clearly positive without exception.

The third question of section two asked the participants to identify the benefits of drafting from their experience. Primary benefits were discussed as “beginning to get more organized,” “seeing how the ideas would connect,” and “staying on schedule for the larger project.” The benefits were clearly stated, with one participant providing a list as “progress, organization, and timesaving.” Thus, there were no areas of disagreement in this question. However, there were some overlapping responses as shown in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Benefits of Drafting**



The final question of the section referred to challenges experienced during drafting. Two participants stated that they did not have any notable challenges while the other participants provided detailed discussions. For instance, one participant explained that “the crafted ideas from prewriting often seemed disconnected and I struggled to determine where to place them in the draft.” Another indicated that “I prefer to take my time, and I did not feel confident with the draft that I composed during this stage.” Primarily, the participants indicated that disorganization was a challenge during this stage of the process approach.

### **Section Three: Revising**

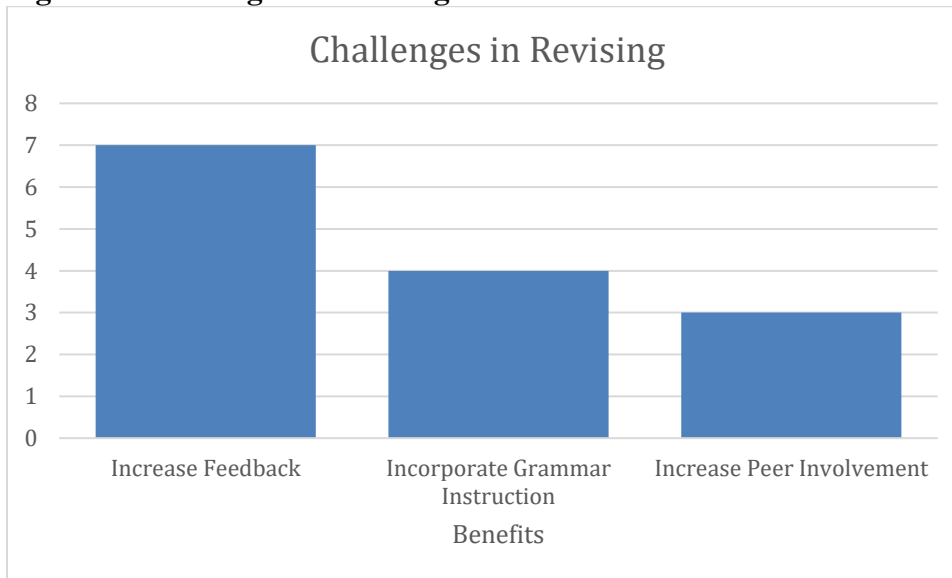
Section three explored the experiences in revising. The first question related to how revising affected the structure of their writing. All participants expressed that the structure of the paper was much more complex than from their draft. One stated that, “when reading the draft for revision, I could see the simplicity of many of the sentences. I was able to adapt them to make a larger impact.” Another participant stated that “I felt more focused on the structure since I already had the ideas down.” There was no negative feedback for this question or disagreement from the outside reviewer.

The second question asked about the organization during revising. One participant stated that they did not change much about the organization of the ideas while all others responded positive perceptions about revising and organization. For instance, one participant stated, “I felt that the flow of the paper was better once I moved the thoughts around.” Another commented, “I found it much easier to read after revising.” Both the researcher and outside reviewer indicated an overall positive response to this question.

The third question asked about the benefits of revising. Participants identified several benefits beyond organization and structure. For example, one stated that they “felt more in control of the writing process at this point” while another added “I was excited to see the project coming together.” Additionally, the participants noted that they felt they were better positioned to “try new words and sentence structures,” and “consider how the organization impacted the meaning.”

The final question of this section asked about any challenges encountered in revising. One participant explained that “it is sometimes hard to see errors in your own work.” Another commented that “I was uncertain about making changes and went through a lot of trial and error.” Overall, the challenges were expressed regarding the ability to self-evaluate as shown in Figure 4, which could indicate a need to incorporate peer review and feedback at this stage of the process approach.

**Figure 4: Challenges in Revising**



#### **Section Four: Editing**

The final stage of the process questions related to the editing process. The first question asked how editing affected the overall project. All responses to this question were positive. For instance, one participant stated that they “felt confident in their ability to identify grammar and spelling issues that affected the paper.” Another participant stated that they felt “proud of their completed project.” Notably, one response indicated that they did not find a significant difference between this stage and revising. However, they acknowledged the benefit of an extra review. Thus, both the researcher and the outside reviewer coded this question positively.

The second question referred to understanding the purpose of the process approach. The responses in this section were also positive such as “It all came together nicely” and “I can recognize the importance of focusing on ideas first and details later.” An interesting response was “I did not realize at the beginning how it would all progress, but I learned a lot about how I learn.” The question was overwhelmingly coded positively.

The third question of this section referred to the benefits of editing. Responses focused on areas such as “ensuring the paper was up to standards,” “improving the ability to identify errors,” and “building confidence in writing.” The participants were highly engaged in the writing process as

one indicated, “I think this can help me in other areas to slow down and focus on one area at a time.”

The final question in this section related to the challenges faced during editing. The responses were minimal in this area as one stated, “I had the hang of it by this time.” Another stated that, “my biggest challenge was not wanting to backtrack. I tried to focus on the specific editing but made some other changes.” Finally, another notable challenge was “taking enough time to be thorough at this stage.” The overall consensus was that editing was a form of completion that finalized the project.

#### **Section Five: Future Practice**

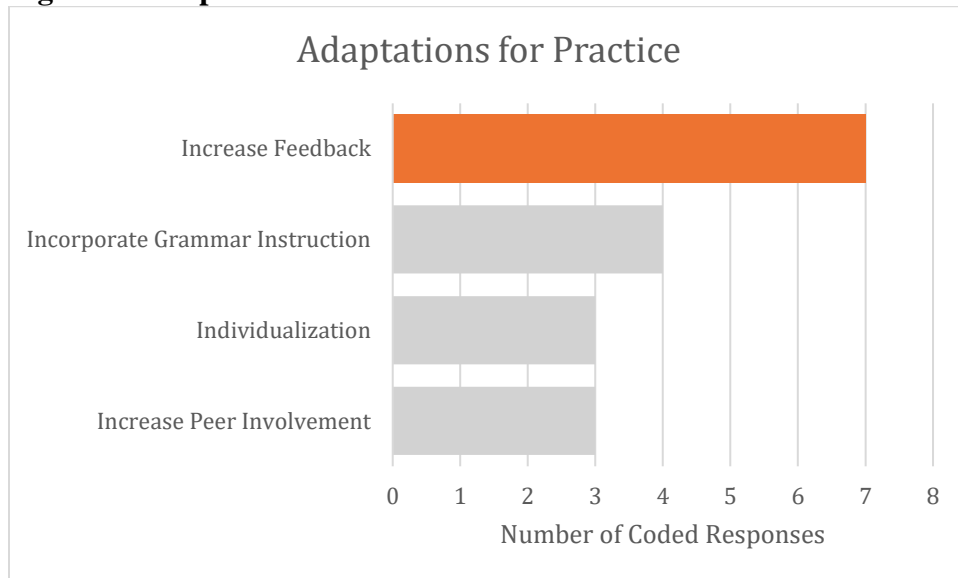
In the final section, the participants were asked about their intention to use the process approach in their future teaching practice. The first question referred to their overall perception of the process approach to learning English writing. The participants responded positively such as “I was excited to see the process” and “I would have missed a lot if I would have skipped steps.” One participant stated that “it felt a bit drawn out, but I enjoyed the process.”

The second question focused on their intention to use this process approach with their students. All participants stated that they felt that this approach was the most effective. One noted that they felt additional grammar and vocabulary instruction prior to writing could be helpful, but they added that this could be incorporated throughout the process. Thus, the approach is anticipated to be beneficial in future practice.

The third question focused on the benefits of the process approach. One participant stated that “it makes the tasks seem less daunting” while another explained that “it was less overwhelming to look at the stages instead of the whole project.” Most of the participants included some reference to organization and structure of the final paper as compared to their thoughts and ideas at the beginning of the process.

The final question asked the participants how they will address the challenges they faced. Suggestions included “encourage peer involvement,” “provide additional feedback for grammar,” and “direct the topics as less broad for students who become overwhelmed.” The participants noted that “the process approach is beneficial for learning but there is a need to ensure that all students are benefiting at each stage.” Thus, additional feedback is recommended as shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Adaptations for Practice**



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Resolution of Research Questions

Although there were some outliers, the overall perceptions of the process approach to learning English writing were positive among the 10 participants in the study. These findings were similar to what was expected based on the literature reviewed. Notably, the findings were significant as the experiences of these future teachers will impact how they utilize the process approach in their future practice.

**RQ1:** What elements of the process approach do students find beneficial?

The primary findings of the study indicate that the benefits of the process approach are time management, organization, confidence, and successful writing projects.

**RQ2:** What elements of the process approach do students find challenging?

Challenges faced during the process approach were related to narrowing topics and being critical of one's own writing.



**RQ3:** How do future teachers plan to utilize the process approach for teaching English writing? Future teachers aim to utilize the process approach to teaching English writing with increased feedback and direction from the educator and fellow students.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

The primary recommendations revealed through this study is a need to increase the level of feedback that is provided during each stage of the writing process. While some indication for narrowing the topics were considered, others felt that the process of narrowing for themselves was exciting and engaging. Thus, it is important to individualize how this approach is addressed based on the needs and level of knowledge for each student.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Further research should be conducted to determine the generalizability of these findings. Repeating the study with a larger sample and from different regions could be further beneficial. Finally, research should be conducted to validate the recommendations presented by these future teachers. Thus, implementing the recommendations and determining their impact would strengthen the findings of this study.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Informed Consent**

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study. The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between the learning experience and the intention to teach using the process approach to English writing learning. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions divided into five sections associated with the writing processes and your future teaching process. Your responses will remain confidential and no personally identifying information is required for your participation. You are completing this questionnaire on a strictly volunteer basis. You may choose to stop the questionnaire at any time. Upon return of your electronically signed consent form, I will email you a copy of the questionnaire. If you choose to complete this questionnaire, I would appreciate its return within one week to allow time for analysis and the completion of the final report.

Thank you.

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Your signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B: Questionnaire**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. Please answer the following questions relating to your experience with the process approach to learning English writing and your intention to utilize this model in your future teaching practice. As a reminder, your participation is voluntary, and your personal information is not required for participation. Your responses will remain anonymous, so please feel free to answer as thoroughly and honestly as possible.

### Section One: Prewriting

1. How did prewriting affect your creativity in topic selection?
2. How did prewriting affect your motivation for writing?
3. What aspects of prewriting did you feel most beneficial?
4. What challenges did you face during freewriting?

### Section Two: Drafting

5. How did drafting affect your understanding of the larger project?
6. How did drafting affect your ability to progress from prewriting?
7. What aspects of drafting did you feel most beneficial?
8. What challenges did you face during drafting?

### Section Three: Revising

9. How did revising affect your overall structure?
10. How did revising affect your organization?
11. What aspects of revising did you feel most beneficial?
12. What challenges did you experience during revising?

### Section Four: Editing

13. How did editing affect your completed project?
14. How did editing affect your understanding of the process approach?
15. What aspects of editing did you feel most beneficial?
16. What challenges did you experience during editing?

### Section Five: Future Practice

17. What is your overall perception of the process approach to learning English writing?
18. Will you use the process approach in your future teaching practice?
19. What aspects of the process approach do you find most beneficial?
20. How will you address the challenges you identified in your future teaching practice?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please feel free to add any additional information or comments that you feel are relevant to this line of research.