ACADEMIC WRITING ISSUES OF FOUNDATION LEVEL STUDENTS: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTEXT-SPECIFIC TEACHING MATERIALS USING A PROCESS GENRE APPROACH TO WRITING

by

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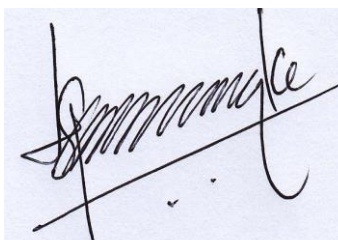## SUPERVISOR: DR. CARIEN WILSENACH

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of context-specific teaching materials delivered through an adapted process genre model of writing, in enhancing academic writing proficiency of tertiary level English foreign language (EFL) students. The study was conducted at a College of Technology in Oman and was motivated by the low EFL writing level of tertiary students at the college. The study employed a quasi-experimental design in which two main groups (experimental and control) were included. The experimental group received EFL writing instruction for one semester via the especially developed teaching materials, while the control group received EFL writing instruction via the prescribed textbook. The findings indicated statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the Mid-Semester examination (MSE) and the Level-Exit examination (LEE). A qualitative analysis of the experimental group's writing suggests that this group significantly outperformed the control group in writing fluency and accuracy. Therefore, based on the findings of the current study, it can be concluded that context-specific materials delivered through the proposed process genre model of writing are effective in enhancing tertiary level students' academic writing proficiency in an EFL context. Specifically, the writing intervention had a positive effect on students' ability to compose a variety of genres in an examination setting, which is an important finding, given that the process-genre approach to writing is normally not associated with writing in an examination setting.

Key terms: English foreign language, Academic writing proficiency, accuracy, fluency, context-specific teaching materials, product-based approach, process-based approach, process genre approach, corrective feedback, interaction, editing.

DECLARATION

"I declare that ACADEMIC WRITING ISSUES OF FOUNDATION LEVEL STUDENTS: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTEXT-SPECIFIC TEACHING MATERIALS USING A PROCESS GENRE APPROACH TO WRITING is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution. I, furthermore, declare that the statistical calculations were conducted under the expertise of Ms. Rungrat Charoenwisal, who is an independent researcher and a statistician attached to Happy Time Learning Centre at 36/31 Moo 6, Wiragorn Village, Hat Yai, Songkhla, 90112, Thailand, (Tel. +66 842564107 E-mail: roong072@yahoo.com) has certified that all statistical information relevant to the study are accurate and up to the standard".

16. 06. 2017

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(SARATH WITHANARACHCHI SAMARANAYAKE) DATE

Student No: 42101034

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother who had to undergo numerous sufferings and difficulties in bringing me up, educating and shaping my character to become the academic that I am today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are a great number of people to whom I should extend my sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation for their hard work, commitment, unstinting cooperation, encouragement and guidance given to me in the pursuit of achieving my qualification.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA……..Analysis of Variance

B. Tech……...Bachelor of Information Technology

CLIL………...Content and Language Integrated Learning

EAP…………English for Academic Purposes

EFL………… English as a Foreign Language

EFT/T……….Error Free T-unit ratio

EFCs…………Error Free Clauses

ELC………… English Language Centre

ELT………… English Language Teaching

ESL………… English as a Second Language

GCC…………Gulf Cooperation Council

GFP………… General Foundation Program

HCT…………Higher College of Technology

HR…………. Human Resources

LEE………… Level Exit Examination

LSD………… Least Significant Difference

L1…………... First Language

L2…………... Second Language

MMO………. Ministry of Manpower in Oman

MANOVA… Multivariate Analysis of Variance

MSE…………Mid-Semester Examination

NAEP………..National Assessment of Educational Progress

OAAA……....Oman Academic Accreditation Authority

OAAC……….Oman Academic Accreditation Council

OQF……........Oman Qualification Framework

PFP………….Post-Foundation Program

SLA………… Second Language Acquisition

SPSS………...Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TOEFL………Test of English as a Foreign Language

UAE…………United Arab Emirates

UFOs…………Unidentified Flying Objects

UNESCO……..United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

TOEFL……….Test of English as a Foreign Language

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the aims of the current research project. The background to the study is discussed, followed by the research problem and the main research questions. A brief explanation is given to elucidate the gap in the domain of English Foreign Language academic writing that motivated the focus of this research study. Furthermore, the research problem is contextualised and then the aims of the study are discussed. Finally, a brief explanation of the research methodology employed in the study is provided and an overview of the thesis structure is given.

1. Introduction and background to the study

Writing has a number of positive benefits, not just educational, occupational and social, but also in terms of one's social and mental well-being. Therefore, improving writing proficiency in learners who study English as a foreign or a second language seems mandatory on the part of foreign language English writing teachers. Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity which many learners find difficult to master even in their first language. Writing requires the writer to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously (Bell & Burnably, 1984). In fact, Leki (2010, p. 107) claims that "personal, social, cultural, linguistic, educational and political" variables are "necessarily entwined" in second language (L2) writing.

In tertiary academic settings, as well as in professional settings, L2 writing in English has become an increasingly essential tool worldwide, in that it establishes disciplinary knowledge and enables a country to contribute to the international arena of science and technology publications (Leki, 2010). This is also true in Oman. Thus, given the role that English academic writing plays in Omani tertiary level education, learning outcome standards for English Language in the general foundation program (set out by the Ministry of Higher Education) state that it is mandatory for students in the general foundation program to be able to write a text of a minimum of 250 words, showing control of layout, organisation, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary (Oman Academic Accreditation Authority, 2008). Stressing the importance of having a foundation year in higher educational institutes, Education in Oman: The Drive for Quality Summary Report, jointly prepared by the Ministry of Education and The World Bank (2012), states that "the foundation year is deemed necessary by the

higher education institutes because Grade 12 graduates lack skills, particularly in English proficiency" (p. 32). Shinas College of Technology which falls under the purview of the Ministry of Manpower in Oman is one of seven colleges which offer the general foundation program (GFP) which is a prerequisite to a post-foundation program which leads to certificate, diploma, higher diploma and degree programs in Engineering, Business Studies and Information Technology. The Ministry of Manpower is responsible for the annual selection and assignment of students to the seven Colleges of Technology using secondary school results published by the Ministry of Education in July every year. Depending on their results, students can register with a study program in a college of technology. The newly registered students are required to sit for a placement test and students are placed in the GFP which consists of four levels (1-4) based on their scores in the placement test, regardless of their prospective specialisation. However, students who score exceptionally well on the placement test (86% and above) qualify to immediately sit for the Level 4 Level-Exit Exam (LEE). Upon passing this LEE, such students go directly to the credit hour programme, provided that they meet all the other admission criteria for the target specialisation, including the minimum TOEFL score. However, if such a student fails in the Level 4 Exit-Exam, he or she is required to enrol in Level 4 and continue his or her studies.

A student could spend up to five semesters in the foundation program before proceeding to the certificate level and then to the other three levels, namely Diploma, Higher Diploma, and Bachelor of Technology (B. Tech) in a chosen specialisation. These four levels correspond to the first four levels of the post-secondary education described in Oman Qualification Framework (OQF). In Colleges of Technology, students progress from one level to another, provided they meet progressively demanding criteria, as per the provisions made in the College by-laws (Ministry of Manpower, 2004). Students can exit the system after completing any level with a qualification that enables them to enter the job market.

The four-level English Language Programme offered by the English Language Centre of each College of Technology in the foundation year mainly aims at developing students' linguistic proficiency to meet the academic requirements of the Post-Foundation specializations. Though it is a non-credit course, it is a prerequisite to join the Post-Foundation Programmes (http://www.hct.edu.om/centers/english-language-center/programs-and-courses). Given the importance attached to English language proficiency in the foundation level, it is mandatory for each student to acquire a

satisfactory level of competence in all language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Having been an English teacher for the past three years in the foundation English program of English Language Centre (ELC) at Shinas College of Technology, the researcher has observed that a clear majority of foundation students from all four levels (Levels 1 to 4) demonstrate low performance in the college based Mid-Semester Exam (MSE) and LEE. Test result analysis performed for the quality assurance purposes of the Shinas College of Technology for the academic year 2013-2014 indicates that a considerable number of students from all four levels received low marks for their writing skill even though most of them performed well in the other language skills (reading, speaking and listening). The researcher also noted that motivational levels in writing classes tended to be low. Previous research in the Oman context (Al-Badwawi, 2011) has indeed found that Omani students tend to have negative perceptions about their academic writing classes, particularly when it comes to the instructional practices of their teachers. According to Al-Badwawi (2011), teachers' practices negatively influenced students' writing when assignment instructions were given without further support and without acquainting students properly with the requirements of the academic writing task; and when students were not given sufficient practice in writing mock assignments before they had to write the final (assessed) semester assignment/exam. Given the context stated above, the current study aims to address the academic writing issues experienced by foundation level students at Shinas College of Technology.

1.1. Research problem

As stated in the introduction, the General Foundation Level English program at Shinas College of Technology lasts one semester (28 weeks) and during the semester students have to do continuous assessment tests on reading, writing and grammar which are generally taken on the last day of every week. As per the course requirements, foundation level students are required to sit for two examinations (MSE and LEE). Depending on the level, the content and the types of writing topics vary. For example, Level 1 and 2 students study how to write a description of a person, place or an event, whereas Level 3 and 4 students are required to study different rhetorical modes such as expressing an opinion, compare- contrast essays, composing a cause-effect essay and writing a job application. In the examinations, Level 3 students are expected to be able to produce well-thought out and organised paragraphs in line with the academic writing conventions which entail that

they should write a clear topic sentence, supporting details and a conclusion. The ability to construct coherent and cohesive texts in a written medium is considered essential at this level. In other words, students should be able to use the basic rhetoric, linguistic aspects, form and the cognitive processes involved in academic writing. During 2013, the researcher taught writing skills to two different groups of Level 3 students. An Analysis of the test results of the MSE and LEE exams of 2013 (conducted by the quality assurance unit of the college and by the researcher) indicated that most of the students had not performed well in writing. In extreme cases, students wrote nothing and only copied the question on to the answer script. Several students had problems with content, organization and language use. For example, a few students had not written a conclusion for the paragraph they had already written while others had forgotten to write a topic sentence (Shinas College of Technology, 2013). It should be noted here that these students have studied English as a subject at school for almost ten years in addition to studying the writing course for two semesters at the college.

Lack of writing proficiency in the target language (English) constantly poses problems for foundation level Omani students, both in academic and social contexts. The foundation students at Shinas College are to study different majors such as Engineering, Business Studies and Information Technology in the post foundation program and most of them aspire to find a job after graduation while a few continue their higher studies at a Higher College of Technology or at a local university (Higher College of Technology, Muscat, n.d.). Naturally, as they advance in their tertiary studies, their success depends, to some extent, on their English writing proficiency.

The low performance in writing skill in the college based examinations and other evidence from the classroom-based writing instruction suggest that writing needs to be taught systematically to the foundation level students. Lenneberg (1967 as cited in Brown, 2001) once noted, in a discussion of 'species specific' human behaviour that:

> human beings universally learn to walk and talk, but that swimming and writing are culturally specific learned behaviors. We learn to swim if there is a body of water available and usually if someone teaches us. We learn to write if we are members of a literate society and usually only if someone teaches us (p. 334).

If the teaching of writing does not happen in a systematic way, what students write does not conform to discourse and genre requirements demanded in academic writing. Furthermore, it can be assumed that if the problem of writing proficiency of foundation level learners is not properly addressed at the Pre-elementary stage, it will continue to

negatively affect students' studies at higher levels in the college. Outside of academia, these students' lack of writing skills might also pose serious communication problems. Therefore, given the problem described above, the researcher decided to implement a writing intervention program with foundation students, more specifically with Level 3 students. For the intervention, the researcher will employ the process genre approach and context-specific materials with the premise that the genre approach allows students to learn more effectively by exposing them to see writing as a process rather than a product (Badger & White, 2000; Henry & Roseberry, 1998; Kim & Kim, 2005). In the process genre approach, learners are required to go through several steps, including pre-writing, composing, re-reading and revising, peer editing and teacher feedback. The current study revolves around the research problem of what intervention measures can be taken to help students achieve academic writing proficiency in EFL in the Omani context.

1.1.1. Existing knowledge gaps in the field of EFL/ESL academic writing

Existing literature in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing suggests that the process genre approach to writing can help students to improve their academic writing proficiency in the target language. Given this assumption, the current study is conducted to determine whether the process genre approach and context-specific teaching materials are effective in enhancing tertiary level students' academic writing proficiency in the context of technological education in Oman. Only a few studies (Chelli & Hassinia, 2012; Jackson, 2012; Nihayah, 2009; Nordin & Ghazali, 2010) have been conducted in different teaching contexts to determine whether the process genre approach has an effect on the academic writing development of EFL students. Moreover, no studies exist in which researchers used context-specific materials in their respective intervention studies to improve students' writing in an examination setting.

Therefore, the goal of the current study is to determine whether context-specific teaching materials delivered through the process genre approach (the idea of context-specific materials will be discussed in detail in section 4.4.2) are effective in helping EFL tertiary level students to develop their academic writing proficiency to perform better in an examination setting. The original contribution of this work lies therein that the researcher will show that the development and use of context-specific teaching materials (using a process approach) is likely to be beneficial in any EFL writing class. The theoretical and pedagogical impact of the current study, and how the findings close

existing gaps in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing are explained in more detail in section 6.7.

1.1.2. Perceived impact of the contextualised writing instruction

The assumption of theorists who developed the process genre approach is that if students are instructed based on genres and have had the opportunity to analyse and manipulate model examples, then they should be able to compose more effectively in a given writing task. However, it has not been determined to the researcher's best knowledge whether the process genre approach also helps students to write better and faster in an examination setting. Moreover, instructional materials in any given language program play a very important role and is generally considered the second most important factor in EFL classrooms after the teacher (Riazi, 2003). Given the pedagogical value of materials as indicated by Riazi (2003) and other authors (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & John, 1998), the researcher decided to develop and implement context-specific materials that would enhance his learners' academic writing proficiency by engaging them in the process writing approach. The common claim concerning the organisation and presentation of materials is that it should follow a logical order which helps learners to take part in various stages of a task at hand.

It seems plausible to hypothesise that writing instruction, based on a combination of the process genre approach and context-specific materials will help students to write better and faster in an examination setting. However, the researcher did not find any empirical evidence that could corroborate this hypothesis. Hence, the current study is likely to enhance our understanding of the impact of specific and contextualized writing instruction in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing. Theoretical background plays an important role in guiding the entire process of doing research, seeing that the theoretical framework of a study introduces and describes why a particular research problem exists. Therefore, the next section describes the theoretical background to the current study.

1.2. Theoretical background to the study

Given the complexity of writing, it should be noted that there is currently no model or theory of writing that adequately or fully captures these complexities. Several relevant theories of writing are therefore incorporated in this study, and these theories are briefly introduced in the next four sections.

1.2.1. Cognitive approaches to writing

One conceptual approach to studying writing focuses mostly on the individual writer and concentrates on understanding the cognitive and the motivational processes involved in composing (Graham, 2006; Graham, 2010). This cognitive approach is exemplified in an influential model of writing developed by Hayes (1996). In his model, Hayes discusses the importance of interaction between the task environment for writing and the internal capabilities of the writer. The task environment includes both a social component (for example, the audience, other texts read while writing, and collaborators) and a physical component (for example, texts read so far and the writing medium, such as a word processor). Hayes explains these internal factors which consist of four main elements, namely i) cognitive processes (that include text interpretation, reflection, and text production), ii) motivation (that includes the goals, predispositions, beliefs, and attitudes that influence the writing process), iii) long-term memory (which accounts for knowledge of the writing topic, linguistic genre and the audience) and iv) working memory (which serves as an interface between cognitive processes, motivation, and memory).

However, in the model proposed by Hayes (1996) only limited attention is devoted to the social nature of writing. The influence of the writing community, culture, society, institution, politics and history are mostly ignored. One or more of these factors are dealt with in socio-cultural theories of writing. Given the importance of purpose, audience and co-construction of knowledge, the following section will briefly introduce socio-constructivist approaches to writing.

1.2.2. Socio-constructivist approaches to writing

According to Derry (1999) and McMahon (1997), social constructivism emphasises the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and how knowledge is constructed based on this understanding. When socio-constructivism is applied to learning, it is thought the leaning occurs through processes

of interaction, negotiation and collaboration (Billet, 1995; Hicks, 1995-96). Moreover, social constructivists view learning as a social process which does not take place only within an individual, and which is not just a passive development of behaviours that are shaped by external forces (McMahon, 1997). With regards to writing in a socio-constructivist approach, Palincsar (1998), referring to several studies (see Daiute & Dalton, 1993; Hicks, 1996; Needles & Knapp, 1994; Nystrand, 1986), concluded that by drawing upon a larger collective memory and by working in a group, individuals identified multiple ways in which knowledge about the writing process could be structured. The present study will use some of the perspectives that inform us how we could facilitate learning to write within a framework of social constructivism (Gredler, 1997).

Russell (1995) developed a theory for explaining how macro-level social and political forces influence micro-level writing actions and vice versa. According to Russell (1995), a basic unit in this model is an activity system, which examines how actors (an individual, dyad, or collective) - perceived in social terms and taking into account the history of their involvement in the activity system) - use concrete tools (for example, writing) to accomplish some action with some outcome. Another important feature of Russell's theory is that it employs the concept of genre which is very relevant to the current study. Russell (1995) has observed that texts are tools for 'transporting' various activities. When writers adjust the semiotic tools used to compose a text (to fit the requirements of a particular activity) different 'genres' are created. Genres are stabilised through regularised use of tools within and among individuals, creating a relatively predictable way of interacting with others, but they are only 'stabilized-for-now structures', as they are subject to change depending upon the context.

The process genre approach includes several stages of writing. Some of these stages (such as composing a first draft) are completed individually, whereas others (such as pre-writing re-reading and revising could be completed by working either individually or in groups/pairs. At least one stage (peer-editing) can only be completed when students work together. Thus, the process genre approach which this study employs seems congruent with some of the principles of the socio-constructivist approach.

While socio-constructivist teaching emphasises the belief that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction (as opposed to passively receiving information), another group of scholars, called the New London Group (1996) has presented an approach to writing called Multiliteracies. This

approach aims to make classroom teaching more inclusive of cultural, linguistic, communicative, and technological diversity and will be explained in the next section.

1.2.3. Multiliteracies approaches to writing

The New London Group (NLG) argue that multiple modes of communication systems and cultural and linguistic diversity in the world today call for a much broader view of literacy, that differs from traditional language-based approaches (New London Group, 1996). According to the NLG, teachers should make classroom teaching more inclusive of cultural, linguistic, communicative and technologically diversity, so that students are better prepared for a successful life in a globalised world (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). Multiliteracies overcomes the limitations of traditional approaches by placing emphasis on how to negotiate the multiple linguistic and cultural differences in our society which is central to the pragmatic challenges that students face in their professional and private lives (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). Moreover, scholars advocating multiliteracies believe that the use of such approaches in writing pedagogy will enable students to achieve two goals, namely1) create access to the evolving language of work, power, and community, and 2) foster the critical engagement necessary for learners to design their social futures and achieve success through fulfilling employment. While a pedagogy of multiliteraries creates a path between what leaners already know and can practise with print towards more sophisticated practice with digital forms of communications (New London Group, 2000), Alvermann (2002) has emphasised that writing as a tool of communication is inherently a social activity. It is to this dimension of writing that I turn in the next section.

1.2.4. Writing as a social activity

Most of us tend to think that writing is a solo act, but, in reality, it is not so because effective writing tends to go beyond a solo act, the reason being that writing involves elements that defines it as a social activity. For example, when we write an email to a friend or a colleague, we want to convey a message to that person. Similarly, when we write a letter of complaint, we are looking to address our grievances to someone with the expectation that the recipient will deal with our problem (Alvermann, 2002). These types of writing can be regarded as actual social interactions that happen in any society as real-world acts. In addition to what is stated above, writing becomes a social activity if a group

of students do a writing activity in a collaborative manner in a classroom setting. In group, pair or whole class activities, students discuss, negotiate, share knowledge and experience, debate, agree or disagree with opinions/information or facts on a topic at hand. In this sense, writing is a social activity. In the current study, the view that writing is a social activity is considered crucial in that the process genre approach and the context-specific materials include a wide array of writing tasks such as writing opinions, writing business letters, writing compare and contrast essays and writing cause-effects essays (see Chapter 3 and Appendix I for more information) which are of social interests. More information about writing as a social activity will be provided in section 2.4.5. Keeping in mind this background knowledge of different writing approaches, the next section will explain how writing development occurs in learners.

1.2.5. Writing development

The cognitive and activity theories proposed by Hayes (1996) and Russell (1995) respectively have led to different views of writing development and, have greatly influenced later scholars. For example, Graham (2006, 2010) argued that a writer's self-regulatory behaviours (e.g., becoming more sophisticated in planning), motivation (e.g., heightened sense of efficacy about one's writing capabilities), knowledge (e.g., increased knowledge about the attributes and structures of different types of writing), and skills (e.g., automatization of handwriting and spelling and proficiency in sentence construction) prompt writing development (also see Olive, Favart, Beauvais, and Beauvais, 2009 for a discussion of children's cognitive efforts in developing writing fluency). All the factors mentioned by Graham are inherent in the individual and his views concerning writing development are consistent with cognitive/ motivational theories of writing.

In contrast, Schultz and Fecho (2000) suggest a different view of writing development which is more consistent with socio-cultural theories of writing. They argue that writing development reflects and contributes to the social, historical, political, and institutional contexts in which it occurs; and varies across the educational institutions, home, and work contexts in which it is situated. They, furthermore, observed that writing is shaped by the curriculum and pedagogical decisions made by teachers and educational institutions. Writing is tied to the social identity of the writer(s), and is greatly influenced by the social interactions surrounding writing.

These two approaches and the theories underlying them benefit different aspects of writing and writing development. However, it can be argued that neither is complete because cognitive/motivational views of writing pay relatively little attention to context while socio-cultural views do not adequately address how individual factors shape writing development in learners. Given my teaching context, the two approaches of writing discussed above are relevant and important in that they will inform the development of a best practice teaching approach, which aims to improve the academic writing skills of students at Shinas College of Technology.

1.3. Context of the research problem

Shinas College of Technology is a public institution catering to the higher educational needs of Omani youth. The main aim of the Colleges of Technology is to deliver high quality technical education in order to produce graduates who possess the required professional and personal skills. Omani graduates from Colleges of Technology are thus able to undertake employment in their chosen fields and in return they can contribute efficiently and effectively to the ongoing economic development in their own country. Shinas College of Technology offers study programs leading to a diploma, an advanced diploma and bachelor's degrees in the field of Engineering, Information Technology and Business Studies.

The ELC at the College offers English language programs for both Foundation and Post-Foundation levels such as Pre-Elementary, Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced. The four-level English Language Program in the Foundation Year mainly aims at developing students' linguistic proficiency so that they will meet the academic requirements of the Post-Foundation specialisations. At Pre-Elementary and Elementary levels, students are taught the four major language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). *Cutting Edge Starter Students' Book* by Cunningham, Redston and Moor (2010) is used as a class textbook which is often supplemented with teacher prepared materials.

Although the prescribed textbook contains sections that focus on writing skills, most Arabic speaking teachers of English L2 seem to pay too little attention to the development of writing skills (Al Seyabi & Tuzlukova, 2014). As a result of this, the students' proficiency level in English writing remains inadequate or below expectation. Fareh (2010) observes that inadequate preparation of EFL teachers, lack of motivation on the part of learners, teacher-centered teaching methods and inadequate assessment techniques are some of the major factors that render EFL writing programs unable to

deliver as expected. As stated above, given the writing difficulties faced by my students at the foundation level, I decided to conduct a study to investigate the effectiveness of using context-specific writing materials delivered through the process genre approach in teaching academic writing to my students. With the premise that the context-specific writing materials delivered through the process genre approach would help my learners to perform better or faster in an examination setting, the following research questions were formulated:

1.3.1. Research questions

1. Does the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students to perform better in academic writing in an examination setting; as measured by the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology?

   i. Does the success of the intervention programme applied in this study depend on the instructor?

   ii. Do students who had a lot of exposure to English (including reading, accessing the internet and additional English instruction) benefit more from the intervention than students who had little exposure to English?

2. Does the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students to improve academic writing fluency as measured by the T Unit analysis?

3. Does the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students to improve academic writing accuracy as measured by T Unit analysis?

1.3.2. Research hypotheses

Past research studies which investigated the effect of the process genre approach in improving writing fluency in students in different teaching contexts suggests that this teaching approach has a positive outcome (Berninger, Fuller & Whitaker, 1996, Flower & Hayes, 1981; Perl, 1980; Urzua, 1987, Zamel, 1983). Therefore, based on the premise stated above, the following hypotheses will be investigated in the present study:

1. The application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, will help tertiary level students to perform better in an

examination setting as measured by the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology.

2. The application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, will improve tertiary level students' academic writing fluency as measured by T-unit analysis.

3. The application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, will improve tertiary level students' academic writing accuracy as measured by T-unit analysis.

1.3.3. Objectives of the research

By conducting this research, the researcher hopes to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the effectiveness of an enhanced process genre approach in writing instruction to improve the writing fluency and accuracy of tertiary level students in an examination setting.

2. To demonstrate that using a prescribed textbook alone is not sufficient to improve tertiary level students' academic writing proficiency in English.

3. To contribute to the field of EFL writing pedagogy by demonstrating how context-specific teaching materials can be designed in line with the process genre approach of writing.

1.3.4. Research methodology

The research was conducted using a quantitative framework, more specifically a quasi-experimental design in which statistical comparisons of interval data obtained from the subjects' writing tasks in a pre-test, the MSE and the LEE were drawn. The research design can be described as quasi-experimental since it involved more than one group of subjects, pre-testing of both groups at the outset of the study, the administration of a 'treatment' to the experimental group and the random selection and assignment of control and experimental groups (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). The subjects for this study were selected randomly using a random purposive sampling technique (Laerd Statistics, n.d.; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). (More information about student selection is found in Chapter 4). The study lasted for 28 weeks with approximately 78 hours of classroom instruction. The study employed five research instruments namely, a pre-test, MSE and LEE, the treatment instrument (context-specific teaching materials) and a questionnaire.

The data will be analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tests, supported by IBM SPSS computed software (version 20.0, 2011). In order to establish the reliability of the pre-test, the MSE and the LEE for the experimental and control groups both in the pilot and the main study, Cronbach's alpha will be reported. In addition, a pilot study will be conducted to assure the reliability and validity of the research instruments. Data from the main study will be analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, including Independent Samples T-tests, Paired Samples T-tests, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and a non-parametric test (Mann-Whitney U test). The analysis of the quality of the students' writing before and after the intervention programme will be supported via T-Unit analysis (Elola, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 1978; Perkins, 1980, 1983). Specifically, the quality of writing in a sub-sample of each group will be established using error-free T-unit ratio (EFT/T) (in which the EFT/T is calculated as the total number of error-free T-units in a given piece of writing divided by the total number of T-units) (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 2001). Finally, in order to determine the effects of (some) social variables on the treatment, the scores on the LEE of students with a high interest and high exposure to English will be compared to the scores of students with a low interest and low exposure to English.

1. 4. Outline of the thesis

This chapter This chapter introduces the aims of the current research project. The background to the study is discussed, followed by the research problem and the main research questions. A brief explanation is given to elucidate the gap in the domain of English Foreign Language academic writing that motivated the focus of this research study. Furthermore, the research problem is contextualised and then the aims of the study are discussed. Finally, a brief explanation of the research methodology employed in the study is provided and an overview of the thesis structure is given.

Chapter 2 will focus on the relevant and important theories that explain writing as a cognitive linguistic process, both in general and in a second language. The chapter begins by outlining a working definition of writing. This is followed by a discussion of how children develop writing as they grow up and the role of cognitive and meta- cognitive abilities in acquiring writing. Secondly, the theoretical models of writing are explained. Thirdly, the chapter discusses the importance of developing implicit and explicit knowledge of second/foreign language learners with particular reference to writing. Finally, the challenges of writing in English for EFL Arab learners are explored with reference to published literature and its relevance to the current study.

Chapter 3 will first describe the teaching strategies and elements that scholars believe ought to be present in any writing program that aims to improve the writing of adolescents and young adults. Following this, the different crucial roles that approaches to writing (already mentioned in the previous chapter) is explained in more detail. The process genre approach in writing instruction is explained in particular. Thirdly, the chapter explores the effects of writing intervention programs where the process genre approach was used to enhance academic writing proficiency of EFL/ESL students from diverse educational and social backgrounds. Finally, the effects of context-specific writing materials and the process genre approach in enhancing academic writing proficiency of EFL learners are described with reference to published literature and its relevance to the current study.

Chapter 4 deals with the research design of this study (a mainly quantitative approach is followed), as well as with the research methods used. This discussion is done with specific reference to participants, materials and procedures. The chapter starts with a brief general introduction to research methodology – the aim being to motivate the choice of a quantitative, rather than a qualitative research paradigm to execute this study. Following this, the research procedure, data collection tools, intervention tools, teaching equipment and data analysis tools specific to this study are discussed and explained in detail while the subject selection and allocation procedures used are outlined clearly. Furthermore, the ethical considerations of this study are explained. Finally, details of the pilot study, conducted to ensure that the context-specific teaching materials used in the current study are appropriate and that the testing tools are reliable and valid, are included.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the presentation and the discussion of the findings of the study. The chapter is aimed at answering the research questions posed and accepting or refuting the hypotheses formed in Chapter 1. Moreover, findings of the qualitative analysis of the students' writing samples will be discussed in relation to the second and third research questions. In addition, the data gathered from the social variables in the study groups will be analysed to determine whether these social variables could have accounted for the writing outcome in the treatment group. Finally, the findings pertaining to each of the research questions of the study are discussed and interpreted in the light of previous research.

Chapter 6 presents the researcher's contribution to theory building in the field of ESL/EFL writing instruction and highlights the pedagogical implications of the study, based on the significance of the findings presented in Chapter 5. An adapted process genre model to writing is conceptualised and proposed. The proposed process genre model includes the possible language input sources and how the process genre model operates in academic writing tasks. An explanation of the interaction patterns between the language input sources received by an individual and the process of writing (by that same individual) at each stage are provided. This chapter concludes with a description of how the current study bridges knowledge gaps in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing.

Chapter 7 contains a summary of the major findings and their contribution to the domains of SLA and EFL writing, keeping in mind the limitations of the study. This chapter also includes recommendations for EFL practitioners and it highlights avenues for further research on the effects of context-specific writing materials delivered through an adapted process genre model of writing in different teaching contexts across the world.

CHAPTER 2
WRITING IN A FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE

This chapter will focus on the relevant and important theories that explain writing as a cognitive linguistic process, both in general and in a second language. The chapter begins by outlining a working definition of writing. This is followed by a discussion of how children develop writing as they grow up and the role of cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities in acquiring writing. Secondly, the theoretical models of writing are explained. Thirdly, the chapter discusses the importance of developing implicit and explicit knowledge of second/foreign language learners with particular reference to writing. Finally, the challenges of writing in English for EFL Arab learners are explored with reference to published literature and its relevance to the current study.

2.1. Definition of writing

Writing can be discussed both as a process and a product. Before going into this discussion, various definitions of writing will be provided. Some definitions highlight the linguistic aspects of writing and neglect the fact that writing is a communicative tool, whereas other definitions take the view that writing is a process of producing a communicative text, but neglects the fact that it is also a linguistic and meta-cognitive process. Writing is defined as, "a system of written symbols which represent the sounds, syllables or words of a language" (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1992, p. 313). As stated earlier, this definition emphasises the graphical features and linguistic elements of writing at the expense of other aspects. As such, it does not show that the purpose of writing is to communicate a message.

Halliday (1989) makes a distinction between writing and the written language. By the former he means "the symbols and their function in the language" whereas the latter refers to "what is produced in the written medium" (pp. 42-43). The current study will employ the definition of writing provided by Atkinson (2003, p. 10) who states, "Writing is a cognitive or internal, multi-staged process, and in which by far the major dynamic of learning is through doing, with the teacher taking (in some- sometimes imagined-senses) a background role."

The definition provided by Atkinson (2003) for writing fits into the context of my study in several ways. Firstly, Atkinson sees writing as a cognitive process in which the learners should engage with their thinking process at all stages of composing a text.

Secondly, according to this definition, writing involves a number of stages. This aspect of Atkinson's definition is in line with the present study's use of the process genre approach in an intervention program in which students are required to follow several stages (such as prewriting, planning, composing, editing and producing a final draft). Thirdly, as is often the case with writing, whether it is in a first or second language, the writing teacher has to guide his learners throughout the whole process without 'taking over' the writing of his/her learners. This is what Atkinson (2003) means by stating that a writing teacher should take a background role. Atkinson's definition of writing is therefore a suitable working definition for the purposes of this study.

As explained in Chapter 1, the students at Shinas College of Technology are expected to master academic writing skills during their respective study programs. Thus, as the focus of this study falls on the acquisition of academic writing skills in a second/foreign language, it is also necessary to define academic writing in more detail. The ability to construct coherent and cohesive texts in a written medium is considered essential for students pursuing higher education in which they have to use the basic rhetoric, linguistic aspects, form and the cognitive processes involved in academic writing at their specific level of education.

Even though there are different views of what constitutes academic writing, the general view of all the authors reviewed here is that academic writing displays students' understanding of an expository or argumentative topic and of writing conventions. An academic text should have a clear and meaningful thesis statement that is discussed in an organised, logical, fluent and accurate manner (Weideman, 2003). Academic writers have to use semi-formal or formal voice and present their arguments mainly from a third person's point-of-view. Hofstee (2006, p. 187) proposed that "academic writing has the following characteristics: clarity, accuracy, brevity, simplicity, and focus", whereas Thaiss and Zawacki (2006, pp. 4-6) outlines the characteristics as follows: "attention to the topic of study and reflective thought about it, that reason dominates emotion, and that an academic writer should display analytic ability". Focusing on abilities and components of academic writing, Weideman (2003) also provides comprehensive details about the abilities students are required to have at tertiary level. According to Weideman (2003, p. 61), "students need to understand relations between different parts of a text, be aware of the logical development of (an academic) text, via introductions to conclusions, and know how to use language that serves to make the different parts of a text hang together." Naturally, these abilities are relevant to improve the academic literacy of students across

the globe. Omani students wishing to do diploma courses at tertiary institutions are indeed also required to develop their academic writing skills in their mandatory English courses to such an extent that they meet (some of) the requirements necessary for successful academic writing (as mentioned in Weideman (2003)).

Leki and Carson (1995) observed that students should have guidelines for their initial academic writing activities across the curriculum. The responsibility of the writing teacher is to expose students to various writing strategies which include combinations of activities such as outlining, drafting, or free writing (Lavelle & Bushrow, 2007; Spack, 1988) based on their level of general and academic writing experience. According to Dudley-Evans (2002), given the limited time of many academic writing courses, teachers often have to employ short-cut methods to raise students' proficiency to the required level before starting their undergraduate studies. Despite all the efforts that teachers exert in an EFL class to help learners achieve academic writing proficiency, "many learners never move beyond composing single sentences or perhaps paragraphs" (Williams, 2005, p. 1). However, given the complex nature of academic writing in particular and writing in general, in order to become proficient writers, students have to develop a range of skills, from early childhood into adulthood. The following section will focus on the development of these skills.

2.2. Development of writing

2.2.1. Early writing

Toddlers generally start scribbling on paper (or on the walls of their homes) around 15 months of age (Anselmo & Franz, 1995). Children at this age are discovering that they can manipulate a wide range of objects such as pencils, pens, crayon, paint brushes and other objects like clay, cutlery and remote controls and they realise that their movements of the pen/ crayon result in the lines on a paper. Toddlers will, at first, typically hold a marker or crayon in a fist and use large movements, but they eventually will gain more motor control, and around the age of two and a half to three years, toddlers are better able to control their scribbles (Batema, n.d.). At this age, children will draw the same shapes, such as circles, over and over again (Batema, n.d.). Close to age three, toddlers transition to holding the crayon between their thumb and middle finger (Batema, n.d.). This activity grows out of their innate learning instincts. Bartel (2010) asserts that scribbling is a very important developmental task. It is an instinctive learning stage that helps the brain and body develop and build readiness for both complex cognitive and

motor tasks that are to be learned later. For some children, scribbles become true letters and words of their native language, leading to such children becoming literate in their native language. However, many children acquire a second or a foreign language as they grow up, and they are expected to develop writing skills in this language too.

From three to five years, most children begin to draw pictures of objects or people (mostly family members). At this stage, children develop the ability to hold an image in their mind and represent it on a paper- a cognitive skill which takes some time to develop. It is assumed that children at this stage may label the picture with the names of people, animals, or objects they are familiar with once they finish drawing it (Robertson, 2007). When a child has begun to purposefully draw images, it tells us that he/she has mastered symbolic thinking, which is regarded an important milestone in thinking skill. This means that a child can understand that lines on paper can be symbols of something else, like a house, a cat or a person. At this stage, a child also begins to understand the difference between pictures and writing- one may see him/her draw a picture and then scribble some "words" underneath to describe what he has drawn or to tell a story (Levinger & Mott, 2013). By this time, children have had experience with letters and print for several years and are beginning to use letters in their own writing. Usually children start by experimenting with the letters in their own names, as these are most familiar to them (Robertson, 2007). Another striking feature of writing development is when children begin to understand that some words are made up of symbols that are shorter and some words are made up of symbols that are longer. As a result, their scribbles change. Rather than one long string of letters or letter-like shapes, a child's writing now has short and long patterns that look like words or sentences. While these letters and words are probably not technically correct, this exciting landmark means that a child is beginning to understand that text and print have meaning (Robertson, 2007). According to McNary (2017), writing skills are important for elementary students' continued learning in all academic areas, communication and self-expression. Given that writing skills are important for school-age children, the following section will discuss this aspect in detail.

2.2.2. Writing in school-aged children

Johns (2012, p.30) holds the view that literacy develops "from the results of our teaching (in the vast majority of cases), but builds from the critical brain capacities we nurture and shape in the critical years before formal education begins" In line with this argument, literacy can be viewed as a developmental process which begins from birth and continues into preschool years, a process which is known as emergent literacy (i.e. the early period of literacy development). Areas important to emergent literacy includes speaking, listening, understanding and more particularly alphabet knowledge (including letter knowledge and sensitivity to letter sounds), phonological awareness, vocabulary and comprehension (McLachlan, Nicholson, Fielding-Barnsley, Mercer & Ohi, 2013). Before children start schooling, most children are educated in pre-schools where teachers support the child's literacy learning by building on the literacy foundations that have been partially developed through prior experience (McLachlan et al., 2013). A number of research studies (Mason & Stewart, 1990, Sénéchal, LeFevre, Smith-Chant, & Colton, 2001; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) suggest that there are interrelations between components of writing and reading. Therefore, in order to better understand the nature of the developmental and individual differences of children's early writing skills, an organisational framework for the construct of emergent writing skills is suggested by Puranik & Lonigan (2014). These authors hypothesised that three distinct but correlated dimensions would account for children's emergent writing skills and they, furthermore, go on to describe that their concern was with the skills of young children, in that they did not include sociocultural factors in their organisational framework (the rationale being that young children are not influenced by socio-cultural factors when they write). According to Puranik & Lonigan (2014), the first component of their organisational framework for emergent writing skills is 'conceptual knowledge' which deals with understanding of how printed language works. For this, children need to understand that writing is organised in straight lines or that writing occurs from left to right (in English) as well as the knowledge of the universal principles of print (knowledge of writing as a symbolic representational system), concepts about writing (knowledge of units and means of writing) and functions of writing (purposes for which writing is used).

The second component is 'procedural knowledge', which is concerned with children's knowledge of the specific symbols and conventions involved in the production of writing. The third component of the organisational framework for emergent writing skills of young children is 'generative knowledge'. Generative knowledge represents

children's emerging ability to compose phrases and sentences in their writing. Studies have shown that even after children become familiar with print and letters, they do not necessarily understand the symbolic representational significance of those letters to convey meaning. According authors such as Bialystok (1995) and Berninger and Swanson (1994), it takes time for young children to understand the symbolic representational significance of letters to convey meaning, but children can grasp this knowledge, they can generate texts beyond the word level (e.g., phrases and sentences) to express ideas (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014).The organisational framework for the construct of emergent writing skills of young children proposed by Puranik and Lonigan (2014) helps us to understand theoretical underpinnings of how young children develop their writing skills at early stages of schooling. Similarly, an understanding of how children acquire writing skills at primary schools holds equal importance for teachers who take care of writing skills of primary school children. The present researcher is of the opinion that the organisational framework discussed above might also inform the development of writing skills in EFL learners, particularly in contexts where the first language of learners is vastly different from the target language, and where various aspects of conceptual, procedural and generative knowledge (already acquired in the first language) have to be re-learnt in the target language.

Once children enter the first grade in a school, it marks an important milestone for them because the first grade is traditionally thought of as the level where children learn to read and write. First graders have to use the social skills they developed in preschool in more mature ways. In the first grade, children develop the ability to understand what letters and numbers really mean with the help of their teachers. Several studies conducted to investigate young children's writing abilities have shown that first graders can grasp a few concepts and make connections between those concepts at the same time (Diamond & Baroody, 2013; Diamond, Gerde, & Powell, 2008; Dunsmuir & Blatchford, 2004). This is reflected through their writing because they use 'invented spellings' by writing in ways that make sense to them. They use what they know about sound and spelling relationships to get their ideas onto the page. They haven't mastered all the letter sounds or spelling rules that they need to be fluent writers, but they start to use what they know to work out the puzzle of written language.

In the second grade, most learners acquire the basics of reading and writing. At this stage, children also become better story writers as they learn to write basic sentences and short narratives about an event or a character. Children's handwriting often becomes

smaller and neater, and the cursive alphabet may be introduced. Second graders may experiment with different voices, writing some stories from a personal viewpoint, and others in the third person (Hall, 2010). They more frequently use the correct spelling of words that they know, and use punctuation more regularly. In subsequent grades such as grade three, four and five, students become more courageous, confident and open to new challenges and experience in literacy as they grow. At this stage, children tend to spend long periods of time reading and writing on their own. Most importantly, they learn to gather information from several sources like books, newspapers, leaflets, magazines and the internet (Hill & Nichols, 2006). However, their work may not be perfect. Moreover, children at this stage, develop a writing style where their personality comes through. They will learn to edit their work and in this process children tend to use a range of lexical choices and sentences arranged in a coherent manner to convey their ideas, thoughts and concepts.

One of the most impressive aspects of language development in the early school years is the acquisition of different registers. Children learn how written language differs from spoken language and how the language of a science report is different from the language of a narrative text (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Children also develop more sophisticated metalinguistic awareness as they grow. Scardamalia & Bereiter (2006) state that meta-cognitive skills include knowledge and understanding of 'what we know' and 'how we think' (this includes our ability to regulate our thinking as we work on a task). While cognitive skills are necessary to perform a task, meta-cognitive skills allow us to understand how the task was performed (Garner, 1987). Several meta-cognitive abilities need to be in place in order for children to develop the potential to shift from a knowledge-telling to a knowledge transforming approach in writing, and to use information about the audience, genre and rhetorical stance to accomplish a variety of writing purposes. Research suggests a potential link between linguistic abilities, cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities and writing (Kasper, 1997). Therefore, it is worth examining their roles with regards to writing development.

2.3. The role of linguistic, cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities in writing development

Writing, even in one's mother tongue, is a demanding multi-stage task, which calls upon several language abilities, as stated above, as well as on more general (meta) cognitive abilities, linguistic, cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities are naturally also

crucially important in the writing development of second/foreign language learners. These abilities are therefore, described in some detail below.

2.3.1. The importance of linguistic abilities in writing

As discussed above, writing includes several language abilities of which linguistic abilities hold primary importance - the reason being that writers, who wish to express an idea or a message to a reader, should have sufficient vocabulary and morpho-syntactic knowledge of the language in which they intend to write (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Similarly, writers' lexical knowledge or vocabulary size significantly influences the quality of their texts. In a study conducted by Laufer and Nation (1995), it was found that vocabulary size, use of words of different frequency bands (Lexical Frequency Profile) and composition rating were highly inter-correlated. Lexical Frequency Profile "shows the percentage of words a learner uses at different vocabulary frequency levels in his writing" (Laufer and Nation, 1995, p. 311). Limited lexical resources seem to reduce writers' possibilities for expressing their ideas in meaningful ways. In general, writers' ideas cannot be just expressed in single words or phrases, but need to be grammatically structured in a way that indicates the relationships between the constituents in a clause or a sentence. In order to achieve this, writers are required to have some grammatical knowledge in a given language to be able to connect the words of the language into proper clauses and sentences (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). McCarthy (1991, p. 34) states that, "without a command of the rich and variable resources of the grammar offered by a language such as English, the construction of natural and sophisticated discourse is impossible" With sufficient grammatical knowledge, writers should be able to construct a coherent text, in which a reader finds the ideas are tied together in a logical manner and where the text progresses logically. In order to make a text coherent, a writer needs to have a fair understanding of how, when and where cohesive devices need to be used to make his ideas clear, concise and comprehensible.

2.3.2. Cohesive devices in written discourse

The concept of cohesion and coherence are indispensable concepts that need to be discussed in this study in some detail as the current study deals with writing issues of Omani students. Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it a meaning (Michael, 1991). According to Halliday and Hassan's (1976) identification, there are five general categories of cohesive devices

that create coherence in a text namely reference, ellipses, substitution, lexical cohesion and conjunction. By reference these authors mean that two linguistics elements are related in what they refer to as in *Jan lives near **the park**. He often goes **there***. Substitution means a linguistic element is not repeated but is replaced by a substitution item as in *Daan loves strawberry **ice cream**. He has **one** every day* (Sanders & Maat, 2006, p. 591). Omitting one of the identical elements is termed as ellipses; e.g. *All the children had an **ice cream** today. Eva chose strawberry, Arthur had orange and Willem **too*** (Sanders & Maat, 2006, 591). The next category is lexical cohesion in which two elements share a lexical field as in *Why does this little boy **wriggle** all the time? Girls don't **wriggle*** (Halliday & Hassan, 1976, p. 285). In conjunction, semantic relation is explicitly marked. For example, *Eva walked into the town, **because** she wanted an ice cream* (Sanders & Maat, 2006, p. 591). What has been described above is the crucial role that cohesive devices play in written discourse. However, using only cohesive devices in writing will not suffice for a writer to convey his message clearly to his reader. Therefore, he or she should be able to write in a way that his or her text makes sense to the reader through the organisation of its content with relevant ideas and concepts (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Thus, creating a unity of a text as a whole is referred to as coherence.

Coherence in a text can be achieved through the effective grouping and arrangement of idea in a logical order. Enquist and Oates (2009, p. 34) emphasised that in academic writing paragraphs are an important part of a text in which information and ideas are sorted into paragraphs to make the writing more logical and to ensure that the argument flows and develops logically. Enquist and Oates say "to achieve cohesion and coherence, paragraphs and sentences need to be clearly linked to each other to logically and linguistically form a whole". As described at the outset of this section that cohesion and coherence in writing are crucial aspects which should specifically be taught to EFL/ESL students who are required to write essays of different genres and text types. However, as discussed above, having an ability to construct grammatically correct sentences or join sentences together to form a paragraph will not suffice because cognitive, meta-cognitive abilities and strategies also play a key role in writing development of learners.

2.3.3. The importance of cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities and strategies in writing

Writing is a volitional act which demands a high level of cognitive abilities, or thinking skills, as writers transfer information from one stage of the writing process to the next (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Becker, 2006). Skilled writers internalise the writing process by retrieving prior knowledge, connecting it to the given task, and sorting their thoughts before transferring them to paper (Baker et al., 2003). Internalising the writing process involves meta-cognition, or the awareness of one's own thinking. Pintrich and De Groot (1990) reported a positive correlation between high levels of self-regulation and high levels of meta-cognitive strategies. Metacognition is triggered by interest, or affective states that stimulate strong feelings such as success and satisfaction, connected to past experiences (Flavell, 1979). Meta-cognition is comprised of a range of functions including meta-cognitive knowledge and meta-cognitive control. Meta-cognitive knowledge refers to an awareness of the writer's own processes, and consists of three categories: strategic knowledge, knowledge about cognitive tasks, and self-knowledge. Meta-cognitive control refers to the actual use of those strategies (Pintrich, 2002; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

Meta-cognitive strategy is a term used in information-processing theory to indicate an 'executive' function and it refers to strategy that is used by learners as a means to manage, monitor and evaluate their learning activities. In other words, meta-cognitive strategies are skills, approaches, thoughts and actions learners use to control their cognition and learning process. Scholars such as Brown (1994), Cohen (1998), O'Malley & Chamot (1990) and Lv and Chen (2010) have all shared similar ideas with regard to the function of meta-cognitive strategies in writing. According to these scholars, the basic function of meta-cognitive strategies is that they allow an individual to plan, organise, and evaluate his or her own writing. Wenden (1991) provides us with a more comprehensive explanation of meta-cognitive strategies, in the form of a conceptual framework (See Figure 2.1), which indicates how writers use meta-cognitive strategies in a writing task. According to Wenden (1991), the following meta-cognitive strategies are used in writing: think aloud – (reporting on anything the writers are thinking while they are performing the task); considering the purpose and audience; consulting background knowledge; understanding that a writing plan is not linear and rereading and critiquing what is written. The diagram below explains the use metacognitive strategies in writing as a conceptual framework;
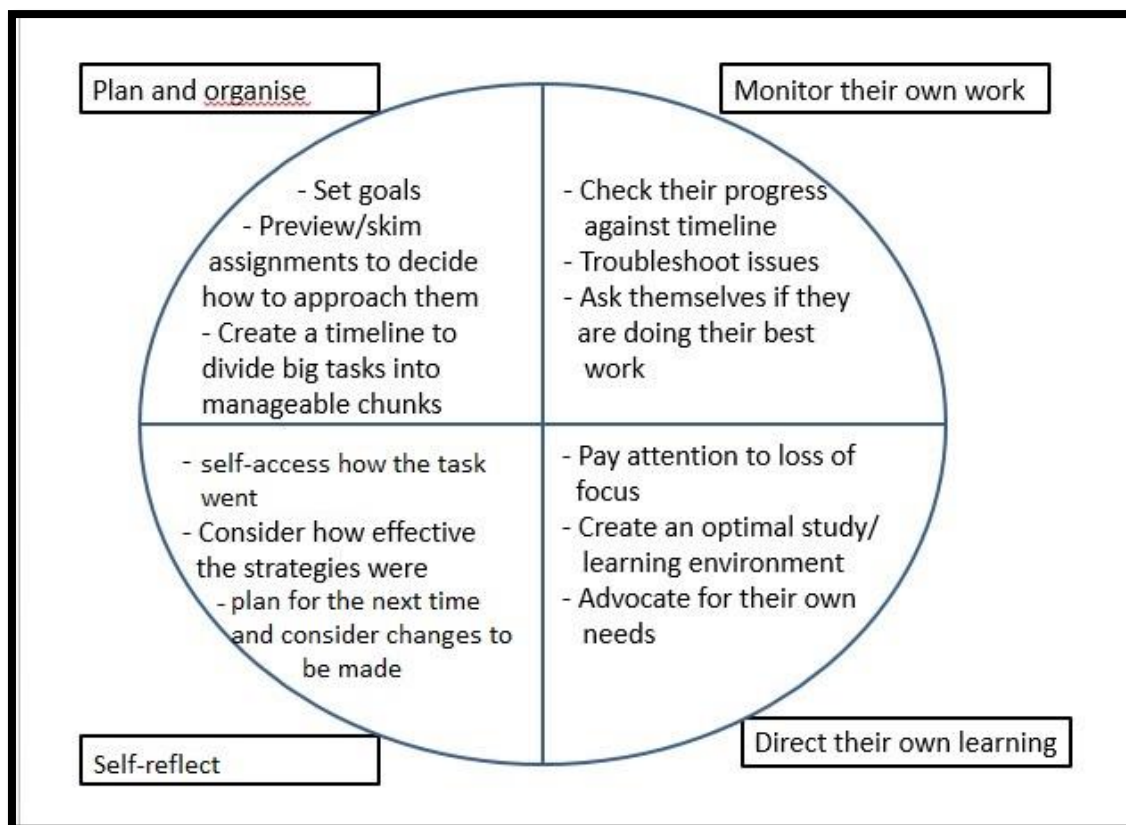
Figure 2.1. Conceptual framework of how writers use their meta-cognitive strategies in a writing task (Wenden, 1991).

Even though the meta-cognitive strategies described above are used by foreign language learners in general, they are often applied specifically to writing task. In the process genre approach, students are expected to make use of these meta-cognitive strategies (planning, organising and evaluating) (Cumming, 1990). According to the process genre approach, an instructor decides on a particular writing task (whether it be a job application letter or describing a process) and then get the students to brainstorm ideas about the topic at hand. This entails that students discuss (keeping in mind the topic), the subject content, the audience, the purpose, the style (formal or informal) and specific syntactic structures demanded by the specific genre. All these aspects fall under planning, while organising occurs in the actual composing stage where students structure their ideas in meaningful sentences into paragraphs and finally into an essay or a report. In line with the process genre approach, when it comes to evaluating strategy, students do re-reading and revising of their own writing. At this phase, students look at their ideas critically and evaluate the meaning and message; if the meaning and message are not clear, they make necessary changes to the text by adding or deleting irrelevant ideas (Shih, 1986). In sum,

when the whole concept of meta-cognitive strategies is taken together, it seems that the adapted process genre approach which was used to instruct the experimental group in the current study entail the use of the meta-cognitive strategies described above by O'Malley & Chamot (1990) and Wenden (1991).

Given the complex nature of writing, it is anticipated that writing in a second language (L2) is even more demanding because several of these meta-cognitive abilities may be less developed in an individual's second language than in the first language (L1). Therefore, many L2 writers find it difficult to access linguistic knowledge as rapidly or automatically as they do in their L1. This may be one of the factors that cause many L2 writers to find it difficult to master writing within a short period of time (Garner, 1987). The following section will discuss and describe some existing writing models as suggested by various authors, with specific reference to Hayes & Flower's (1980) model.

2.4. Theoretical models of writing

Because of the complexity of the writing process it is difficult to envisage a theoretical model for writing in terms of its 'sub-skills' (Abbott & Berninger, 1993; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Most existing writing models focus on the writing process (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Flower & Hayes, 1980; Flower & Hayes, 1983; Hayes, 1996; Kellogg, 1996) or on the development of writing proficiency (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1994) more than on the characteristics of the cognitive and linguistic resources needed for writing. It is argued that most of the research on L2 writing has been closely dependent on L1 research (Myles, 2002). Even though L2 writing differs strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically from L1 writing (Silva, 1993), L1 models have had a significant influence on L2 writing instruction and the development of a theory of L2 writing. Therefore, an examination of two popular L1 models will give us some insight into the theoretical models of writing that currently exist.

Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987) proposed a model in which they suggest reasons for differences in writing ability between skilled and less-skilled writers. According to them, the basic difference is linked to their two models of writing: the knowledge-telling model, in which the basic structure depends on the processes of retrieving content from memory with regard to topical and genre cues and the 'knowledge-transforming model', which involves more reflective problem-solving analysis and goal-setting (Myles, 2002). The second model seems important because it includes the idea of multiple processing where the writers go through several stages in producing a piece of writing depending on

the complexity of the writing task at hand. Here, the authors discuss the notion of mental representation as a writing strategy. From their research with graduate students, they observed that students "generated goals for their compositions and engaged in problem solving involving structure and gist as well as verbatim representations" (p. 354). However, the knowledge-transforming writing model is different from knowledge telling in that it involves setting goals that are to be achieved through the composing process. Therefore, the composing process does not depend on memories and emotions or on external assistance (given by a teacher) for writing. Bereiter and Scardamalia criticise formal schooling where learners are encouraged primarily via a passive kind of cognition, i.e. by "continually telling students what to do," rather than encouraging them "to follow their spontaneous interests and impulses . . . and assume responsibility for what becomes of their minds" (p. 361). Moreover, they argue that the ability to deal with and resolve both content and rhetorical problems demand analytical reasoning. They furthermore, highlight the fact that if students rarely practice the kinds of writing tasks that develop knowledge-transforming skills, students will not be not be able to develop those skills easily and as a result they will not be able to perform well in writing in classroom contexts.

In L1 and L2 writing instruction, both the Flower and Hayes (1981) and the Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) writing process models have served as the theoretical basis for the process approach. The next writing model which is described below was proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981).

2.4.1. Cognitive Process Model

The cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies described in the previous section are features of the Cognitive Process Model of writing proposed by Flower & Hayes (1981). Flower and Hayes (1981) emphasise three elements as the major components of their model: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory and the writing processes. The task environment includes a rhetorical problem or assignment in which the writer has to solve or respond to a problem presented to him/her. In this component, the writer is supposed to describe the topic and define the rhetorical problem relevant to the audience. A writer's long-term memory refers to that particular writer's knowledge of the topic, the audience and to the writing plan (where writing plan refers to the writer's abstract plan (representation) of his goals, and his knowledge of the topic). The third element includes the writing processes such as planning, translating and reviewing. These aspects are

controlled by a monitor. Figure 2.2 below shows the structure of the Cognitive Process Model and how each one of the components contributes to the overall process of writing:
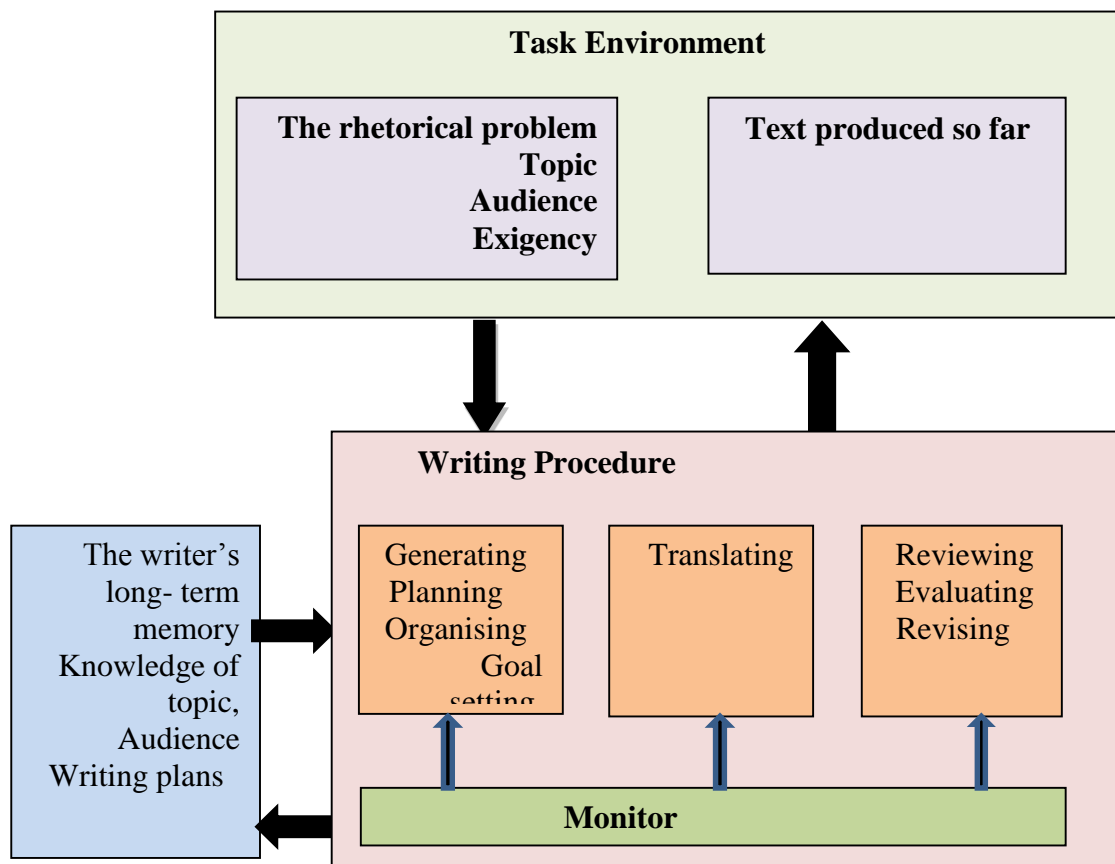
Figure 2.2. The cognitive process model of writing (Flower and Hayes, 1981).

Describing the task environment in detail, Flower and Hayes (1981), write that as composing proceeds, a new element enters the task environment and it places more constraints on what the writer can say. Just as a title constrains the content of a paper and a topic sentence shapes the options of a paragraph, each word in the growing text determines and limits the choices of what can come next. The authors, moreover, add that a growing text demands more time and writer's attention during composing because the writer has to deal with two other elements namely the writer's knowledge stored in long-term memory and the writer's plan for dealing with the rhetorical problem.

Flower and Hayes (1981, p. 371) state that "long-term memory is a relatively stable entity and has its own internal organisation of information". The writer's long-term memory can exist in his/her mind as well as in outside resources. Long-term memory is conceptualised as a storehouse of knowledge about the topic, the audience and writing plans. In the

planning stage, according to Hayes and Flower (1981), writers form an internal representation of the knowledge that will be used in writing. Planning involves a number of sub processes such as generating ideas where the writer retrieves relevant information from his/her long-term memory. Generating ideas from the writer's long-term memory is, however, not adequate because the ideas may not be organised. Therefore, the next sub-process of organising comes into play where the writer groups facts, forms new concepts and presents ideas in an orderly manner relevant to the topic at hand. However, organization of ideas is often guided by the major goals established during the process of goal-setting which is the next important aspect of the Cognitive Process Model. The writer is responsible for creating goals and most of the writer's goals are generated, developed, and revised by the same processes that generate and organise new ideas. This process continues throughout the composing stage, in the sense that setting goals leads a writer to generating ideas and those ideas lead to new, more complex goals which can then be integrated with the content and purpose of the composition. The authors of the Cognitive Process Model argue that "the act of developing and refining one's own goals is not limited to a "pre-writing stage" in the composing process, but is intimately bound up with the on-going moment-to-moment process of composing" (Flower and Hayes, 1981, p. 371). The next important element in the model is the translating process where the writer puts the ideas generated in planning into visible language (a linear piece of written language).

As illustrated in Figure 2.2 above, reviewing depends on two sub-processes: evaluating and revising. In reviewing, the writer chooses to read what he/she has written either as a spring board to further translating or to evaluate or revise the text. The reviewing process can occur as an unplanned action prompted by an evaluation of either the text or one's own planning. The last step of the model is the monitor which functions as a writing strategist. It determines when the writer moves from one process to the next. As writers compose, they also monitor their current process and progress.

Considering the Cognitive Process Model as suggested by Flower and Hayes (1981) it can be stated that for each one of the three processes Flower and Hayes mention, a certain set of meta-cognitive abilities are required and there seems to be a parallel correspondence between the meta-cognitive abilities discussed above and the stages (plan, translate and review) outlined in the Cognitive Process Model by Flower and Hayes (1981).

2.4.2. More recent cognitive process models of writing

Recently developed models of writing include working memory as a critical component mediating the successful coordination of writing sub processes (Hayes, 1996; Kellogg, 1996). Research has demonstrated a significant relationship between the availability and efficient use of working memory capacity on the one hand, and writing fluency and (to a lesser extent) writing quality (Benton, Kraft, Glover, & Plake, 1984; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1994; Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Fayol, 1999; Kellogg, 1996; Levy & Marek, 1999; McCutchen, 2000). Writers must have enough cognitive capacity in working memory at their disposal to be able to deal with all the writing constraints (in terms of lexical, grammatical, orthographical and discourse decisions) simultaneously. Automatic or fluent retrieval of lexical or grammatical chunks may contribute to an efficient use of the available working memory capacity. From the studies conducted by the authors above, it can be inferred that it is not enough to have linguistic and meta-cognitive knowledge available while writing; writers must also be able to apply this knowledge efficiently and fluently. Fluent access to words and phrases or grammatical structures in memory may lower the cognitive processing load for a writer and may thus enhance the writing process and possibly the quality of a written text.

Apart from cognitive and meta-cognitive knowledge which writers are required to successfully engage with in the writing process, Tribble (1996) observes that a writer needs a range of knowledge bases to produce a specific writing task. He summarises the different aspects of knowledge as follows:

Content knowledge	Knowledge of the concepts involved in the subject area.
Context knowledge	Knowledge of the social context in which the text will be read.
Language system knowledge	Knowledge of those aspects of the language system (lexis, syntax) that are necessary for the completion of the task.
Writing process knowledge	Knowledge of the most appropriate way of preparing for a specific writing task.

(Tribble, 1996, p. 43)

Tribble has argued that writers need to know the subject area that they are going to write about. Moreover, he asserts that a writer should be aware of the readers' expectations and need to be sensitive as to the style of language that would be relevant to a particular task. If a writer has knowledge of the four areas stated above, Tribble maintains that such a writer has a good chance of composing a successful piece of writing. The ideas stated above are summarised as follows in Tribble's (1996, p. 68) words:

> If writers know what to write in a given context, what the reader expects the text to look like in a given context, and what part of the language system are relevant to the particular task in hand, and has a command of writing skills appropriate to this task, then they have a good chance of writing something that will be effective

Using an example from a writing task "Prepare an internal company report evaluating a newly introduced office automation strategy" (p. 43), Tribble explains that the kinds of knowledge that a writer needs most in order to complete the task above is content knowledge. In other words, a writer needs to first and foremost know about the topic; without this knowledge, a writer will not be able to prepare an effective report. Moreover, in this particular example, a writer needs to know the power relationships within the company if his/her report is going to be successful. For this, a writer will need 'context knowledge'. Equally important for the writer to have knowledge of the language of system – this will allow him/her to use appropriate lexical items and grammatical structures, so that the report will meet the expectations of its readers. Finally, a writer should have 'writing process knowledge' which entails knowing the stages involved in composing (i.e. prewriting, drafting, revising and editing). Schoonen and De Glopper (1996) showed that proficient writers have more declarative knowledge about writing than less proficient writers and that they have a different perception of what is important for a text to be adequate: proficient writers focused more on text organisation compared to poor writers who focused more on mechanics and layout.

In contrast to speaking, writing also requires knowledge of the orthography of the language which influences the spelling of words (Abbott & Berninger, 1993). Depending on the language involved, the 'match' between graphemes (the written symbols of language) and phonemes (the spoken symbols of language) varies in terms of transparency. The degree of transparency in a particular language will affect the amount of difficulty that writers experience in encoding their ideas in written form. However, once learners have understood the nature of written language, orthography does not matter much in encoding ideas (Gibson & Levin, 1995).

The discussion above is centred mainly on the cognitive models of writing. However, modern language learning theories inform us that social interaction plays a key role when learners engage in the act of constructing knowledge and making sense of their world (Hurst, Wallace & Nixon, 2013). Given the importance of social interaction in learning, the following section discusses socio-constructivist approaches to writing.

2.4.3. Socio-constructivist approaches to writing

As discussed in Chapter 1, social constructivism suggests that learners learn concepts and construct deeper meaning about concepts through their interaction with others, with their world and through interpretations of that world (Frank, 2008). As discussed in section 1.1.5, several studies have shown positive evidence supporting socio-constructivist views that learning occurs through processes of interaction, negotiation and collaboration (Billet, 1995; Hicks, 1995-96). Nystrand (1986) investigated the effect of peer collaboration in writing and found that students who worked in groups demonstrated greater gains than those who worked alone. Furthermore, Nystrand reported that students who had experienced group work came to think of revision as reconceptualisation, whereas those who worked alone continued to think of revision as mainly editing. Daiute and Dalton (1995) investigated how children aged 7 to 9 used diverse abilities as they taught one another how to write stories. In this study, the collaboration included interaction between teachers and children. The researchers examined the individually generated written work before, during and following collaboration. The researchers found that children who worked in collaboration brought more diverse areas of expertise (related to story structure knowledge, style and schema) to the story writing process than those who worked alone. The researchers further concluded that peer interaction was more facilitative than teacher - learner interactions.

Storch (2005) provides furhter evidence in favour of the important role of social constructivism in the various stages of the writing process. This study drew on the construct of co-construction of knowledge through working closely with peers and tutors. The study compared texts produced by pairs with those produced by individual learners and investigated the nature of the writing processes evident in the pair talk. The study found that pairs produced shorter but better texts in terms of task fulfilment, grammatical accuracy and complexity. Collaboration afforded students the opportunity to pool ideas and provide each other with feedback.

As discussed in section 1.1.6, the current study is congruent with the core principles of constructivism in which the emphasis is placed on the view that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction. Similarly, several authors argue that the 'Information Age' of the new millennium is a world where global and multicultural education, internationalisation of the curriculum and the notion of multiliteracies exist. In this world of new learning it is no longer feasible to speak of literacy as if it were a unitary concept (Fehring 2005; Osborne & Wilson 2003: New London Group, 1996). Given this, these authors suggest the inclusion of multiliteracies in today's classroom (Callow, 2006). A multiliteracies approach to writing will be discussed in the next section.

2.4.4. A multiliteracies theory of writing

A multiliteracies theory of writing suggests both a metalanguage and a learning sequence for designing relevant 21st century learning around multimodal texts (Healy, 2008; New London Group, 2000). The New London Group offers four possible dimensions for active and recursive participation in these knowledge processes namely: 1) 'situated practice' where known experiences and knowledge form the base for bridging to new learning; 2) 'overt instruction' where learners work with explicit and relevant metalanguage to articulate and conceptualise the available meanings in text; 3) 'critical framing', where different possible interpretations of text meanings are provoked and problematised; and 4) 'transformed practice' where learners redesign and transform their original practices by creating responses to the social, economic and cultural agendas in text. This cycle is aimed at deepening and expanding existing repertoires of literacy practice, through responsive educational experiences (New London Group, 2000). In doing so, the socio-critical elements of multiliteracies pedagogy are brought into being, through active citizenship and authentic connections to lived experience. Collaborative dialogue and equity are important factors in this active process. However, Kress (2010) observes that for those teachers who were previously immersed only in a traditional print paradigm, the foregrounding of 21st century authenticity and multimodality would require self-reflection and continuous professional development in order to implement this new learning style.

There has been research into theories of multimedia learning to improve retention, and a few studies have investigated the effect of multiliteracies approach on writing. Walter (2007) found a statistically significant difference in writing attainment between a

multiliteracies-based approach to teaching and learning as opposed to a solely print-based curriculum. In another study, Vincent (2001) supported the idea that multi-media environment in schools can have positive effects on each stage of process writing. Emphasising the effects of multimedia on writing, Vincent (2001) wrote that children were introduced a sequence of three writing activities: one included writing without visual input, another included writing with a drama stimulus and one more included a writing task embedded in a multimedia environment. The study found that the students, who were assigned a writing task with visuals and the wiring task which was embedded in a multimedia environment, produced outputs with more qualitative and complex texts than the students who were assigned a writing task with no visual input. Fan and Orey (2001) conducted an experiment into the effects multimedia modes on student writing ability. Their study saw a statistical correlation in the improvement of students writing with multimedia. Given the positive results that emerged from the studies cited above, it can be concluded that writing teachers should be encouraged to organise learning environments that integrate technology meaningfully and appropriately (Selber, 2004). In terms of inclusion of multimedia in the current study, it can be said that multimedia technology for classroom teaching was used to some extent, in that students were shown videos, *PowerPoints*, pictures and even feedback was provided using a computer programme called '*Kaizena*' (see section 6.5 and appendix I for more information). While multiliteracies theory has argued for learners to be literate in technological meaning making systems in order to fully participate in society (Now London Group, 1996), writing as a social activity, Yagelski (2015, p. 47) has emphasised that "writing is an inherently social act in at least three ways" The following section will examine how writing becomes a social act with reference to the three ways mentioned in Yagelski (2015).

2.4.5. Writing as a social act

Our common perception about writing is that it is a solitary activity because a writer mostly happens to work alone in a writing task. However, this common perception is misleading. According to Yagelski (2015) writing is a social activity in three ways. First, writers write for an audience because writing is almost intended to be read by someone else. For example, if you write a job application and send it to a prospective employer, he will read it to decide whether you are suitable for the position for which you have applied. In this case, your prospective employer becomes your reader. Similarly, if

you are a student and writes an essay about a topic that interests you in a classroom situation, your classmates or teacher will read it and comment on it. In both cases, you have an audience that influences what you write and how you write. In this sense, writing is always a social transaction between writer and reader (Yagelski, 2015).

Second, writers often involve others in the process of writing. In most communities, writers regularly receive suggestions from his/her readers concerning several aspects of the writer's work. For example, in a class, students may share their drafts with their classmates and comment on their classmates' writing. In this way, the act of writing is social rather than solitary.

Third, writing becomes a social activity given that it ascribes to the rules, conventions and different genres of writing which are socially constructed. Such rules, conventions and genres have evolved over time as a result of the way people have used writing for various purposes, including to communicate, to share ideas and information, and to learn about new concepts (Yagelski, 2015). In other words, familiar forms of writing such as business letters, research papers and various narratives follow different genres because writers need these genres to accomplish specific purposes with their writing. For example, a research paper will make it easier for a researcher to share the results of his/her experiments with the readers (typically scholars or other researchers). Considering all the ideas discussed above, it can be concluded that a writer's effectiveness as a writer depends not only on the effort he/she puts into a writing task but also on the way a writer fits in and responds to the social situations in which the writer is completing a particular task.

2.4.6. Models of language competence

Learners also have to be aware of how their communicative intentions can best be expressed. From a broader, more pragma-linguistic and sociolinguistic perspective, writers need to have knowledge of the addressed readership and of ways texts function in their community in order to be able to write effective texts (Cumming, 2001; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmers's (2010) model of language competence, pragmatic competence is a central component in that it is regarded as one of the two main competences of language competence parallel to organizational competence. Pragmatic competence is the ability to convey and interpret meaning appropriately in a social situation which "has become an object of inquiry in a wide range of disciplines" (Taguchi, 2009, p. 1). Pragmatic competence is divided into two

components, namely pragma-linguistic and sociolinguistic competence (Leech, 2014; Thomas, 1983). According to Kasper and Rose (2001), pragma-linguistic competence is the linguistic resources available for conveying communicative acts and performing pragmatic functions. The resources "include pragmatic strategies such as directness and indirectness, routines and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communication acts" (p. 2). Sociolinguistic competence refers to knowledge of language that goes beyond sounds, words and structures as it guides the individual in how to use language appropriately in various social situations. Pragma-linguistic and sociolinguistic competences are concerned with issues such as 'What kinds of people use a specific language?', 'What kind of language do people use in different contexts?' and, 'What kind of occasions may influence language use?' (Crystal, 1990, p. 121). Given the important role that pragma-linguistic and sociolinguistic competences play in writing, it is essential that writing instructors should train EFL/ESL students to improve these competences so that their learners will be able to vary the use of language in terms of audience, purpose, genre, topic and degree of formality when they want to write in their academic or real-world situations.

Despite the fact that writing is theoretically presented as a very complex concept, it is a language skill of undeniable importance, seeing that writing is one of the most important tools of communication. The ability to write helps develop imaginative and critical thinking abilities. It is stated that writing is more permanent than speaking, and requires more careful organisation (Elbow, 1985). It is also less spontaneous because it involves a process, from organizing ideas in the mind to setting the final document on paper. Teaching the skill of writing involves familiarising students with various formats of informal and formal written texts. Moreover, teaching writing includes taking students through a process – a series of steps: including brainstorming for ideas, organising and sequencing them, revising and editing the draft and so on. Given the complex nature of writing, it would be appropriate for me to examine the theoretical, empirical and pedagogical views of writing at the beginning in order to gain a better understanding of it so that my engagement in teaching writing to my students will be better informed.

2.4.7. Theories of L2 writing and teaching

According to Homstad and Thorson (1994), theories of L2 education seemed to have evolved from the Grammar-Translation to the Audio-Lingual Method to the more Communicative approaches that are commonly used today. Parallel to the evolution of

writing theories in L2 education, ideas about how language proficiency develops in learners and how language learners are to be taught have also undergone a number of changes in the domain of L2 learning and teaching. In the Grammar-Translation Method, writing was seen as a supporting skill used to reinforce the acquisition of grammar. In the Audio-Lingual Method, writing was used to support the memorisation of language structures. In the Communicative approach, writing has not received much attention in classroom teaching as this approach's emphasis is mainly on learners' oral proficiency. However, ideas from 'writing–to–learn', 'writing across the curriculum' and 'writing for academic purposes' movements in composition in ESL are said to have had an impact on current beliefs about the place of writing in L2 education and of the role of L1 to L2 transfer in writing (Homstad & Thorson, 1994; Gentry, McNeel, & Nesler, 2014).

In L2 writing, transfer can be considered both as a learning device and as a strategy to solve communication problems (Karim & Nassaji, 2013). As Mahmoud (2000) pointed out, when L2 learners attempt to compose a piece of writing, they will use transfer as a tool to learn or as a means to convey their meaning. In other words, language learners use their existing knowledge about writing (acquired in the L1) to formulate and test hypotheses about writing in the target language. It is assumed that many of the composing strategies which learners use when writing is the same in the L1 and the L2. Therefore, L2 learners are assumed to transfer those writing strategies from their L1 to their L2 writing. For example, learners who have already learned how to plan, develop ideas, revise, and edit their writing in their L1 may use the same strategies when they write in their L2 (Cumming, 1990; Uzawa & Cumming, 1989). However, L2 learners are required to have an adequate level of proficiency in the target language in order for them to carry over such composing strategies to the L2. Similarly, learners with lower-levels of writing proficiency will be at a disadvantage when it comes to transferring L1 strategies successfully to L2 writing because they have not yet reached a level of linguistic knowledge where they can compose a text in the target language (Berman, 1994). L2 learners may also resort to their L1 to compensate for their deficiencies in L2 knowledge. In addition, adult learners who are cognitively mature may have complex ideas to include in their writings, but may lack adequate and/ or sufficient target language knowledge, which may force them to rely on the L1 to express those ideas (Karim & Nassaji, 2013). For such learners, dependence on the L1 can have both positive and negative results.

The negative impact of depending on L1 writing strategies is that using such strategies may lead to errors if a learner incorrectly transfers a linguistic form from one language, to the other or if a learner is misled by the partial similarities between the two languages. As Eckman (1977) pointed out, there are some language features which can be transferred from one language to another with no major differences in meaning and form. However, transferability of language forms may not always be possible based on their distinctive linguistic features. Moreover, some psychological factors such as the learner's perception of the distance between the L1 and the L2 may play a role in the transfer of a linguistic item from one language to the other (Kellerman, 1983). Ringbom (1987) believes that a learner's L1 can be used as a tool not only to compose but also to simplify the complexity of the L2 writing task. The use of the L1 in such cases can make the task more manageable and may consequently have beneficial effects on the learners' writing product. A brief review of studies that investigated the role of L1 in L2 writing, focusing on various issues such as similarities between L1 and L2 writing strategies, the use of L1 as a strategy to facilitate content, generating of ideas, organisation, planning, the role of L2 proficiency and negative effects of L1 use is provided below.

A number of studies have compared the use of writing strategies in L1 and L2 writing, and have found many similarities between a learner's L1 and L2. For example, Raimes (1987) investigated the use of writing strategies by 8 ESL students and the findings from the verbal report data suggested that the students used strategies for L2 writing that were similar to those used by L1 writers such as engaging in some prewriting, use of rereading, and planning. However, the Raimes study also revealed that ESL students used more editing and correcting strategies than the L1 writer. Furthermore, Kubota (1998) investigated whether students transfer the discourse patterns developed in the L1 when they write in the L2. Kubota evaluated both Japanese and ESL essays in terms of organisation and rated ESL essays in terms of language use. His findings revealed that about half of the writers used similar patterns in L1 and L2. Results also revealed a positive correlation between Japanese and ESL organisational and rhetorical patterns.

Several studies have investigated whether L2 writers use their L1 as a way of facilitating content, generating ideas or planning during writing. In a study, Uzawa and Cumming (1989) compared the writing processes in Japanese and English of 4 intermediate learners of Japanese as a foreign language. The students who wrote expository essays, one in Japanese and one in English, on the same topic, reported that

they generally used the L1 (English) extensively for generating ideas, searching for topics, developing concepts, and organising information. These writers reported that they provided less information in the essay and simplified the syntax and the vocabulary during their composing process (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989). In another case study of 23 Francophone students, Cumming (1990) found that students switched frequently between English and French while composing aloud an ESL writing task. Considering the positive results of the studies reviewed above, it can be concluded that knowledge about writing acquired in the L1 has (for the most part) a positive impact on ESL writers when they write in English. According to cognitive psychologists, in implicit learning, learners are unaware of the learning that has taken place, although it is evident in the behavioral responses they make. So, learners cannot express what they have learned. When it comes to explicit learning, learners are aware that they have learned something and can express what they have learned (Ellis, 2009). In the section that follows, I will discuss the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge and why both types of knowledge are essential for students in the process of writing.

2.5. The importance of developing implicit knowledge in L2 writing

Drawing on a variety of theoretical perspectives, Ellis (2005) presented ten principles of instructed language learning. They are stated below:

i. Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.

ii. Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.

iii. Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.

iv. Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge.

v. Instruction needs to consider the learner's 'built-in syllabuses'.

vi. Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input.

vii. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.

viii. The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency.

ix. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.

x. In assessing learners' L2 proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

In principle iv, Ellis discusses the importance of language instruction which should be directed at developing implicit knowledge of L2 while not neglecting the explicit knowledge of the learners. In his argument concerning the role of implicit and explicit knowledge in L2 acquisition, Ellis states that implicit knowledge is procedural and is held unconsciously and can only be verbalised if it is made explicit. Implicit knowledge is accessed rapidly and easily and thus is available for use in rapid, fluent communication. In the view of most researchers, high levels of competence in an L2 is primarily a matter of implicit knowledge.

Explicit knowledge, on the other hand, "is the declarative and often anomalous knowledge of the phonological, lexical, grammatical, pragmatic and socio-critical features of an L2 together with the metalanguage for labelling this knowledge" (Ellis, 2005, p. 214). It is held consciously, is learnable and verbalisable and is typically accessed through controlled processing when learners experience some kind of linguistic difficulty in the use of the L2. In other words, implicit knowledge is assumed to be acquired in a naturalistic L2 acquisition setting while explicit knowledge is typically acquired in the additional language classroom (Krashen, 1988; Ellis, 2008; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami and Takashima, 2008). Implicit knowledge of the L2 is similar to knowledge of one's native language. It is the knowledge that the user is unaware of, but which can be used in order to produce or understand language. Typically, when knowledge is implicit, users may not be able to explain the rules for the use of a particular structure (Williams, 2005). In contrast, in explicit knowledge, users can provide rules and reasons for why and how a certain form is used.

In foreign language classes, what frequently happens is that L2 teachers teach rules to their students in order to develop their explicit knowledge of the new language. It is stated that "most learners find this knowledge useful and refer to it especially when they begin to study the new language" (Williams, 2005, p. 4). It is important to note, however, given that it is *implicit knowledge* that underlies the ability to communicate fluently and confidently in an L2, it is this type of knowledge that should be the ultimate goal of any instructional program (Ellis, 2005). With regards to skill-building theory, DeKeyser, (1998) holds the view that implicit knowledge arises out of explicit knowledge, when the latter is proceduralised through practice. Therefore, given the underline assumptions of skill-building theory, as well as the importance of explicit and implicit knowledge in L2 acquisition, it seems crucial that L2 learners should be afforded ample opportunities to practice writing in the classroom context (Gentry et al., 2014).

Some authors who have dealt with writing believe that practice is particularly useful in developing skills. Given this view, writing is also a skill which requires considerable practice in both L1 and L2 (Zamel, 1982; Williams, 2002). Taking the theoretical positions held by some authors (Ellis, 2005; DeKeyser, 1989; Krashen, 1981; VanPatten, 2002) with regards to the role of implicit and explicit knowledge in L2 acquisition, these two concepts (explicit and explicit knowledge) are important and relevant to this study, as will be explained in the next paragraph.

The learners in the current study generally would not have had much practice in EFL writing in the Omani school context (Al Seyabi & Tuzlukova, 2014), and it is questionable whether writing instruction in EFL happened in a manner that promoted the internalisation of explicitly acquired knowledge. Despite this, once students enter a college of technology, it is required of them to study and master academic writing skills before they graduate as professionals. To this effect, writing instructors at Shinas College of Technology should afford more opportunities for the learners to practice writing activities of different genres using effective instructional methods in the classroom context with the premise that explicit knowledge should ultimately become implicit knowledge. Thus, one of the main aims of this study will be to test whether the introduction of specifically designed teaching materials helps learners to gain a level of proficiency in academic writing which will enable them function in their chosen professions and higher study disciplines in the future. With this background awareness, I now examine why writing remains a challenge in EFL contexts, with particular reference to EFL learners who speak Arabic as L1.

2.6. The challenges of writing in a second/foreign language

Many EFL/ESL writing instructors working in different teaching contexts have noted that acquiring writing skills in EFL/ESL seems to be more laborious and demanding than acquiring listening, speaking and reading skills (Yan, 2005). Nunan (1999, p. 271) considers it an enormous challenge to get EFL/ESL learners to produce "a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing". This kind of difficulty is ascribed to the fact that the rhetorical conventions of English texts-the structure, style, and organisation-often differ from the conventions of other languages. It requires effort to recognise and manage these differences (Leki, 1992) and when it comes to writing in English, Alsamadani (2010) has noted that Arab learners of English are not an exception. They face many difficulties in writing well-developed paragraphs and essays in English since English and Arabic

languages differ in many aspects such as orthography, spelling, vocabulary, sentence grammar, style, and rhetorical organisation (Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ružić, 1983). The next section will describe the challenges that Arab learners encounter when they write in English.

2.6.1. Challenges faced by Arab learners when writing in English

The four most problematic grammatical features of English for Arabic-speaking students (both in school and college contexts) are verbs, prepositions, articles, and relative clauses (Scott & Tucker, 1974; Beck, 1979, Mukattash, 1981). Scott and Tucker, (1974) conducted an error analysis of writing by Arab students and emphasised that first language (Arabic) interference accounted for at least half of the errors with articles, (a significant portion of which resulted from omission of the indefinite article). Moreover, Scott and Tucker stated that the use of verbs and the formation of relative clauses present Arabic speaking students with complex problems and errors in these areas are particularly pervasive in Arabic students' written English. In the following sub sections, the most characteristic errors in Arabic students' written English are outlined.

2.6.1.1. Copula omission

One of the most frequent errors of EFL Arab students is the omission of the copula.
For example:

(1) هو غائب

He absent

(2) أستاذي زعلان جدا

My teacher very angry

(Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ružić, 1983. p. 614)

The sentences above, although ungrammatical in English, are considered well formed in Arabic. They are examples of equational sentences, which correspond to English sentences with *be* in the present tense affirmative. The major difference here is that there is no surface-structure copula or verb present in Arabic sentences of this type. If transferred to English, errors such as those above result, where the copula is omitted. This structure persists in being problematic for many Arab students, as Beck (1979) and Scott and Tucker (1974) have demonstrated. In addition, Arabic tends to use verbs to describe states more frequently than English does. For example:

.التهيرة هل تعترف له؟ وهو نجم الروك .(3)

Do you recognize him? He is a famous rock star

(Ryding, 2005, p. 586)

2.6.1.2. Incorrect use of English verb forms

According to Thompson-Panos and Thomas-Ružić (1983), a more complex problem to analyse and address in the writing classroom is the actual misuse of verb forms in English, the reason being that the rules governing the use of verbs in Arabic sentences are quite distinct from those in English. Therefore, an examination of the Arabic verb system is essential for the EFL teacher if he/she wants to understand the students' difficulties. Arabic is a highly aspectual language. While English can combine several tenses with simple, perfective, and progressive aspects, Arabic makes two basic distinctions: the perfect and imperfect aspects (commonly referred to as the 'perfective' and 'imperfective' in the field of linguistics). The perfect is used to describe a completed action (frequently in the past), while the imperfect describes a situation not yet completed (often in the present or future). However, since these aspects derive their meaning from the point of view of the completion or incompletion of an activity rather than the time of completion or incompletion, both aspects may be used to describe an action in the past, present, and future. For example, Abboud, Najm, Wallace, Mounah, McCarus, Rammuny, Abdel-Malek and George (1975) indicate in their textbook on Modern Standard Arabic that the imperfective is used to describe a past habitual, past progressive, or past future activity, while the perfective is used to denote a completed event or to describe actions that would require the present perfect or past perfect in English.

Since the forms of the Arabic verb have little actual time reference (in the English sense), certain invariable particles and conjugated auxiliary verbs can be employed to lend various modal and temporal meanings which might not be clear from the context. These particles, which in form resemble English modals or other auxiliary verbs, are used with fully conjugated perfect or imperfect verbs. Problems in English can result if AUX + participle or MODAL + base–form verb are confused with the PARTICLE + perfect or imperfect verb construction in Arabic. For example, the following errors produced by Arab students are not uncommon:

لم أذهب للمدرسة (4)

I didn't went to school

(5) ربما هي لم تفهم

She might didn't understand

(Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ružić, 1983, p. 615)

In addition, progressive aspect in Arabic is frequently indicated by adjectives derived from the roots of verbs. The question *Where are you going?* in English uses the present progressive form of the verb *go*. The same question in Arabic, however, would employ a dynamic adjective derived from the verb, as in *Where you going'* in which *going* functions as an adjective (Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ružić, 1983). Another serious problem for Arabic speaking learners of English is the misapplication of the verb tenses (Mukattash 1981). One frequently observed source of inconsistency and difficulty for Arab students is the sequence of tenses across clauses. In Arabic, temporal clauses are frequently in the imperfect (present) tense. The meaning and time reference of the verb in a subordinate clause are derived from the time of the verb in the main clause. Therefore, an imperfect verb in a subordinate clause following a perfect verb in the main clause refers to an action that happened in the past (Abboud et al., 1975). For example, the following sentence, translated directly from Arabic, shows how the imperfect tense in a subordinate clause refers to the same time as the verb in the main clause:

(6) The minister arrived (perfect) while he carries (imperfect) an important letter from the President

(Abboud et al., 1975, p. 435)

Here, the imperfect tense denotes an action taking place at the same time as the main verb. In English, the same idea would be expressed by the following sentence:

(7) The minister arrived carrying an important letter from the president.

The following sentence from Arabic is an example of the use of the perfect tense with a particle in the subordinate clause: *The reporter returned (perfect) to his country while he (particle) talked (perfect) with the president* (Abboud et al., 1975, p. 437).

The use of the perfect aspect in subordinate clauses indicates a completed action, and the particle clarifies the sequence of events. The most unambiguous translation in English would be:

(8) المراسل رجع الى بلده عندما كان يتكلم مع الرئيس

The reporter returned to his country after having talked with the president.

<div align="right">(Abboud et al., 1975, p. 437)</div>

2.6.1.3. Coordination and subordination in Arabic

In Arabic, there is coordination as well as subordination, but the former is more frequently employed than the latter (Othman, 2004). Therefore, it has been argued that Arabic favours the use of coordination rather than subordination. In a study, using a computer text analysis program, Reid (1992) examined 768 essays written in English by native speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and English in order to determine whether distinctive, quantifiable differences in the use of four cohesion devices existed between and among the four language backgrounds. Results of the analyses showed that Arabic writers used more coordinate conjunctions than native speakers of Chinese, Spanish and English. The tendency to do so was ascribed to L1 transfer from Arabic to English. Along similar lines, Ostler (1987) also found that long sentences conjoined with coordinating conjunctions are typical of Arabic writing.

(9) ازداد خوفه من الموت مع تقدمه في السن.

He grew older and feared death more. (Coordinating conjunction-*and*)

He feared death more as he grew older. (Subordinating conjunction-*as*, where the sentence above should have been written using the subordinating conjunction '*as*')

<div align="right">(Quirk et.al., 1985, p. 1041)</div>

(10) القبول كانت حرة ، ولكن حضر عدد قليل من

Admission was free, but few people attended the lecture. (Coordinating conjunction–*but*)

Although admission was free, few people attended the lecture. (Subordinating conjunction–*although*, where the sentence above should have been written using the subordinating conjunction '*although*')

<div align="right">(Quirk et.al., 1985, p. 1041)</div>

2.6.1.4. Relative clause formation in Arabic

Another sentence-level feature of Arabic that differs in a number of important respects from English is relative clause formation. Relative clauses are a frequent and important construction in English. There are three major differences between English and

Arabic relative clause formation. First, there is no relative pronoun in Arabic. Rather, a relative particle, part of neither clause, links two complete clauses. This particle is present only when the antecedent is definite as in the following example:

(11) رأيت الولد الذي شعره أحمر

I saw the boy who he has red hair.

When the antecedent is indefinite, however, no relative particle occurs, as in:

(12) رأيت ولدا لديه شعر أحمر

I saw a boy he has red hair.

Omission of the relative pronoun by Arabic ESL learners in English in sentences where the pronoun is the subject of the clause is directly attributable to Arabic interference, according to Scott and Tucker (1974).

2.6.1.5. Antecedent and relative clause in Arabic

The antecedent clause and relative clause in Arabic are both complete sentences; neither is subordinate, at least not in the surface structure. In fact, if there is a pause in reading, or if there is written punctuation, the result is two independent sentences (Abboud et al., 1975). We can therefore see that the relative clause construction in Arabic is coordinate, rather than subordinate as in English. The most serious source of error production for Arabic speakers learning English relative clauses is the presence in Arabic of a relator in the relative clause. This is a second word or affix that serves as the subject or the object of the clause and refers to the antecedent. When transferred to English, the repetition of referents results in aberrations described by some as 'Middle Eastern clauses'. For example:

(13) جاءت البنت الي كانت جميلة.

The girl who she was pretty came.

(14) جاءت البنت الي كانت جميلة.

This is the record which I bought it.

(Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ružić, 1983, p. 616)

Scott and Tucker (1974) note that the object-deletion rule is acquired later than the rule for subject deletion, indicating that object deletion will require more attention and practice in the EFL classroom in an Arabic EFL context. Repetition of the object was the most frequent of all relative clause errors analysed in the Scott and Tucker study, again attributable to L1 interference.

2.6.1.6. Stylistic differences between Arabic and English

Other possible obstacles to good English writing are certain stylistic devices for assertion and exaggeration in Arabic, which may be transferred inappropriately into written English. Assertion and exaggeration are part of Arabic linguistic tradition and entails that main points are over asserted and exaggerated (Patai, 1976; Hamady, 1960). For example, Arabic uses special word endings, ways to double consonants, and rules for redundant pronouns, e.g. *My professor he is funny*, as well as other stylistic and rhetorical devices, to achieve exaggeration. Moreover, both in spoken and written Arabic, repetition, increased use of the superlative, and frequent rewording and restatement are devices used to communicate ideas clearly.

Another area where Arab EFL learners encounter difficulty in writing is in paragraph development. In Arabic, a paragraph is developed as a series of parallel constructions, with parts of sentences connected by coordinating conjunctions. However, maturity of style in English is measured by the degree of subordination rather than coordination (Kaplan, 1966). As Cowan (1978) notes, "linguistically speaking, Arabic as a language compounds and is associative" (p. 11). College English skills require analysis and subordination of thought, Arabic requires synthesis and coordination". In fact, infrequent use of subordination and overuse of coordination, particularly coordinating conjunctions at the beginning of sentences, comprise the chief characteristic of Arabic speakers' written English (Yorkey, 1977). This is largely because Arabic sentences emphasise sequences of events and balance of thought, which favour coordination. When transferred to English, Arabic sentences also frequently lack sub structures (such as participial phrases and adverbial clauses).

While the linguistic differences in the tense/aspectual systems, stylistic devices and paragraph development discussed above would certainly present Arab EFL learners with challenges when writing in English, they are certainly not the only issues which negatively affect Arab EFL learners' writing proficiency. Educational policies and institutional practices with regards to writing skills affect learners too. For example, a

scrutiny of the writing course outlines and syllabuses used in Shinas College of Technology for Foundation levels indicate that there are several discrepancies and mismatches in terms of uniformity and organisation of micro and macro skills of writing. Aspects of writing skills include micro and macro skills of writing, mechanical components of writing, cohesion and coherence of writing. The first aspect of writing skill is its macro and micro components. Brown (2001, pp. 342-343) outlines a list of micro and macro skills for English written communication which focuses on both the form and functions of language, as follows:

- Producing graphemes and orthographic patterns of English
- Producing writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose
- Producing acceptable core words
- Using appropriate word order pattern of English
- Using acceptable grammar systems such as tense, subject verb agreement and expressing a particular meaning in different grammar form
- Using cohesive devices in written discourse
- Using the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse

According to Brown (2001), the macro skills of writing deal with some other aspects such as achieving the communicative function of a written text in line with form and purpose. Moreover, macro skills help to build up links and connections between different parts of a text (main idea, supporting ideas, new information, given information, generalisation and exemplification).

Students who want to enter their chosen field after graduation must be able to write well enough to satisfy their employers because communication is an essential professional skill. What Anderson and Burt (1978) have written on the back cover of *The effective writer: A freshman English Manual Texas A & M University* readily confirms the ideas above. Gilmore states, "An engineer, without the tools of communication, is unable to sell his (or her) ideas, no matter how great those ideas are". In stark contrast to this idea, the Oman education system emphasises writing as a tool that is needed only for writing tests. For many students, the only reason to practice writing is to pass examinations or to get good grades. In my opinion, the focus on writing to pass examinations reduces writing to producing a product and receiving a grade from the teacher. This approach is not likely to enhance students' interest in writing, seeing that it

becomes de-contextualised and artificial, giving students no real sense of purpose and no perspective of a target audience.

Given the described challenges of writing in English for EFL Arab learners, the aim of this research project is to identify ways to improve writing and writing instruction in the Omani context; and to thus prepare students adequately for the writing they will have to do after they graduate.

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided a working definition for 'writing' in this thesis which states that, "writing is a cognitive or internal, multi-staged process, and in which by far the major dynamic of learning is through doing, with the teacher taking (in some-sometimes imagined-senses) a background role" (Atkinson, 2003, p. 10). I discussed the development of writing in young children and school–aged children, and explained how the linguistic, cognitive and meta–cognitive abilities that adult writers need in order to be successful writers begin to develop at a young age. Various theories of writing in an L2 and an L2 were explained with specific reference to the cognitive process model of writing, which acts as the main theoretical framework of this study. This chapter also briefly focused on the function of implicit and explicit knowledge of L2 learners, with particular reference to writing. Finally, the challenges of writing in English for EFL Arab learners were described, focusing on the linguistic and stylistic differences between the Arabic and English languages, which cause such learners to struggle with English composition.

In the next chapter, the mainstream approaches of writing which have been advocated and used in the past few decades of EFL/ESL writing instruction will be discussed. These models include the model-based approach, the process approach, the genre approach and the process genre approach to teaching writing.

CHAPTER 3
APPROACHES TO WRITING INSTRUCTION

This chapter will first describe the teaching strategies and elements that scholars believe ought to be present in any writing program that aims to improve the writing of adolescents and young adults. Following this, the different crucial roles that approaches to writing (already mentioned in the previous chapter) is explained in more detail. The process genre approach in writing instruction is explained in particular. Thirdly, the chapter explores the effects of writing intervention programs where the process genre approach was used to enhance academic writing proficiency of EFL/ESL students from diverse educational and social backgrounds. Finally, the effects of context-specific writing materials and the process genre approach in enhancing academic writing proficiency of EFL learners are described with reference to published literature and its relevance to the current study.

3.1. Writing strategies and instructional elements of writing
3.1.1. What types of writing intervention works?

Over the past three decades, there has been a dedicated attempt to identify writing strategies and teaching methods that improve the writing performance of elementary school-, high school- and young adult learners. Reports such as those by Graham and Perin (2007a, 2007b), Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara and Harris (2012), Hillocks (1984) and Koster, Tribushinina, De Jong and Van den Bergh (2015) describe the meta-analyses of writing intervention studies, in an attempt to discover which intervention techniques are most successful; and at which level of instruction a strategy or method is likely to be effective. The reason for these analyses seem to be that there is considerable concern (worldwide) that the majority of learners do not become competent writers. As a result, they struggle to be successful in their school work and later on in life cannot cope with the demands of their studies and their workplace. Such concerns have recently been voiced across the globe; in the USA (Achieve, Inc., 2005; National Commission on Writing, 2004, 2005), Canada (Dion & Maldonado, 2013), The Netherlands (Henkens, 2010, in Koster et al. 2015), France (Boch & Frier, 2012), Egypt (Abd-ElFattah, 2013), Malaysia (Jackson, 2012), Korea (Kim, 2005) and South Africa (Parkinson, Jackson, Kirkwood & Padayachee, 2008; Pineteh, 2014), to name but a few.

Of particular interest for this study are conclusions of college instructors that 50% of high school graduates are not prepared for college-level writing demands (Achieve,

Inc., 2005), as this is also what the current researcher observed in Oman, and what motivated the present study. One explanation for why young adults don't meet writing standards is that teachers do not spend enough time teaching this complex skill, and that they do not know which instructional practises work well within their particular context.

In an attempt to discover which effective instructional practices are most suitable for teaching writing to adolescent learners, several researchers conducted meta-analyses of true and quasi-experimental studies which were conducted over the past 30 years. Reviews of the writing literature vary – some authors focused on a single writing treatment, such as 'teaching strategies for planning or revising' (Graham, 2006; Graham & Harris, 2003), 'word processing' (Bangert-Drowns, 1993; Goldberg, Russell, & Cook, 2003; Morphy & Graham, 2012) or the 'process approach' (Graham & Sandmel, 2011) (all of which were found to improve the writing of typical and struggling writers). Other reviewers adopted a broader approach, in that they examined the effectiveness of multiple writing treatments at specific grades, by calculating the average effect sizes of the various interventions. For example, Hillocks (1986) reviewed writing interventions with students from Grade 3 through to college, while Graham and Perin (2007b) reviewed 123 articles and focused on a variety of interventions (the average effect sizes of these intervention types are included in brackets), including 'strategy instruction' (0.82), 'summarization' (0.82), 'peer assistance' (0.75), 'setting product goals' (0.70), 'word processing' (0.55), 'sentence combining' (0.50), 'inquiry' (0.32), 'prewriting activities' (0.32), 'process writing approach' (0.32), 'study of models' (0.25), and 'grammar instruction' (0.32) from Grades 4–12.[1] The meta-analyses conducted by Hillocks (1986) and Graham and Perin (2007b) were conducted almost two decades apart, but both reviews found that 'sentence-combining instruction', 'emulation of good models', and 'inquiry activities' improved the quality of students' writing. The reviews further overlapped in that grammar instruction was found to be ineffective in improving the overall quality of writing.

Koster et al. (2015) calculated average effect sizes for ten types of interventions used in Grade 4 to 6, and found, in line with other recent reviews (Graham & Perin, 2007b; Graham et al., 2012), that the most effective interventions are (in order of effect sizes): goal setting, strategy instruction, text structure instruction, feedback, and peer

[1] Meta-analysis is a powerful way to synthesise large bodies of research, as it "relies on quantitative studies and permits the calculations of effect sizes" (Graham & Perin, 2007a, p. 13). Meta-analysis gives an indication of both the *strength* and *consistency* of an intervention's effects. Effect sizes indicate the strength of the effect; and the following guidelines make these numbers more interpretable: 0.2 = small or mild effect; 0.5 = medium or moderate effect; 0.8 = large or strong effect.

assistance. Thus, even though Koster et al.'s analysis was limited to intervention studies from Grade 4 to 6 in a regular educational setting, the findings were similar to that of Graham and Perin (2007), who analysed writing intervention in older learners. In summary, the writing intervention studies conducted in different teaching contexts over the past three decades reported mostly positive results, and the importance of providing learners with effective writing instruction seems non-negotiable. Therefore, the following section will introduce eleven elements of writing instructions that have been found to be effective writing instruction tools in the past.

3.1.2. Eleven elements of effective writing instruction in adolescents and young adults

Building on their analyses of the writing literature, Graham and Perin (2007a; 2007b) identified 11 elements of current writing instruction that help adolescent and young adult learners to write better, and to implement writing as a tool for learning. There is considerable overlap between the elements mentioned below and those mentioned in the reports of Graham et al. (2012) and Koster et al. (2015), but these latter reports focus on the effectiveness of instructional elements when used with learners in the elementary grades. Thus, Graham and Perin (2007a; 2007b) were used as basis for this discussion. The 11 elements of writing instruction are as follows:

1. **Writing strategy instruction**: writing strategy instruction, which entails explicitly showing learners how to plan, revise and edit their writing is very effective in improving writing (Graham, 2006). Strategy instruction may also involve the teaching of generic processes, such as 'brainstorming' (Troia & Graham, 2002) and 'collaboration for peer-reviewing', or it could involve teaching strategies that would help learners to accomplish a specific task, such as 'writing a story' (Glaser, 2005; Walser, 2000) or a 'persuasive essay' (De La Paz & Graham, 1997; Yeh, 1998). Explicit writing strategy instruction has been found to be a particularly useful tool for struggling student writers. The meta-analysis conducted by Graham and Perin (2007b) indicates that strategy instruction has a dramatic (positive) effect on the quality of students' writing.

2. **Summarisation:** teaching learners to summarise texts strongly and positively impacts learners' ability to write more concise text (Graham & Perin, 2007a). Summarisation instruction can range from teaching summarisation strategies (Knight, 2003; Placke, 1987) to improving summarisation skills by

progressively fading models of a good summary (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002). Summarisation has been found to have a strong positive effect on student's ability to write more concise texts.

3. **Collaborative writing/peer assistance when writing:** this entails creating an instructional program which provides opportunities for adolescents or students to work together to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions. One way of how this would work in practice is to pair higher achieving learners with lower achieving learners. The students work as partners and the stronger students assist the weaker students with text organisation, spelling, punctuation, meaning, generating ideas etc. The teacher monitors, prompts and encourages the learners, and assist them with any problems that they cannot address by themselves (Yarrow & Topping, 2001). Research studies that tested the effectiveness of this instructional element show that "collaborative arrangements where students help each other with one or more aspects of their writing had a strong and positive impact on writing quality" (Graham & Perin 2007b, p.463).

4. **Specific product goals:** setting specific product goals entails assigning students with specific goals for their composition; which are attainable and which provide objectives for learners to focus on a particular aspect of the composition. Examples of specific goals are to 'add more ideas during the revision stage' (Graham, MacArthur, & Schwartz, 1995), or to 'include specific structural elements' in a given composition. For instance, students may be asked to write a letter of persuasion (general goal), but specific goals may be added to this general goal, such as 'include a statement of belief; three reasons for that belief; supporting information for each reason; three reasons why others may not agree with the statement of belief and why those reasons are incorrect' (Ferretti, MacArthur & Dowdy, 2000). The literature suggests that assigning product goals has a strong impact on writing quality.

5. **Word processing:** several studies have tested the effect of using word processing software in writing instruction (compared to instruction where students had to compose by hand). Working on a computer allows students to compose a text that is neat and legible; and adding, deleting, moving and spell-checking the text is easy. The effect size for most of the studies included in the meta-analyses (Graham & Perin 2007b) was positive and moderate,

suggesting that word processing positively impact the quality of students' writing. Thus, computers and word processors can be helpful as instructional tools in a writing program.

6. **Sentence combining**: this instructional element is seen as an alternative approach to traditional grammar instruction, and it entails that students construct more complex and sophisticated sentences by completing exercises in which they have to combine two basic sentences into a single sentence. For instance, following a model provided by the instructor, learners can (i) combine simple sentences using connectors such as and, but, and because; (ii) embed an adjective or adverb from one sentence into another; (iii) embed an adverbial or adjectival clause from one sentence into another or (iv) construct complex sentences through multiple embedding (adverbs, adjectives, adverbial and adjectival clauses) (Graham & Perin 2007a). The available literature suggests that sentence combining exercises have a moderate impact on the quality of students' writing (Graham & Perin 2007b).

7. **Prewriting:** pre-writing "engages students in activities designed to help them generate or organise ideas for their composition" (Graham & Perin 2007a). Pre-writing activities include gathering information for a paper (through reading or brainstorming) and developing a visual representation (such as a semantic web) of the gathered ideas before actually writing the text. Typical pre-writing activities are "encouraging group and individual planning before writing, organizing pre-writing ideas, prompting students to plan after providing a brief demonstration of how to do so, or assigning reading material pertinent to a topic and then encouraging students to plan their work in advance" (Graham & Perin 2007a). Collectively, the literature suggests that engaging adolescents in pre-writing activities before writing a first draft improves writing quality – such activities have a positive and small to moderate effect on students' writing.

8. **Inquiry activities:** in inquiry activities, students are involved in activities that develop their ideas for a specific writing task. Immediate and concrete data are explored (this includes comparing and contrasting cases or collecting and evaluating evidence). Students are asked to infer the qualities of a number of objects in order to be able to describe them in writing. This can include making students aware of the objects via bodily sensations (e.g. touching objects,

listening to sounds, doing physical exercises), providing pictures of objects and acting out dialogues. In doing these activities, students create a list with precise details regarding objects and can respond to fellow students' descriptions. This makes students more and more aware of the writing task at hand, and of how an audience may respond to their written product (Hillocks, 1982). Inquiry activities work well when a specific goal is set, when specific strategies are implemented to conduct the data analysis, and when students can incorporate in their writing what they've learned during the inquiry process. The available evidence suggest that inquiry is an effective element of writing instruction.

9. **Process writing approach:** while this approach is included in several of the mentioned meta-analyses, it should be stressed that this approach cannot be understood as a single instructional element; rather it interweaves several writing activities in a workshop environment. The focus is on extended writing opportunities, writing for real audiences, providing personalised instruction, teaching students to write in cycles (such as planning, translating and reviewing), encouraging students to take ownership of their writing and creating platforms for interactions. The overall effect of the process writing approach in the literature reviewed by Graham and Perin (2007b) was small to moderate, but significant. However, Koster et al. (2015) reported a negative effect for the process approach in their meta-analyses. Koster et al. (2015, p. 318) explained this negative effect by stating that the process approach "is too comprehensive for beginning writers: working on too many aspects at the same time" and that "beginning writers may profit more from a targeted intervention, such as text structure or strategy instruction".

10. **Study of models:** study of models provides students with model (good) examples of each composition type that they have to master. The idea is to get students to analyse and then emulate the forms and structures of these models in their own writing. For example, an instructor can provide students with two examples of well-written persuasive essays, one that claims that UFOs exist and one that claims that they don't. After discussion, the structures of the essays, the students are asked to write a persuasive essay arguing for or against the idea that boys are better in math than girls (Knudson, 1991). Hillocks's (1984) meta-analysis showed positive, but small effects for the study of

models. Likewise, this instructional element resulted in small improvements in writing quality in the studies included in Graham and Perin's meta-analysis.

11. **Writing for content learning:** when students can write well, writing becomes an effective tool to support students' learning of content/subject material. Although the effect of writing-to-learn is not very big, it is consistent enough to warrant inclusion in this list. For instance, in a science class, where the learners study plant growth, the teacher's goal is to help learners develop an understanding of the plant's structure (roots, leaves etc.), the soil and the role of water and sunlight. The science teacher can instruct the learners to write summaries and answer questions about the topic in writing, to increase their overall understanding or to interpret specific information in the written science text (Boscolo & Mason, 2001).

Very importantly, it should be noted here that while the above-mentioned instructional elements have been found to be effective, and thus implementing them can potentially improve the writing ability of students, together they do not constitute a writing curriculum. Educators have to consider the needs of their students before implementing any of the discussed elements (using assessment data such as observations, analyses of written samples and test scores). It is unlikely that all elements will be effective in all contexts; and as with reading intervention, writing intervention is most effective when students' needs have been carefully considered. In the following section, it will be explained how (some of) the instructional elements discussed above are utilised in well-known writing instruction approaches, including model-based approaches, process approaches, genre approaches and process-genre approaches.

3.2. Writing instruction approaches
3.2.1. Model-based approach

The literature that describes the field of writing instruction suggests that the teaching of writing is language focused in traditional teaching contexts such as the model-based approach. In such teaching context, writing is used as a means of reinforcing language which has already been learned in spoken form. The emphasis in writing instruction is on grammatical accuracy. To produce a piece of writing that is correct, it is necessary to provide learners with a good model from a textbook (or from the teacher). This kind of instructional method, known as model-based or product approach, required

of students to follow a procedure when they want to write. The product approach is used to highlight form and the emphasis is on rhetorical drills (Silva, 1990). Students using the product approach are normally told to write an essay imitating a given pattern. Generally, the focus of such writing is on the written product rather than on how the learner should approach the process of writing. Writing is believed to be "mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development is mainly the result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher" (Badger & White, 2000, p. 154). It is therefore teacher-centered, as the teacher becomes the arbiter of the models used (Silva, 1990).

The characteristics of a model-based approach are to use a text as a starting point: the text is then analysed and studied for features of form, content and organisation. Finally, students are required to produce a parallel text using their own information (White, 1988). Even though the model-based approach became popular in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) domain as much of EAP writing is product-oriented, this approach has also been criticised for its apparent weaknesses in teaching writing. These weaknesses include that the product approach focuses on writing tasks in which the learner imitates, copies and transforms teacher supplied models (Flower & Hayes, 1977; Nunan, 1999) and that the product approach merely results in "mindless copies of a particular organisational plan or style" (Escholz, 1980, p. 45). According to Brown (1994), the product approach was used in composition classes where the focus was on grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, content and organisation and the writing activities were mostly de-contextualised. Learners were instructed to write essays on given topics. These essays were collected, critical comments were provided and the essays were assessed and evaluated (Caudery, 1995). The essays were returned and learners were supposed to do corrections. The actual process of how people write was neglected by teachers using the product approach.

In their meta-analysis of writing intervention research, Koster et al. (2015) came to the conclusion that grammar instruction approaches to writing yielded negative average effect sizes. Koster et al.'s analysis confirmed the results of previously conducted meta-analyses (those of Graham & Perin (2007b), Graham et al. (2012) and Hillocks (1984) and confirmed that explicit focus on correct sentence formation, as found in product approaches, does not lead to improved writing. Koster et al (2015, p 318) argued that this negative effect is due "to lack of transfer effects: when grammar is taught in isolation, and not in a 'real' writing context, it may not be clear to students how to apply what they

learned when writing a text". Moreover, the continuous error correction reduced learners' motivation and self-esteem with regard to writing. Consequently, learners seldom learnt that an effective piece of writing can hardly be produced in only one draft. In addition, Zamel (1983) pointed out that written products do not show teachers much about learners' instructional needs, which means then that teachers do not know how to help their learners if only written products are expected (i.e. if teachers are not part of the learners' writing process at all). Even though an effective piece of writing, or the product, is the ultimate aim for any writer, there are different methods or strategies available to reach the product stage. This was recognised by some composition teachers and researchers (Emig, 1971; Hairston, 1982; Zamel, 1982, 1983) and the traditional thinking about writing was questioned. Due to some limitations and shortcomings inherent in the model-based approach, the process approach emerged as a reaction to it (Yan, 2005).

3.2.2. Process approach

Writing is often referred to as 'composing'- a term which emphasises the importance of communication and the fact that writing is a creative process. Emphasising that writing needs to be seen as a process rather than a product, Liebman-Kleine (1986, p. 785) argues that "process is not a dogma, but a concept that enables people to see writing in a new way and thereby ask questions that were not asked as long as people saw writing simply as finished products".

The process approach movement began with studies about the composing process of writers (Emig, 1971; Perl, 1980; Pianko, 1979) and resulted in informing students how to approach a writing task. The process approach was developed initially for first language classrooms in English-speaking countries and was later adapted for additional language teaching (Caudery, 1995). The process approach involves several stages which appear to follow each other. However, the process approach is not linear, but rather recursive, which means the stages can appear anywhere in the process depending on the writers' choices. Most proponents of the process approach (Geyser, 1996; Shih, 1986; Tessema, 2005; Williams, 2005; Yan, 2005; Zamel, 1983) agree that the number of stages can range from three to five (Pianko, 1979, pp. 7-8). These stages include i) 'prewriting' (conceptualising/ thinking) which includes analysing the topic, generating and organising ideas relevant to the writing task at hand, ii) 'drafting' (writing a first attempt) which involves organising and developing ideas into paragraphs, focusing on the content rather than on the grammatical accuracy of the text (Geyser, 1996). iii) 'revising' (improving on

the first draft), iv) 'proofreading' (correcting the text) and v) 'publishing' (sharing the finished product). (These stages were discussed in Section 2.2.3.1 in more detail). A number of research studies related to the implementation of the process approach in teaching writing have been conducted in different school contexts in different parts of the world.

Several studies show positive results relating to the process approach. Goldstein and Carr (1996) examined the 1992 NAEP writing assessment administered to a representative national sample of approximately 7, 000 4th grade students, 11, 000 8th grade students and 11, 500 12th grade students across the USA. Their results indicate that process-related activities are strongly related to writing proficiency. Jacob and Talshir (1998) adapted process writing in the 4th and 6th grade classrooms at the Pisgat Ze'ev Bet School in Israel, in an attempt to make English writing more realistic for the students. Students who participated in this study developed into active independent writers. Mahon and Yau (1992), in launching a process-oriented writing program for a primary class, found that students' writing ability improved by adapting the process approach to writing. Cheung and Chan (1994) carried out a writing program in a primary school in Hong Kong. They too found that the process writing approach helped the students to develop their writing skills.

However, some researchers investigating the process approach, found positive results, yet expressed these results with reservations. Urzua (1987), for example, indicated that teaching writing to L2 writers using a process approach had positive effects in that learners acquired significant composing skills. However, this study involved only a small number of subjects (two 4th grade and two 6th grade learners) and as such the results could not be generalised.

Despite the wide recognition of the process approach in EFL/ESL classrooms, it is not free from criticisms. Some authors argue that process-based instruction will give learners a false impression of what will be expected from them once they leave the classroom (Horowitz, 1986; Williams, 2005). Another criticism of process approaches is that such approaches not only ignore formal accuracy but also not prepare students adequately for writing exams (in which the students will be judged on the final product). In examination settings, due to time constrains students do not have time to brainstorm, revise, discuss with their peers and write several drafts. Furthermore, Badger and White (2000) state that teachers using the process approach to teach writing, in trying to be humanistic and student-centered, fail to give enough input regarding linguistic aspects,

different types of texts (genres) and purposes of writing. Finally, according to Reid (1984), the process approach does not consider variation among individuals, specifically, in linguistic and cognitive development and in academic discourse styles.

Even though there are arguments against the process approach, it is not unreasonable to speculate that if ESL/EFL learners can improve their writing in L2 writing classes, they can also transfer their writing skills to other settings such as tests or examinations. Even in time constrained writing tasks, writers need to go through a composing process which can be perceived as different to that of the process-based instruction in a typical classroom situation. For example, in my own experience, when students write their exam, they often plan their final answer by writing main points under sub headings or drawing web organisers relevant to the topic of the essay on a separate sheet of paper. Given the real nature of writing, one may find that writers tend to go back and forth revising and refining ideas at all points in the composing process. Therefore, in terms of developing EFL learners' academic writing skills, one may assume that the process approach will do more justice to learners than a product approach (which disregards the steps involved in composing and focuses only on the final product) (Flowers & Hayes, 1981; Williams, 2005). However, given the weaknesses and limitations of the process approach, some authors began to argue that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced (Flowerdew, 1993; Martin, 1993; Swales, 1990). Therefore, another approach called genre-based approach emerged. In the following section, I explain the genre-based approach as well as the different perspectives that exist with regards to this approach in the literature.

3.2.3. Genre-based approach

Swales (1990, p. 58) defines a genre, "as a set of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" In other words, genre is a social action and a speech event that has a communicative goal and this goal is shared by the members of a particular discourse community. According to Hammond and Derewianka (2001), "Genre" refers not only to types of literary texts but also to the predictable and recurring patterns of everyday, academic and literary texts (research articles, conference proposals, business reports, grant applications, letters to the editor, reference letters, lectures and dissertation proposals) occurring within a particular culture. A genre-based approach places great emphasis on the relationship between text-genres and their contexts (Hyon, 1996). In doing so, it aims to help students become effective

participants in their academic and professional environment as well as in their broader communities (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001). Following are some characteristics of the genre-based approach.

First, the genre-based approach emphasises the importance of exploring the social and cultural context of language use in a piece of writing. The context decides the purpose of a text, as well as the overall structure of a text in terms of language features and text features (often expressed with particular linguistic conventions) (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001; Hyon, 1996). A genre based approach argues that L2 students can only produce a successful text, accepted by a particular English-language discourse community, when they take the context of a text into account.

Secondly, a genre-based approach highlights that there are reader conventions and linguistic conventions that a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership (Muncie, 2002). In other words, a genre-based approach assumes that any student, who wants to be successful in joining a particular English-language discourse community, has to be able to produce texts which accomplish the expectations of the readers of that community with regards to grammar, organisation, and content.

Thirdly, a genre based approach underscores that writing is a social activity. This notion originated from the social-cultural theory initiated by Vygotsky (1978). According to this theory, knowledge is best constructed when learners collaborate together, support one another to encourage the use of new techniques and construct and reflect on new knowledge together. In social interactions and participation, group members play a key role in developing new knowledge. In writing classes, students are encouraged to participate in the activities of meaning exchange and negotiation with their more capable peers and teacher. The belief is that learning to write in a collaborative way can remove the feeling of isolation which bothers many learners when writing, and at the same time, it can help student writers to have positive reinforcements about linguistic structure, content and ideas in the composing of texts (Hyland, 2003)

Fourthly, a genre-based approach to writing instruction looks beyond subject content, composing processes and linguistic forms to see a text as attempting to communicate with readers. Genre-based approaches are concerned with teaching learners how to use language patterns to accomplish coherent, purposeful prose writing. Its central goal, as Hyland (2003, p. 18) observes, is that "we do not just write, we write something

to achieve some purpose". Thus, in genre-based approaches, student writers are required to take the overall social purposes of a text into account when composing.

Fifthly, genre-based approaches emphasise the important role of writer-reader interaction (Reid, 1995). Based on these characteristics, the procedure involved in the genre-based approach can be stated as follows: Students think about the intended and/or potential readers when writing in order to be able to select appropriate content, language and levels of formality. In order for this to happen, a student writer should always ask himself/ herself questions such as "Who will be my intended readers?", "Who might be interested in reading my text?", "What are their beliefs about a good piece of writing?", "What are their levels of English proficiency?" and "What are their educational and cultural backgrounds?". Similarly, genre based approaches to text production and text comprehension, suggest that when readers interact with a text, they should ask themselves questions such as the ones below:

1. For what purposes, does/did the writer write this text?
2. What is/ was the writer's viewpoint when writing the text?
3. What kinds of language features and organisation does/did the writer use in the text?

To summarise, there always exists an interaction between a writer and his/her readers during the writing process, despite the physical absence of the readers. The teacher's role in a genre based approach is viewed as 'authoritativeness' rather than 'authoritarian' (Rothery, 1996). As an expert in the classroom, the teacher provides students with systematic guidance and careful support through various activities so that students ultimately gain control of various written genres. At the same time, he/she also recognises the importance of students' contributions to the teaching-learning process. Lastly, the genre-based approach emphasises the explicit teaching of the linguistic conventions of the genre for L2 novice student writers (Christie, 1990). It is argued that students cannot produce a particular text-type successfully if they are not taught explicitly about linguistic conventions of that text-type with respect to language features and schematic structure. Therefore, making known these conventions to student writers; especially at the first stage of the instructional modules of particular text-types is a very important task of genre-based teachers. In the classroom, teachers following a genre based orientation often employ the teaching-learning cycle which comprises the three phases, namely, (i) modelling of a "sample expert" text, (ii) joint-negotiation of text with teacher,

and (iii) independent construction of a text by an individual student (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993)**.**The positive effects of the genre approach on the teaching of writing are acknowledged by several authors (Badger & White, 2000; Goa, 2007; Hyland, 2003; Kim & Kim, 2005; Paltridge, 2004; Yan, 2005). However, limitations of the genre approach led to the conclusion that using the genre approach exclusively might not be suitable for turning learners into competent writers. Therefore, similar to the product and process approaches, the genre approach has also been criticised in the literature. Caudery (1995), for example, notes that by attempting explicit teaching of a particular genre, teachers are in fact not helping the learners as the genre approach may not require students to express their own ideas or may depend too much on the teacher finding suitable materials as models. It could thus become counter-productive. Badger and White (2000) therefore, proposed a merger of the two approaches discussed above, hence the development of the process-genre approach to the teaching of writing came into existence. In the following section, I explain the process genre approach, taking into account different perspectives that exist in the literature.

3.2.4. Process genre approach

From a theoretical perspective, a number of authors (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003, 2004; Tribble, 1996) working in the field of L2 writing have called for an integration of process oriented and genre based approaches in teaching writing to students in L2 contexts. These theorists argue that writing is complex in nature and that writers require knowledge not only of linguistic features, but also the process of writing and of the social context in order to produce successful texts (Archibald & Jeffery, 2000). The use of each approach on its own may not be successful in teaching L2 writing, as neither of them (in isolation) provides a complete view of writing. As Cumming (2001, p. 13) complains, the practices of teaching that divide writing into sub-components, "inevitably diminish the task of writing into sub activities that are seldom integral to the activity overall". In actual teaching situations, the L2 writing instructions are commonly a mixture of several approaches and teachers typically integrate the main elements into their practice (Hyland, 2003). From a theoretical viewpoint, instruction that combines key elements of process based and genre oriented approaches should help students to understand the complex view of writing, as they should learn the necessary writing skills of planning, drafting, and revising the written drafts and gain explicit knowledge of linguistic features in relation to the social context (Badger & White, 2000). In explaining

their model of the process genre approach, Badger and White (2000) state that writing involves knowledge about language (as in product and genre approaches), knowledge of the context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and skills in using language (as in process approaches). Writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential (as in process approaches) and by providing input to which the learners respond (as in product and genre approaches). Synthesising all the aspects presented in the different approaches, Badger and White (2000) derived a model for teaching writing using a process genre approach. This model is illustrated in Figure 3.1 below:
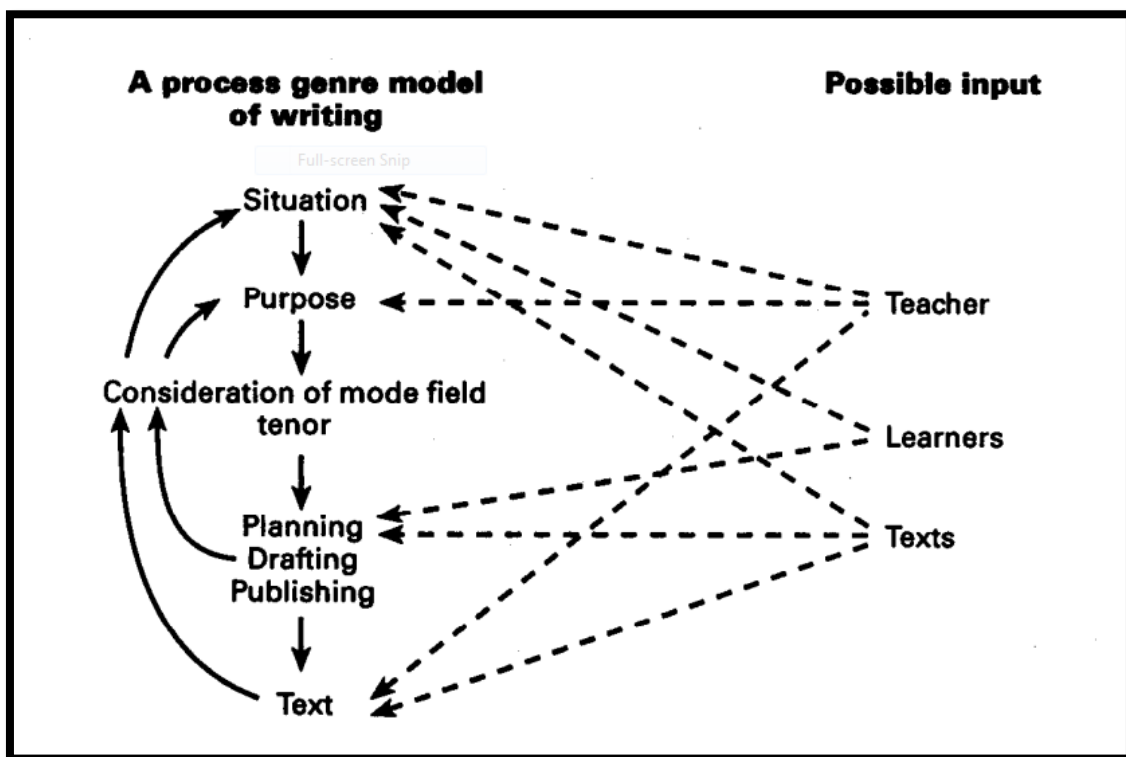
Figure 3.1. A genre process model of teaching writing (Badger & White, 2000, p. 159).

According to Frith (2001) and Goa (2007), the process genre approach is a hybrid as it entails the combination of two approaches. The process genre approach not only takes into consideration the development of the writing skills as well as the conventions and concept drawing from the genre approaches but also retains the process philosophy such as writing skills development and learners' response. The process genre approach in the views of Goa (2007), characterises not only the learner creative thinking and the act of how writers compose a text, but also the knowledge of linguistic features. The issue of skills dealing with the process of writing is addressed by the process approach, whilst the

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knowledge of social context and its influence on textual features is addressed by the genre based approach. By using an approach which integrates process writing and genre knowledge, it is expected that students should gain the necessary knowledge of textual features, of the process of writing and of the social context to deal with writing as a complex activity. Badger and White (2000) state that genre approaches to writing are predominantly linguistic but, unlike product approaches, they emphasise that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced. Therefore, when teaching writing, it is argued that the different purposes, social contexts, structures and linguistic features of specific texts should be taken into consideration (Halliday, 1989, 2002; Swales, 1990; Yan, 2005). It is true that we have a range of types of writing-such as sales letters, research articles, reports, and memos that are linked with different situations (Flowerdew, 1993). Not all learners need to operate in all social contexts. Even so, the genre approach can be related to academic writing. The students at Shinas College of Technology, study Engineering, Information Technology and Business Studies and they are required to write project reports, business letters, job applications, advertisements and memos and to design and develop web-based materials, technical product specification reports, incident/accident reports and solicited proposals, especially when they study in the post-foundation level. Therefore, a process genre approach seems relevant and important for the study context of the students at Shinas College of Technology.

According to Kim (2007), emphasis on the reader and the purpose of writing are paramount in the genre approach. As the reader is usually an experienced member of a specific community, albeit academic, technical or in the business field, he/she expects the writing discourse to comply with known, acceptable schemata and writing conventions based on the identifiable genre (Silva, 1990).

Kim and Kim (2005) maintain that the genre approach acts as a support mechanism in ESL writing instruction, where examples of a particular genre could be used to help students to systematically understand what the linguistic and structural requirements of a particular genre are and what the communication purpose of the text is. Students' knowledge of linguistic features and structural conventions of a variety of genres based on their communicative purposes is often very limited (Kaunda & Ball, 1998; Swanepoel, 1999). Therefore, the writing teacher can play an active role in guiding, assisting and supporting students to advance to the point where they can employ their skills to be conversant in a variety of genres. The genre approach assumes that students learn more effectively when exposed to multiple examples of texts. In the genre approach

students know exactly what is expected of them since they have received explicit instruction and examples of the specific genre (Kim, 2007). The awareness of the association between content, purpose, audience, style, structure, and language usage will stand students in good stead when encountering a similar writing situation later in their career. Indeed, it has been argued that knowledge of organisation, arrangement, form and genre can systematically lead to knowledge of subject matter. They can then tap into their background knowledge of rhetorical conventions to write a text that is acceptable and effective for its purpose. The genre approach is believed to lower the stress experienced by especially ESL writers (Kim, 2007). Given the importance of the process genre approach to the current research context, the stages involved in it will be explored in the following section.

3.2.4.1. Stages involved in process genre approach

Students must be made aware of the recursive nature of the writing process. Even though the phases mentioned below are presented in a linear fashion, they are not necessarily meant to follow in the order suggested here, because phases can overlap. In other words, while students are busy with one phase they can concurrently employ skills or activities from another phase. For instance, while students compose their first draft, they can still do rereading and revising as stated by Zamel (1982, p. 206), "…planning [for example] is not a unitary stage but a distinctive thinking process which writers use over and again during composition". If executed effectively, another advantage of the process genre approach is that it does not only involve the skill of writing but also speaking, reading and listening are incorporated in the lessons and according to Yan (2005, p. 20), the "four language skills promote the expansion of the students' overall language competence."

The first phase of the process approach is the 'pre-writing' phase. In this stage, students are supposed to become familiar with the genre and the relating conventions through direct instruction or through models they are provided with. They are required to discuss issues relevant to the topic, the subject content, the audience, the purpose, the style (formal or informal), and grammar issues such as tense and specific syntactic structures demanded by a specific genre. The main function of the pre-writing stage is to gather information from various sources to record the information in a useful form. The format of the information is recorded in will depend on the genre, e.g. causes and effects are outlined in a table to write a cause-effect essay. This stage could take up several

minutes (or even hours depending on the accessibility of sources and the students' skills in identifying sources), and requires of the writer to record the points to arrange them in a logical order. Moreover, students are required to use their background knowledge about the possible subjects or topics, the linguistic features and linguistic skills to write their own text in the specified genre. The teacher can provide learners with several techniques on how to read about a topic, gather ideas, analyse, synthesise and organise these ideas. The teacher's involvement should be beneficial and sensitive. In most EFL classes, teachers will find that some students are capable of finding information themselves, whereas others may need some help.

The next stage is known as 'composing'. In composing, students structure the ideas in meaningful sentences based on the specific genre. Even though the students have the topic and the gathered ideas, they still do not necessarily know exactly how they will use the information in their texts. According to Shih (1986, p. 628), the action of writing encompasses that, "writers take the material previously gathered and organised and structure it into a linear piece of discourse". This is to emphasise that writers construct sentences and paragraphs. However, when it comes to students, their ideas are seldom fully formulated before they begin to write their first draft. There are differences in the composing process of each individual, and the process genre approach allows writers to go about the composing task in their unique way. For example, in the writing class, teachers need to replicate a given situation as closely as possible and then provide sufficient support for learners to identify the purpose and other aspects of the social context (Badger & White, 2000). So learners who want to apply for a job advertised by a company or other institution requesting a suitably qualified candidate to apply for a given position would need to consider that their description is meant to apply for the given job (purpose), that it must appeal to a certain group of people (in this case, to the HR Manager or Chairman of the company) (tenor), that it must include relevant information about the candidate, his/her educational qualifications, experience and skills (field), and that there is a specific structure (format) in which job application are presented (mode). Then, drawing on their knowledge of things such as vocabulary, grammar, and organisation, the candidates (wishing to apply for the position) would use the skills practiced in the process genre approach, such as redrafting and proof-reading, to produce a formal letter of job application which reflects the situation from which it arises.

Once the first draft is completed or while students are still busy composing it, they are encouraged to enter the re-reading revising stage. In this stage, learners have to re-

read their text to determine whether their subject content matches the topic and what they intended to say (Shih, 1986). Furthermore, students should check whether their paragraphs have a logical order with a clear topic sentence and supporting sentences.

Stressing the importance of revision and re-writing, Maimon (1982, p. 61) writes: "successful papers are not written; they are re-written". Students look at their ideas critically and evaluate the meaning and message; if the meaning and message is not clear, they make necessary changes to text by adding or deleting irrelevant ideas at this stage. The second focus is on structure where students evaluate the organisation of their text to ensure that it is reader-orientated (Shih, 1986). After that, students are required to check the grammar used in the text. If a learner/student used sources, the referencing of these sources should be checked and edited as well, if necessary.

Following the revision stage, learners have to go through the 'peer-editing' stage. Peer editing means that students read each other's work, and then offer feedback on content, structure and grammar. Peer-editing is also a form of input, as discussion on content with other students might lead to the addition of ideas. This skill can be used successfully in the process genre approach if administered effectively. It is mandatory for students to receive guidelines on how to peer-edit. Therefore, it is always useful to give students criteria in the form of a structured feedback form or checklist to be filled in or ticked off (Gao, 2007). (For more information, see Appendix I). Objectivity must be stressed and the teacher could model a peer-editing session before students embark on editing each other's work in pairs. After the peer-editing session, students should be allowed more time to re-write the text if necessary.

In the process genre approach, as in the other approaches described above, 'teacher feedback' is considered as an important phase in the composing process. Once the first draft is written, self-edited and peer-edited, and revised, possibly re-written, the teacher is responsible for editing and evaluation. After having read the text which the students have written relevant to a specific genre, the teacher can use one or more methods of feedback. A useful but time-consuming method is to go through each student's writing individually (with the student), asking questions and making suggestions in a positive and motivating way. This is called teacher-student conferencing (Gao, 2007; Kim & Kim, 2005; Nordin & Norhisham, 2006). This technique can provide the teacher with insight into the students' level of competence while it helps the students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses in terms of academic writing ability. Another technique preferred by many ESL writers is written feedback (Kim & Kim, 2005). This means that

the teacher evaluates the essay and does error correction on a grammatical level and makes suggestions on how to improve the content of the text (Gao, 2007; Nordin & Norhisham, 2006). The teacher may ask the student to re-write the essay again based on his/her recommendations and suggestions. Once the final draft is handed over to the teacher, he/she should evaluate the essay using a writing rubric, give written feedback and allocate marks based on the specific course and genre criteria and marking rubric.

Although it is evident that using the process genre approach when teaching academic writing could be useful, the approach is not free from criticism when it comes to implementing it in EFL contexts. In the following section, criticism against the process genre approach is discussed.

3.3. Arguments against the process genre approach

It seems difficult to find concrete criticism against the use of the process genre approach in the literature about writing instruction. This may be due to the fact that the process genre approach is a relatively new approach in teaching writing in ELT (Badger & White, 2000). Even so, Horowitz (1986) raises the problem of time. In fact, the problem of time is linked to the concerns discussed earlier for other versions of the approach. Time is already a problem when using the process approach and it becomes an even greater issue in the process genre approach. The reason for this is that more activities and strategies such as reading, manipulating language features and analysing model examples are added to help students to write more effectively. However, some scholars (Atkinson, 2003; Giddens, 1979; Rowe, 1995; Trimbur, 1994) have attempted to move beyond a process approach which has now been established as one of the effective approaches to teaching writing both in L2 and L2 contexts. Many scholars (largely influenced by postmodernist and anti-foundationalist perspectives) suggest that process is no longer a viable explanation for writing, and that the process paradigm has reduced the writing act to a series of codified phases that can be taught (Lee-Ann & Breuch, 2002). Post-Process scholars, moreover, claim that in the process classroom, teaching writing is emphasized as the teaching of steps, while the dynamics of the writing act – the contextual, social aspects of writing-are left behind (Sinor & Huston, 2004). Accordingly, post-process theory advocates paying attention to the "socially situated nature of writing itself" (Sinor & Huston, 2004, p. 371). It encourages students to write the way "real" writers write. However, post-process does not abandon the writing steps. Sinor and Huston (2004, p.

371) emphasize that, "instruction is centered on the social, political, and contextual forces that surround writing".

As an emergent writing theory, the post-process approach does not offer concrete applications to the writing classroom, but it does provide valuable pedagogical insights that can guide teaching practice. Some of the key assumptions that the post-process approach suggests are that -writing is 'public', 'interpretive', and 'situated' (Kent, 1999). The public nature of writing suggests that writing is "communicative interaction with others rather than a product of an individual," and so writers should "work toward communicating their message to an audience" (Breuch, 2002, p. 110-111). To view writing as interpretive is to emphasise the "indeterminate nature of the writing activity" (p. 115). Finally, writing is situated in that it should "correspond to specific contexts" (p. 115).

All these assumptions have already been articulated in the process genre approach. Therefore, one may not see a marked difference between the main assumptions of the process genre approach and the post-process approach both in theory and pedagogy. Moreover, it has not been determined yet, whether the process genre approach helps students to write better and/or faster in examination settings. An intuitive assumption regarding the process genre approach is that if students are instructed based on genres and have had the opportunity to analyse and manipulate model examples, then they should be able to compose more effectively in an examination setting. However, it was not possible for the researcher to find any empirical studies that could corroborate the assumption that this approach helps students to write better and faster in examination settings.

3.3.1. Empirical evidence on process genre approach in application

A relatively a small body of research has investigated the usefulness of the process genre approach in enhancing EFL learners' writing proficiency. Even so, the effectiveness of this approach has been tested in several contexts and in various parts of the world, including Africa, The Far East and the Middle East. The studies which are reported below are similar to the current study (in terms of research design and research questions). Chelli and Hassinia (2012) investigated the effectiveness of the process genre approach on the EFL composition writing of the first-year students at Biskra University, Algeria. This research was conducted in order to test the hypothesis that the implementation of the process genre approach would positively affect the students' EFL writing. The researchers posed the following questions: 1. *Does the implementation of the*

process genre approach enhance students' writing in terms of fluency? 2. Does the implementation of the process genre approach enhance students' writing in terms of accuracy? 3. Does the implementation of the process genre approach enhance students' writing in terms of complexity? The experimental group (N=40) which consisted of first year students was taught using the process genre approach while the control group (N=40) was instructed through the product approach. The researchers reported that their investigation consisted of the comparison of pre-and post-writing tests in addition to two pre-questionnaires and two post interviews. At the end of the study writing was evaluated in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity using T-unit as a measure of analysis (Ortega, 2003; Ellis & Yuan, 2004). The findings related to fluency revealed that the control group recorded a slight increase in the means score from pre-test to posttest (12.56 to 13.17) with a difference of 0.61, while the experimental group increased significantly from pre-test to posttest (12.17 to 17.81) with a mean difference of 5.64. However, when it came to accuracy, both groups had difficulties in producing language accurately (more precisely T-units free from errors). The control group recorded a slight decrease in the mean scores from pre-test to posttest (1.97 to 1.82) with a difference of 0.15 while the experimental group also recorded a slight decrease in mean scores from pre-test to posttest (1.71 to 1.07) with a difference of 0.64. However, the number of errors in the control group decreased with a value of 0.15, whereas the experimental group decreased with a value of 0.64 which is greater than that of the former with a difference of 0.75. This proves that students exposed to the process genre approach performed better than the control group which was exposed to the product approach.

Concerning grammatical complexity, the experimental group outperformed the control group. The experimental group recorded a difference of 0.25 in mean scores between the pre and posttests (1.58 to 1.83) while the control group's performance remained the same with a mean score difference of 0.08. Overall, the researchers concluded that the process genre approach is more effective in helping EFL students to develop their writing competence than the product approach.

Moving to the Far East, Nordin, Halib, and Ghazali (2010) conducted a study at the University Teknologi Petronas, Malaysia to investigate the effect of the process genre approach on the writing skills of engineering students. The experimental group received writing instruction based on the process genre approach while the control group was taught through the genre approach. The findings of the study indicated that the writing ability of students in the experimental group was significantly better than those in the

control group. The study thus supports the view that the process genre approach has advantages in teaching technical writing. In an attempt to enhance the writing ability of foundation level undergraduate students in a Malaysian International University, Jackson (2012) employed Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), combined with the process genre approach. In his study, the experimental group was taught using CLIL combined with the process genre approach while the control group was taught in another manner (not described). The writing genre started with personal narratives and proceeded to argumentative, compare-and-contrast and cause-and-effect essays. The results indicated that the experimental groups' average scores increased from 56% to 68% from the pre-test to the posttest while the control group recorded an increase from 59% to 61% in their average scores. The researcher concluded that the use of CLIL combined with process genre approach was effective in enhancing academic writing skills of tertiary level EFL/ESL students.

In the Malaysian school context, Foo (2007) conducted a school-based study to establish how the process genre approach to writing instruction would affect ESL students' written products compared to the traditional product approach. The researcher applied process genre instruction to the experimental group while the control group was taught with product-based writing instruction. Foo (2007) found a remarkable improvement in the experimental group's ability to communicate their ideas relevant to the purpose of the task, compared to the control group. However, no improvement was recorded in the organisation of ideas or in the control of language. The students in the experimental group commented that they had a better understanding of "conceptual writing strategies" (Foo 2007, p. 16) and that they would be willing to apply practical strategies when writing essays.

Another school-based study conducted in Indonesia by Nihayah (2009) reported that the implementation of the process genre approach improved students' writing ability. Providing statistical evidence to support the positive effects of the process genre approach in improving writing ability of the students, the researcher states that a comparison of the mean scores (with a maximum score of 4) taken before and after the study indicate an improvement from 1.29 to 3.15 on content, from 1.62 to 3.01 on organisation and from 1.55 to 2.98 on language use.

In the Middle East, Abd-ElFattah (2013) has used the process genre approach to develop writing skills in second year secondary stage female students in Egypt, whose proficiency in writing was low. The study adopted an experimental design; the

experimental group received process genre-based instruction while the control group was instructed using traditional writing instruction. The instruction lasted for nine weeks for each group. Abd-ElFattah (2013) used a writing performance test, a holistic scoring rubric, an analytic scoring rubric and a writing attitude scale as research instruments and reported that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on the writing performance post-test. Moreover, the researcher concluded that his study provides evidence for the effectiveness of using the process genre approach in developing students' writing performance and for improving attitudes towards writing.

Even though there are some weaknesses in the way the study was conducted, the researcher found a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control group in the post writing test (which was analysed on five components namely content, organisation, sentence fluency and writing conventions and layout).

Each of the studies reviewed in this section has both strengths and weaknesses. One weakness of Nihayah's study is that the researcher failed to report whether a control group was used to compare the results obtained from the experimental group. The study would have been more valid if the researcher had included a control group. Jackson does not explain how the control group was instructed or the instructional method used in the study. As far as Foo's (2007) study is concerned, it is stated that there were no improvements in the organisation of ideas or in the control of language, but no attempt was made to explain why this was the case. Beginner level EFL/ESL students often write with no organisation of ideas and/ or no control of the language. In order to avoid this, writing instructors should consider tackling the problems associated with organising ideas or control of the language through teacher feedback as outlined in the process genre approach. In order to avoid an outcome similar to that of Foo (2007), the intervention/instruction in the present study will include all steps proposed in the process genre approach. The role of teacher feedback in this process will be of central importance as the researcher believes it to be a core aspect of teaching and learning writing through the process genre approach.

Abd-ElFattah's (2013) study was conducted with female students only, which renders the study gender-biased in some way. Moreover, the researcher failed to explain the nature of the teaching and learning materials or how they were used during the study. Chelli and Hassina (2012) study's test results relating to fluency and grammatical accuracy show that both groups did not perform well in the posttest, but that the experimental group gained a slight improvement in fluency and grammatical accuracy

from the pre-test to posttest as well as between the groups. However, the researchers do not clearly account for the findings. Moreover, the types of instructional materials used to instruct both groups are not explained.

To avoid the weaknesses described above, the present study will use contextually-developed materials (more information about contextually-developed materials will be presented in Chapter 4) and the process genre approach to teach the experimental group while the control group will be instructed using a prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2* by Blanchard & Root, 2010). It should specifically be noted that, to the best of my knowledge, - no studies have been conducted in the Omani context on the application of the process or the process genre approach. The studies described above, which were mainly conducted in different teaching contexts, suggest that the process approach and process genre approach are beneficial in improving academic writing skills of students who study English either as a second or a foreign language. Therefore, given the findings of the studies stated above, I believe that the application of the process genre approach in academic writing class would be more beneficial to my students whose linguistic (specifically writing) needs are linked to different genres. Moreover, the current study will seek to fill in the gaps that exist in the studies stated above in terms of knowledge and pedagogy. This study will hopefully also support the view that using the process genre approach and context-specific materials can help improve EFL students' academic writing skills in the context of technological education in Oman. In the following section, I explore the effectiveness of writing intervention programs conducted in various teaching backgrounds.

3.3.2. The role of the instructor in writing intervention programs in EFL/ESL contexts

As was illustrated at the beginning of this chapter, there have been considerable efforts to analyse the existing writing intervention literature, in an attempt to discover which instructional elements are most likely to improve writing in learners in a variety of contexts. Most of the reviewed studies focused on writing intervention programs in 'normal L1 contexts, or in contexts where the aim was to assist struggling L1 writers. Since the present study was conducted in an EFL context, it is useful, before the conclusion of this chapter, to also summarise the findings of available research regarding the success of writing intervention programs in an ESL/EFL contexts.

A number of studies conducted in different teaching contexts have found that intervention programs aimed at the improvement of academic writing (in general) are effective in helping EFL/ESL learners improve their writing skills. Du Plessis (2012) reports on the results of an intervention program designed to improve academic writing skills of foundation program students of the University of Namibia in 2008 and 2009. For her study, she selected three different groups of participants from the Foundation program and employed three writing approaches; the process approach, the model-based approach and the process genre approach in order to establish which approach improves academic writing skills the most. To examine the effects of the interventions, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was applied. The data collected from the three groups who were taught using the three approaches suggested that there were clear group differences: specifically, the results from the pre-test and post-test showed (taking average scores into account) that the model-based approach produced the best essay results (average = 55%), while learners instructed with the process genre approach and process approach (45%) recorded 45% and 44% respectively. On the other hand, the differences in mean scores of the three approaches indicated that the learners instructed with the process genre approach made the best progress (post-test average score was 11.34% higher than the pre-test score) while the process approach and model-based approach showed gains of 10.4% and 8.49% respectively. Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that the process genre approach had the biggest impact on the academic writing abilities of students. However, the researcher of this study failed to include a control group which affects the internal validity of the study.

Carstens (2011) reports the results of a writing intervention program conducted with two groups of second year university students. The researcher applied a quasi-experimental design to gather data. She selected two groups: one group consisting of 16 students received an intervention in which the content of the intervention program was focused on a specific subject (History) while the other group (which consisted of 11 students) received an intervention in which the content was focused on a variety of humanistic subjects. The researcher wanted to prove that irrespective of the teaching method being used, a strong subject-related focus would result in stronger motivation and in turn would result in better performance by students. Both groups received a particular intervention (subject-specific intervention or non-subject specific intervention). Non-subject specific interventions (wide-angled) emphasise learners and learning in general rather than target texts and practices (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Widdowson, 1983)

while subject-specific (narrow-angled) interventions focus on disciplinary writing conventions (Hewings & Hewings, 2001). Based on the results of the study, the researcher concluded that the differences in the achievement of the two groups do not seem to be only related to the focus of the particular intervention (subject-specific or non-subject specific). Teaching strategies, amount of exercise and overt emphasis of particular meaningful resources also seemed to impact on the amount of learning that take place.

Judging from the findings of Carstens's (2011) study, it can be assumed that certain instructional approaches and techniques are useful tools when one conducts a writing intervention program in ESL/EFL context. Carstens's hypothesis was that, within the context of the students' everyday lives, the ones who were instructed with subject-specific materials would relate better to the intervention materials, as they are based on an academic subject that the students find stimulating and interesting. More or less in the same vein, the current researcher is hypothesising that the students in this current study will respond better to intervention materials when it is based on the students' immediate (cultural and social) context. According to principles of leaning, Mayer (2001) states that information is encoded and remembered when it is delivered in multiple modes (verbal and pictorial), sensory modalities (auditory and visual), or media (computer and lecture) than when delivered in only a single mode, modality or median. The context-specific materials used in the current study have been designed in such a way that information gets delivered in multiple modes, modalities and media (in line what Mayer (2001) has called 'Dual Code and Multimedia Effects' (more information about context-specific materials will be included in Chapter 4). Hakel and Halpern (2005) write that an understanding of an abstract concept improves with multiple and varied examples. In the context-specific materials, multiple and varied examples have been included so that learners in the study will find it easy to understand texts written in different genres. Writing about discovery learning, Kirschner, Sweller and Clark (2006) observe that when designing learning materials, teachers need to provide guides and explicit instruction in the principles that are to be learned. According to the concept of discovery learning, the context-specific materials which were used in my study contain sufficient guides and explicit instruction on how to deal with different writing tasks. Therefore, given all the features described above with regards to the context-specific materials used in the current study, it was assumed that it will motivate and engage students in writing. Another important point that needs to be made here is that as far as the researcher knows, there are no other studies that have used contextually-developed and appropriate materials to

teaching academic writing skills using the process genre approach and as such, this study can be considered as a novel contribution to the field of L2 instruction/pedagogy.

Given all the theoretical, empirical and pedagogical underpinnings of different writing approaches, their strengths and weaknesses and the success of previous studies on the use of process genre approach in the EFL/ESL classroom situations as described above, I plan to employ the process genre approach in my study to investigate its effect on my learners' academic writing proficiency. The studies described earlier are consistent with the present study because most of them were conducted in the contexts of EFL/ESL. Moreover, the findings of the studies cited above strongly suggest that the process genre approach can help learners to improve their academic writing skills. I want to find evidence to test the hypothesis which I have formed and stated below, "If the process genre approach will have a positive effect on the academic writing proficiency of my students and as a result, they will be able to compose more effectively in an examination setting". Original context-specific teaching materials was designed and employed in this study to investigate the link existing between the independent variable; contextually-developed writing activities delivered through the process genre approach, and the dependent variable; academic writing proficiency in an examination setting.

3.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the instructional elements that have been found to be effective in teaching writing to older learners. Four writing instruction approaches, namely the model-based approach, the process approach, the genre approach and the process genre approach along with a discussion of their origin, specific characteristics as well as the principles of each model were discussed, and it was shown how these approaches combine some of the instructional elements mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. Moreover, the strengths and weaknesses as indicated by several authors (Badger & White, 2000; Flowerdew, 1993; Williams, 2005; Zamel, 1983) of these approaches have been explained. Finally, I have included a few studies that investigated the effects of writing intervention programs conducted with learners form different social and educational backgrounds in varied teaching and learning contexts from around the world to support my study, which is also be a writing intervention program meant to improve the EFL academic writing skills of tertiary level students in an Omani context.

In the next chapter, I will focus on the methodology of the present study, and it will be illustrated how the various instructional elements discussed in this chapter were

incorporated in the context-specific teaching materials that were used to teach the experimental group in this study.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the research design of this study (a mainly quantitative approach is followed), as well as with the research methods used. This discussion is done with specific reference to participants, materials and procedures. The chapter starts with a brief general introduction to research methodology – the aim being to motivate the choice of a quantitative, rather than a qualitative research paradigm to execute this study. Following this, the research procedure, data collection tools, intervention tools, teaching equipment and data analysis tools specific to this study are discussed and explained in detail while the subject selection and allocation procedures used are outlined clearly. Furthermore, the ethical considerations of this study are explained. Finally, details of the pilot study, conducted to ensure that the context-specific teaching materials used in the current study are appropriate and that the testing tools are reliable and valid, are included.

4.1. Research methodology

4.1.1. General overview of research methodology: quantitative versus qualitative research

Literature that deals with quantitative social research reveals that social researchers adopted the 'scientific method' in their investigations in the 19th century. The emergence of a scientific method in social research could be traced back to the work of philosophers such as Copernicus, Bacon, Galilei, Kepler and Newton (Dörnyei, 2007) who lived in the mid-sixteenth century and who were immensely influential. In a scientific method, one will find three key stages in the research process; (a) observing a phenomenon or identifying a problem; (b) generating an initial hypothesis; and (c) testing the hypothesis by collecting and analysing empirical data using standardised procedures. Once a hypothesis has been successfully tested and further validated through replication, it becomes accepted as a scientific theory or law. In this way, the 'scientific method' is seen as a tool to explore questions in an objective manner, in which any researcher bias or prejudice is minimised. Therefore, scholars working in the social sciences today believe that they can present an accurate and reliable description of a given phenomenon in the world. Another salient characteristic of the scientific research method is its association with numerical values and statistics. Thus, to serve the mathematical needs of research in the social sciences statistics became a sub discipline of mathematics by the

end of the 19th century (Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, the contribution of Francis Galton was significant in establishing quantitative data collection and analytical methods in psychology at the turn of the 20th century (McLeod, 2008). In this manner, as a result of contributions from different disciplines within the social sciences, such as psychology, political science, sociology, economics, anthropology, history and linguistics, the research work in social sciences achieved maturity and recognition of being able to study human beings scientifically both at the individual and the societal levels (University of Utah, n.d).

In its simplest sense, Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2011) define quantitative research as research that deals primarily with the interpretation of numbers (i.e. numerical data). Dörnyei (2007, add page number) lists the main characteristics of quantitative research as follows:

1. Using numbers: one of the most important features of quantitative research is that it uses numerical data. Importantly, numbers are powerless unless we provide precise definitions of the contents and the boundaries of the variables we use and unless we also provide the exact descriptors for the range of values that are allowed within a given variable.

2. A prior categorisation: this means that a researcher needs to specify the categories and values of numbers before conducting the actual study. In other words, if a researcher wants the respondents to encircle figures in a questionnaire item, they should know exactly what those figures represent.

3. Variables rather than cases: quantitative research pays less attention to individual features than to the common features of groups of people "quantitative research pays less attention to individual features than to the common features of groups of people. Therefore, in contrast to qualitative research, which involves data collection procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analysed primarily by non-statistical methods, quantitative research is centered around the study of variables that capture these common features and which are quantified by counting, scaling or by assigning values to categorical data" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 33). Moreover, the various quantitative methods that are commonly employed are aimed at identifying the relationships between variables by measuring them and often manipulating them.

4. Statistics and the language of statistics: as discussed above, statistics is the most important analytical tool which is used to analyse data ranging from calculating

the average (mean) of several figures to performing (for example) a multivariate analysis using a statistical software program.

5. Standardised procedures to assess objective reality: In the research process, a researcher takes every precaution to avoid any individually based subjectivity from the different stages of his other research by developing an appropriate research framework in line with his other research objectives. Therefore, quantitative methodology often employs standardised research procedures to ensure that they remain stable across investigators and subjects. Bachman (2004) points out when different researchers observe the same phenomenon using standardised measures, their findings will show agreement and convergence due to the objective stance of researchers.

6. Quest for generalisability and universal laws: As discussed earlier, numbers, variables, standardised procedures, statistics, and scientific reasoning are all part of the quantitative research methodology.

Another salient characteristic of quantitative research is that the findings from a study can be generalised not only to a particular group of subjects but also to a particular population group and sometimes to the whole world and universal laws.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) mention three broad classifications of quantitative research methodology, namely 'descriptive', 'experimental' and 'causal comparative'. In a descriptive approach, a researcher examines a particular situation or problem in its present state. Descriptive research typically aims to identify the characteristics of a particular phenomenon or to explore the relationship between two or more phenomena, in a single study group. Experimental approaches tend to be more exploratory than descriptive approaches. In an experimental research design, the aim is to investigate the effect of implementing a treatment or an intervention in a study group (typically referred to as the 'experimental group' - this group is then contrasted with a 'control group' which did not receive the same treatment). Leedy and Ormrod (2001) identify three main exploratory approaches, namely 'pre-experimental', 'true experimental', and 'quasi-experimental'. According to Williams (2007, p. 66) the pre-experimental design "involves an independent variable that does not vary or a control group that is not randomly selected". True experimental designs require a high degree of control of all the variables that may influence the outcome of the experimentation and are thought to be more valid than other types of exploratory research. In a true experimental design, every

aspect of the design has to be meticulously and systematically controlled, and participants are selected using a random sampling technique. In contrast, in a quasi-experimental design, while relevant variables are still controlled systematically (as far as possible), participants in the study are elected in a non-random manner, in the sense that pre-existing groups of people are chosen as participants. As a result, true experimentation is not possible, and since participant election is not controlled, validity may be less robust in a quasi-experimental design. Causal comparative research involves the exploration of cause and effect relationships between independent and dependent variables. The aim in this type of design is to investigate how the independent variables in a study affect the dependent variable(s). Causal comparative designs thus provide researchers with methodological tools that allow the exploration of how independent variables interact, and how they influence dependent variables.

Given the characteristics stated above, quantitative research methodology is assumed (by some) to hold more strengths than qualitative research methodology, due to its systematic and controlled approach and due to the aim of the researcher to remain objective. However, before such a conclusion is drawn, it would be useful to briefly discuss the nature of qualitative research.

Qualitative research deals primarily with data which presents itself in the form of words. Picciano (2004, in Bray, Adamson, and Mason, 2007) compares quantitative and qualitative research methods in education and in doing so defines qualitative research as research which "relies on meanings, concepts, context, descriptions, and settings". Qualitative researchers concern themselves with the subjective experiences, feelings and opinions of individuals in their natural settings, and aim "to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experience" (Williams, 2007, p. 67). Whereas 'quantity' in quantitative research refers to amounts, 'quality' in qualitative research refers to the essence of things. Williams (2007, p. 65) defines qualitative research as "a holistic approach that involves discovery". In line with this definition, one of the main characteristics of qualitative research is its emergent research design - the research design is not strictly preconceived, and is kept 'open' and less structured so that new details that emerge during the investigation can be incorporated into the design. Qualitative research methodology is associated with case studies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies, phenomenological studies and content analysis studies (Williams, 2007). Qualitative data obtained from such studies cover a wide range of data types, including recorded interviews, observations, narratives, various types of texts and images (Yoshikawa,

Weisner, Kalil & Way, 2008). Furthermore, qualitative descriptions of such data are also less structural, as the aim of is to formulate and build new theories (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Finally, qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive, and as a result the research outcome is, in the end, the product of the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data.

A detailed comparison of quantitative and qualitative research methods is not the aim of this chapter, and is beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather, the aim here is to motivate why, despite the weaknesses of quantitative research, it is the best approach to use in the present study. In the next section, both the strengths and weaknesses of the quantitative framework, with particular reference to the quasi-experimental research design, will be discussed.

4.1.2. The strengths and weaknesses of quantitative research, with reference to quasi-experimental research

The strengths of quantitative research are manifold (Dörnyei, 2007; Nunan & Bailey, 2009). Quantitative research is systematic, focused and controlled, involving precise measurement and producing reliable and replicable data that is generalizable to other contexts (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Another strength of quantitative research can be ascribed to the concept of 'statistical significance', which provides the field with ways to understand whether a correlation is powerful enough or whether a difference in scores is big enough to warrant generalising the results of the study (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). Finally, quantitative findings tend to enjoy a universally high reputation with any audience or stakeholder group (Dörnyei, 2007).

The particular benefits of conducting quasi-experimental research are well-documented (Dörnyei, 2007; White & Sabarwal, 2014). Quasi-experimental research often does not suffer from the time and logistical constraints associated with true experimental designs, and may thus be more realistic and feasible in terms of executability. For example, extensive pre-screening and randomisation is not required or utilised, which reduce the time and resources needed to complete a study.

Because all variables have to be tightly controlled in true experimental designs, such designs can create artificial and/or unrealistic situations, which are quite unlike real-life situations. In contrast, quasi-experiments are *natural experiments*, and reactions of participants are likely to be trustworthy, given the natural environment in which testing is conducted. This advantage of quasi-experimental research is associated with increased

external validity. Remaining threats to validity can usually be identified and addressed by the researcher, especially given the range of possible variations of experimental research, which allows for a tailored approach.

The use of self-selected groups in quasi-experiments reduces ethical concerns that may arise when participants are randomly selected and assigned to study groups. The results from quasi-experimental research studies can also be very useful in identifying general trends, especially in social science disciplines – the reason being that matching procedures may be used to create comparable experimental and control groups, which makes generalisation more feasible. Finally, the results generated from quasi-experiments are often useful in reinforcing the findings of qualitative and more interpretative case studies, in the sense that quasi-experimental research methodologies allow for statistical analysis.

However, quantitative research has some pitfalls too. Many of the problems are related to the difficulty of controlling all possible confounding variables associated with research on human subjects who are endowed with desires, anxieties and goals that are often difficult for the researcher to control in any comprehensive way. As a result, even in the strongest research designs, threats to validity sometimes arise, weakening the interpretation of the results. With regards to quasi-experimental methodologies, several pitfalls have been listed in the literature (Dörnyei, 2007; White & Sabarwal, 2014). The lack of random assignment may cause unequal or unbalanced test groups, which poses threats to internal validity and which may limit the generalisability of the findings. Furthermore, conclusions about causality have to be more cautious in quasi-experimental research, since statistical analyses are less robust in the absence of randomisation (given the associated threat to internal validity).

Because variables are not as controlled in quasi-experimental designs as in true experimental designs, pre-existing factors and other variables that may affect the outcome are normally not fully considered. As a result, when other variables are not controlled, the researcher has less firm grounds to conclude that the treatment or intervention was the sole factor contributing to the outcome.

Another general problem with quantitative research relates to the issue of objectivity and subjectivity. Quantitative research emphasises objectivity in hopes of counteracting the threats of researcher and subject expectancy. As a result, teachers and learners generally do not collaborate in language classroom research conducted within the quantitative framework (Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

Essentially, quantitative research has been criticised by many scholars in the human and social sciences, who believe that a purely quantitative approach ignores essential and relevant information about the context in which the research is conducted. The sentiment is that subjects' perspectives and feelings, community beliefs, cultural experiences and deeper meaning are ignored, that quantitative researchers too often focus on theories which are not relevant to the participants, that research questions are stripped from the context and that quantitative data are superficial and often inapplicable to individual cases (Bryman 1998, Denzin and Lincoln 2000, Picciano 2004, all cited in Bray et al., 2007).

Even so, given the main hypothesis and the aims of the current study, as well as the personal context of the researcher and the time constraints associated with completing a higher degree, employing a quasi-experimental design was the best and most applicable option in this study. The specific design details of the quasi-experimental method used here, as well as the steps taken to maximise validity, will be the focus of the next section.

4.1.3. Overview of the quantitative research framework employed in this study

Given the discussion above about the nature of quantitative research methods, it can be stated that the underlying research philosophy of this study (i.e. to determine whether there is a relationship between independent variables (context-specific teaching materials and the instructor delivering these materials) and the dependent variable (academic writing proficiency of the tertiary level EFL students studying at colleges of technology)) aligns well with the underlying research principles of quantitative research. In order to answer the research questions posed in Section 1.2.1, a quantitative research framework was thus deemed most suitable to execute this study. Particularly, in this study, a quasi-experimental research design will be used, because the researcher needs a research design that will enable him to detect the effects of a specific intervention. In order to manipulate variables in this study, the researcher will include two experimental groups and two control groups, and two different instructors. The quasi-experimental design employed here will entail the use of a pre-test to establish writing levels before the implementation of the teaching intervention, followed by the introduction of the intervention in the experimental groups. All participants will then write the MSE and the LEE in order to establish the effect of the treatment.

In addition, samples of the students' writing will be analysed to determine the quality of the students' writing. Fluency of the students' writing will be measured by T

unit analysis as suggested by Elola (2005), Larsen-Freeman and Strom (1977) and Perkins (1980, 1983). T-unit measures used in this study include the number of words per composition, the number of sentences per composition, the number of T-units per composition and T-unit length. Writing accuracy will be measured in terms of error-free T-unit ratio (EFT/T) in which the EFT/T is calculated as the total number of error-free T-units in a given piece of writing divided by the total number of T-units (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 2001). T-unit analysis has been used as an objective measure to evaluate the quality of ESL students' writing by several scholars (Larsen-Freeman and Strom, 1977; Larsen-Freeman, 1978; Perkins, 1980; Perkins, 1983; Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 2001). Hunt (1965, 1970, 1977) devised the notion of a T-unit and established that the T-unit as the fundamental yardstick for measuring natural syntactic development (Vavra, 2012). According to Street (1971, p.13):

> "T-units slice a passage up into the shortest possible units which are grammatically allowable to be punctuated as sentences. The T-unit can be described as one main clause plus whatever subordinate clauses, phrases and word happen to be attached to or embedded within it"

An example to clarify what a T-unit consists of is drawn from Loban (1976, p. 9): The sentence *I know a boy and he has red hair* can be segmented into two T-units because the sentence contains a compound sentence with two independent clauses (*and* is counted with the second main clause). However, the sentence *I know a boy with red hair* contains a single T-unit. Hunt (1965) found T-unit length to be a better measure of writing maturity than sentence length because even a run-on sentence can be divided into two or more T-units.

Several studies that investigated writing improvement in ESL/EFL writers have used T-unit analysis as a yardstick to measure fluency, accuracy and syntactic complexity in different teaching contexts. The studies cited below have all used T-unit analysis as a valid and reliable measure in measuring writing fluency, accuracy and syntactic complexity of ESL/EFL learners. Casanave (1994) wanted to find measures that could document changes in ESL students' journal writing over three semesters. With regards to accuracy, the researcher chose to examine the ratio of error free T-units (EFTs) and the length of ETFs to determine the accuracy level of students' journal writing. Similarly, Robb, Ross and Shortreed (1986) examined the effects of four different kinds of feedback in EFL students' essays and they used ratio of EFTs/total T-units, ratio of EFTs/total clauses and ratio of words to measure students' writing accuracy. Ishikawa's (1995) study

investigated how two different types of writing practice tasks affected low proficiency EFL students. In her study, she used error free clauses (EFCs) and EFTs to measure the writing accuracy levels of students writing tasks. Another study in which T-unit analysis was used to measure writing fluency, complexity and accuracy was conducted by Bardov-Harlig and Bofman (1989). They investigated the relationship between syntactic development or complexity, and overall accuracy evidenced in the written English of 30 advanced learners of English as a foreign language. The essays were scored along two parameters: syntactic complexity and surface errors. Syntactic complexity was calculated as the number of clauses per T-unit and surface errors were calculated as the number of error free T-units per clause.

In addition to the data collected from the pre-test, MSE and LEE, the researcher also gathered data from the study groups relating to their social environment (some background information about the students' use of English outside the college) by using a questionnaire to determine whether social variables may have contributed to the outcome in the treatment group. Moreover, the questionnaire sought to discover what beliefs and attitudes the students have towards learning English in general. The questionnaire which the researcher used consisted of "yes/no" questions and categorical questions where students had to select one of the predetermined categories to answer the questions. During the study, with the assistance of the other teacher who agreed to be the second instructor, the researcher distributed the questionnaire among the participants during the second week of the classes. The students' home language is Arabic and English is studied as a foreign language in Oman's school context. The findings of the questionnaire will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Therefore, given the use of various quantitative data collection and analysis procedures in the current study, this study could be characterised as a study employing multiple quantitative methods in a quasi-experimental design.

4.2. Research design

4.2.1. Participants

The participants in the current study were Omani students studying in the Foundation English program in Level 3 at Shinas College of Technology, during the second semester (January to June) of 2015. The students were between the ages of 18 and 20 and were both male and female. According to the college policy and student promotion criteria, a student who studies in the foundation Level (1, 2, 3 and 4) should obtain a minimum of 25 marks out of 50 from the course work, which includes a mid-semester examination, continuous assessment, class participation and presentation marks as well as a minimum of 25 out of 50 for the LEE, which includes listening, speaking, grammar, reading and writing.

Depending on the intake of students in a given year, the number of students in a particular level may vary. In general, each Level consists of 10-15 groups and each group has 27-30 students (an approximate number of 400 to 450 students per semester). After the LEE of each level, the student registration department of the college feeds the data of passed students into a computer program which then randomly allocates students to groups within the next Level. The students are not grouped according to any criterion based on their marks or any other performance in their previous Level. However, the student registration department allocates an equal number of female students to each group because the number of female students is lower than the number of male students entering the college every year.

Given the above procedure used by the college for student selection and allocation to the next Level, it can be stated that the subjects for this study were selected using random purposive sampling (Crossman, 2016). For the current study, students from Level 3 were chosen because these students had already completed their studies at Level 1 and 2 (where they had received instruction in listening, speaking, reading, grammar and writing). Therefore, it was assumed that the students in Level 3 had already acquired basic writing skills. Furthermore, it should be noted that the students in Level 1 and 2 in the Foundation program, are exposed to general English where they are expected to study how to write about themselves, their family and daily activities. They are also expected to learn how to write descriptions (of places, for example). However, in Level 3, Level 4 and in the Post Foundation Level, students are taught academic writing in which they are required to write texts belonging to various types of genres such as personal and business letters, compare and contrast essays, explanations of processes, descriptions of graphs

and charts, expressions of opinions and cause and effects analyses. Of the 14 groups from foundation level (Level 3) in the second semester (January-June, 2015) of the 2014-2015 academic year, four groups were randomly selected to participate in the study.

4.2.2. Quasi-experimental design

This study employed a quasi-experimental design in which two main groups (an experimental group and a control group) were included. The experimental groups (n=60) consisted of students from groups one and nine in Level 3, whereas the control groups (n=60) consisted of students from groups four and ten in Level 3. Experimental group one and control group four were taught by the researcher, while experimental group nine and control group ten were instructed by another lecturer, who also worked as an English instructor at Shinas college. The rationale for dividing the groups between the two instructors was to control for possible researcher bias. By allowing another instructor to teach one of the experimental groups, the researcher attempted to remove his influence on the experimental group. The researcher's goal was to see whether the developed context specific teaching materials are effective as an intervention tool not only when implemented by the researcher (who developed the materials and who has a personal and very particular research goal to achieve) but also when introduced by an instructor who does not have the same personal attachment to the context-specific materials.

As mentioned previously, the overall experimental design included a pre-test, a treatment/teaching intervention, a mid-semester test, a post-test in the form of a final examination, a questionnaire and T-unit analyses of students' composition writing in an examination setting. Nunan and Bailey (2009) observe that experimental methodology in research paradigm includes a collection of research designs and experimental methods, and that a researcher wishing to investigate effects of or relationships between variables should select a suitable design in order to counteract the possible confounding variables that can influence the internal and external validity of a study. A pre-test for both experimental and control groups was conducted before any formal instruction began and the treatment, consisting of instruction supported by context-specific writing materials (based on the process genre approach), was administered to the experimental group for a period of 28 weeks with a total of 78 hours of classroom instruction.

The control group was taught the same number of hours as the experimental groups using the regular teaching method with the prescribed text book (*Ready to write-2*) by Blanchard and Root (2010). The teaching approach suggested in *Ready to write-2*

is based on the process approach in that each stage of writing is guided with specific techniques for prewriting, writing and revising. Moreover, the textbook introduces different patterns of text organisation with model paragraphs and activities that focus on a specific *grammar guide*. Thus, the prescribed text book uses, as its instructional basis, some of the basic features of the process genre approach; and therefore, it can be stated that the control group also received instruction which employed the process approach. Some extra work sheets were used with the control groups in order to provide them with sufficient practice in writing, but the extra work sheets were not similar to the context-specific materials used in the experimental groups.

Thus, the main difference was that the experimental groups' instruction was supplemented with the context-specific instructional materials, which the researcher designed and developed specifically for this purpose.

4.2.3. Research instruments

In this study, in order to gather data, execute the intervention and analyse the data, several different research tools were used. These research instruments will be discussed in the sub-sections that follow below.

4.2.3.1. Data collection tools:

a. **Writing pre-test:** a writing pre-test was developed and administered before the instruction began for the experimental and control groups to establish the participants' baseline ability in writing as well as to see whether the four groups were homogeneous in writing. The writing pre-test was developed by the researcher and it was a non-standardised test (see Appendix A for more information). As discussed earlier, the students in Level 2 study general English in which they practice to write about themselves, their family, people and places. However, in Level 3, 4 and in the Post Foundation Level, students are taught academic writing in which they are required to write texts belonging to various types of genres such as (i) personal and business letters, (ii) compare and contrast essays, (iii) cause and effect analyses, (iv) process explanations, (v) descriptions of graphs and charts and (vi) expressions of opinions. Given this, a standardised pre-test in writing, which included these specific aspects in academic writing couldn't be administered to Level 3 students who were just promoted from Level 2 to 3.

Due to the non-significant results yielded by the T-test in the pilot study (which will be discussed towards the end of this chapter), it was concluded that the pre-test was

a reliable way to measure the students' baseline writing ability. Hence, the pre-test that was used in the pilot test was also used in the main study. In order to increase the reliability and validity with regards to the pre-test measurements, the pre-test answer scripts were marked by two raters from the English Language Centre.

b.　　**MSE (Mid Semester Examination):** The MSE measured the extent to which subjects' academic writing proficiency had improved in the target language halfway through the intervention. For the MSE, students had to answer one question from the two given questions. In the MSE, one writing question was based on business letters in which students were instructed to write a letter applying for the job advertised in the job advertisement (see Appendix B) while the other question was meant to test the students' ability to compare and contrast the different features of two hotels. The total marks allocated for the writing question in the MSE is 20. After examination, the writing scripts of the various groups (experimental and control) were rated according to the rubrics used for assessment of writing skills at the English Language Centre (ELC) of Shinas College (see Appendix C and Appendix D). In the MSE, two writing rubrics were used because the students, as noted above, were given a choice from the two questions (Writing a compare and contrast essay or writing a job application). The writing rubric used for the compare and contrast question included content, organisation, structure and vocabulary, use of transition words, grammar and spelling. The content and organisation, structure and vocabulary of the students' writing were scored on a 6-point scale (0-6), whereas the use of transitions and grammar and spelling were scored on a 4-point scale (0-4). The writing rubrics used for the job application letter included content, organisation, vocabulary and grammar and spelling. Both content and organisation were scored on a 6-point scale while vocabulary and grammar and spelling were scored on a 4-point scale.

c.　　**LEE (Level-Exit Examination):** For the LEE, the same procedure as discussed in section b above was followed to gather data from the experimental and control groups. In the LEE, students were not given any choice but they were required to answer two compulsory questions. In the LEE, writing question 1 was based on a bar graph where students were asked to write a paragraph of about 150 words describing the data included in the bar graph. The second question focused on causes and effects in which students were required to write an essay on the topic "What are the causes and effects of living in a city rather than living in a village". A total of 25 marks (question 1 carried 10 marks and question 2 carried15 marks) are allocated for the writing question in the LEE exam (see Appendix E). After the LEE examination, the written answer scripts were rated by

two moderators (Shinas College of Technology Policy Handbook, 2009), using the marking criteria set out in Appendices F and G. After the two moderators had finished rating, inter-rater reliability was calculated using Pearson product moment correlations (IBM SPSS 20.0, 2011).

In general, when designing examinations, the Testing Unit of the ELC takes factors such as practicality, validity, and reliability (as described in Kubiszyn & Borich, 2013) into account in order to ensure that tests are reliable and valid. Other parameters such as time, facilities, and equipment as well as the scoring procedure are also clearly documented.

d.   **Questionnaire**: A questionnaire was developed and circulated among the participants of the experimental and control groups (N=120) to investigate social variables (students' previous and current knowledge, experiences and practices in learning and using English in social and educational contexts). However, the researcher wanted to determine whether there will be any effect of social variables on the treatment (i.e. do the students who had a lot of exposure to English including reading, accessing the internet frequently and studying English outside benefit more from the intervention than the students who had less exposure to English?). The questionnaire consisted of 14 items, and except for four questions, all the questions were closed type questions, such as the age at which the students started to study English; how long they studied English at primary, secondary and high school; whether they studied English outside school; how long they have been learning English at the college; whether they currently study English outside the college; if they have English books at home and read them; whether they watch English movies on TV; their parents' opinion about the students' English proficiency; the students' opinion about their English proficiency; and their overall impression about the four major language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The results of the questionnaire will be presented in Chapter 5. The questionnaire used in this study is presented in Appendix H

4.2.3.2. Intervention tools

Intervention material: Context-specific teaching materials based on the process genre approach were used with the experimental groups while the control groups were taught using only the prescribed textbook. At the end of the intervention, the researcher investigated whether there was any impact of the treatment instrument on the dependent variable (writing ability). The nature of the context-specific teaching materials is

explained in detail in Section 4.4 below and the entire set of materials employed is to be found in Appendix I.

4.2.3.3. Analytical tools

a. Statistical analyses: Descriptive tests, T-tests (T-Independent Samples), Correlations, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and non-parametric tests (Mann-Whitney U-tests) were used in this study. In order for the data to be analysed in this study, both descriptive and inferential statistical tests were used since the goal was to determine significant differences between the experimental and control groups. Descriptive statistics provided simple summaries about the sample and the measures while they formed the basis of the further analysis of the data. An Independent Samples T-test was used to compare the mean difference between the experimental and control groups in the Pre-test, while a two way MANOVA was used to determine whether there was a statistical difference between the two groups in the MSE and the LEE. A Post Hoc Multiple Comparison of Multivariate test was conducted to compare the main effects of the instructor and group on the performance of the students in the control or experimental group. Finally, a Mann-Whitney U test was used to measure students' fluency and accuracy using their writing samples extracted from the LEE. Moreover, in order to determine the effect of the social variables on the treatment, an Independent Samples t-test was conducted to compare scores of the LEE of the students with high interest and high exposure to English with the scores of LEE of the students with low interest and low exposure to English.

b. T-unit analysis (examination of writing samples): In order to establish whether the experimental group had improved fluency and linguistic accuracy in writing over the control group, 40 samples of writing were drawn from the LEE (20 from the experimental groups and 20 from the control groups) and were analysed using T-unit analysis. In addition to the answer scripts, a few assignments which these students wrote during the course were also analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. Fluency of the students' writing was measured by T unit analysis as suggested by Elola (2005), Larsen-Freeman (1978) and Perkins (1980, 1983). T-unit measures used in this study include the number of words per composition, the number of sentences per composition, the number of T-units per composition and T-unit length. Writing accuracy was measured in terms of error-free T-unit ratio (EFT/T) in which the EFT/T was calculated as the total number of error-free T-units in a given piece of writing divided by the total number of T-units

(Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 2001). (More information about T-unit measures is presented in Chapter 5).

4.3. Teaching materials used in the study

As noted earlier, the majority of the Level 3 students are not proficient in academic writing in the target language even though they had studied English in schools for 12 to 13 years and at the college for 8 months. Recall that the research hypothesis in the present study is that Level 3 students' academic writing proficiency will develop and improve when such students are instructed using context-specific instruction materials delivered through the process genre approach (as discussed in Chapter 2). However, the process genre approach is not linear, but rather recursive, which means the stages can appear anywhere in the process depending on the writers' choices. Most proponents of the process approach (Geyser, 1996; Shih, 1986; Tessema, 2005; Williams, 2005; Yan, 2005; Zamel, 1983) agree that the number of stages can range from three to five.

Instructional materials in any given language program play a very important role and is generally considered the second most important factor in the EFL classrooms after the teacher (Allwright, 1990; Paige, 2001; Riazi, 2003). Dudley-Evans and John (1998) state the following four reasons for using instructional materials:

1. as a source of language.
2. as a learning support.
3. for motivation and stimulation.
4. for reference.

Teaching materials, in general, include textbooks, handouts, activity sheets, *PowerPoint* presentations, video and audio tapes, computer software, and visual aids. They contain a lot of contents extracted from different sources ranging from books to websites. Therefore, the contents of the teaching materials include different types of linguistic structures in the target language, which learners find useful as a source of language input. Littlejohn and Windeatt (1989) have contended that materials include an unseen curriculum in which one may find attitudes toward knowledge, teaching and learning, the role and relationship of the teacher and student, as well as values and attitudes related to gender and society. Therefore, materials carry an underlying instructional philosophy which includes approach, method, and content, together with linguistic and cultural information.

Depending on the approach, material writers choose certain activities and select the linguistic and cultural information to be included. As described above, when materials have an age-appropriate approach and when activities include vocabulary, linguistic examples and visuals relevant to the students' age level, knowledge, and interest, learners will experience the materials as a positive learning support. Not only that, when materials contain visuals, various viewpoints on controversial issues, students tend to learn to explore, analyse and make clear judgments (The School Board of Miami-Dade County Bylaws and Policies, 2015). In a study conducted by Sass (1989), the researcher asked his classes to recall two recent class periods, one in which they were highly motivated and one in which their motivation was low. Each student wrote a list of specific aspects of the two classes that influenced his or her level of motivation, and students then met in small groups to reach consensus on characteristics that contributed to high and low motivation. In over twenty courses, Sass (1989; include page number for this reference) reported that the students named 8 characteristics which influenced their level of motivation, including:

1. Instructor's enthusiasm
2. Relevance of the material
3. Organisation of the course
4. Appropriate difficulty level of the material
5. Active involvement of students
6. Variety
7. Rapport between teacher and students
8. Use of appropriate, concrete, and understandable examples

From the list above, it is evident that 4 out of the 8 characteristics (i.e. 2; 4; 6; 8) concern the teaching materials employed. Moreover, according to Dudley-Evans and John (1998), printed materials used in teaching can be used as a reference when students want to review what they have learnt previously; the reason being that students can determine their own pace with regards to the learning process – they can pause and consult the materials if they need clarification about any previously learned concept. Thus, printed materials can be a great source of reference for both teachers and learners.

Given the pedagogical value of materials as indicated by Riazi (2003) and Dudley-Evans and John (1988), context-specific materials were used in the current study with the premise that context-specific writing materials, if designed to suit the needs, knowledge,

skills level and interests of Omani students, would enhance Level 3 learners' academic writing proficiency. The common assertion concerning the organisation and presentation of materials is that it should follow a logical order which helps learners take part in various stages of a task at hand. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) suggest that the process of material production for a specific language course involves a number of stages. The material production should be based on the syllabus, while the syllabus should reflect the language features of the target situation and the learners' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Based on the course outline for Level 3 students at Shinas College of Technology, the researcher prepared additional teaching materials (teaching materials are included in Appendix I) in which a specific order was followed for each of the writing topics which had to be covered in a given semester. The following section will elaborate on why contextually-developed materials are crucial for teaching academic writing skills to EFL learners whose language needs and writing proficiencies are different from what a commercially-produced book can teach.

4.3.1. Contextually-developed materials

The importance of using contextually-developed materials in teaching is linked to instructional theory pioneered by several key authors (Skinner, 1953; Bloom, 1956; Gagne & Briggs, 1979) over the years. An instructional theory offers explicit guidance on how to better help learners to develop their educational, vocational and personal goals. In this process, instructional theories focus on how to structure material for promoting the education of learners (Reigeluth, 1999). Instructional theory is believed to have been influenced by three basic theories in educational thought, namely behaviorism (learning as response acquisition, cognitivism (learning as knowledge acquisition), and constructivism (learning as knowledge construction) (Gagne, Wager, Golas & Keller (2004). According to the authors cited above, instructional theories encompass different instructional methods, models and strategies and can be adapted based on the educational context and more importantly the learning styles of the students. Moreover, they argue that instructional theories are used as teaching guidelines/tools by teachers/trainers to facilitate learning (Reigeluth, 2012).

Merrill (2007, 2009) has suggested that there is a set of five instructional principles that can enhance the quality of instruction across all situations. These principles are 'task–centeredness', 'activation', 'demonstration', 'application' and 'integration'. The task-centered principle states that instruction should use a task–centered instructional

strategy while the activation principle states that instruction should activate relevant cognitive structures in learners by having them recall, describe, or demonstrate relevant prior knowledge or experiences. The demonstration principle focuses on the importance of demonstrating a skill (consistent with the type of component skill being acquired) and should engage learners in peer-collaboration. When it comes to the application principle, it emphasises that instruction should integrate new knowledge into learners' cognitive structures by having them reflect on, discuss, or defend their new knowledge or skills. Moreover, the integration principle elaborates that instruction should help learners to create, inventor explore personal ways to use their new knowledge or skills.

When designing the contextually-developed materials, the inclusion of writing activities in line with the five instructional principles as described above, were considered to a certain extent (see Appendix I for more information). At the same time, it should be noted that contextual factors were also taken into account, as scholars like Reigeluth (2009a) and Merrill (2007) have observed that instruction should be different for different situations. To quote Merrill (2007, 43) "acquiring knowledge and skill components out of context makes it very difficult for learners to form mental models about how this information applies in the real world" When learners acquire new skills in the context of real-world tasks (i.e. tasks which they might encounter in the world outside the classroom) it becomes more likely that learners "will form mental models for how these individual skills are integrated into a complete performance". Skills acquired within a real-world context are also more easily retrieved and transferred/applied to new situations.

Based on the assumption that instructional theory offers explicit guidance on how to better help learners to develop their writing skills, the context-specific materials used in this study were designed and used with the experimental groups during the study. The control groups were not taught using the context-specific materials in the study, but, for ethical reason, they were provided with soft copies of context-specific materials after the study (a soft copy of each study unit was sent to their college emails).

4.3.2. Why are context-specific materials used in the current study?

Commercially-produced textbook EFL materials have flooded the markets across the world in recent years, with a hidden message that teachers are not capable of producing the materials needed for their learners to learn. In other words, as Crawford (2002) has argued, commercially produced materials deskill teachers and rob them of their capacity to think professionally and respond to their students. In addition to this

hidden message, commercially-produced materials have several weaknesses identified by a number of authors. Most commercially-produced materials fail to present appropriate and realistic language models (Porter & Roberts, 1981) and also fail to contextualise language activities (Walz, 1989). Even though there are other weaknesses discussed by different authors from different viewpoints, they are all not considered here as they are not relevant to the current study. As described in section 1.2 above, *Ready To Write 2: Perfecting Paragraphs* (4th ed.) by Blanchard and Root, a commercially-produced textbook is used as a class textbook for Level 3 writing. This textbook has not been written for a specific target group, but it has been written for EFL/ESL learners who study English for general purposes. The students at Shinas college study English for specific purposes. As discussed in Chapter 1, once the foundation level students finished studying, they will go to post-foundation level where they are supposed to study their specialisations (Engineering, Business Studies and Information Technology). Another reason why this textbook is not a good fit for the students in the foundation program at this college can be ascribed to the arrangement of contents and the teaching methodology. In other words, the textbook does not organise the lessons in a way that enables learners to interact in a writing activity. As such, the principles of socio-constructivist theory (cf. section 2.4.3), multiliteraries (cf. section 2.4.4) and writing as a social activity (cf. section 2.4.5) have not been considered in this book. Moreover, the prescribed textbook was published in 2010 and as a result, it has not been subjected to paradigm shift which has brought many changes in the teaching and learning English as a foreign or a second language for the past few years. Finally, the writing tasks suggested in the prescribed textbook are not adequate to provide students with ample opportunities to practice their writing.

What has been discussed above is related to issues of the prescribed textbook. I now provide the reader with an overview of Omani learners who study in the foundation program to support the argument why contextually-developed materials are needed for the students to study writing skills in the context of education in Oman. A clear majority of students who study in the foundation level can be considered as total beginners even though they are expected to be intermediate learners in terms of English proficiency. The researcher has observed in all levels (1-4) including post-foundation that there are students who are unable:

to identify some letters in the English alphabet.

to spell a three-letter word correctly.

to construct a simple sentence in English with subject and verb agreement.

to read and understand written instructions in a question paper.

The following sample text was produced by a typical Level 3 student when he was asked to write a paragraph about a typical day in his life on the first day of writing class. This student had studied English (listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar) for two semesters (semester 1 in Level 1 and semester 2 in Level 2) at the college, in addition to studying English for 6-7 years at school. From this sample text, it is evident that the learner difficulties stated above are a real concern in this student population (more writing difficulties faced by students are discussed in section 2.6.1).
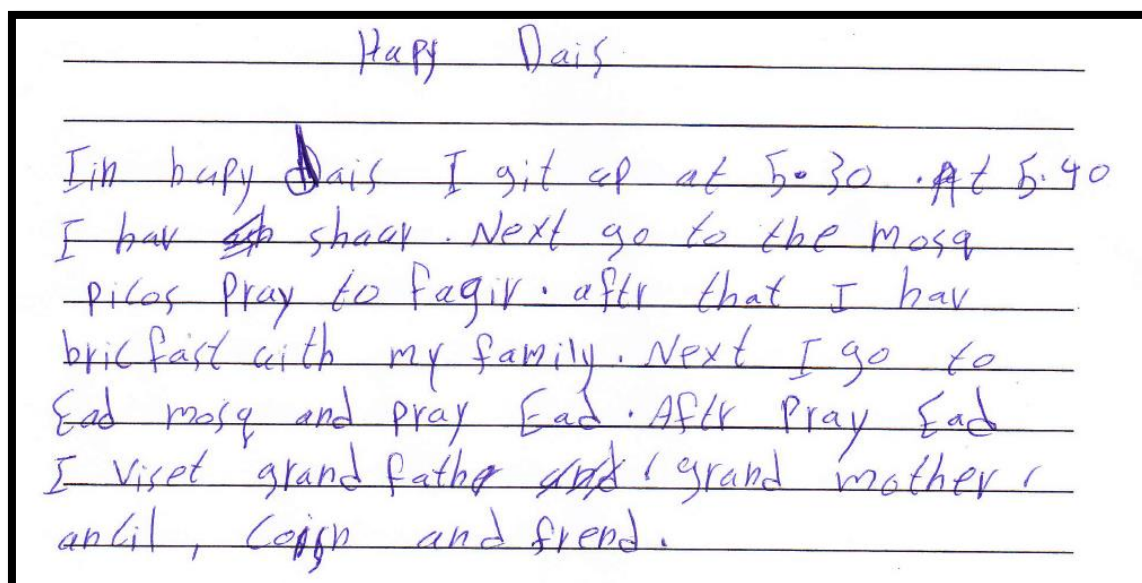
Figure 4.1. A level-3 student writing sample extracted from the first day writing activity.

Considering all the weaknesses inherent in the prescribed textbook (*Ready To Write 2: Perfecting Paragraphs*) and the challenges faced by Arab learners when writing in English (as discussed in 2.6.1), the researcher developed additional teaching materials to be used with the experimental groups in the current study to determine whether the contextually-developed materials can help tertiary level students to improve their academic writing proficiency in ways that would help them to perform better in an examination setting.

Both psychological theories of skill acquisition and second language acquisition theories suggest that considerable practice is required to automatise a skill (DeKeyser, 2007). Moreover, practice in writing improves performance in writing. Given the theoretical underpinnings and the research evidence from studies conducted into skill

acquisition by a number of researchers (Anderson, Fincham, & Douglass, 1997; Singley & Anderson, 1989), the additional writing activities which the researcher developed and used with the current study were consistent with Ortega's (2007) model for the design of activities. Ortega (2007) proposes that the following two principles should be considered when designing activities for EFL learners to practice in class:

1. Practice should be interactive so that learners can practice either in pairs or in groups.

2. Practice should be meaningful in a way that ensures that learners are personally and cognitively engaged in the practice events.

When applied to writing, Ortega's model implies that writing teachers should design interactive activities in which they expose their students to various writing strategies such as organising, outlining, drafting, revising, analysing and free writing (Lavelle & Bushrow, 2007; Spack, 1988). Good writing does not happen by chance. Successful writers use mental procedures to control the production of writing. The mental procedures involved in writing are called strategies which can be regarded as tools that writers use to complete their task effectively (Collins, 1999). Therefore, given the importance of teaching writing strategies to learners, some writing strategies were incorporated in the various modules of teaching materials used in the present study. It was further hoped that the participants in the present study, on acquiring the writing strategies stated above, will be able to master the genres as stipulated in Section 3.2.1 above. The topics for developing the modules were selected from the prescribed textbook mentioned above. Based on the delivery plan issued by the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology for Level 3 writing, the researcher prepared additional tasks for the topics stated below:

1. Getting organised: The key to good writing.

2. Understanding paragraphs.

3. Organising information by order of importance.

4. Understanding the writing process

5. Supporting the main idea.

6. Expressing your opinion.

7. Writing personal and business letters.

8. Comparing and contrasting.

9. Analysing causes and effects.

10. Description and comparison: bar graphs and charts.

11. Writing descriptions.

12. Explaining a process.

In designing academic writing tasks, the researcher followed a process genre approach by including the stages such as pre-writing, composing, re-reading and revising, peer-editing and teacher feedback. The writing tasks were presented to the students as chapters, and each of these chapters dealt with one of the topics mentioned above. In the following section, the design of the teaching materials for one of the chapters (Compare and Contrast) is explained in detail, in order to shed light on how exactly the process-genre approach was incorporated in the context-specific teaching materials. The teaching materials pertaining to the remaining topics were designed in a similar manner. All 12 chapters of the teaching materials are included in full in Appendix I.

4.3.3. The design of the writing tasks used for the chapter "Compare and Contrast"

This chapter in the teaching materials includes a *PowerPoint* presentation and a video as teaching aids along with the teaching materials. At the outset of this particular chapter, students are presented with a picture which they are asked to talk about with the teacher's initiation as a 'warming-up activity' to the lesson. However, in this particular lesson, the video can also be used as a warming-up activity if the classroom is equipped with a computer. In each of the chapters, the students were presented with clear objectives and outcomes. This is important because the objectives are measurable and should include specific information about what the students will be able to do while learning outcomes specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity.

The objectives and learning outcomes for the chapter "Compare and Contrast" were explained as follows:

> **In this chapter, you will learn to write paragraphs of comparison and contrast.**
>
> **Objectives of this chapter**
>
> At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
>
> 1. Recognize and use signal words of comparison and contrast.
> 2. Identify what to include in a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence for paragraphs that compare and contrast.
> 3. Recognize appropriate topics to compare (write similarities between two things) and contrast (write differences between two things).
> 4. Write both paragraphs of comparison and contrast using relevant signal words and other mechanics in effective ways.

Following the explanation of the objectives and outcomes, it was explained to students what kinds of writing tasks they will be expected to perform in the chapter, which grammatical structures they will have to employ as well as the kind of class interaction that they will have to engage in. For this particular chapter, this is described as follows:

> **Writing**: Descriptive writing
> **Writing strategies**: Complete sentences
> **Grammar**: *Be* verbs; simple present tense; simple past; present perfect, structural patterns for future ideas, adjectives, adverbs and personal pronouns (possessive)
> **Interaction**: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

4.3.3.1. Introducing the topic of the chapter

In each of the chapters, students were provided with a brief explanation of the topic that is the focus of the chapter. This was done in order to ensure that students' interests were stimulated and that they were encouraged to think using their preconceived notion about the topic. In chapter 8, the instructor used the following scenario to introduce the topic (compare and contrast) to the class.

> **COMPARING and CONTRASTING**
>
> In everyday life, we compare or contrast the neighbourhoods we want to live in and the prices of homes we want to buy, or the honesty and policies of political candidates as we decide for whom we will vote. In working life, we compare or contrast the salaries, benefits, and working conditions among several career opportunities. In college life, we compare and contrast leaders, governments, cultures, literature, technology, writers, or philosophies in a wide range of courses. To write a comparison or a contrast paragraph, identify the comparable points between two (or more) topics. Once you identify the points of comparison, brainstorm a list of similarities and differences for each one. Then, list and explain examples of each similarity or difference (Walter, 2000).
>
> In writing, you may need to explain how things are similar or different. Therefore, when you compare, two things, you explain how they are similar. When you contrast, you explain how things are different.

After this brief introduction, the chapter contains linguistic examples which demonstrate the concepts of comparing and contrasting, as well as simple exercises which were designed with the aim of familiarising students with the grammatical structures that they needed to master before attempting to compose a compare and contrast text.

4.3.3.2. Linguistic examples and exercises for comparison

At this stage, students are presented with signal words used in comparison because they need to learn that they should connect one thought or idea to another in order to produce a coherent piece of written discourse. Therefore, the students are introduced to various types of signal words as sentence patterns in the examples and exercises below.

---

1. Oman exports **oil**.   2. The UAE exports **oil.**
    *Oman exports oil. **Similarly**, the UAE exports oil. (**Likewise = Similarly**)*

1. Oman has **big supermarkets**.   2. The UAE has **big supermarkets**.
    *Oman has big supermarkets. **Likewise**, The UAE has big supermarkets.*
    ***Both** Oman **and** the UAE **have** big supermarkets.*

1. Oman grows dates.   2. The UAE grows dates.
    *Oman grows dates, **and** the UAE **does too.***
    *Oman grows dates, **and so does** the UAE.*

4.3.3.3. More linguistic examples and exercises with comparison

---

There are <u>many words</u> and <u>sentence patterns</u> to show comparisons in English

Signal words of comparison

similarly	likewise	both	and	as (adjective) as
as (adverb) as	like	the same as	alike	similar to

E.g. 1. Ahamed is **tall.**   2. Ali is **tall. (Adjective)**
    *Ahamed is **as** tall **as** Ali*

    1. Fatma sings **beautifully**.   2. Reem sings **beautifully. (Adverb)**
    *Fatma sings **as** beautifully **as** Reem.*

More examples:
    *The weather in Oman is **like** the weather in the UAE.*
    ***Either** the clerk **or** the secretary has the keys to the store room.*
    ***Neither** Ahmed **nor** Hussain studies engineering this semester.*
    *I feel exactly **the same as** I did yesterday.*
    *The two cars are much **alike.***

Price: 4500 OMR   Nissan Juke   Price: 4500 OMR   Nissan Murano

*Nissan Juke has **the same** price **as** Nissan Murano's* (Price is a noun)

Nissan Juke- Colour: Red   Nissan Qash- Colour: Red

*Nissan Juke is **the same** colour **as** Nissan Qash's*. (Colour is a noun)

Similar to

Population: 3.25 million people   Population: 3.25 million people

The population in Kuwait is similar to the population in Qatar

---

Examples for **neither** or **not either**

1. I don't like junk food. My brother doesn't like junk food.
   *I don't like junk food, and my brother doesn't **either.***
   *I don't like junk food, and **neither** does my brother.*

2. Shinas isn't a big city. Saham isn't a big city.
   *Shinas isn't a big city, and Saham isn't **either.***
   *Shinas isn't a big city, **and neither** is Saham.*

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After introducing the linguistic examples relevant to compare and contrast sentences, students are afforded an opportunity to practice their writing. An example of such a practice activities are presented below.

Activity 1

Join the two sentences below using the *signal words of comparison* you have just studied from the examples above. Use a *variety of ways* and *different signal words* in your comparison.

1. **Ali** studies at Shinas College of Technology. 2. **Shibli** studies at Shinas College of Technology.

A._____
  (Similarly)

B._____
  (Likewise)

C._____
  (Both_____and)

D._____
  (and _____ does too)

E._____
  (and so does_____)

---

1. The weather in **Oman** is hot. 2. The weather in **Saudi Arabia** is hot.

A._____
(Similarly)

B._____
(Likewise)

C._____
(and   is too)

D._____
(and so is_____)

Activity 2

Practice writing more sentences using signal words for comparison. (Use a separate sheet)

	Sentence 1	Sentence 2
1	Omani speaks Arabic.	Emirati speaks Arabic.
2	My father has two cars.	My elder brother has two cars.
3	Oman exports oil to other countries.	Saudi Arabia exports oil to other countries.
4	Shinas College has a football field	Ibri College has a football field
5	I can speak two languages	My sister can speak two languages
6	The price of a Toyota Yaris car is 5000 Riyals	The price of a Susuki Maruti car is 5000 Riyals.
7	Australia is a continent	Africa is a continent
8	Gold is mined in South Africa	Gold is mined in Botswana
9	Oman doesn't grow rice	Iran doesn't grow rice.
10	This dress isn't expensive	That dress isn't expensive

In the process genre approach, one of the salient features at the pre-writing stage is providing students with models written on different genres. Therefore, based on the principles of the process genre approach, the exercises below were presented. These models will help students to become familiar with the subject content, the audience, the purpose, the style (formal or informal), and grammar issues such as tense and specific syntactic structures demanded by a specific genre.

4.3.3.4. Linguistic examples and exercises with models

At this stage of the lesson, in accordance with the process genre approach, students were shown a *PowerPoint* presentation which provided them with examples on how to write an essay of compare and contrast. In this example, students were taught how to write a topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion for a compare and contrast essay.

---

1. Use the signal words given below to complete the paragraph (A paragraph of comparison).

(***both, similarly, secondly, in the same way, thirdly, likewise***)

My hometown and my college town have several things in common. First, _____are small rural towns. For example, my hometown, Saham, has a population of only 7000 local people. _____, my college town, Shinas, consists of about 6800 local residents. This population increases to 8000 when the college students start attending the classes. _____, they are both located on the coast. Saham has many gardens where people grow different kinds of vegetables and limes _____ the people in Shinas are mostly farmers who grow vegetables. _____Saham is famous for fishing and ancient forts. _____, Shinas is also famous for fishing and old forts.

---

2. Use the signal words given below to complete the paragraph (A paragraph of contrast).

(whereas, another difference, but, also differ in, however, while)

Even though Arizona and Rhode Island are both states of the U.S.A, they are different in many ways. For example, the physical size of each state is different. Arizona is large, with an area of 114,000 square miles, _____ Rhode Island in only about a tenth the size. Arizona has about four million people living in it_____ Rhode Island has less than one million. The two states_____ the kind of natural environments that each has. For example, Arizona is a very dry state, consisting of large desert areas that do not receive much rainfall every year. _____, Rhode Island is located in a temperate zone and receives an average of 44 inches of rain per year. In addition, Arizona is a non-coastal state and thus has no seashore, _____Rhode Island lies on the Atlantic Ocean and it has a significant coastline.

---

3. Use the signal words given below to complete the paragraph. Some extra signal words are also given but you don't need to use them all.

(in the same way, likewise, another similarity, similarly, whereas, too, while, both, however, alike)

Even though we come from different cultures, my wife and I are alike in several ways. For one thing, we are_____ thirty-two years old. In fact, our birthdays are in the same month, hers is on 10th of July and mine is on 20th of July. _____is that we both grew up in large cities. Helene was born and raised in Paris and I come from Yokohama. Third, our hobbies are _____. My wife devotes a lot of her free time to play piano. _____, I like to spend time after work playing my guitar. A more important similarity concerns our values. For example, Helene has strong opinion about educating our children and raising them to know right from wrong. I feel _____. Our children should receive a good education and also have strong moral training.

4.3.3.5. Demonstration of writing a compare and contrast essay step by step using a *PowerPoint* presentation

In the *PowerPoint* presentation (Samaranayake, 2015) students were presented with two cars with some similarities and differences. First of all, comparable points, one by one, were described and then the students' attention was drawn on how to write a topic sentence for a compare and contrast essay. After that, students were introduced to supporting details followed by a conclusion. When the students reached this stage, it could be assumed that they had already had some practice of linguistic features relevant to writing a compare and contrast essay on a given topic. Based on the premise that students had mastered basic components of composing process, the students were introduced to a writing task based on the process genre approach as below.

4.3.4. A writing task based on the process genre approach is introduced

Students were briefly introduced to the steps of the process genre approach (pre-writing, composing, re-reading and revising, peer-editing and teacher feedback) and how they are expected to go about the writing task. The class was shown a video clip (a video clip is also a teaching aid in this chapter) of two hotels: one is located on the beach while the other is located in the centre of a busy city. After playing the video clip, the students were to talk about their preference (e.g. *Which hotel do you like to spend your weekend/holiday and why*?) A discussion was conducted with the class to know what they

know about hotels and the types of facilities they have. Then, the class was informed that they were going to write an essay of comparison and contrast of two hotels (one in Muscat, Oman and the other in Dubai, UAE). In accordance with the pre-writing stage of the process genre approach, the students were divided into to a few groups and introduced to the task. The task sheet was distributed to each member of the group; the purpose of this sheet was to stimulate discussion of issues relevant to the topic, of the content, of grammar issues or any specific structural demands of the task. Any issues relating to the topic or task can also be discussed with the teacher. Before the students started writing, they were provided with specific guidelines in the teaching materials for each part of the essay so that they could follow it throughout the whole process of writing their essay. The following were the guidelines for composing a compare and contrast essay.

Writing a compare and contrast essay

Point by point method	Block method
* Introduce the topic in general * Introduce the specific topic **Thesis statement:** Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but a right choice depends on the owner's lifestyle, finance and household accommodations.	* Introduce the topic in general * Introduce the specific topic **Thesis statement:** Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but a right choice depends on the owner's lifestyle, finance and household accommodations.
Topic sentence: Point 1 Cats do not interfere with the owner's lifestyle Supporting idea 1: No need to watch during the day. Supporting idea 2: Easier to get care if owner travels. Topic 2: Dogs Point 1: Dogs cannot be left alone Supporting idea: Harder to take care when away *Use a transition sentence*	**Topic sentence:** Cats are easier and less expensive to be watched during the day. **Point 1: Lifestyle** Supporting idea 1: Don't have to be watched during the day Supporting idea 2: Easier to get care if owner travels **Point 2: Cost** Supporting idea 1: Food and health care are usually less expensive. Supporting idea 2: Less likely to cause any property damage or present risk to neighbours. **Point 3: Accommodations** Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space. Supporting idea 1: Less troublesome. *Use a transition sentence*
Topic sentence – Point 2 Cats are less expensive to won and care for. Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Food and health care are usually less expensive Supporting idea 2: Less likely to cause any property damage or present a risk to neighbours Topic 2: Point 2-Dogs Supporting idea 1: Food is expensive	**Conclusion** * Summary of main points * Evaluation and/ possible future developments * Significance of the topic to author: e.g. When considering adopting a pet, the owner must consider his/her lifestyle, finance and household accommodation that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these

Supporting idea 2: Over-breeding causes some health problems ***Use a transition sentence***	aspects will often tend not to care for their pet in a safe manner.
Topic sentence: Point 3 Cats need few special house accommodations Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space Supporting idea 2: Less disturbing Topic 2: Dogs Supporting idea 1: Often need yard and fence Supporting idea 2: Require more safety and protective measures ***Use a transition sentence***	
Conclusion * Summary of main points * Evaluation and/ possible future developments * Significance of the topic to author: e.g. When considering adopting a pet, the owner must consider his/her lifestyle, finance and household accommodation that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often tend not to care for their pet in a safe manner.	

Adapted from http://www.efl.arts.gla.ac.uk/CampusOnly/essays/15web.htm

4.3.4.1. Composing stage

The students next moved to the composing stage where they wrote a first draft. However, this being the first task, the topic sentence and the conclusion of the paragraph were included in the teaching materials. When composing the first draft, the students were allowed to work in pairs.

Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting the Grand Hyatt in Muscat and the Grand Hyatt in Dubai.

Grand Hyatt - Muscat	Grand Hyatt - Dubai
Modern luxury hotel	Modern luxury hotel
No of rooms 50	No of rooms 100
Serves Omani and Western food	Serves Indian and Western food
Room charges: 25-OMR per night	Room charges: 15-OMR per night
Has Wi-fi	Has Wi-fi
Close to beach	Far from the beach
2 restaurants	4 restaurants
Provides transports from the hotel to the airport	Provides transports from the hotel to the airport
Live music concerts on Thursday only	Live music concerts on Friday and Saturday
Has a gym only	Has a gym and a tennis court

Now write the first draft of your paragraph which compares and contrast the both hotels below. Include a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. Use signal words and transitions where necessary. Topic sentence and concluding sentence have been written for you.

There are some similarities between the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Muscat and the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Dubai.

_____

_____

_____

In conclusion, I can say that these two hotels have a lot of things in common. Therefore, when you visit Muscat, you can stay at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Muscat. However, if you are looking for accommodations in Dubai, I recommend that you should stay at Grand Hyatt in Dubai.

4.3.4.2. Re-reading and revising

At this phase, the teaching materials guided students to re-read their texts because they should be able to determine whether their subject content matches the topic and what they intended to say. Furthermore, they should check whether their paragraphs have a logical order with a clear topic and supporting sentences. At this stage, students can help each other to help them revise their work. A student may give his or her draft to his or her partner along with the following checklist:

	Have your <u>first draft</u> checked by your partner.		
	Checklist for paragraph editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	**Yes**	**No**
Content check			
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the paragraph end with a concluding sentence?		
5	Are signal words/transitions used in the paragraph?		
6	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
Language and grammar check			
7	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
8	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
9	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
10	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
11	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
12	If the paragraph has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adopted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once the student's partner has finished reviewing, the student should go through the checklist and see what he/she have missed or forgotten to include. Next, the student writes his/her second draft.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4.3.4.3. Peer-editing phase

At this stage, students read each other's work, and then offer feedback on content, structure and grammar, the reason for this being that peer-editing is also a form of input. At least, discussion on content with other students should lead to the addition of ideas. Therefore, in the process genre approach, students are encouraged to give their second draft to another student (male to male or female to female) to read his second draft and offer his/her feedback on the content and organisation of ideas or to include new ideas or delete irrelevant information. After the peer-comments and suggestions, the students have to re-write their texts. The teaching materials give direct instructions that this phase is to be included, as shown below:

Write your third draft. Use a separate sheet.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4.3.4.4. Teacher feedback

In the process genre approach, as in the other approaches described in Chapter 2, teacher feedback is considered to be an important phase in the composing process. Once the first draft is written, self-edited and peer-edited, revised and, possibly re-written, the teacher is responsible for editing and evaluation. Therefore, students, after writing their third draft, should give it to their teacher for feedback. With the teacher's oral and/or written feedback, the students may have to further improve their texts. After improving the students' texts with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of writing in the process genre approach. A useful method in giving feedback is to go through each student's writing individually (with the student), asking questions and making suggestions in a positive and motivating way. This technique can provide the teacher with insight into a student's level of competence while it helps the student to recognise his or her strengths and weaknesses in terms of academic writing ability. However, a teacher can also provide the student with written feedback (Kim &

Kim, 2005). Once the final draft is handed over to the teacher, he or she should evaluate the essay using a writing rubric, give oral and/or written feedback and allocate marks based on the specific course and genre criteria and marking rubric. Face to face oral feedback is very much encouraged here.

Teacher's oral/ written

_____

_____

_____

Marks:_____

4.3.4.5. Be the editor

In this activity, students are expected to edit an authentic writing sample drawn from students' writing and this activity mainly helps the writers to learn a number of aspects relating to grammar issues encountered in writing. When editing, it is expected that students should look into different aspects in a text such as fragment sentences, run-on sentences, punctuation, articles, plurals and possessives, pronouns and pronoun/antecedent agreement, modifier misplacement, subject-verb agreement, capitalization, tense sequence, italics and underlining, using numbers, wordiness, parallelism and spelling (McNamara, n. d). This activity is meant to do individually or as pairs.

The following is a first draft of a paragraph which has been written by a Level 3 student and it has some mistakes. Work with a partner, identify the mistakes and improve the text.

There are many similarites and diffrinces between Crown plaza and AL-Wadi Hotel. First I will dischipe the similarites.

First of all, the swimming pool in Crowne Plaza is as available as AL Wadi Hotel. Bath Crowne Plaza and AL-Wadi Hotel are haven't sea view. In addition, in Crowne Plaza has all types of food. Likewise AL Wadi Hotel has all the types of food. Also Sightseeing services are available Crowne Plaza. Similarly, AL-Wadi Hotel has this service. I think it's a nice service. In Crown plaza they have Holiday Package like AL-Wadi Hotel.

Now I will dischipe the diffirnces betwen the two hotels.

First Crowne Plaza is located in Falaj, but AL wadi Hote

is in Sohar. Crowne plaza is 5 star hotel, Wereas. AL-Wadi Hotel is 3 star Hotel. Crowneplaza is actully costs 100 RO per day, but AL Wadi Hotel is costs 70 OR per day. Crowne plaza is distant from main road 3km. On the other hand AL-Wadi Hotel distant 1 km. The indoor games are available in Crowne plaza. Another diffrince is that AL-Wadi Hotels not avilable the indoor games.
When I want to veset Sohar I will choose AL Wadi Hotel and when I want to veset Falag I will choose Crowne plaza.

(Author's data, 2014)

Write the improved text below

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In the example above and in the in the rest of the teaching materials used in the current study, as presented in Appendix I, the researcher maintained the principles as stated in Section 3.3.1 of this chapter, and as such strived to provide context to the learner in a meaningful way, in combination with the forms and functions relevant to the writing

tasks. Moreover, the researcher ensured that the content of the activities was related to the different kinds of writing covered in the EFL curriculum at this college. In addition to the factors mentioned above, the researcher specifically considered his students' current and future language needs, their interests and language ability in the target language throughout the design of the teaching materials. The section that follows will deal with the research procedures followed in this study.

4.4. Research procedure
4.4.1. Ethical procedures

In Harvard College's (2002, p. 2) *The Intelligent Scholar's Guide to the Use of Human Subjects in Research* it is stated that "at least three parties have legitimate interests in any research venture involving human subjects: the investigator who initiates it, the society that provides the conditions for it and the subjects who participate in it". According to Harvard's guidelines for research involving human subjects, it is evident that ethical issues seem crucial in human subject research. In conducting the current study, permission from the Ethics Subcommittee of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa was obtained first and then from the Dean of Shinas College of Technology (see Appendix J). It should specifically be mentioned here that for ethical reasons, the control group was not disadvantaged, in that they received regular tuition in the form of their prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2).*

On the first day of the program, the students of the study groups were requested to participate in the research study. They were informed about the purpose of the research as well as about the nature of the data that would be collected from them. Furthermore, the participants were made aware of foreseeable discomforts involved in agreeing to cooperate in the study. The researcher discussed the type of materials and activities that the experimental group was expected to do during the study and explained how the activities were related to the themes of their prescribed textbook. In a similar discussion with the control group, the researcher informed the students about the number of units that they were going to cover from their prescribed textbook and told them that both experimental and control groups would study the same themes. Moreover, the researcher informed them that they would be pre-tested on the second day of their writing class in order to get to know their current level of proficiency in writing since it was a requirement of the study. Finally, the researcher told them that they could contact the researcher for

any problem or clarification about the study at any time during his office hours on weekdays or using any other mode of communication (phone or email). The researcher gave his contact information to the students and distributed letters of consent (see Appendix J) to all students on the first day of the program. When distributing the letters, the researcher explained to students that their information would be kept confidential; that there was no penalty for not taking part in the study and that they could withdraw from the research project at any point in time. The researcher, moreover, ensured that the participants' identities were protected, and that the data were used only by the researcher and a statistician.

4.4.2. Development of teaching materials and data collection tools

The literature relevant to the current study was reviewed to establish the theoretical and empirical background of the study. Following this, instructional materials (context-specific writing materials) as well as testing tools (i.e. data collection tools) were developed by the researcher to be used with the experimental group, as discussed in Section 4.3.

4.4.3. Data collection and scoring

The current study employed six data collection instruments, including a pre-test, the MSE, the LEE, a questionnaire, the intervention instrument and writing samples. On the second day of the first week, the pre-test was administered to all the participants. After the pre-test, the answer scripts of the two study groups were marked by two raters; one being the researcher, while the other was the lecturer who agreed to act as the second instructor in this research study.

The pre-test was scored out of 20 using the writing rubric of the English Language Department of the college. The writing rubric included content, organisation, use of transitional words and grammar. The five aspects were weighted equally (5 points) each. Likewise, after the MSE writing scripts were rated by two markers of which the second marker was the researcher for one of the study group. The other study groups' answer scripts were marked by different raters of which the first marker was the second instructor. The MSE was scored out of 20 using the same writing rubric as stated above. The average of the two markers' scores was taken as the final mark except when there was a discrepancy of more than 3 marks. If a discrepancy between the two markers is larger than 3 marks, the English Language Centre examination policy requires that such cases

be referred to the third marker. In such a situation, the average of the two highest scores is taken as the final score of a candidate (Shinas College of Technology Policy Handbook, 2009). Once the scoring procedure was over, the Mid-semester writing marks were entered in a separate Microsoft Excel sheet and saved in the same file as the pre-test marks. Following the LEE, the same procedure, as applied to the MSE, was followed to score and save data. However, in the LEE, the maximum score for writing is 25 because students are required to answer two writing questions which carry 10 and 15 marks respectively.

As discussed in Section 4.4 above, in order to measure writing fluency and accuracy, 10 answer scripts from each study group were randomly drawn from the LEE for qualitative and quantitative analysis (more information about this random selection of answer script will be provided in Chapter 5). Before the end of the LEE, a questionnaire as stated in Section 4.4.4 was circulated among the participants (N-120) in order to investigate whether social variables (students' previous and current knowledge, experiences and practices in learning and using English in social and educational contexts) could have affected their performance in English writing. 96 of the participants completed the questionnaire forms which were tagged and separated on the basis of group and gender for later analysis. At the end of the study, data gathered from the six data collection instruments were analysed as described in the section below.

4.4.4. Preliminary data analysis

After scoring, the raw data were entered in a Word Excel sheet and saved in the researcher's computer in a specific file for later analysis.

4.4.4.1. The pre-test, MSE and LEE

In analysing the data for both experimental and control groups, the raw score given to each participant (out of 20) was used. Similarly, the raw scores given out of 20 and 25 for the MSE and LEE respectively were used in the data analysis. Using the IBM SPSS (2011) statistical software, descriptive and inferential statistics were obtained. The main aim in choosing inferential tests was to establish whether the treatment group performed significantly better in EFL academic writing in an examination setting than the control group. In other words, the goal of the statistical analyses was to determine whether the treatment group had improved in academic writing more than the control group in the study, and whether this could be attributed to the intervention programme tested here. A

General Linear Model Test was conducted to determine whether the means of the experimental and control groups differ across the three tests (pre-test, MSE and LEE), and whether the instructor played a significant role in the outcome. Specific detail regarding the statistical analyses will be presented in Chapter 5.

4.4.4.2 The questionnaire

As described in Section 4.2.3.1(d), a questionnaire was used to gather data relating to social variables (students' previous and current knowledge, experiences and practices in learning and using English in social and educational contexts) of the study groups. After gathering the questionnaire data, the responses to each question was entered as frequencies in a table and then the percentage for each question item was calculated. In order to determine whether there are any effects of social variables on the treatment (i.e. do the students who had a lot of exposure to English including reading, accessing the internet frequently and studying English outside benefit more from the intervention than the students who had less exposure to English?), the researcher analysed the experimental group students' (n = 60) questionnaire data and the students' LEE marks. Participants were divided into two groups: *higher exposure to English* and *lower exposure to English*. The marks obtained for LEE by students with high exposure and low to English were analysed using an Independent Samples T-test to establish whether the *high exposure* group performed better than the *lower exposure group* (More information about how students were ranked as high and low exposure to English will be presented in Section 5.2.3).

4.5. Teaching equipment used in the study

As noted earlier, a quasi-experimental study was conducted using experimental and control groups. Multi-media equipment was used for both groups as classroom instructional strategies, in order to help students understand some concepts, processes, techniques and strategies involved in academic writing. A computer and multi-media projector, installed in the classroom, were the most extensively used electronic equipment throughout the study. The computer was used to show video clips relevant to the writing topics, for *PowerPoint* presentations as well as for viewing samples from students' writing (extracted from assignments and exam scripts). Moreover, using the computer for editing purposes was found to be very useful, since it offered an opportunity for the whole class to interact in a given session. Furthermore, a computer program called '*Kaizena*' was

used to provide learners with both oral and written feedback (More information is found in Chapter 5).

4.6. Pilot study

In order to establish the viability of the research problem and to test the reliability and validity of the research instruments, a pilot study was conducted with a group of 60 foundation Level 3 students. In the pilot study, an exploratory investigation was conducted in order to test whether the main research hypothesis, as outlined in Chapter 1, can be tested using the research instruments and teaching materials described in sections 4.3.3 and 4.4 of this chapter. The hypothesis tested in the pilot study is repeated below, for the sake of clarity:

4.6.1. Research hypothesis

Context-specific materials delivered through the process genre approach have a positive effect on academic writing proficiency, which will help tertiary level EFL students to perform better in writing in an examination setting.

4.6.2. Participants of the pilot study

A pilot study was conducted with a group of 60 foundation level (Level 3) students during the second semester of the 2013-2014 academic year (thus not with the same group tested in the main study). The main objective of the pilot test was to test the effect of the context-specific teaching materials delivered through the process genre approach on academic writing proficiency. From the 13 groups studying in the 2013-2014 academic year, group 6 was selected as the experimental while the group 8 was selected as the control. The experimental group comprised of 14 male and 16 female students aged 18-20 and the control group had 12 male and 18 female students whose ages ranged from 18-20. All the participants completed Level 1 and 2, where they studied the foundation English program. In addition, all participants studied English at school for 12 years. Most of the participants came from families where the primary caregiver's occupation is farming and fishing except for a few whose parents were either government officials or businessmen. Given the participants' age, educational and social backgrounds, they were similar to the participants in the main study.

4.6.3. Procedure

On the first day of the class, during the class orientation, the researcher informed group 6 (experimental group) and group 8 (control group) about the research study that he planned to conduct. It was clearly explained that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty. Following this, the writing pre-test was administered to the experimental group during the first session (4-6 p.m.) and to the control group during the second session (6-8 p.m.). Both groups were asked to sign a letter of consent.

In the pre-test, both groups were required to write a paragraph of 150 words about the topic, "Why do students use Internet a lot?" In the instruction, students were asked to include a topic sentence, supporting details and a conclusion. The pre-test was scored out of 20 using the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre. The experimental group (6) was taught using the context-specific teaching materials while the control group was instructed using the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*). The process genre approach was used with the experimental group as instructional method while the control group was taught as per the instruction suggested in the textbook. However, the teaching topics for both groups were based on the textbook. The study lasted for 28 weeks with a total of 78 hours' classroom instruction.

4.6.4. Data collection and scoring

The pilot study employed three research instruments, namely the pre-test, MSE, and LEE, as explained in Section 4.7 of this chapter. After the pre-test, the answer scripts of both experimental and control groups were marked and scored out of 20 using the writing rubric of the English Language Centre of the college. The raw marks were entered in a Word Excel sheet and saved on the researcher's computer. After the MSE, writing scripts of the experimental and control groups were rated by two examiners, of which one was the researcher.

The MSE exam was scored out of 20 using the same writing as stated above. The average of the two markers' scores was taken as the final score, except when there was a discrepancy of more than 3 marks. In such a situation, a script was sent to a third marker, and the average of the two highest scores was taken as the final score of a candidate. Once the scoring procedure was over, the Mid-Semester writing marks were entered in a separate Word Excel sheet and saved in the same file with the pre-test marks. As soon as the LEE was over, the same procedure as applied to the MSE was followed to score and

save the data. At the end of the study, data gathered from the three research instruments were analysed as described in the section below.

4.6.5. Reliability of tests

In order to establish the reliability of the pre-test, the MSE and the LEE for the experimental and control groups in the pilot study, a Cronbach's alpha test was performed using the IBM SPSS (2011) software program. The Cronbach's alpha reliability test results are shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Cronbach's Alpha reliability test results in the pre-test, MSE and LEE in the pilot study

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on Standardised Items	No of items	
.819	.826	6	

a. List-wise deletion based on al1 variables in the procedure.

As shown in Table 4.1 above, Cronbach's alpha co-efficient is .81 which is above .7. Therefore, the pre-test, MSE and LEE examinations proofed to be reliable testing instruments with the pilot study students' sample.

Table 4.2. Cronbach Alpha reliability test results in the pre-test, MSE and LEE in the main study

Case processing summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	60	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	60	100.0
Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on Standardized Items	No of items	
.807	.819	12	

a. List-wise deletion based on al1 variables in the procedure.

As shown in Table 4.2 above, a Cronbach's alpha reliability test was calculated for the pre-test, MSE and LEE for the experimental group and control group in the main study using IBM SPSS (2011) in order to establish the test reliability. As shown in Table 4.2 above, Cronbach's alpha co-efficient is .80 which is above .7. Therefore, the pre-test, MSE and LEE were deemed to be reliable testing instruments in measuring writing in the current study's sample of students.

4.6.6. Data analysis

In analysing the data for both experimental and control groups, for the pre-test as noted above in 4.7.3, the raw score of each participant given out of 20 was used. Similarly, the raw scores given out of 20 and 25 for the MSE and LEE exam respectively were used in the data analysis. Using the software program IBM SPSS (2011), a paired samples T-test was performed and the results of the tests for both experimental (n = 30) and control (n = 30) groups are shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3. Statistics of the paired T-test on pre-test, MSE and LEE in the pilot study groups

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	F	Sig.	t	df	p	Mean Difference
PRE	Control	30	10.82	2.99	.546	.628	.431	-1.24	58	.218	-.883
	EXP	30	11.70	2.48	.453			-1.24	56		
MSE	Control	30	11.67	3.67	.670	.012	.913	-2.23	58	0.029*	-1.96
	EXP	30	13.63	3.11	.568			-2.23	56		
LEE	Control	30	12.23	4.37	.799	8.65	.005	-2.01	58	0.049*	-1.93
	EXP	30	14.17	2.92	.534			-2.01	56		

PRE = Pre-test   MSE = Mid-Semester exam   LEE = Level-Exit exam

4.6.7. Discussion of the pilot study

The main objectives of the pilot study were to investigate the effect of the context-specific materials (delivered through a process genre approach) on academic writing proficiency in an examination setting and to determine the reliability of the testing instruments. In order to test the hypothesis stated above, paired samples t-tests were used to analyse the interval data gathered from the pre-test, MSE and the LEE.

According to the inferential statistics as shown in the Table 4.3 above, the mean difference (-.883) between the experimental and the control groups was not significant in the pre-test (as illustrated by the p value of .218). However, the mean difference (-.1.96) between the experimental and control groups was significant in the MSE (as indicated by the p value of 0.029). This is an indication that experimental group performed significantly better in the MSE than the control group. Likewise, the mean difference of

-1.93 in the LEE reflects the difference between the experimental and control group. Therefore, based on the results, it can be stated that the student's academic writing proficiency was not different at the beginning of the study. However, after the intervention, the experimental group significantly improved in academic writing in both the MSE and LEE. Given the statistical results of the pilot study, it can be concluded that the context-specific materials, delivered using the process genre approach are effective in improving academic writing proficiency of tertiary level EFL students.

Moreover, given the success of the instructional procedure as discussed above, it can be concluded that the hypothesis which the researcher formulated at the beginning of the study is most likely true, and that a main study to further investigate the hypothesis is warranted. Finally, the pilot study confirms that the research instruments and teaching materials designed for the purpose of this study are useful and reliable instruments to test this hypothesis.

4.6.8. Conclusion of the pilot study

On the whole, given the fact that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group in the MSE and the LEE, it can be concluded that the use of the context-specific materials (as described in this chapter) had a positive effect on the development of the writing skills in the experimental group. The pilot study provided sufficient evidence that the research design and teaching materials (incorporating the process genre approach) are effective in enhancing writing performance in EFL learners, and gave the researcher firm grounds to continue with the main study.

4.7. Conclusion

The current study utilised a quantitative research framework. Therefore, this chapter began with a general overview of research methodology, in which a brief historical overview of the quantitative research evolution from the past to the present was presented and in which the characteristics of quantitative research methodology were explained. It was motivated why, despite the weaknesses of the chosen explorative research design (i.e. a quasi-experimental design), this design was deemed most suitable to investigate the research hypothesis and to answer the research questions. The chapter highlighted the importance of T-unit analysis as a measure of ESL/EFL learners' writing development with reference to several studies that investigated ESL/EFL learners' writing development in different teaching contexts. Next, a description which dealt with

the specific design of this research project, the participants and the research instruments used to collect data in the current study was provided followed by an explicit discussion centered round the design of context-specific writing tasks used in the current study to instruct the experimental groups. Moreover, the efficacy of using teaching materials in EFL/ESL programs in general was discussed with reference to published literature in the domain of second language acquisition. The chapter also focused on the research procedures in that it described aspects such as the ethical considerations, teaching equipment, data collection and scoring procedures, as well as the initial data analysis

Finally, the details pertaining to the pilot study, which were conducted prior to the main study, were discussed, and the results of the reliability testing were given. The results of the pilot study indicated that the research instruments were appropriate and reliable, and on the basis of these results the researcher continued with the main study. The next chapter will present the results obtained in the main study of this research project.

CHAPTER 5
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is dedicated to the presentation and the discussion of the findings of the study. The chapter is aimed at answering the research questions posed and accepting or refuting the hypotheses formed in Chapter 1. Moreover, findings of the qualitative analysis of the students' writing samples will be discussed in relation to the second and third research questions. In addition, the data gathered from the social variables in the study groups will be analysed to determine whether these social variables could have accounted for the writing outcome in the treatment group. Finally, the findings pertaining to each of the research questions of the study are discussed and interpreted in the light of previous research.

5.1. Descriptive statistics of the experimental and control groups

This section includes the descriptive statistics that formed the basis of the statistical analyses. Table 5.1 summarises the number of participants per group. The mean age of the participants in each group and the number of males and females in each group are given. The mean scores obtained by each group in the pre-test, MSE and LEE, as well as the standard deviations and standard error of the mean related to these tests in each of the groups are also presented in this table.

Table 5.1. Descriptive statistics of experimental and control groups across the pre-test, MSE and LEE.

		Sex	Min score	Max score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
PRE	Experimental group (n = 60)	29 (M) 31 (F)	7 9	14.5 14.5	10.88	1.67	0.21
	Control group (n = 60)	27 (M) 33 (F)	7.5 6	13 14	10.38	1.60	0.20
MSE	Experimental group (n = 60)	29 (M) 31 (F)	9 9	18.5 18.5	14.78	2.46	0.31
	Control group (n = 60)	27 (M) 33 (F)	6 8	15 15	11.80	1.94	0.25
LEE	Experimental group (n = 60)	29 (M) 31 (F)	11 13	22 22	16.74	2.44	0.31
	Control group (n = 60)	27 (M) 33 (F)	8.5 7.50	16 16	12.15	2.18	0.28

PRE = Pre-test; MSE = Mid-Semester exam; LEE = Level-Exit examination

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, in order to answer the research questions posed in this study, several inferential statistical tests have to be performed. Inferential tests, such as Pearson correlations and Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) assume that certain underlying assumptions about the data have been met. One specific assumption is that the data are normally distributed. For this reason, two normality tests, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test, were conducted to ascertain whether the data obtained from the MSE and LEE tests are normally distributed. The test results (as shown in Table 5.2) indicate that the test statistics yielded non-significant p-values on both tests. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the data come from a normal distribution.

Table 5.2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results for normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
MSE	.067	120	.200[*]	.982	120	.107
LEE	.066	120	.200[*]	.986	120	.249

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

It is sufficient to report the results of one normality test; and the Shapiro-Wilk was chosen as it is suitable for smaller samples (but it can also reliably predict normality in samples up to 2000) and because it is preferred when skewness and kurtosis are used to help determine the normality of the data. The case processing summary and descriptive statistics of the Shapiro-Wilk test is presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Normality test results: Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
MSE	120	100%	0	0%	120	100%
LEE	120	100%	0	0%	120	100%

Table 5.4. Descriptive results of Shapiro-Wilk test of normality

			Statistic	Std. Error
MSE	Mean		13.29	.243
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	12.81	
		Upper Bound	13.77	
	5% Trimmed Mean		13.31	
	Median		13.25	
	Variance		7.12	
	Std. Deviation		2.66	
	Minimum		6.00	
	Maximum		18.50	
	Range		12.50	
	Interquartile Range		4.25	
	Skewness		-.058	.221
	Kurtosis		-.506	.438
LEE	Mean		14.45	.297
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	13.86	
		Upper Bound	15.03	
	5% Trimmed Mean		14.43	
	Median		14.25	
	Variance		10.61	
	Std. Deviation		3.25	
	Minimum		7.50	
	Maximum		22.00	
	Range		14.50	
	Interquartile Range		4.50	
	Skewness		.087	.221
	Kurtosis		-.553	.438

In further support for the claim of normally distributed data, it was found the *z*-scores associated with the values of skewness and kurtosis in the MSE and LEE are mostly non-significant (this was determined by dividing the value for skewness or kurtosis by their standard error value – the answer to these equations have to be smaller than 1.96 to be deemed non-significant). This means that there were no significant build-ups in high or low scores and that the distributions were neither particularly pointy nor particularly flat. The only exception was with skewness in the MSE, where the negative value (-.058) could possibly be associated with a build –up of higher scores.

Nevertheless, the overall finding remains that the data obtained in the MSE and LEE are normally distributed.

Given this, it was deemed in order to continue with the various inferential statistical analyses.

5.2. Findings related to the pre-test

An Independent Samples T-test was used to compare the means obtained by the two groups in the pre-test. In addition, Paired T-tests were conducted to analyse the interval data gathered from the pre-test, MSE and LEE, in order to establish the gains in both study groups in terms of academic writing. In order to test the effect of the intervention programme on academic writing and the effect of the instructor on academic writing, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, which will be discussed in Section 5.3.

5.2.1 Pre-test performance and within-group gains in writing ability

As shown in Table 5.5 below, an Independent Samples T-test was conducted to compare the mean difference (0.5) between the experimental and control groups before the onset of the intervention. The results indicated that the means between the experimental group ($M = 10.88$, $SD = 1.67$) and control group ($M = 10.38$, $SD = 1.60$); t (118) = 1.67, $p = .097$ were not significantly different from each other in the pre-test.

Table 5.5. Pre-test group comparison

	Experimental group		Control group		Statistical value			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
PRE	10.88	1.67	10.38	1.60	1.67	118	.097	.50

Based on the statistical results, it can be stated that the students' academic writing proficiency was not significantly different at the beginning of the study. In other words, both the experimental and control group had a similar proficiency in academic writing before the intervention.

Table 5.6. Statistics of the Paired Samples T-test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	E PRE E MSE	3.90	1.98	.256	4.41	3.38	15.18	58	.000
Pair 2	E LEE E MSE	1.95	2.53	.326	1.30	2.61	5.99	58	.000
Pair 3	E LEE E PRE	5.85	2.52	.325	5.20	6.51	17.98	58	.000
Pair 4	C MSE C PRE	1.42	1.64	.211	1.00	1.84	6.72	58	.000
Pair 5	C LEE C MSE	.35	1.12	.145	.05	.64	2.41	58	.019
Pair 6	C LEE C PRE	1.77	1.90	.246	1.28	2.26	7.19	58	.000

E=Experimental; C=Control; PRE=Pre-test; MSE= Mid-Semester exam; LEE=Level-Exit examination

As shown in Table 5.6, paired samples t-tests were conducted to compare the scores which the experimental and control group received for the pre-test, MSE and LEE. According to the first pair in which the scores of the pre-test and MSE of the experimental group were compared, there was a significant increase in scores between the pre-test (M = 10.88, SD = 1.67) and the MSE (M =14.78, SD = 2.46); t (58) = -15.18, p = .001. The second paired samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the LEE (M =16.74, SD = 2.44) and the MSE (M = 14.78, SD = 2.46); t (58) = 5.59, p = .001 in the experimental group. The third paired samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the LEE (M = 16.74, SD = 2.44) and pre-test (M = 14.78, SD = 2.46) t (58) = 17.98, p = .001 in the experimental group.

With regard to the control group, the following paired t-test results were obtained: the fourth paired samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the MSE (M = 11.80, SD = 1.94) and the pre-test (M = 10.38, SD = 1.60); t (58) = 6.72, p = .000. The fifth paired samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the LEE *(M = 12.15, SD = 2.18)* and MSE (M = 11.80, SD = 1.94); t (58) = 2.41, p = .019. The sixth paired samples t-test also indicated that there was a significant

difference between the LEE (M = 12.15, SD = 2.18) and the pre-test (M = 11.80, SD = 1.94); t (58) = 7.19, p = .001.

According to the paired test results, it is evident that the students in both the experimental and control groups made an improvement in academic writing skills after they were instructed in a formal classroom context. The mean scores obtained in the MSE and in the LEE (at α = 0.05) were significantly higher than the mean scores obtained in the pre-test, for both the experimental and control groups.

5.2.2 Correlations

As shown in Table 5.7, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the class (i.e. the class a student was allocated to) and the LEE, between the Instructor and the LEE and between the group (i.e. control or experimental) and the LEE. The results of the Pearson correlations showed that there was a strong positive correlation between the group (control or experimental) and the LEE (r = .706, p < .001). There was a weak positive correlation between the Instructor and the LEE, r = 306, p < .001. However, there was no significant correlation between the class and the LEE (r = .118, p = .099).

Table 5.7. Correlations

Correlations (N = 120)					
		LEE	**Group (C or E)**	**Class**	**Instructor**
Pearson Correlation	**LEE**	1.000	.706	.118	.306
	Group (C or E)	.706	1.000	-.272	.000
	Class	.118	-.272	1.000	.953
	Instructor	.306	.000	.953	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	**LEE**	.	.000	.099	.000
	Group (C or E)	.000	.	.001	.500
	Class	.099	.001	.	.000
	Instructor	.000	.500	.000	.

5.3. Findings related to the first research question and two sub-questions related to the first research question

The first research question posed in this study was:

Does the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students to perform better in academic writing in an examination setting; as measured by the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology?

Two related questions, which are treated as sub-questions of the first research questions, and which will also be dealt with in Section 5.2 are:

> *i. Does the success of the intervention programme applied in this study depend on the instructor?*
>
> *ii. Do students who had a lot of exposure to English (including reading, accessing the internet and additional English instruction) benefit more from the intervention than students who had little exposure to English?*

5.3.1. Main effects (of group, class and instructor) on the MSE and LEE

A MANOVA (Multivariate Analysis of Variance) was conducted to answer the first research question. The researcher constructed a MANOVA model by entering the class (i.e. study group 1, 4, 9, and 10, as explained in Section 4.2), group (experimental or control) and instructor as independent variables and the MSE and LEE scores as dependent variables. This MANOVA model provides the researcher with information about the effect of the intervention (i.e. whether the participants were instructed with g the context-specific materials or via the prescribed textbook) and it also tells the researcher whether the different instructors had an effect on the outcome (i.e. whether the intervention programme is effective, regardless of the teacher who delivers it). Finally, any differences between the four classes in the MSE and LEE are also reflected in this model. The overall main effects of the independent variables are shown in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8. Main effects of the General Linear Model (MANOVA)

Multivariate Tests[b]		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Effect						
Intercept	Wilk's Lambda	.58	27.492[a]	3.00	114.00	.000
Class	Wilks' Lambda	.88	5.126[a]	3.00	114.00	.002
Instructor	Wilks' Lambda	.91	3.756[a]	3.00	114.00	.013
Group	Wilks' Lambda	.59	26.275[a]	3.00	114.00	.000

As explained above, the multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to compare the effects of the group (experimental or control), class and of the instructor on the performance of the students in the MSE and LEE. All three factors (class, instructor and control or experimental group) yielded statistically significant effects at the .05 level, as shown in Table 5.8. Concerning the main effect for class, there was a significant main effect: Wilks' λ = .88, F (3, 114.00) = 5.12, p = .002. Thus, it could be confirmed that the class to which a student belonged significantly affected at least one of the dependent variables. Likewise, in the case of instructor there was a significant main effect: Wilks' λ = .91, F (3, 114.00) = 5.12, p = .013, indicating that the instructor had an effect on the outcome of either the MSE or the LEE (or possibly on both). In respect of group (control or experimental), a significant (p = < 001) main effect was recorded: Wilks' λ = .59, F (3, 114.00) = 27.27, p = .001. This result confirms that either the control or the experimental group performed significantly better in at least one of the post-tests (i.e. the MSE or the LEE). Whether the above-mentioned main effects occurred in the MSE or with the LEE (or in both) are illuminated in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9. Tests of Between-Subject effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tests of Between-Subjects effects						
Corrected Models	MSE	335.523[b]	3	111.84	25.32	.000
	LEE	774.350[c]	3	258.11	61.18	.000
Intercept	MSE	130.44	1	130.44	29.54	.000
	LEE	324.00	1	324.00	76.80	.000
Class	MSE	1.75	1	1.75	.39	.530
	LEE	26.13	1	26.13	6.19	.014
Instructor	MSE	6.14	1	6.14	1.39	.241
	LEE	118	1	118	12.15	.001
Group	MSE	37.25	1	37.25	8.43	.004
	LEE	249.61	1	249.61	59.17	.000
Error	MSE	512.22	116	4.41		
	LEE	489.35	116	4.21		
Total	MSE	22061.25	120			
	LEE	26320.00	120			
Corrected Total	MSE	847.74	119			
	LEE	1263.70	119			

As indicated by the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects in Table 5.9, there was a statistically significant effect of group (control or experimental) in the MSE, $F (1, 116) = 8.43$, $p = .004$. Similarly, there was a statistically significant effect of group in the LEE, $F (1, 116) = 59.17$, $p = .001$. The Test of Between-Subject effects further revealed that there was no significant effect of class ($F (1, 116) = .39$, $p = .530$) or instructor ($F = 1.39$, $p = .241$) on the outcome of the MSE. However, class significantly affected the outcome of the LEE ($F = 6.19$, p $= .014$), as did the instructor ($F = 2.94$, $p = .001$).

Importantly, as Table 5.9 depicts, there is a significant main effect for group (control or experimental) in both the MSE and LEE, which means that one group performed significantly better than the other group. Recall from the descriptive statistics presented in Table 5.1. that the experimental group obtained higher mean scores on both the MSE and the LEE than the control group. In the next section, the results from the post hoc testing will indicate which of these mean differences were significant.

5.3.2. Group and class differences in the MSE and LEE

To ease reader interpretation, the means, standard deviation and standard errors obtained by the experimental and control group in the MSE and LEE given in Table 5.1 are repeated in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10. Means, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors of the raw scores obtained by the two main groups (experimental vs control) in the MSE and LEE

	n = 60	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
MSE	**Experimental group**	14.78	2.46	0.31
	Control group	11.80	1.94	0.25
LEE	**Experimental group**	16.74	2.44	0.31
	Control group	12.15	2.18	0.28

As Table 5.9 shows, there was a significant main effect of group (experimental or control) on the MSE (F (1, 116) = 8.43, p = 0.004) and on the LEE, F (1,116) = 59.17, p = .001, indicating that the mean difference of 2.98 in the MSE and the mean difference of 4.59 in the LEE were both significant. Thus, the mean scores of the experimental group were significantly higher than those of the control group in both the MSE and LEE. This improvement of the experimental group could be credited with the intervention (context-specific materials and the adapted process genre approach) which the experimental group was instructed or the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*) and its instructional procedure with the control group taught.

As indicated in Table 5.9, the test of between subjects confirmed that the class to which a student belonged had a significant effect on the outcome of the LEE (but not on the outcome of the MSE). In order to determine how the classes differed from each other, a LSD post hoc test was performed, of which the results are presented in Table 5.12 However, prior to that, the means, standard deviations and standard errors of the raw scores obtained in the MSE and LEE by the four classes are presented in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11. Means, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors of the raw scores obtained by the four classes in the MSE and LEE

	n = 30	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
MSE	**Class 1 (Experimental)**	14.15	2.76	0.50
	Class 4 (Control)	10.93	2.00	0.36
	Class 9 (Experimental)	15.42	1.99	0.36
	Class 10 (Control group)	12.68	1.45	0.26
LEE	**Class 1 (Experimental)**	15.28	2.03	0.37
	Class 4 (Control)	11.63	2.65	0.48
	Class 9 (Experimental)	18.20	1.91	0.35
	Class 10 (Control)	14.42	2.27	0.42

MSE = Mid-Semester exam; LEE = Level-Exit examination

Table 5.12. LSD Post Hoc Test Multiple Comparisons

Multiple Comparisons						
LEE						
					95% Confidence Interval	
Class	Class	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	4	3.6500*	.53032	.000	2.5996	4.7004
	9	-2.9167*	.53032	.000	-3.9670	-1.8663
	10	2.6000*	.53032	.000	1.5496	3.6504
4	1	-3.6500*	.53032	.000	-4.7004	-2.5996
	9	-6.5667*	.53032	.000	-7.6170	-5.5163
	10	-1.0500	.53032	.050	-2.1004	.0004
9	1	2.9167*	.53032	.000	1.8663	3.9670
	4	6.5667*	.53032	.000	5.5163	7.6170
	10	5.5167*	.53032	.000	4.4663	6.5670
10	1	-2.6000*	.53032	.000	-3.6504	-1.5496
	4	1.0500	.53032	.050	-.0004	2.1004
	9	-5.5167*	.53032	.000	-6.5670	-4.4663

As is clear from the LSD post hoc multiple comparisons test (Table 5.12), all the classes differed significantly from each other in the LEE, with the exception of class 4 and 10 (p = .050), which were the two control group classes. The mean difference between class 1 (experimental) and class 4 (control) was 3.65 ($p < .000$), while the difference between

class 1 and class 10 (control) was 2.6 ($p < .000$). Thus, class 1, in which the intervention was used as instruction, performed significantly better in the LEE than both the control classes. The mean difference between class 9 (experimental) and class 4 (control) was 6.56 ($p < .000$), while the mean difference between class 9 (experimental) class 10 (control) was 5.5 ($p < .000$). Again, class 9, which was an experimental/intervention classroom, performed significantly better in the LEE than both the control classes. Interestingly, experimental group 9, who was taught by the second instructor (i.e. not by the researcher), performed significantly better than experimental group 1 in the LEE

5.3.3. The role of the instructor

Recall that the test of between subjects (Table 5.9) indicated that the instructor had no significant effect on the outcome of the MSE, but that the instructor significantly affected the outcome of the LEE, as indicated in Table 5.13. There was a significant main effect of Instructor on the LEE, F (1, 118) = 12.15, $p = .001$, suggesting that the students taught by one of the two instructors performed significantly better in the LEE. Both instructors taught 30 control group participants and 30 experimental group participants (i.e. 60 students in total).

Table 5.13. Univariate analysis of variance between Instructors

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: LEE					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	118.008[a]	1	118.008	12.154	.001
Intercept	25056.300	1	25056.300	2580.662	.000
Instructor	118.008	1	118.008	12.154	.001
Error	1145.692	118	9.709		
Total	26320.000	120			
Corrected Total	1263.700	119			

Table 5.14. Means, Standard Deviations and Standard Error of raw scores obtained in the LEE by the different instructor groups.

n = 60		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
LEE	**Instructor 1**	13.5	2.97	.31
	Instructor 2	15.5	3.24	.36

The mean raw scores obtained by the participants in the two instructor groups are shown in Table 5.14. As can be seen, Instructor 2's students obtained a higher mean score than Instructor 1's students. The significant F value associated with the mean difference (F (1; 118) = 12.15, p = .001) indicates that the students who were taught by Instructor 2 performed significantly better in the LEE than the students who were taught by Instructor 1.

In other words, this kind of improvement of the students (across the experimental and control groups) in the current study confirms that the materials *and possibly also* the way in which they were delivered in class helped students to improve their proficiency in academic writing. Thus, even though (in itself) the use of the context specific materials described in this study is likely to lead to improved performance in academic writing in an examination setting, the role of instructor clearly remains important.

Given the positive results that emerged from the current study which was conducted to investigate the effects of context-specific materials and the process genre approach in enhancing academic writing proficiency, it can be concluded that context-specific materials and the adapted process genre approach had a positive effect on academic writing proficiency, and this helped the participants in the experimental groups to perform better in the LEE than the control group. The findings will be discussed in more detail in Section 5.6.

5.3.4. Impact of the social variables on the writing proficiency of students in the experimental group

As mentioned in chapter 4, a questionnaire was circulated among the participants (N = 120) to investigate whether social variables (students' previous and current knowledge, experiences and practices in learning and using English in social and educational contexts) could have affected their performance in English writing. The questionnaire consisted of 12 closed type items, except for 4 questions where students

had to answer with relevant information. The researcher received 96 responses and the results of the questionnaire are summarised in Table 5.15

Table 5.15 An overview of the social variable of the learners.

Questions (N = 96)	Remarks	Frequency	Percentage
1. At what age did you start to study English?	Age-5	84	87.5
	After-5	12	12.5
2. How long did you study English from primary to high school?	12-years	67	69.7
	13-years	29	30.2
3. Did you study English outside school?	Yes	55	57.2
	No	41	42.7
4. How long have you have been learning English at the college?	6 Months	n/a	100
5. Do you study English outside the college?	Yes	22	22.9
	No	74	77.0
6. Do you have English books at home?	Yes	77	80.2
	No	19	19.7
7. Do you read English books at home?	Always	7	7.2
	Sometimes	66	68.7
	Never	23	23.9
8. Do you watch English movies on TV?	Yes	92	95.8
	No	4	4.1
How often do you watch movies on TV?	Always	33	34.3
	Sometimes	63	65.6
	Never	0	1.0
9. Do you access the internet in English?	Yes	81	84.3
	No	15	15.6
How often do you access the internet in English?	Always	15	15.6
	Sometimes	44	45.8
	When I need	22	22.9
	Never	15	15.6
10. Do your parents want you to improve your English proficiency?	Yes	92	95.8
	No	4	4.1
11.Your opinion about English proficiency.	Essential	66	68.8
	Not essential	12	12.5
	No idea	18	18.7
12. Your overall impression about the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Which skill or skills are more important?	List & Speak	7	7.2
	Read& Write	12	12.5
	All 4 skills	77	80.2

As indicated in Table 5.15, 76 (69 %) students had studied English for 12 years during their school period which includes primary, secondary and high schools. 29 (30%)

students had studied English for 13 years. 55 (57%) students had studied English outside school while 41 (42%) students had not studied English outside school. The question which enquired how long students had been learning English at the college was unanimously answered with "6 months", as they studied English for 3 months in Level 1 and 3 months in Level 2. For question 5 (Do you study English outside the college?) 22 (22%) students replied that they studied English outside the college while 74 (77%) students responded that they did not study English outside the college.

According to question 6, 77 (80%) of the students have English books at home while only 19 (19%) students don't have English books at home. The next question posed to students sought to know whether they read English books at home. For this question, seven (7%) students answered "always", 66 (68%) replied "sometimes" and 23 (23%) said that they never read English books at home. 92 students out of 96 (98%) expressed that they watched English movies at home while four (4%) participants said 'no'. However, the frequency with which they watched TV was different. Thirty-three (34%) students stated that they "always" watch TV, while 63 (65%) said that they "sometimes" watch TV. No participant watched no TV.

Question 10 was meant to find out what perception their parents held concerning the importance of English proficiency. 92 (95%) participants stated that their parents constantly encouraged them to study English; while four (4%) participants answered that their parents were not very concerned about their children's English proficiency. Question 11 sought to establish the students' own perception about English proficiency. 92 (95%) participants indicated that English proficiency was essential for their studies, work and life. However, 12 (12%) participants considered English to not be very necessary for their future life and 18 (18%) participants indicated that they had no idea about it.

From the answers, which the participants provided to the rest of the questions in the survey, it became clear that the participants came from varying social backgrounds and that their parents were employed in a range of professions, such as farming (36%), government or private sector employees (9%), fishing (29%) and business (19%).

The researcher wanted to determine the effect of the social variables on the treatment (i.e. *Do the students who had a lot of exposure to English including reading, accessing the internet always and studying English outside benefit more from the intervention than the students who had a little exposure to English?*).

In order to answer this sub-question, the researcher selected the experimental group students' (n = 60) questionnaire data and the students' LEE marks to divide the

participants into two groups: *higher exposure to English* and *lower exposure to English*. In order to group the participants, the responses provided by the participants to the following three questions in the social variables questionnaire were considered: 1. Do you study English outside the college? 2. Do you always read English books? 3. Do you always access the internet in English? It was found that 14 out of 60 students studied English outside the college. 4 students "always" read English books while 9 said that they "always" access the internet in English. The total number of students from the experimental group that was thought to show clear evidence of *higher exposure to English* was thus 27. These 27 students' LEE marks were checked against their names and it was found that they obtained marks between 17.5 and 22 out of 25. The rest of the students which comprised of 33, were allocated to the *lower exposure to English group*. These students obtained marks between 12 and 17.5 on the LEE, and they answered the three questions (mentioned above) with negative responses; which confirmed that they had a lower interest and a lower level of exposure to English. These two groups' marks were analysed using an Independent Samples T-test (Table 5.17) to establish whether the intervention benefited students with a higher interest and higher level of exposure to English more than students with a lower interest and lower level of exposure to English in their social context.

The results indicated that there was a significant difference in the scores between the high interest and high exposure to English group (M = 19.05, SD = 1.31) and low interest and low exposure to English group (M = 14.93, SD = 1.50); t (58) = 11.14, p = .001.

Table 5.16. Descriptive statistics of high exposure and low exposure groups

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
High interest and high exposure	27	17.50	22.00	19.05	.252	1.31
Low interest and low exposure	33	12.00	17.50	14.93	.262	1.50

Table 5.17. Independent Samples T-test for equality of means between high and low exposure group

| | Levene's Test for Equality of variance | | T-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence | |
	f	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variance assumed	.803	.374	11.14	58	.000	4.11	.369	3.37	4.85
Equal variance not assumed			11.30	57.76	.000	4.11	.364	3.38	4.84

Based on this result, it seems to be the case that the high interest and high exposure group had improved more in terms of academic writing during the study than the low interest and low exposure group. These results leave us with a message that EFL learners should be encouraged to expose themselves to language input whenever and wherever possible. In other words, although the writing instruction intervention definitely yielded an improved outcome in the experimental group as a whole, it is not impossible that social variables such as previous and current exposure to the target language, as well as interest in the target language, also affected the outcome in individual learners. This seems like a natural conclusion, as more motivated and more proficient language learners are more likely to succeed.

Considering the overall questionnaire statistics, most students in this study started studying English at the age of five and continued up to high school (i.e. 12 to 13 years of exposure to English). Therefore, given the period which the students had spent studying English at school seems quite adequate to acquire some proficiency in the target language. A clear majority of students (70%) did not take tuition for English outside the college. The researcher observed that taking tuition outside is considered unimportant in Omani society; unlike in some Asian countries where learners at school level mostly depend on outside tuition. Another crucial factor was the habit of reading among the participants of the survey. A high percentage (68%) of students was not in the habit of reading materials related to English. A good number of studies that investigated the relationship between reading and writing have shown that these two skills are interdependent and it is generally agreed that the development of good reading habits and skills improve students' ability

to write (Grabe, 2003; Leki, 1992; Krashen, 2004). Even though a clear majority of students showed no positive tendency towards reading, their preference for watching TV was high (95%) which is an unfortunate scenario - students seemed to have become victims of digital age.

Most students (84%) had access to internet but they did not utilise it properly to enhance their study skills. In a paper entitled *Internet in education: support materials for educators* published by UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (2003) it is states that those who study at schools, universities and colleges can enhance their knowledge using educational literature, encyclopaedia, references, dictionaries and databases, which are freely available on the internet.

Another striking characteristic revealed in the survey was the parents' opinion about the importance of English proficiency. 95% agreed that proficiency in English was essential for their children. However, it is startling to note that 12% of students had stated that they considered English proficiency "not essential", while 18% had expressed that they had no clear idea about the importance of English proficiency as a tool of communication. This kind of negative attitude would have dire consequences on students in terms of learning English as a skill at tertiary level, where they are generally expected to demonstrate positive attitudes towards a world language like English. Finally, responding to the last question in the survey which sought their overall impression about the four major language skills, 80% of students had agreed that all four the skills should be mastered to gain proficiency in English.

Taken into account the students' views concerning their previous and current knowledge, experiences and practices in learning and using English in social and educational contexts, it can be concluded that students learning at tertiary level should cultivate good practices such as reading English books, learning English outside the college and using the internet for learning purposes (rather than using it as a medium of entertainment). Moreover, tertiary level students should consider giving priority to their educational attainments which, in return, would help them to achieve their desired personal, professional and social goals in life.

5.4. Writing development of the control group

As shown in Tables 5.6, the Paired Samples t-test results for the control group were as follows: the fourth paired samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the MSE (*M* = 11.80, *SD* = 1.94) and the pre-test (*M* = 10.38, *SD* = 1.60); *t* (59) = 6.72, *p* = .001, whereas the fifth paired samples t-test also indicated that there was a significant difference between the LEE *(M* = 12.15, *SD* = 2.18) and MSE (*M* = 11.80, *SD* = 1.94); *t* (59) = 2.41, *p* = .019. Similarly, the sixth paired samples t-test also indicated that there was a significant difference between the LEE (*M* = 12.15, *SD* = 2.18) and the pre-test (*M* = 11.80, *SD* = 1.94); *t* (59) = 7.19, *p* = .001. These positive results clearly indicate that the control group also improved in writing proficiency. It can be concluded that the control group improved in academic writing after they were taught using the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*) and the teaching method suggested in it. Even though the control group made improvement in writing, it was relatively small and limited compared to the improvement of the treatment group. The possible reasons for the more limited improvement of the control group are discussed below.

5.4.1. Possible reasons for limited improvement in writing made by the control group

As can be seen from the descriptive (Table 5.1) and inferential test results (Table 5.6) above, the performance of the control group from the pre-test to the LEE in writing was limited in that the mean differences from the pre-test (*M* = 10.38, *SD* = 1.61) to the LEE (*M* = 12.16, *SD* = 2.18) was 1.78 which was quite low compared to the experimental group. The mean difference between the pre-test and the LEE was 5.86 for the experimental group. It is argued here that one of the main reasons for the limited improvement of the control group was that the control group was not taught using the context-specific materials and the adapted process genre model of writing.

The students in the control group had limited opportunities to practice writing because they did not apply the adapted process genre model of writing where writers should follow a procedure in composing process. For example, the students in the control group did not write several drafts as the experimental group did and nor did they do peer editing in which students read each other's work and offered feedback on content, structure and grammar. Since the control group missed these two important stages in writing, their writings did not improve to the expected level, and as a result, they performed significantly poor in the LEE. The writing procedure suggested in the

prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*) which the control group used as the instructional material in the study was as follows:
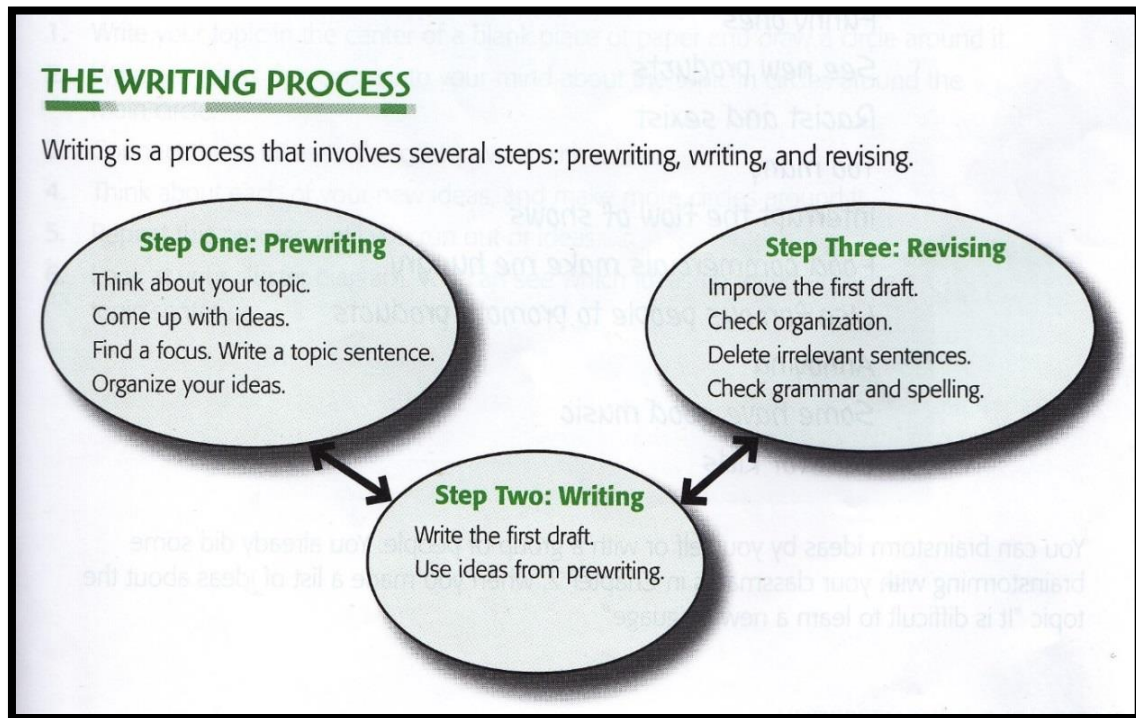
Figure 5.1. Extract from Ready to write 2 (Chapter 6, p. 61).

According to the writing process suggested in the textbook, the students have three steps to follow namely 'prewriting', 'writing' and 'revising'. However, according to scholars in the field of writing, (Geyser, 1996; Shih, 1986; Tessema, 2005; Williams, 2005; Yan, 2005; Zamel, 1983), the process approach consists of five stages, including 'prewriting', 'drafting', 'revising', 'proofreading' and 'publishing' (as discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis). As described in Chapter 2, writing in a second language is a demanding task which calls upon several linguistic, cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities. In addition to cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities, according to Tribble (1996), writers need to have knowledge of a range of aspects, such as content, context, the language system and the writing process in order to successfully complete a specific writing task. Therefore, writing activities which the students in the control group did from the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*) were neither interactive nor engaging in that students received limited language input. Another observed reason that prevented the control group from receiving adequate language input to improve their writing proficiency was that the writing activities in the prescribed textbook were not sufficiently based on the process genre approach. Therefore, the students in the control group did not

interact with their peers to discuss or share their ideas or views with regard to the writing tasks they did in the classroom situation. Moreover, they did not receive feedback from their colleagues concerning their writing to the same degree than the students in the experimental group received from their peers and the teacher.

Therefore, given the limited improvement as shown in descriptive and inferential results across the three tests of the control groups (pre-test, MSE and LEE) in respect of performance in an examination setting, the researcher wishes to conclude that, in the absence of EFL writing programs designed context-specifically to help learners to engage in writing as an interactive and engaging process, improvement in writing performance in the target language may be limited for EFL tertiary level learners who study academic writing in contexts similar to the current study.

5.5. Findings related to the second research question

The second research question dealt with whether the context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, improved academic writing fluency of the experimental group as measured by T-unit analysis. The second research question, repeated below is discussed in this section.

Does the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students improve academic writing fluency as measured by T-unit analysis?

The second research question in the current study addressed the effects of the context-specific materials on the academic writing fluency of tertiary level students in the target language. The various definitions proposed in Chapter 2 for writing fluency may have resulted from different indicators that are used in measuring the construct 'writing fluency'. Many L1 and L2 writing process studies (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Hatasa & Soeda, 2000) measured writing fluency in terms of the composing rate, i.e. the number of words written per minute (obtained through dividing the text quantity by the time spent for writing). Other reported measures of writing fluency include holistic scoring of the text (Ballator, Farnum & Kaplan, 1999), total number of words and T-units (Elola, 2005), number of correctly spelled words and number of sentences (Rosenthal, 2006). Of all these indicators, the composing rate has been the most frequently used indicator for assessing writers' fluency. However, it may be argued that the validity of the composing rate and the product-based indicators of writing fluency are questionable. Some product-

based indicators of writing fluency such as the number of T-units or the sentences written in the text are more likely to reflect some quality aspects in writers' texts than the flow of their composing processes. The length of the text produced by a writer may be dependent on several factors such as writers' pre-task decision to include a specific amount of words, lines or paragraphs in the text, and/or his/her familiarity with the topic of writing. In addition, judging students' writing fluency through dividing the amount of text they produce by the time they spend on the task may be refuted by the hypothesis that some students do not spend much time performing a given task due to their negative attitude to writing. Similarly, some competent writers may produce fewer words per minute and this does not indicate that they are less fluent. Therefore, researchers need to use process-based indictors that more accurately mirror writers' text production fluency.

Only a couple of researchers have addressed or referred to the issue of writers' fluency from a process-based perspective. Kaufer, Hayes & Flower's (1986) and Friedlander's (1989) studies showed that the length of the proposed text for writing interacts positively with their language experience. Over three quarters of the words newly proposed as sentence parts were included by L1 writers of Kaufer et al.'s (1986) study. Chenoweth and Hayes (2001) found that writers with more L2 experience proposed texts in longer bursts (writing burst is a strategy in which a writer starts writing about a topic that he/she prefers at a stretch without worrying about the quality for a limited time – short burst or a longer period - longer burst) and given this, Chenoweth and Hayes have pointed out that the length of the newly proposed text for writing, or the length of the burst, is a main contributor to writer' fluency, measured by the composing rate. Another aspect of writing fluency referred to in process writing research is the production of text in larger chunks. Perl (1979, p. 322) referred to her twelfth grader participants' fluency by contrasting fluent writing that could be observed when "sentences are written in groups or chunks" to non-fluent writing occurring "when each sentence is produced in isolation". The observations reported by the other authors above indicate the possibility of measuring writers' fluency in terms of the mean length of the chunk of text produced. Chenoweth and Hayes' (2001) findings suggested that the mean length of the translating episode seems to be a more valid indicator for measuring EFL writers' fluency than the text-based ones extensively used in previous studies. The study also found that the mean length of the participants' translating episodes correlate with some of their composing behaviours.

Of all the measures used to measure the writing fluency of EFL learners, T-unit analysis has been deemed to be a very reliable indicator of writing fluency. Larsen-Freeman (1978, p. 441) stated that "Hunt and other first language acquisition researchers (O' Donnel, Griffin & Norris, 1967; Loban, 1976) found T-unit length to be "a highly satisfactory index of measuring oral and written language development of learners". Therefore, in this study, fluency of the students' writing was measured by using T-unit analysis as suggested by Elola (2005), Larsen-Freeman and Strom (1977) and Perkins (1980, 1983). T-unit measures used in this study to measure writing fluency included the number of words per composition, the number of sentences per composition, the number of T-units per composition and T-unit length.

For qualitative and quantitative analysis of the students' writing, 40 LEE answer scripts (10 from each of the two control groups and 10 from each of the two experimental groups) were selected. Thus, 20 control group LEE answer scripts were compared to 20 LEE experimental group scripts. In order to prevent gender bias, five answer scripts from male and five from female students were selected randomly from each experimental and control group, as shown in the Table 5.18 below. In order to select 5 writing scripts from the 14 male students in group 1, using the list of names of each group, a serial number starting from one was assigned to each of the students' college identification number and then lots were cast to select five students. The same procedure was applied to the other groups.

Table 5.18. Composition of the sample of analysed LEE answer scripts.

Experimental		Control		No of answer scripts selected
Group 1	**Group 9**	**Group 4**	**Group 10**	Group 1 (Male) = 5 (Female) = 5
Male = 14	Male = 16	Male = 13	Male = 14	Group 9 (Male) = 5 (Female) = 5
Female = 16	Female = 14	Female = 17	Female = 16	Group 4 (Male) = 5 (Female) = 5
				Group 10 (Male) = 5 (Female) = 5
			Total	40

5.5.1. T-unit analysis of students' writing accuracy in the pre-test

As discussed above, given the efficacy of using T-unit analysis to measure the construct of fluency and accuracy of written texts, T-unit analysis, as suggested by Elola (2005), Larsen-Freeman (1977) and Strom and Perkins (1980, 1983) was used in this study. T unit analysis was performed as an objective measure to evaluate the quality of EFL student writing. The first step of this part of the analysis was to compare the writing performance of selected sub-groups in the pre-test. As the groups were smaller, this comparison was done by means of non-parametric testing, to avoid breaching the underlying assumptions associated with parametric statistical tests. Mann-Whitney tests were conducted to see whether there were any differences in terms of writing fluency at the beginning of the study (i.e. before the onset of the intervention) in the selected sub-groups. The following descriptors were considered for measuring writing fluency of the four study groups: t*he number of words per composition; the number of sentences per composition; the number of T-units per composition and the T-unit length*. The descriptive statistics associated with these descriptors are presented in Table 5.19, while the results of the Mann-Whitney test are given in Table 5.20.

Table 5.19. Descriptive statistics of pre-test T-unit analysis.

Mann-Whitney Test Ranks				
	Group	**N = 40**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**
V1 (Number of words per composition)	Experimental group	20	21.13	422.5
	Control group	20	19.88	397.5
V2 (Number of sentences per composition)	Experimental group	20	15.05	301
	Control group	20	25.95	519
V3 (Number of T-Units per composition)	Experimental group	20	15.55	311
	Control group	20	25.45	509
V4 (Error-free T-Units per composition)	Experimental group	20	18.73	374.5
	Control group	20	22.28	445.5
V5 (T-unit length)	Experimental group	20	25.15	503
	Control group	20	15.85	317

Table 5.20. Non-parametric statistics of pre-test T-unit analysis

Test Statistics					
	V1	**V2***	**V3***	**V4**	**V5***
Mann-Whitney U	187.5	91	101	164.5	107
Wilcoxon W	397.5	301	311	374.5	317
Z	-0.339	-3.006	-2.743	-0.99	-2.518
Asymptotic Significance- (2-tailed)	0.735	0.003	0.006	0.322	0.012
Exact Significance- [2*(1-tailed Significance.)]	0.738	0.003	0.007	0.341	0.011
A	Not corrected for ties.				
B	Grouping Variable: Experimental/Control				

Table 5.20 above indicates the analysis of the experimental and control groups' answer scripts extracted from the pre-test in which the students were required to write a paragraph of 150 words on the topic '**Why do students use Internet a lot?**' In their paragraph, they were instructed to include a topic sentence, supporting details and a concluding sentence. Moreover, students had to use appropriate signal words wherever necessary. The pre-test was scored out of 20 (see Appendix A).

In order to illustrate to the reader how the number of T-units per sentence and the other descriptors as stated above were calculated, two sample texts (one good and one weak) will be shown here, with examples of what the researcher considered to be T-units. Figure 5.2 is an example of an authentic text written by one of the students in the study groups in the pre-test. The text below is considered to be quite fluent and accurate in terms of the study groups' writing ability in the pre-test.

Write a paragraph about the topic given below. Include a topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion. "Why do students use internet a lot?"

Why do students use internet a lot?
The internet is very important. The internet
is very easy for me to use. When I need some
informition, I use the internet. I love using
internet becouse It has many informition. for examble,
foto, countries, books and video. when I have
some problams, I use internet to talk someone.
when I have quastions I go to use internet
and search for answars. I use internet to
chat with my family and friends a lot.
I downrlod many fotos and videos a lot.
All in all, I think the internet is
very important for students.

Informition
about

Figure 5.2. A sample of a student's writing in the pre-test (Fluent and accurate text)

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Examples of T-units in Figure 5.2 are:

Examples of T-units	Number of T-units
1. [The internet is very important]	1
2. [When I need some information, I use internet]	2
3. [I love using internet because it has many information, For example, information about photo, countries, books and Video]	2

Table 5.21. Calculation of error-free T-unit ratio in a fluent and accurate text (Figure 5.2)

1. Total number of words in the text	87
2. The number of sentences in the text	9
3. The number of T-units in the text	13
4. T-unit length ($87 \div 13$) =	6.69
5. The total number of error free T-units	11
6. Error free T-unit ratio ($11 \div 13$)	0.8

Figure 5.3. below represents an example where the text is considered weaker in terms of writing ability in the pre-test.

Figure 5.3 A sample of a student's writing in the pre-test (Less fluent and accurate text)

Examples of T-units	Number of T-units
1. [The internet is a good technology]	1
2. [I use internet a lot of study because it is give me information in short time]	2

Table 5.22. Calculation of error-free T-unit ratio in a less fluent and accurate text (Figure 5.3)

1. Total number of words in the text	65
2. The number of sentences in the text	8
3. The number of T-units in the text	8
4. T-unit length (65 ÷ 8) =	8.12
5. The total number of error free T-units	4
6. Error free T-unit ratio (4 ÷ 8)	0.5

The Mann-Whitney test indicated that *the number of words per composition* was not significantly different between the experimental ($M = 21.13$) and the control groups ($M = 19.88$), $U = 187.5$, $p = 0.735$ in the pre-test. Likewise, *the number of error-free T-units per composition* was not significant between the experimental ($M = 18.73$) and control groups ($M = 22.28$), $U = 164.5$, $p = 0.322$. However, there was a significant mean difference between the experimental and control groups for the following descriptors: *the number of sentences per composition; number of T-units per composition* and the *T-unit length* in the pre-test. The *number of sentences per composition* was greater for the control group ($M = 25.95$) than the experimental group ($M = 15.05$), $U = 91$, $p = 0.003$. Similarly, *the number of T-units per composition* was greater for the control group ($M = 25.45$) than the experimental group ($M = 15.55$), $U = 101$, $p = 0.007$. However, *the T-unit length* was greater for the experimental group (M = 25.15) than the control group ($M = 15.85$), $U = 107$, $p = 0.011$.

5.5.2. T-unit analysis of students' writing fluency in the LEE

The second part of the analysis of the students' quality of writing entailed an analysis (as described in Section 5.4.1 above) of the answer scripts produced by the 40 selected students in the LEE. Table 5.23 and Table 5.24 below present the analysis of the experimental and control groups' answer scripts in which the students were required to answer two questions in one hour. In the LEE, question 1 was a guided writing task and students had to write a paragraph of about 130-150 words using information given in a graph (Employment growth in different GCC countries, Oman, the UAE and Bahrain). In their paragraph, they were instructed to include a topic sentence, supporting details and a concluding sentence. Moreover, they had to use appropriate signal words wherever necessary. Ten marks were allocated for question 1. Question 2, which was a free-writing task, asked of the students to write an essay of about 150-180 words on the **'Causes and effects of living in a city rather than living in a village'** including a topic sentence, supporting details and a conclusion. Similar to the first question, the students were

required to use signal words where necessary. Question 2 carried 15 marks (see Appendix B).

Table 5.23. Descriptive statistics of the LEE T-unit analysis.

| Mann-Whitney Test | | | | |
| Ranks | | | | |
	Group	N = 40	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
V1 (Number of words per composition)	Experimental group	20	28.9	578
	Control group	20	12.1	242
V2 (Number of sentences per composition)	Experimental group	20	25.95	519
	Control group	20	15.05	301
V3 (Number of T-Units per composition)	Experimental group	20	25.22	504.5
	Control group	20	15.77	315.5
V4 (Error-free T-Units per composition)	Experimental group	20	29.92	598.5
	Control group	20	11.07	221.5
V5 (T-unit length)	Experimental group	20	26.2	524
	Control group	20	14.8	296

Table 5.24. Non-parametric statistics of pre-test T-unit analysis

Test Statistics					
	V1	V2*	V3*	V4	V5*
Mann-Whitney U	32	91	105.5	11.5	86
Wilcoxon W	242	301	315.5	221.5	296
Z	-4.55	-2.96	-2.57	-5.11	-3.09
Asymptotic Significance- (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Exact Significance- [2*(1-tailed Significance.)]	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
A	Not corrected for ties.				
B	Grouping Variable: Experimental/Control				

As noted above, a Mann-Whitney test was conducted to establish whether the context-specific materials designed in line with the principles of the process genre approach had an impact on the experimental groups' academic writing fluency. The Mann-Whitney test indicated that the number of words per composition was significantly different between the experimental ($M = 28.9$) and control groups ($M = 12.1$), $U = 32$, $p = .01$ in the LEE, with the experimental group outperforming the control group. Likewise, the number of sentences per composition was greater for the experimental ($M = 25.95$) than the control group ($M = 15.05$), $U = 91$, $p = .01$. The T-unit length was also greater for the experimental ($M = 26.2$) than for the control group ($M = 14.8$), $U = 86$, $p = .01$.

5.6. Findings related to the third research question

The third research question was concerned with whether the context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, had improved academic writing accuracy of the experimental group as measured by the T-Unit analysis. The third research question was.

Does the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students improve academic writing accuracy as measured by the T-unit analysis?

This research question addressed the effects of the context-specific writing materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, on the accuracy of tertiary level students' academic writing in the target language. A number of authors (Larsen-Freeman, 1978; Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 2001) have defined writing accuracy in terms of error-free T-unit ratio (EFT/T) in which the EFT/T is calculated as the total number of error-free T-units in a given piece of writing divided by the total number of T-units (how to calculate the error-free T-unit ratio is discussed in 5.2.4 above). Some researchers have found that EFF/T to be one of the most effective measures of accuracy (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 2001). Therefore, the EFT/T was chosen as the unit to measure accuracy in this study.

5.6.1. T-unit analysis of students' writing accuracy in the pre-test and in the LEE

The same set of answer scripts extracted from the pre-test and the LEE (as discussed in research question 2) were used to calculate the error-free T-unit ratio. A Mann-Whitney U-test was conducted to establish whether the context-specific materials and the process genre approach had an impact on the experimental group's academic writing accuracy. The descriptive statistics indicating the mean number of error-free T-units in the writing of the experimental and control groups (as they occurred in the pre-test and in the LEE) are presented in Table 5.25, and the results of the Mann-Whitney U tests are given in Table 5.26.

Table 5.25. Non-parametric descriptive statistics of pre-test and LEE Error–Free T-unit ratio analysis

Mann Whitney U-test		Rank		
	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Pre-test	Experimental	20	21.20	424.00
	Control	20	19.80	396.00
	Total	40		
LEE	Experimental	20	26.85	537.00
	Control	20	14.15	283.00
	Total	40		

Table 5.26. Non-parametric statistics of pre-test and LEE Error-Free T-unit ratio analysis

Test Statistics[a]	PRE-TEST	LEE
	Experimental - Control	Experimental - Control
Mann Whitney U	186.00	88.00
Wilcoxon W	396.00	298.00
Z	-.381	-3.036
Asymptotic Significance-(2-tailed)	.704	.001
Exact Significance- [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.718[b]	.002[b]
a Grouping variable: Experimental and Control		
b Not corrected for ties		

As can be seen from the above results, in the pre-test, there was no significant difference between the error-free T-unit ratio (EFT/T) in the experimental (M = 21.20) and control (M = 19.80) groups before the intervention (U = 186, p = .704). Thus, the students in both the experimental and control groups had similar proficiency with regards to writing accuracy at the beginning of the study.

In the LEE, a comparison of the mean scores between the experimental (M = 26.85) and control group (M = 14.15) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups (U = 88, p = .001). Given the significance of the results in the LEE, it can be concluded that the experimental group improved more in writing accuracy than the control group due to the writing intervention.

5.6.2. Qualitative analysis of students' writing fluency in the LEE

Consider the writing sample in Figure 5.4 below, which was extracted from the experimental group:

There are several causes and effects of living in cities rather than living in villages. First, I will describe about the causes of living in cities. One reason is that cities have a better transport facilities than villages have. For example, in a city, we find public transport service such as buses and trains which are cheap. ~~and~~ But in most villages, people don't have proper transports facilities Therefore, people have to walk a long way to get to a city. Second reason is that people can find jobs in cities whereas in villages, they cannot find jobs because there are no big companies or factories. Third reason why most people like to live in cities rather than in villages is education. Most of the better schools both government and private are in the cities. Therefore, people move to cities so that they can get a good education. In villages, schools do not have facilities such as teachers, labs and libraries.
    As you can see from the causes above, I can conclude that there are several causes why people want to live in a city rather than ~~live~~ living in a village.

Figure 5.4. A sample of a student's writing in the LEE (experimental group)

A close analysis of this writing sample revealed that the student has included relevant arguments to support the topic sentence, even though the topic sentence is directly stated. The conclusion provided to the first part of the cause and effect paragraph

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is quite well-thought out and the signal words are adequately used. Overall organisation of the paragraph shows evidence of the production of complex sentence forms and grammatical errors are minimal. The writer uses relevant vocabulary, which suggests competence in the target language and which improves the fluency of the text. The passage has 189 words and 13 T-units (14.53 words per T-unit). According to Hunt's (1965) categorisation, 12th graders' average is 14.40 words per T-unit (where the 12th grader is a native English-speaking student). Therefore, given the T-unit length, it can be concluded that this student is quite fluent in writing.

The writing sample which appears below was written by a student from the control group as an answer to the writing question in the LEE exam. It was extracted from LEE (Writing).

There are many several causes and effects of living in cities rather than in Villages. The first cause is that the improvement in the cities. There are many developr like the streas ,houses, Sarrves and many things. The socend cause is that the educations, parks, health and communcate sarves is better than from the villages, So the people immgret from the village to the cities. The thaird cause is that the cities give the people more oppereunty jobs than the villages give to their people. They womt to work and get the salary to improve their life.

Now, I will descrip the effects. The first effect is that the villages will be look like empty conry. The second effec is that the years will going up and the villago will be more empty, So the cities will have more traffec jam. The cars will increas and also the houses will increas. The thaird effect is that the pollution will be every where becaus of factories will be more. Also there will be no jobs to the people when they come more and living in the cities.

All in All, from the discreption the people rather to live in the cities because there are better life to them from the villages.

Figure 5.5. A sample of a student's writing in the Level-Exit Exam (control group)

A scrutiny reveals that the student has a clear point of view with regards to the cause and effect paragraph but not all the supporting details are linked together well. There is quite a lot of relevant vocabulary but most words are spelt incorrectly, which makes it hard to understand the exact message the text conveys. Even though the signal words have been used, the coherence of the text is distorted in that several grammatical errors and poor expressions are found. The passage has 209 words and 19 T-units, with

11 words per T-unit. According to Hunt's (1965) categorization 8th graders average is 11.50 words per T-unit. Therefore, given the T-unit length, it can be concluded that this student, from the control group, whose writing sample appears above is less fluent and less accurate in writing than the student from the experimental group.

5.6.3. Qualitative analysis of students' writing accuracy

Discussing the strengths of using qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis in a research, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) wrote that using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis can add insights and understanding that might be missed when only a single method is used. Therefore, as stated in Section 4.3.3.3 in the chapter 4, in order to measure the constructs of fluency and accuracy of study groups, writing samples extracted from the LEE were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively because the researcher believed that using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis provide stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In this section, writing samples extracted from the experimental and control groups (from the pre-tests, writing assignments and the LEE) are presented, with the goal of illustrating the nature of EFL writing and the kinds of errors produced by the participants, both before and after the intervention. The analysis of these extracts will be descriptive and qualitative, in the sense that a range of linguistic errors produced by the students will be identified and described.

Table 5.27. Extracts from students' pre-test writings

Experimental group	Control group
Student A: "The internet is very importent in the wreld. Firest of all, students use internt a lot because give some information about all thing."	**Student A:** "The internet is very important. The internet is very eyes for my. When I need some information I using the internet."
Student B: "Internet is very important in every where because it is give every one a lot of information and ideas about any things.	**Student B:** "the internet very good do students. the internet help the any wan."
Student C: "Internet is very importan in the life. I am using internet in facebook, Messenger and whatsapp."	**Student C:** "Internet is very important in the life. I'm using internet like: Facebook, messenger, BBM and whatsapp."
Student D: "My opinion about this is I think it is no problem to use internet because when students sarch about something they can use."	**Student D:** "Internet is a good tehlologe. I use internet a lot of study because it is give me information in short time."

A scrutiny of the writing extracts revealed that most students in both groups could not compose error free sentences in the pre-test. The clear majority of students tended to make errors in the following areas (linguistic examples are extracted from students' writing samples from the pre-test and from assignments):

Table 5.28. Linguistic examples with errors extracted from students' writing samples
from the pre-test and written assignments

Subject-verb agreement	i. *The villages is more quite than cities.* ii. *This bar graph show us the employment growth in different Asian countries.* iii. *In 2013, there is about 38 thousands employees in Oman.* iv. *In the cities some people gets simple job and some people gets to make difficult jobs.* v. *As we can see, all countires are gos up employees in 2013.*
Wrong tense or verb form	i. *In the year 2012, the number of employees is increase between Oman and UAE.* ii. *There have a lot of cars and a lot of people.* iii. *In Oman, employment growth go up about 56 thousands.* iv. *When I need some information, I using the internet.* v. *Also the Bahrain has increases in different years.*
Spelling errors	i. *You can see buttefl plasis and the roed is cleing.* ii. *in the cit have different new cars, whil, in the villge different taipes old cars.* iii. *Also in cities has road that is eisy to commuicat with others.* iv. *Some people thing the cities are comfortable mor than the villages.* vi. *In the cities very craodet and every where very craodet.*
Sentence fragment-	i. *The life in village is very hard and difficult because /*

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(a) No subject	*no job.*
	ii. The villages are very small, so / don't have big colleges or universities.
	iii. A lot of people working in cities because / get a lot of money.
	iv. I use internet a lot because/ chatting with my friend.
	v. Finally, use the internet very important, but they shouldn't use it in a lot of time.
Sentence fragment- **(b) No complete verb**	*i. In cities, people have to buy water, but in villages, they/ not.*
	ii. The internet / very good to students.
	iii. I think internet / important for students but they /careful use.
	iv. A lot of students using internet because it / information.
	v. There also some effects when you living in cities.
Missing pronoun	*i. When he needs anything / will go to supermarket.*
	ii. A lot of people come to the city because so / has a big population.
	iii. Al-Hayat Muscat hotel has 30 rooms but / has no swimming pool.
	iv. I have 2 years experience as an engineer and / now working at Oman Telecom Company.
	v. When you watch too much TV, / can affect your eyes.

In addition to those common errors found in students' writing in the pre-test in both of experimental and control groups, there were cases relating to misuse of punctuation marks which are not described here in detail. Students who used to write simple sentences with no linking words gradually learnt that ideas should be linked using linking words so as to express a complete idea.

Table 5.29. Extracts from students' LEE writings

Experimental group	Control group
Student A: "This bar graph shows of the employment growth in different GCC countries. The x-axis shows with years and the y-axis with number of employees. In 2012, the UAE had the highest number of employees which is about 50 thousands. But the lowest number of employees is from Bahrain which is about 6 thousand."	**Student A:** "This graph shows chaing of employment growth between 2012 to 2014 in differen country Oman, UAE and Bahrain. The main number of employees was 50000 in UAE 2012."
Student B: "Most people like to live in cities for several cause. First of all, people like to like to live in cities because they can get many facilities and service such as transport and shopping. Cities have modern building, roads, shops and parks unlike in village".	**Student B:** "There are several causes and effects of living in cities rether than in villages. Firstly, the first causes of living in cities than villages the services, I think the services in the cities are more good than the services in the villages."
Student C:	**Student C: Extract from the middle of the paragraph)**

There are several causes and effect of living in cities rather than in villages. First of all, the services in the cities are better than the villages, for exmple cities have hospital, modene shoping mels, many college and university, good school. On the other hand, some villages don't have good schools, colleges or hospitel."	"Secondly, in the cities has jobs more than the village. In the village not has a big shops and if they want any thing go the cities."
Student D: (Extracted from the middle part of the paragraph) "There are many effects of living in cities rather than in villages. One of the most important effects is that people feel comfortable when they live in cities because in village they feel uncomfortable. Another effect is people can get jobs and earn money easy than villages.	**Student D:** "The causes living in villages is not good. Because don't have hospital or shop bilding. every people in villages you need something go to cities. New I will discrib effects. The first effects is we living good live in cities."

It is evident from the writing samples cited above (Table 5.30) that students in the experimental group made substantive improvements in linguistic accuracy from the pre-test to the post-test. As can be seen from the writing extracts above, it is, moreover, evident that the students in the experimental group made fewer of the linguistic errors in the LEE exam than the students in the control group. Based on the evidence above, it can be said that the control group still makes the same kinds of errors that they made in the pre-test. The possible reasons why the students in the control group fail to achieve writing accuracy is discussed in Section 5.2.7.

5.7. Discussion of the findings

5.7.1. Discussion of the findings related to the first research question and the two-sub questions related to the first research question.

As noted above, the first research question examined whether the context-specific materials, designed in line with the process genre approach, helped tertiary level students to perform better in academic writing in an examination setting. In order to answer the first question, the researcher hypothesised that the application of context-specific materials will help tertiary level students to perform better in academic writing in an examination setting as measured by the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology. In addition, two related questions, which are treated as sub-questions of the first research questions enquired whether the success of the intervention programme applied in this study depend on the instructor and whether the students who had a lot of exposure to English (including reading, accessing the internet

and additional English instruction) performed better after the intervention than students who had little exposure to English.

It needs to be emphasised at the outset that even though the participants for the current study were randomly allocated to Level 3 by the Registration Department of the College using a computer program, their proficiency levels in writing were not determined before they were assigned to the experimental and control groups. According to the descriptive statistics as shown in Table 5.1 for the experimental and control groups, there is a statistically significant difference (α = .05) between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups' writing performances across the three tests (pre-test, MSE and LEE). As described above, this difference of mean scores can be ascribed to the instructional procedure used with the experimental group (The experimental group was taught using context-specific materials and the adapted process genre approach while the control group was instructed using the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*). As discussed in Chapter 4, the study participants were divided into four study groups (i.e. two experimental groups and two control groups) – this was done since the pre-existing classes at Shinas College consisted of 30 students, and the researcher wanted to include at least 60 participants in each group. Furthermore, this design allowed the researcher to control for the possible influence of the instructor on the outcome of the study, as the researcher taught one control group and one experimental group, while o another lecturer taught the other control group and experimental group. In order to instruct the control groups, both the researcher and the other lecturer used the teaching procedure suggested in the prescribed textbook. As described in Chapter 4, in order to evaluate writing skills, the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre (see Appendices C and D) were used and the tests (Pre, MSE and LEE) papers of both experimental and control groups were rated by two moderators. At the end of the study, the experimental group's scores on the pre-test, MSE and LEE were contrasted with the scores of the pre-test, MSE and LEE of the control group.

The descriptive test results as shown in Table 5.1 revealed that the two study groups were similar in their writing proficiency at the beginning of the study because the mean scores of the experimental group (*M* = 10.88, *SD* = 1.67), and control group (*M* = 10.38, *SD* = 1.60) were not significantly different at (α = .05). The inferential statistics as shown in Tables 5.5 indicate that the means between the experimental group (*M* = 10.88, *SD* =1.67) and control group (*M* = 10.38, *SD* = 1.60); *t* (118) = 1.67, *p* = .097 were not significantly different in the pre-test. However, the mean differences between the

experimental group ($M = 14.78$, $SD = 2.46$) and the control group ($M = 11.80$, $SD = 1.94$); t (118) = 7.33, p = .001 were significant in the MSE. There was also a significant difference in the mean scores between the experimental group $(M = 16.74$, $SD = 2.44)$ and the control group ($M = 12.15$, $SD = 2.18$); t (118) = 10.84, p = .001 in the LEE. The results above confirm that there was a significant effect of the context-specific materials on the performance of the experimental group across the two tests Therefore, given the positive results emerged from descriptive and inferential statistics, the first hypothesis which the researcher formed that "the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, help tertiary level students to perform better in academic writing in an examination setting, as measured by the writing rubrics of the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology" can be accepted. Concerning the two sub-questions of the first research question, the researcher formed the following two hypotheses: that the success of the intervention programme applied in this study depended on the instructor and that the students who had a lot of exposure to English (including reading, accessing the internet and additional English instruction) would perform better after the intervention than students who had little exposure to or interest in English. The multivariate test results indicated that there was a main effect for instructor in the LEE, suggesting that the participants in the different instructor groups obtained different results in the LEE (i.e. participants instructed by Instructor 1 fared better than participants instructed by Instructor 2). However, the instructor played no significant role in the outcome of the MSE. Furthermore, it should be noted that both the experimental groups outperformed the control groups, even though they were instructed by different teachers. Thus, while there is some support for the hypothesis that the success of the instruction in this study depended on the instructor, there is also evidence that the utilisation of the learning materials will yield significant effects, regardless of the instructor. The hypothesis is thus rejected.

As can be seen from the descriptive statistics shown in Table 5.1 and the results from an Independent Samples t-test (Table 5.17) above, it can be concluded that the high interest and high exposure to English group had benefited more from the intervention than the low interest and low exposure to English group. Based on the results above, the sub-hypothesis, that students in the experimental group who had a lot of exposure to English (including reading, accessing the internet and additional English instruction) would perform better than students who had little exposure to English can be accepted.

These results leave us with a message that EFL learners should be encouraged to expose themselves to language input whenever and wherever possible.

The overall findings can be explained as resulting from the implementation of the teaching materials designed by the researcher. According to Allwright (1990), materials should teach students to learn and students learn what is presented in the materials. Given the views as stated by Allwright (1990), the context-specific materials (see Appendix I) which the researcher developed and used to instruct the experimental group were helpful in that the students were engaged in the writing process both individually at some stages, and collaboratively at other stages. Therefore, the context-specific materials helped learners to generate ideas in the pre-writing stage through discussions on topics and composing multiple drafts. Likewise, the feedback from their peers and teachers made the students focus on the recursive nature of writing. As explicitly discussed in Chapter 4, in designing the context-specific materials, care was taken to ensure that the developed materials provided students with ample opportunities to practice their writing. Both psychological theories of skill acquisition and second language acquisition theories suggest that considerable practice is required to automatise a skill (DeKeyser, 2007). Therefore, given the theoretical underpinnings and the research evidence from studies conducted into skill acquisition by a number of researchers (Anderson, Fincham, & Douglass, 1997; Singley & Anderson, 1989), the additional writing activities which the researcher developed and used with the experimental group were interactive in that they exposed the students to various writing strategies such as organising, outlining, drafting, revising, analysing and free writing (Lavelle & Bushrow, 2007; Spack, 1988). Moreover, given the importance of teaching writing strategies to learners, some writing strategies were incorporated in the design of teaching materials used with the study.

Essentially, the students' improvement in academic writing can be ascribed to the adapted process genre model of writing which was the methodology which the researcher used to instruct the experimental group. As described and discussed, the positive effects of process genre approach to teaching writing in EFL class in the Chapter 3, the researcher found that the five stages (pre-writing, composing, rereading and revising, peer editing and teacher feedback were very useful in allowing learners to work on a given task collaboratively sharing their ideas, views and opinions relevant to the topic at hand. The participants in the experimental group were given the freedom of choice in that they were free to join with any group or any partner to brainstorm the topic, discuss issues with the group members, write the first draft, re-read and revise it and then write a second draft

and receive peer feedback. When students were engaged in the process, they found that they were not alone and their contribution to the writing task was cooperative that triggered their inner senses to build up self-efficacy of their own. Self-efficacy is the belief that you are capable of carrying out a specific task or of reaching a specific goal (Bandura, 1977). According to Bong and Skaalvik (2003), self-efficacy is assumed to be a self-concept which can sometimes influence motivation. According to motivational theories, the construct of interest can be regarded as important aspect of motivation. Hidi and Renniger (2006) believe that when students learn from interest, they tend to devote more attention to the topic than when they learn form effort. This claim appeared to be true with the participants in the experimental group because the context-specific materials included videos, pictures, graphics and *PowerPoint* presentations which were not only relevant to the topics of the lessons but also explicitly catered to the students' linguistic needs. For example, when the researcher was teaching how to describe a process of doing or making something, the students were first shown a video which demonstrated the steps of boiling an egg. After watching the video, students could talk about the steps before writing them down using sequence words.

Another important feature of the process genre approach which the researcher noticed was that it helped learners to sustain their interest throughout the lesson. This was again possible due to the fact that when delivering a lesson in line with the process genre approach, for each stage, students were given a time limit and after the time limit, they were required to move to the next stage in which they were supposed to do a different activity. For example, after writing the first draft, the whole class should stop writing and move to reading their first draft silently. Thus, in each stage, the students were supposed to engage in a different part of the core activity and this movement from one part of the activity to another helped them to remain interested as well as engaged in the activity throughout the lesson.

One of the most crucial aspects of the process genre approach is the peer-editing process, in which students find an audience to respond to their work immediately after their writing is completed. Many studies support the idea that peer review can be extremely effective for a variety of reasons when used correctly (Cheung, 2011; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Paulus, 1999), especially when students are trained on how to give and use feedback (Min, 2006). Teachers can incorporate it as a way to present writing skills to students, ideally creating a student-centered classroom with learners capable of critically evaluating their own written work (Braine, 2003). As Gao (2007) has stated that it is

mandatory for students to have a criterion in the form of a structured feedback form or checklist to be filled or checked off. In this study, criteria in the form of a checklist were included in the materials and the furthermore the researcher modelled a peer-edition session before students were asked to do peer-editing. Therefore, the students did not find any difficulty in carrying out the peer-editing tasks for each writing activity they were supposed to do. Immediate feedback for students' writing is generally not received in contexts where the product approach is used for classroom instruction. Moreover, in the process genre approach, students tend to receive different levels of feedback in that students get to understand what area in the text needs clarification and elaboration to make it more sensible. As Williams (2005) has indicated that peer feedback provides student writers with a relatively low-risk environment where they can try out things without losing their confidence on one the hand, and on the other, students get a feeling that no one is a perfect writer and writing one or two drafts will not make them perfect writers. At the very beginning of the study, some male students in the experimental group had the misconception that female students were better in writing than male students. However, during peer-feedback, this misconception was disproved and both sexes realised that they equally make mistakes in their writing. The researcher noticed that such feelings among both sexes boosted a strong morale in ways that both female and male students began to take extra care of their work not to lose their face in front of their opposite sex. At the beginning, both male and female students' feedback was limited to surface errors and sometimes their suggestions were vague. However, this began to change as they progressed. Providing feedback to each other can be considered as a form of interaction which is thought to be a necessary condition for L2 acquisition (Gass & Tores, 2005). When learners engage in providing feedback to each other, they mostly tend to speak, read and listen to other ideas and thus a condition like this can help learners to develop all skills, not just writing. Therefore, this kind of development can be regarded as additional benefits of peer-responses. Given the positive results in respect of peer-feedback emerged from this study, it can be stated that providing students with ample opportunities to actively engage in peer-feedback can possibly help students writers to improve their proficiency in the target language to a satisfactory level.

5.7.2. Discussion of the findings related to the second and third research questions

L2 performance and L2 writing proficiency are believed to be multi-componential in nature and their principle dimensions can be adequately captured by measuring the constructs of complexity, accuracy and fluency (Ellis, 2003; Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). Therefore, complexity, accuracy and fluency are used as both performance indicators and descriptors in both oral and written assessment of language learners (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). However, in the current study, the constructs of accuracy and fluency are used to measure the participants' progress across the study. The findings related to both the second and third research questions will be discussed together in this section, the reason being that in applied linguistic research, fluency and accuracy constructs are investigated together even though they are regarded as two constructs. It should be noted at the outset of this discussion that the researcher cannot account for any individual differences in terms of writing fluency of the participants, because they were not selected based on any criterion. To a certain extent, it will always be unpredictable how a group of students would fare in a given language test since they would have different individual experiences, aptitudes and cognitive abilities at the beginning of a study program.

As stated above, the second research question examined whether the context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach helped tertiary level students to improve their academic writing fluency as measured by T-unit analysis. The study provides evidence in support of the hypothesis that the developed context-specific materials will help tertiary level student to improve academic writing fluency, as measured by T-unit analysis. A Mann-Whitney U-test was conducted which revealed that, before the teaching intervention, the experimental and control groups were not significantly different in terms of *the number of words per composition*. However, *the number of sentences per composition* and *T-unit per composition* were greater for the control group than the experimental group. Meanwhile, the *T-unit length* was greater for the experimental groups. As hinted at the beginning of the discussion, these results indicated that the different groups had fluency in different writing areas during the pre-test phase. The control group performed better in some aspects of writing fluency proficiency than the experimental group while the experimental group performed better in other aspects of writing fluency than the control group. These differences more or less show that the students were randomly assigned to groups.

In the LEE, the results from the Mann-Whitney test (Table 5.25) indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in all fluency

measures (*i.e. the number of words per composition, the number of sentences per composition, error free T-unit and the T-unit length*). Even though the control group seemed somewhat more advanced in some areas of writing in the pre-test, the experimental group outperformed the control group in writing fluency in the LEE. This finding can be mainly explained by referring to the instructional method used in the current study. Research on second-language acquisition over the past few decades has seen a proliferation of quasi-experimental and experimental studies that address the effectiveness of various instructional treatments in L2 classrooms (Doughty & Williams, 1998). Long (1983) concluded that instruction makes a difference in L2 acquisition, when compared with naturalistic exposure. According to Sharwood Smith (1993), the theoretical premise of any instructional intervention should be to effect changes in learners' focal attention when they are processing the L2, so as to increase the likelihood that certain linguistic features are noticed (Schmidt, 1997) and eventually acquired. Norris and Ortega (2000), furthermore, argue that certain instructional techniques, which contextualise the new L2 material within meaningful episodes in a manner that is relatively unobtrusive but salient enough for further cognitive processing, may help learners direct their attention to the relevant features in the input, and thus may expedite the acquisition process. According to the theoretical premise suggested by the authors above concerning the effectiveness of various instructional treatments in EFL classrooms, the present study used context-specific materials where students could work either as a group, pair or as individual. When students dealt with writing activities as suggested in the materials, they needed to brainstorm about the topic under discussion before the actual phase of writing began. This is where learners cognitively process information they gather from various sources (such as discussions with fellow students, books or the internet). Thus, once the students gathered the required information relevant to a specific topic, they can move on to the composing phase. The current study thus contributes to the research domain where experimental and quasi-experimental studies are conducted to investigate the effectiveness of various instructional interventions in EFL and ESL contexts.

The third research question in the current study addressed the effects of the context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, on the accuracy of tertiary level students' academic writing in the target language. Overall, the findings related to the third research question suggests that the hypothesis postulated at the beginning of the study (that the context-specific materials, designed on the basis of

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the process genre approach will help tertiary level students to improve academic writing accuracy) can be accepted. The Mann-Whitney U test results as shown in the Tables 5.26 and 5.27 above confirm that the context-specific materials and the process genre approach helped the experimental group to improve academic writing accuracy as measured by T-unit analysis. The data, moreover, revealed that in the pre-test the two study groups (experimental and control) were not significantly different in writing accuracy. However, a comparison of the results between experimental and control groups revealed that the results were significantly different in the LEE. Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental group improved more in writing accuracy than the control group in the LEE due to the instructional procedure which included the context-specific materials designed on the basis of the process genre approach.

The results of the current study agree with the findings obtained by similar studies in the field, including those of Chelli and Hassinia (2012) Abd-ElFattah (2013), Nordin, Halib and Ghazadi's (2010), Jackson (2012), Foo (2007) and Nihayah's (2009). Chelli and Hassinia (2012) showed that the process genre approach helped the experimental group in their study to make more gains than the control group in the post-test in terms of both writing fluency and accuracy. Likewise, the current study supports the results obtained by Abd-ElFattah (2013) who found that the process genre approach was effective in developing and improving students' writing performance in terms of fluency and accuracy in an EFL context. Nordin, Halib and Ghazadi's (2010) investigated the development of writing skills (both fluency and accuracy) of engineering students and found that the experimental group, which was taught using the process genre approach, improved significantly more in writing fluency and accuracy than the control group which was instructed using the genre approach. The current study also corroborates with Jackson (2012) who reported that the experimental group's average scores increased from 56% to 60% from the pre-test to the post-test showing an improvement in fluency and accuracy. Jackson employed Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) combined with the process genre approach to teach the experimental group in his study. The findings of the current study are also consistent with the findings of Foo's (2007) study which indicated that the experimental group (which was instructed using the process genre approach) showed a greater improvement than the control group in communicating ideas relevant to the purpose of the writing task fluently and accurately. Finally, findings of the current study corroborate the views of Nihayah (2009), who suggested that her study group which was instructed with the process genre approach showed a greater improvement than the

control group in mean scores from 1.29 to 3.15 on content, from 1.62 to 3.01 in organisation and from 1.55 to 2.98 on language use. Content and language use can be considered as aspects of writing fluency while language use mainly concerns accuracy.

A qualitative analysis of a couple of sample texts from both the experimental and control groups were also undertaken, and a qualitative description of the kinds of errors found in the writing of the students was provided. From these analyses and descriptions, it was clear that the texts from students in the experimental groups improved more in terms of quality (fluency and accuracy) than the texts produced by the students in the control group. The possible reasons for this kind of improvement in the experimental group can be attributed to the context-specific materials because a number of linguistic examples and activities relevant to correct use of language were included in the materials. Furthermore, the instructional procedure used with the students in the experimental group was interactive and engaging in that the students were provided with language input that was compelling.

Concerning the quality of writings by the students in the control group, it was evident that, a clear majority of students did not make similar improvements compared to the students in the experimental group. However, some students in the control group demonstrated a sound improvement in fluency from the pre-test to the posttest but with limited improvement in accuracy. It was, furthermore, found that students in the control group made a considerable number of linguistic errors and that the organisation of the ideas in their writing was weak; as a result, their ideas were not communicated well. One of the possible reasons why the participants in the control group continued to make linguistic errors can be ascribed to their L1 (Arabic) interference as discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2 in 2.6.1). The four most problematic grammatical features of English for Arabic-speaking students are verbs, prepositions, articles, and relative clauses (Scott & Tucker, 1974; Beck, 1979). The writing sample as shown in Figure 5.5 provides evidence to support the findings of the researchers (Mukattash 1981; Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ružić, 1983; Abboud et al. 1975) who conducted studies on different types of errors that Arabic learners make when writing in English.

Naturally, in both the experimental and control groups, there was individual variation in terms of writing performance in the LEE, but the samples of writing drawn from the experimental and control groups above provide evidence in support of the quantitative results which suggested that the experimental group performed significantly

better in the LEE than the control group. More examples of students' writing are included in Appendices J and K.

5.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter presented the findings of the study, which aimed at investigating the effects of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach in enhancing academic writing proficiency of tertiary level students. The statistical analyses confirmed that the experimental group's writing proficiency had improved significantly more than the control groups. A multivariate analysis of variation indicated that there was a significant main effect for group in the MSE as well as in the LEE. However, there was no main effect for instructor in this test. Therefore, it was concluded that the intervention strategy employed here was effective in enhancing academic writing proficiency of tertiary level students, regardless of the instructor that delivers the intervention. Given the results that emerged from the current study, factors that contributed to the results were discussed for the three research questions posed in Chapter 1

The instructional materials which included context-specific materials delivered through the process genre approach were not only more effective in improving EFL tertiary level students' writing scores in a test setting but it also had a sustained effect, in the sense that students in the experimental group also performed significantly better in the final examination. The results of Mann Whitney U-tests indicated that participants in the experimental group improved more in academic writing fluency and accuracy than the control group. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the context-specific materials delivered through the proposed process genre approach are more effective in improving EFL tertiary level students' academic writing proficiency in the target language than using only an academic writing text book. Based on the findings pertaining to the social variables, it can be established that the participants in the intervention group with high interest and high exposure to English performed better than participants with a low interest and low exposure to English. These findings suggest that EFL learners should be provided with more opportunities to expose themselves to language input whenever and wherever possible in social contexts.

CHAPTER 6
THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents the researcher's contribution to theory building in the field of ESL/EFL writing instruction and highlights the pedagogical implications of the study, based on the significance of the findings presented in Chapter 5. An adapted process genre model to writing is conceptualised and proposed. The proposed process genre model includes the possible language input sources and how the process genre model operates in academic writing tasks. An explanation of the interaction patterns between the language input sources received by an individual and the process of writing (by that same individual) at each stage are provided. This chapter concludes with a description of how the current study bridges knowledge gaps in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing.

6.1. Conceptualising a framework for adapting the process genre approach

The current study was conducted to establish whether context-specific writing materials, designed in line with the principles of the process genre approach and delivered in an EFL context, will have a positive effect on writing proficiency and whether this will help tertiary level EFL students to perform better in an examination setting. The literature provides no clear answers as to whether such materials will help students to write fluently and accurately in an examination setting. Theorists who developed the process genre approach assume that if students are instructed based on genres and have had the opportunity to analyse and manipulate model examples, then they should be able to compose more effectively in a given writing task (Badger & White, 2000) However, this assumption has not been tested systematically in the context of EFL tertiary level students composing their writing in an examination setting.

Instructional materials in any given language program play a very important role and is generally considered the second most important factor in EFL classrooms after the teacher (Riazi, 2003). Given the pedagogical value of materials as indicated by Riazi (2003) and other authors (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & John, 1998), I decided to use context-specific materials that would enhance my learners' academic writing proficiency by engaging them in the process genre approach to writing. The common assertion concerning the organisation and presentation of materials is that it should follow a logical order which helps learners take part in various stages of a task at hand. Thus, combining the process genre approach and context-specific materials in an

instructional approach should theoretically assist students to write better and faster in an examination setting. However, it was not possible for me to find any empirical studies that could corroborate this theoretical assumption.

The researcher designed a quasi-experimental study in which an experimental and a control group (each consisting of 60 participants) were included. The intervention with the experimental group entailed the use of specifically designed writing materials for a period of 28 weeks (78 hours of instruction). The findings of the current study were positive in that they supported the research hypothesis that context-specific materials designed on the basis of the process genre approach will help tertiary level students to perform better in an examination setting. The students in the experimental group obtained significantly higher scores in the LEE, and following the intervention program, academic writing fluency and accuracy in this group were higher than in the control group.

Given the findings of my study, I now present my conceptualised framework for a process genre model for EFL/ESL classroom (see Figure 6.8 below). My discussion will centre around four specific questions about writing and the process genre approach. These questions are as follows:

1. What do we know about the writing development and writing abilities of learners?

2. What do we need to know about approaches to writing?

3. Why is it important to consider the process genre approach when designing materials for a L2 writing intervention program?

4. How does my study contribute to existing knowledge in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing?

6.2. What do we know about the writing development and writing abilities of learners?

In Chapter 2, learners' development of writing skills at different stages of their life was discussed. This section will focus on how writing development happens in EFL/ESL tertiary level students with reference to my conceptualised framework.

One noticeable theoretical contribution of writing intervention research is that it can potentially increase our understanding of what learners are capable of (Graham & Harris, 2014). This, in turn, can expand the conceptualisation of writing development in a variety of contexts and under different circumstances. For instance, the Common Core State Standards (2010, cited in Graham & Harris, 2014), which (at the time) described the writing standards for learners in the United States, indicated that learners in the third

grade "should be able to write an opinion that introduces the topic, states their opinion, provides reasons to support the opinion, uses linking words to connect opinion and reasons, and provides a concluding statement" (p.95). However, it was found that this benchmark was too low (Harris, Lane, Driscoll, Graham, Wilson, Sandmel, Brindle & Schatschneider, 2012), in that even weaker writers managed to produce writing which include all of the elements mentioned above (i.e. state an opinion and give a reason that supports the opinion), as well as elaborate on the nature of each reason. As such, the standard underestimated grade three learners' writing ability in the United States.

The data gathered from the pre-test in the present study suggest that it would be incorrect to assume that tertiary students will be at a certain (expected) level of writing given that they have had many years of exposure to English as a second/foreign language. Moreover, it would seem that the duration of exposure to English is also no guarantee that students will write at an expected level. In fact, the qualitative analysis of a sub-set of writing samples from the pre-test suggested that tertiary students in this study are unlikely to meet the writing standard as described in the Oman Academic Standards for General Foundation Programs (which, as described in Chapter 1, states that students (in the general foundation program) should be able to write a text of a minimum of 250 words, showing control of layout, organisation, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary). Although this was not the main here, the researcher got the impression that these existing standards overestimate Omani students' ability in the foundation level. Therefore, it seems important, in an ESL/EFL context at tertiary level, to determine the starting (i.e. the developmental point) of the majority of the students in terms of writing ability. In other words, a crucial factor that needs to be considered in the development of any materials using the process genre approach is that the starting point of ESL/EFL student may be vastly different, depending on the context, and thus a one-size-fits-all approach (such as using a prescribed text book) is not necessarily the best option. Furthermore, it should be clear that the design of the context-specific materials should ideally be informed by factors such as the developmental level of students because a majority of tertiary EFL students are, for whatever reason, still in the *developing* or *transitional* stage of writing. Therefore, the writing instructor has to take this matter into account when designing teaching materials.

Essentially, it seems to be the case that existing writing standards and expectations are not always in line with what students are capable of at different ages and levels, in that such standards can either under- or overestimate learners' abilities. Hence, writing

instructors should never assume that students' performance will be at a specific pre-determined level. If setting writing standards are problematic even in an environment where the majority of learners use English as L1), then it is likely that setting writing standards for learners writing in a L2 will be even more difficult. While a lot of variability in terms of writing capabilities is to be expected (Rijlaarsdam, Van den Bergh, Couzijn, Janssen, Braaksma, Tillema, Van Steendam & Reedts, 2012), writing intervention studies can assist us to better predict and understand what students can achieve in specific contexts, and to be more realistic in terms of our expectations. In this particular study, undertaking the intervention was motivated by students' struggle to attain the required standards, and this intervention study confirmed that, unless students are instructed in an appropriate manner, they will struggle to develop the writing skills that they need in order to reach pre-determined standards.

6.3. What do we need to know about approaches to writing?

As discussed in Chapter 3, the first approach to teaching writing was product based in that the emphasis in writing instruction was placed on 'correctness'. As a result, linguistic knowledge (knowledge of the vocabulary and syntax) was the primary focus in writing. Therefore, it was necessary to provide learners with a good model from a textbook (or from the teacher) and learners were required to produce a parallel text using their own ideas. Even though the model-based approach became popular in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) domain (much of EAP writing is product-oriented), this approach has also been criticised for its apparent weaknesses in teaching writing. Due to some limitations and shortcomings inherent in the model-based approach, the process approach emerged as a reaction to it (Yan, 2005).

The process approach movement began with studies about the composing process of writers (Emig, 1971; Perl, 1980; Pianko, 1979) and resulted in informing students how to approach a writing task. Recall, as discussed in Section 2.2.31 above. However, despite the wide recognition of the process approach in EFL/ESL classrooms, it is not free from criticisms. Some authors argue that process-based instruction will give learners a false impression of what will be expected from them once they leave the classroom (Horowitz, 1986; Williams, 2005). Another criticism of process approaches is that such approaches not only ignore formal accuracy but also not prepare students adequately for writing exams (in which the students will be judged on the final product). In examination settings, due to time constrains students do not have time to brainstorm, revise, discuss with their

peers and write several drafts. Furthermore, Badger and White (2000) state that teachers using the process approach to teach writing, in trying to be humanistic and student-centered, fail to give enough input regarding linguistic aspects, different types of texts (genres) and purposes of writing. Therefore, given the weaknesses and limitations of the process approach, some authors began to argue that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced (Flowerdew, 1993; Martin, 1993; Swales, 1990). Therefore, another approach called the genre-based approach emerged.

A genre-based approach places great emphasis on the relationship between text-genres and their contexts (Hyon, 1996). In doing so, it aims to help students become effective participants in their academic and professional environment as well as in their broader communities (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001). Following are some characteristics of the genre-based approach. First, the genre-based approach emphasises the importance of exploring the social and cultural context of language use in a piece of writing. The context decides the purpose of a text, as well as overall structure of a text in terms of language features and text features (often expressed with particular linguistic conventions) (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001; Hyon, 1996). A genre based approach argues that L2 students can only produce a successful text, accepted by a particular English-language discourse community, when they take the context of a text into account. Secondly, a genre-based approach highlights that there are reader conventions and linguistic conventions that a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be accepted by its readership (Muncie, 2002). However, limitations of the genre approach led to the conclusion that using the genre approach exclusively might not be suitable for making learners into competent writers. Therefore, similar to the product and process approaches, the genre approach has also been criticised in the literature.

6.4. Why is it important to consider the process genre approach when designing materials for an L2 writing intervention program?

Badger and White (2000) argue that genre based approaches are only concerned with knowledge of language which deal with social purposes, and development of writing will occur as a result of analysis and imitation of the texts provided by the teacher. Therefore, given the shortcomings of the genre based approaches to writing, Badger and White (2000) proposed that an integration of the insights of product, process and genre approach is needed in order to devise an effective methodology for writing. Thus, the process genre approach emerged, recognising that writing involves knowledge about language (as in product and genre approaches), knowledge of the context in which writing takes place and specifically the purpose for writing (as in genre approach), and skills in using language (as in process approaches). Writing development involves extracting the learner's abilities (as in process approaches) and by providing input to which the learners respond (as in product and genre approaches) (Badger & White, 2000).

The adherents of process approaches to writing (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003, 2004; Tribble, 1996) argue that writing is complex in nature and that writers require knowledge not only of linguistic features, but also the process of writing and of the social context in order to produce successful texts (Archibald & Jeffery, 2000). From a theoretical viewpoint, instruction that combines key elements of process based and genre oriented approaches should help students to understand the complexities of writing, as they should learn the necessary writing skills of planning, drafting, and revising the written drafts and gain explicit knowledge of linguistic features in relation to the social context (Badger & White, 2000). Synthesising all the aspects presented in the different approaches, Badger and White (2000) derived a model for teaching writing using a process genre approach. This model is illustrated in Figure 6.1 below.
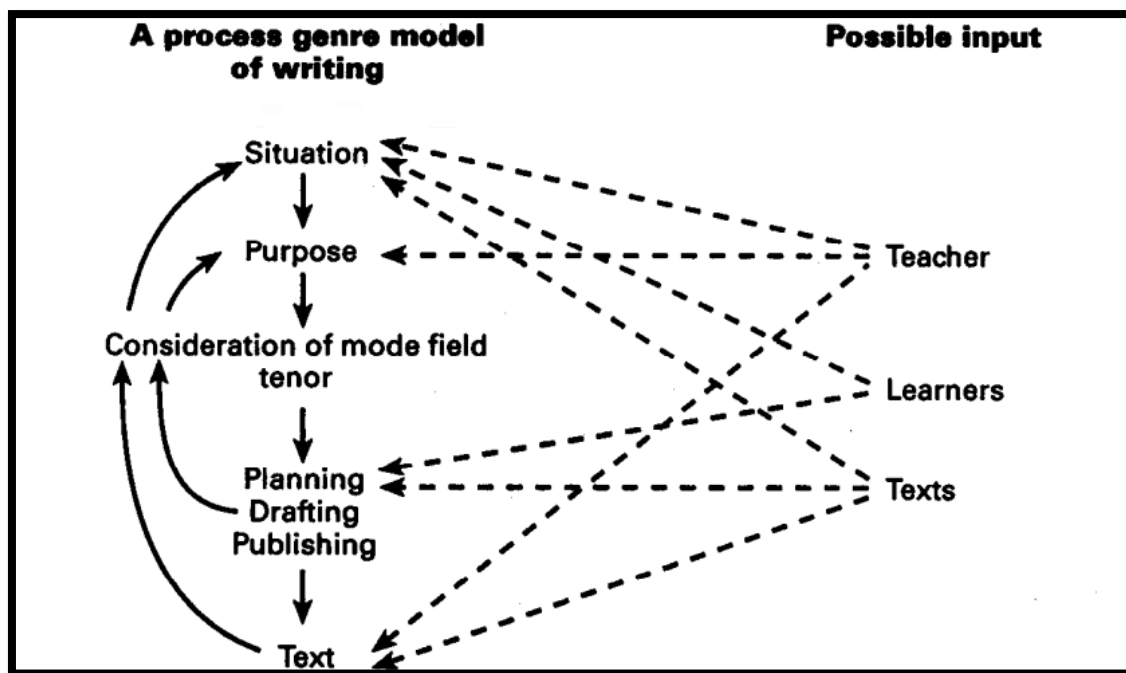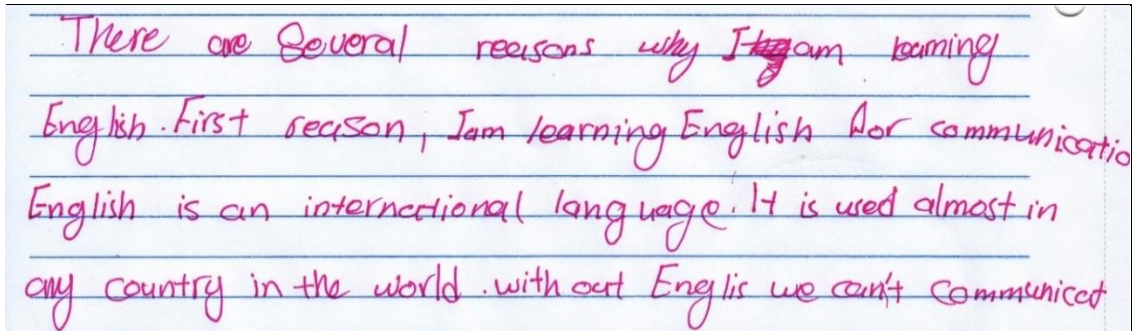
Figure 6.1. The process genre model of writing proposed by Badger and White (2000).
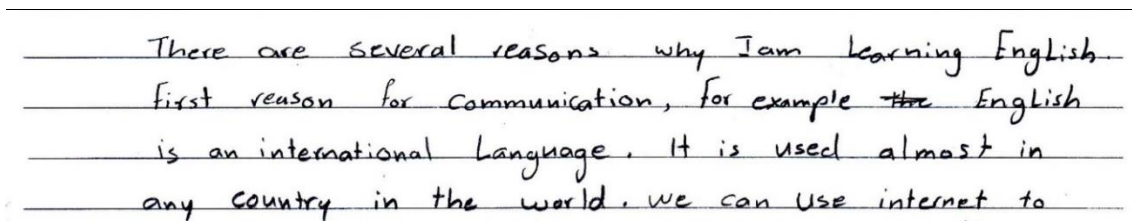
The process genre model depicted in Figure 6.1 needs some clarification. According to Badger and White (2000, p. 158) "in the writing class, teachers need to replicate the situation as closely as possible and then provide sufficient support for learners to identify the purpose and other aspects of the social context". They go on to describe with an example (where an estate agent wants to write a description aimed at selling his/her house) how the model works in a given teaching class. The authors, moreover, consider that different genres require different kinds of knowledge and different sets of skills. Based on the findings of the current study, as well as drawing from my experience as a writing teacher, the following observations can be made with respect to the process genre approach in terms of academic writing in all kinds of contexts. Scholars subscribing to the process genre model of writing (Badger & White, 2000; Pincas, 1982) proposed that learners should be provided with a good model or an example for a particular genre. However, in my experience, providing learners with input in the form of texts often leads to unexpected outcomes at the end of a writing session. For example, while teaching the experimental group before the MSE, I provided students with a model text and asked them to study various aspects of the text, such as vocabulary, sentence structures, organisation of the text and how the introduction, body and conclusion were written. Following my explanation of the model text, the students were grouped and each group had to write a cause-effect essay on the topic, 'Why do you learn

English?' I collected their writing for evaluation after they had finished the task. While evaluating the students' cause-effect essays, I found that all groups had imitated the model text provided to them in composing the cause-effect essay. Figures 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 below provide examples of such input imitation:

Figure 6.2. First example of input imitation extracted from the experimental group

Figure 6.3. Second example of input imitation extracted from the experimental group

Figure 6.4. Third example of input imitation extracted from the experimental group

Figure 6.5. Fourth example of input imitation extracted from the experimental group

Analysis of the essays indicated that students used the model text as a template and copied most of the information contained in this text to the new composition. This behaviour indicates that students with limited linguistic and writing skills in the target language will imitate input texts (sometimes verbatim), rather than use such texts as examples. The seriousness of imitation of the input was further evidenced by the fact that some learners used information exactly as it appeared in the model text, when the writing topic actually required different information. For example, the students were provided with a model essay on comparison and contrast (of two mobile phones), and when they were assigned with a new writing activity in which they had to write an essay comparing and contrasting two laptop computers, they still tended to write, "In this essay, I will compare and contrast two kinds of mobile phones" instead of two kinds of laptops. Moreover, the imitation of input as discussed above, was further aggravated when I found that most students in the experimental group copied some parts of the model text (especially the introduction and conclusion) and inserted these passages in their writing as if they were their own ideas, and in doing so committed plagiarism.

Given the possible demerits of providing students with model texts in this particular context, I decided to rather provide learners with specific guidelines for each part of the essay. However, the guidelines were not exhaustive and learners were free to add their own views to expand the essay. The following is an example of guidelines included in the context-specific materials for compare and contrast essay (see Appendix I).

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(Note that the guidelines provided here are limited to the researcher's teaching context and that they may not be suited to other teaching contexts, in which the organisation of essays may be different).

Table 6.1. Guidelines for organising a compare and contrast essay

Point by point method	Block method
* Introduce the topic in general * Introduce the specific topic **Thesis statement**: Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but the right choice depends on the owner's lifestyle, finance and household accommodations.	* Introduce the topic in general * Introduce the specific topic **Thesis statement**: Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but the right choice depends on the owner's lifestyle, finance and household accommodations.
Topic sentence: Point 1 Cats do not drastically alter the owner's lifestyle. Supporting idea 1: No need to watch during the day. Supporting idea 2: Easier to get care if owner travels. Topic 2: Dogs Point 1: Dogs cannot be left alone Supporting idea: Harder to get care when away. *Use a transition sentence*	**Topic sentence:** Cats are easier and less expensive to watch during the day. Point 1: Lifestyle Supporting idea 1: Don't have to be watched during the day. Supporting idea 2: Easier to get care if owner travels. Point 2: Cost Supporting idea 1: Food and health care are usually less expensive. Supporting idea 2: Less likely to cause any property damage or present risk to neighbours. Point 3: Accommodations Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space. Supporting idea 1: Less troublesome. *Use a transition sentence*
Topic sentence – Point 2 Cats are less expensive to care for. Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Food and health care are usually less expensive.	**Conclusion** * Summary of main points * Evaluation and/ possible future Developments * Significance of the topic to author

Supporting idea 2: Less likely to cause any property damage or present a risk to neighbours. Topic 2: Point 2-Dogs Supporting idea 1: Food is expensive. Supporting idea 2: Over-breeding causes some health problems. *Use a transition sentence*	* When considering adopting a pet, the owner must consider his/her life style/ finance and the accommodation that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often tend not to care for their pet in a safe manner.
Topic sentence: Point 3 Cats need few special house accommodations. Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space	
Topic sentence: Point 3 Cats need few special house accommodations. Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space Supporting idea 2: Less disturbing Topic 2: Dogs Supporting idea 1: Often need yard and fence Supporting idea 2: Require more safety and protective measures *Use a transition sentence*	
Conclusion * Summary of main points *Evaluation and/ possible future developments * Significance of the topic to author: e.g. When considering adopting a pet, the owner must consider his/her lifestyle, finance and accommodation that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often tend not to care for their pet in a safe manner.	

Adapted from http://www.efl.arts.gla.ac.uk/CampusOnly/essays/15web.htm

The following are examples of essays which the students in the experimental group wrote using guidelines provided to them instead of a model essay.

There are several causes and effects of why most American woman until they are 30 years old to have their first badby.

First, I will write the causes. The First causes is that some women want to educate well, develop their skills and Find job. This means they want to have an independent life -She does not want to depend on Her Husband. For example, if you have enogh money, there will not any Question in Finabncial matters. The secand causes is that they tehi/l can lead a better life by acauring basic necessities such as a house, a car, a land. Further more, They can send their children to better schods. The thrid effect is that they can believe they can better. understand the family
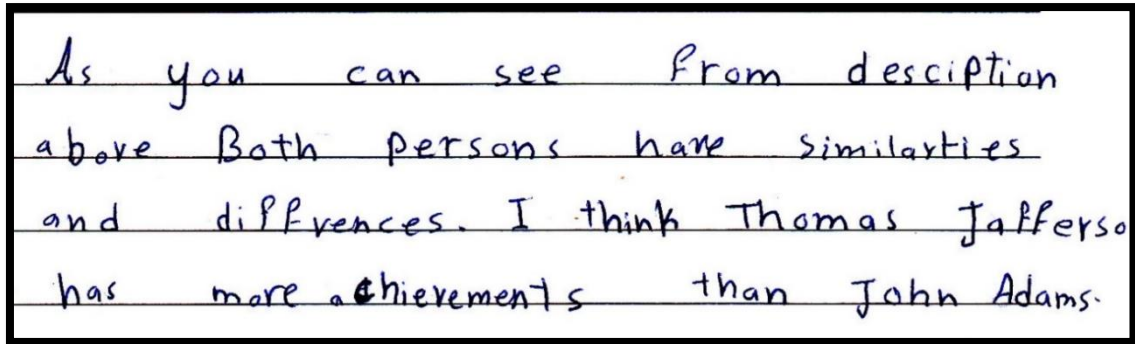
life once they are matured. when people are matured, they can understand the life better. Now, I will describ the effects. The first effects is that, they get social recoynition and have more opportunities to find employed parthers for example if you have a job, you can easily ~~find~~ find apartner. The secand effect it that. They can lead a better life by acquiring basic necessties such as house, a car aland. Furthor more, They can & spend their children to better schools. The third effect is that Tney can lead & a happy family and better social life with no family conflicts. They can help their children withe their school work. As you can see from the causes and effects why do most American women wait until there are 30 years old to have their First ~~~baby.

Figure 6.6. First example of an essay that was written using guidelines

There are several similarities and diffemce between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. I will first describe the similarities of Both persons. Both persons died on the same day in tha same year John Adams was a delegate to the continentel congress. Like waise, Thomas Jefferson was a delegate to the continental congress. Both persons studied and practied law. Both persons played important role in American Revolution.

Now, I will write about the differences between two persons. First, John Adams was born On October 19, 1735. But, Thomas Jefferson was born on Apirl 13, 1743. John Adams was signer of Declaration of independence. Diffent from, Thomas Jefferson was author and signer of Declaration of independence. John Adams was second U.S. President. But, Thomas Jefferson was third president of United Stated.

> As you can see from desciption above Both persons have similarties and diffvences. I think Thomas Jafferso has more achievements than John Adams.

Figure 6.7. Second example of an essay that was written using guidelines

As discussed above, given the demerits of providing EFL learners with a model text, I propose that guidelines relevant to a specific essay should rather be given to learners. Students in EFL contexts lack sufficient linguistic knowledge to construct their own essays, and providing them with specific guidelines is more likely to stimulate creative writing than providing a model text. Therefore, in EFL learning contexts, 'text' under 'possible input' in the process genre model (as depicted in Figure 6.1 above), could be replaced with 'Context-specific instructional materials' as indicated in Figure 6.8 below.
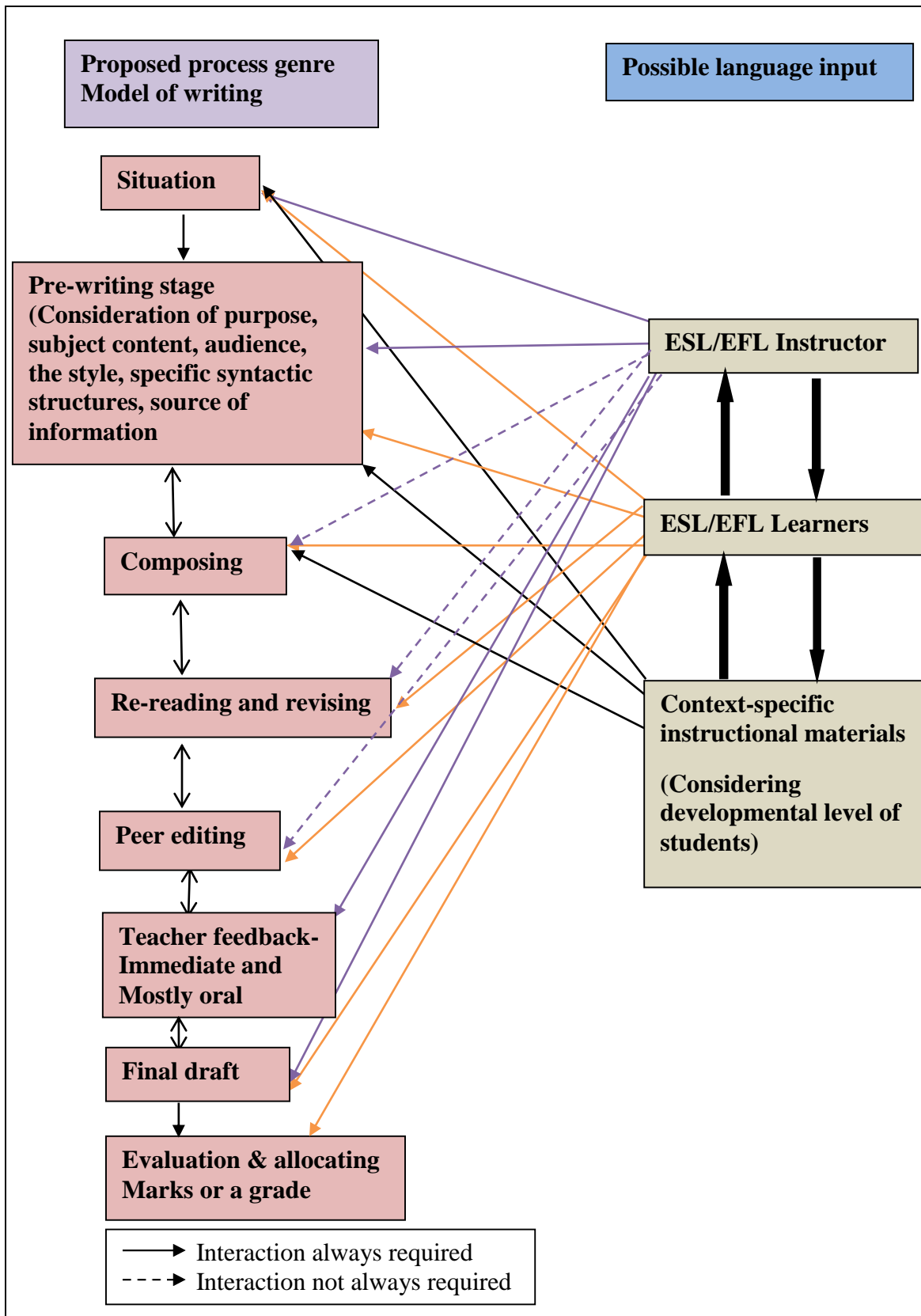
Figure 6.8. Proposed process genre model of writing in a foreign language instruction context

As indicated above, this model is specifically proposed for EFL/ESL classrooms and therefore, the possible language input is provided to learners by EFL/ESL instructors. Thus, learners may receive input from the instructor as well as from the instructional materials which the students are provided with in the class. At the outset, it should be made clear that the design of the context-specific materials should ideally be informed by factors such as the developmental level of students because it can be the case that the majority of tertiary EFL students are, for whatever reason, still in the *developing* or *transitional* stage of writing. Therefore, the writing instructor has to take this matter into account when designing teaching materials. Context-specific materials should include writing tasks, linguistic examples, instructions about the organisation of an essay (depending on the type of genre), as well as peer-editing and self-editing activities to be done either as pairs, groups or individuals. Therefore, learners are required to interact (by themselves), with the materials as well as with the instructor at all stages (pre-writing, composing, re-reading and revising, peer editing and teacher feedback). Essentially, the context-specific materials should be embedded in the process genre approach.

Badger and White's (2000) process genre model sees writing as a series of stages leading from a particular situation to a text where the writing instructor facilitates the writing process by providing learners with relevant input of knowledge and skills. When facilitating the writing process, according to the proposed model, interaction should happen both ways (e.g. from instructor to learners and vice versa), the arrows in the model indicate this two-way interaction. In Badger and White's model, the interaction pattern is marked differently in that it does not show how exactly the possible language input is delivered or exchanged in an actual classroom situation between teacher, learners and materials. As I explained earlier, providing a model text of writing can have negative effects, and thus model texts as input were successfully replaced with context-specific instructional materials in this study. Moreover, I argue that when students engage with a writing task in the pre-writing phase, the teacher should initiate an interactive discussion, with the intention to familiarise students with the topic they are expected to write about in a given session. In this discussion, first of all, the teacher generally sets the situation and informs the class of the purpose of writing. Then, the teacher initiates the pre-writing phase, in which the learners become familiar with the genre and the relevant conventions, through direct instruction provided by the teacher. Both the teacher and learners are required to discuss issues relevant to the topic, the subject content, the audience (tenor), the purpose, the style (formal or informal, i.e. the mode), and grammar issues such as

tense and specific syntactic structures demanded by a specific genre. Moreover, students are required to use their background knowledge about the possible subjects or topics, as well as the linguistic features and linguistic skills to write their own text in the specified genre. Therefore, given the crucial role which the pre-writing stage plays, this phase was placed just below the situation in the revised model. Important points that should be addressed in the pre-writing phase (mode, field and tenor) are included in the model.

Other stages of the process genre approach to writing have been positioned in a descending order, as writing is likely to happen in this way in a teaching context that employs the process genre approach. However, as indicated by the two-way arrows that connect the stages prior to the final draft, there is no fixed order - in the process of composing, a writer is likely to revisit any stage that he or she has already completed. For example, if a writer finds any error, or that he or she needs to include important information, the writer should revisit the text and do the required correction, addition or deletion to make it more meaningful. In the proposed process genre model, the writing instructor or teacher's role is seen as crucial, because the instructor should be involved in more or less in all the stages (pre-writing, composing, re-reading and revising, peer editing, teacher feedback and the final draft), as shown in the Figure 6.8. However, dash lines indicate that the teacher's involvement in the writing stages are not always required, but that he or she can monitor the class to verify if the students are actively engaged in the activity given or whether they need any clarification relevant to that particular stage. Materials in most EFL/ESL programs are assumed to play an important role and when it comes to an EFL/ESL writing course where the process genre approach is employed, the contribution of materials to the language development of learners can never be underestimated. Therefore, the pedagogical role that the various materials developed in this study played is discussed below in more detail.

6.5. Pedagogical effect of writing multiple drafts

Improving writing fluency in ESL/EFL learners depends on a number of factors. As described above, one of the crucial factors is the learning materials (which should be challenging enough to stimulate writing development). However, learning materials in itself cannot help learners to improve their writing ability; it also has to be presented in a systematic manner. This is where the instructional procedure as to how the materials should be used with a specific group of learners comes into play. In other words, there should be a clear process for the learners to follow when they are writing. To this end, the

role that the process genre approach played in this study in terms of helping ESL/EFL learners to improve their proficiency seems undeniably important. In most Asian and Middle Eastern countries, students do not favour the concept of multiple drafts (Al Seyabi & Tuzlukova, 2014). Students in these learning contexts tend to write in a once-off manner and to submit their writings to the teacher as 'the final draft'. As is often the case with other Asian and Arab learners of ESL/EFL, the students in the researcher's study had always written an essay only once and were used to submitting it as 'the final draft'. However, with time, the researcher's students began to write multiple drafts, and they discovered that their writings were becoming more and more organised and fluent as a result of using rich and varied vocabulary to convey their message to the reader effectively. When students write their first draft, Shih (1986) emphasises that their ideas are seldom completely formulated before they begin to write their first draft. Furthermore, the composing process of each individual is different, and the process genre approach allows writers to go about the composing task in their unique way.

A writing sample produced by a student in the experimental group in the current study is cited below as evidence that students develop their writing when they write multiple drafts, as suggested in the process genre approach. This particular sample illustrates an individual student's process of writing and re-writing an opinion essay about the topic 'Using mobile phones should be banned in the classroom', by engaging and interacting with the composed text. Students received clear instructions as to how to start their composition.

Begin your paragraph like this: Using mobile phones in a classroom while teaching is going on is not accepted by many cultures because it causes some problems to the classroom atmosphere in several ways. In this paragraph, I will describe three reasons why we should not use mobile phones in a classroom while a teacher is teaching. In my opinion, using a mobile phone to talk to someone in a classroom while a teaching session is progressing is considered as unacceptable behavior. Therefore, I strongly feel that it should be banned for the following three reasons.

I gree becous that should banned using mobile phons in the classroom. because The first reason it is ~~wrout~~ a bad practice when the student uses the mobile phone in the classroom because, they don't listen ~~to carefully~~ carefly to the teacher. Second reason, when the student use mobile phone, they disturb others, so the other student cant study in classroom.

Like me, when the other student use mobile and talk. I ~~eapt~~ feel angry becaus I cant ~~tedento~~ focus. In addition, beheaviour as a student is improtant. Because ~~sometimes~~ student need use it. In conclusio, There are good points to the use of mobile and other non-good points to the use of mobile phones in the classroom

Figure 6.9. Student writing sample extracted from context-specific materials (first draft).

In the first draft (Figure 6.9) the student begins his essay with a repetition of the last sentence from the thesis statement, and then gives the reason that using a mobile phone in class is a bad practice. Supporting ideas are presented, but the student does not use punctuation marks properly to separate the sentences. Furthermore, it is clear that the student has not connected the ideas logically using proper coordinating connectors. The first draft also contains numerous grammatical and spelling errors.

However, when the student writes the second draft (Figure 6.10) of the same essay, he shows some evidence of using linguistic knowledge - re-reading and revising the first draft has led the student to identify errors which are now corrected. While the first sentence is still copied directly from the thesis statement, the student has managed to construct full sentences with proper coordinating conjunctions, such as 'because' and 'when'. Also, the student's writing seems more logical and the content is more organised than in the first draft. Clearly, employing the process genre approach to his writing has helped the student to improve his writing in a practical manner.

Begin your paragraph like this: Using mobile phones in a classroom while teaching is going on is not accepted by many cultures because it causes some problems to the classroom atmosphere in several ways. In this paragraph, I will describe three reasons why we should not use mobile phones in a classroom while a teacher is teaching. In my opinion, using a mobile phone to talk to someone in a classroom while a teaching session is progressing is considered as unacceptable behavior. Therefore, I strongly feel that it should be banned for the following three reasons.

Second draft I agree that students *should be banned* using mobile phones in the classroom. First, it is a bad practice because we can't understand what she says. Second, when I use my mobile I disturb other students by making some sound. And as are sult they will not be able to understand the subject matter. Third, our mind can't focus on two things at the same time. Also, this will cause problems in the class In conclusion because of the reasons above, I strongly support the opinion that mobile phones should not be use in etas a classroom while studying

Figure 6.10. Student writing sample extracted from context-specific materials (second draft).

In the third draft (Figure 6.11), the student has improved remarkably in organising and presenting ideas in a logical way. As can be expected in an EFL context, a few

linguistic errors (such as incorrect subject verb concord) remain. However, in the third draft, the students clearly state three reasons with supporting ideas, using appropriate vocabulary relevant to the topic in a logical manner. Moreover, the third draft clearly shows that the student has improved both in fluency and accuracy in that he uses more words, sentences, T-units and error-free T-units per composition than in drafts one and two.

Begin your paragraph like this: Using mobile phones in a classroom while teaching is going on is not accepted by many cultures because it causes some problems to the classroom atmosphere in several ways. In this paragraph, I will describe three reasons why we should not use mobile phones in a classroom while a teacher is teaching. In my opinion, using a mobile phone to talk to someone in a classroom while a teaching session is progressing is considered as unacceptable behavior. Therefore, I strongly feel that it should be banned for the following three reasons.

Third draft The first reason is that using mobile phones in a classroom is a bad practice because when someone use a mobile phone in a classroom while a teacher is teaching, he or she can't focus attention on lesson. As a result, he or she will not be able to study subject well. Later, when he/she go to exam, he/she will not answer the question paper well. So, he will fail in the subject.

The second reason is that using a mobile phone in a classroom will disturb other students. When students listen to a phone ringing and someone talking on the phone the other students, the other students in the class will not be able to study the subject very well. They also will not be able to answer the question paper. This is not a good

The third reason is that it is disciplinary problem. discipline is important for a student. Because in studing, we

> need to learn disciplinary rules in a school. This
> will help us to become good people in our
> society in the future.
>   In conclusion, as described above this are
> several reasons why we should not use mobile phone
> when we are studying in a class. Because of the
> three reasons above, I strongly support the opinion
> that using mobile phones should be banned in the
> classroom
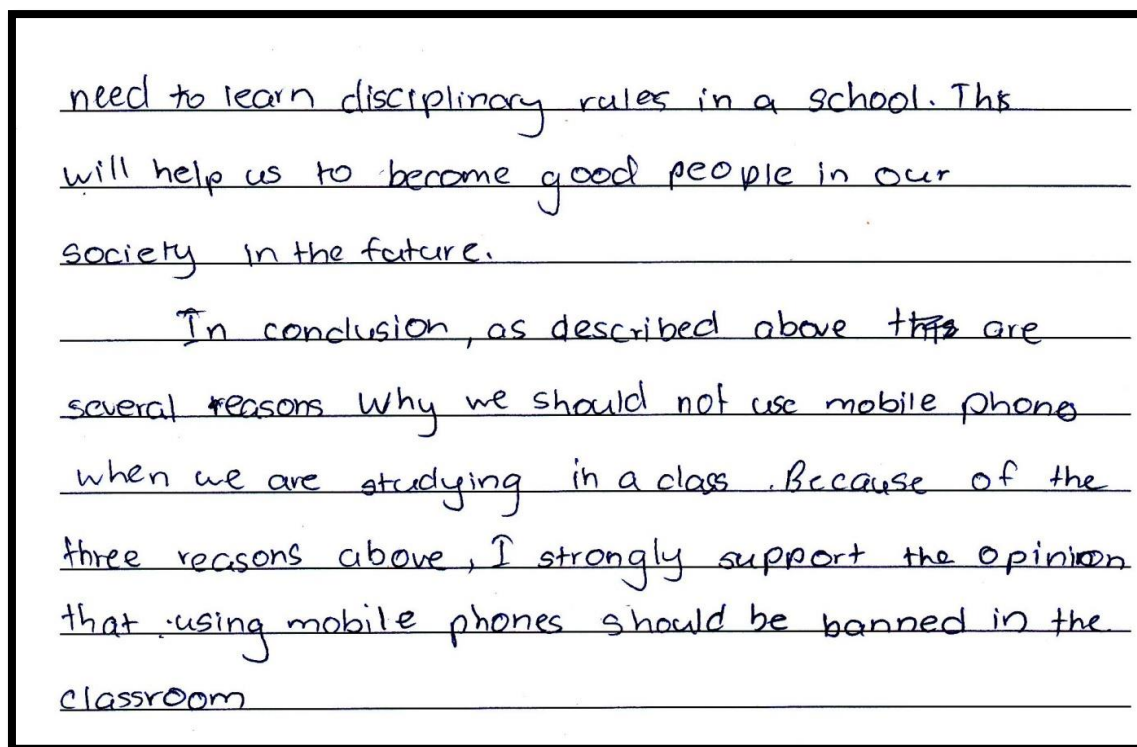
Figure 6.11. Student writing sample extracted from context-specific materials (third draft).

It is interesting to recall here (as discussed in Chapter 3), that writing intervention programs that focus primarily on grammar instruction (i.e. the explicit and systematic instruction of parts of speech and sentence structure) have been found to yield negative results, indicating that traditional grammar instruction is unlikely to help improve the quality and/or accuracy of students' writing (Graham & Perin, 2007a). In their report, Graham and Perin (p. 21) noted that "other instructional methods, such as sentence combining, provide an effective alternative to traditional grammar instruction, as this approach improves students' writing quality while at the same time enhancing syntactic skills". With regard to the present study, it is important to note that traditional grammar instruction did not form part of the context-specific materials used in the intervention, and that the researcher opted to combine methods such as 'sentence combination' and 'focus on form' activities (particularly focusing on the function of a grammatical element within the context of writing) with the process genre approach. Given the results of the T-unit analyses presented in the previous chapter, it seems clear that writing accuracy (and thus grammar proficiency) did improve in the experimental group, even though grammar was not taught as an independent activity. This finding has important pedagogical implications, as it supports the notion that leaners can acquire grammatical

rules in the absence of traditional grammar instruction. Essentially, this study's findings seem in line with previous research reports (Fearn & Farnan, 2005; Graham & Perin, 2007; Kanellas, Carifio & Dagostino, 1998; Saddler & Graham, 2005), which argued that teaching methods such as sentence combining are effective for improving the accuracy of students' writing and that traditional grammar instruction methods in writing programs are obsolete.

The improvement of this writing sample supports the view that lots of engagement with context-specific materials and the review process associated with the process genre approach is effective and useful in helping tertiary students to improve their academic writing skills in an ESL/EFL context. Because of the specific nature of the context-specific writing activities, the students in the experimental group were provided with more opportunities to engage in writing tasks in which they followed the five-step construction approach. This kind of interaction and engagement allowed the students in the experimental group to write several drafts in the composing process.

As described in the second chapter, the process genre approach provided students with an opportunity to work as groups, in which they interacted with their peers and the teacher in the classroom. Hyland (2007) has noted that, more specifically, genre-based pedagogies employ the ideas of Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1990). These writers emphasised the notion of scaffolding in which the role of interaction with peers and experienced others help learners move from their existing level of performance 'what they can do now' to a level 'what they can do without assistance'. Research shows that students are able to reach much higher levels of performance by working together and with an expert than they might have achieved working on their own (Donato, 2000; Ohta, 2000). Furthermore, Boscolo and Ascorti (2004) reported that adolescent writers improved more in text composition when helped by their peers than when corrected by their teacher.

Hattie (2009) argued that 'what teachers do matters' and found that the expertise of the teacher was the most important positive influence on students learning. Given Hattie's view, it can be said that the degree of teacher intervention in the process genre approach as shown in the Figure 6.7 was high (relative to other approaches in general) because according to the proposed model, the teacher should monitor, instruct, facilitate, guide and provide feedback to learners at all stages of writing. Confirming this view, Hyland and Hyland (2006) say that feedback is seen as an important developmental tool, which moves learners through multiple drafts towards effective self-expression in

process-based, learner-centered classrooms. Several studies have indicated that feedback is more effective when it is given immediately (Dihoff, Brosvic, Epstein & Cook, 2004; Nakata, 2015; Optiz, Ferdinand & Mecklinger, 2011) and I also found that providing immediate feedback was more effective than providing delayed feedback. Moreover, I noticed that oral feedback was more effective than written feedback. Some studies (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Williams, 2004) conducted in different teaching contexts support the view that oral feedback is more effective than written feedback because written feedback sometimes does not get read or may not be understood, even when writing teachers take great pains to provide their learners with written feedback.

As I found oral feedback useful and effective, I decided to use a computer program called *'Kaizena'* which is available free of charge at https://kaizena.com/. By using the digital tools that this program includes, writing teachers can provide constructive feedback both in oral and written media to their learners in an expedient manner. Almost all students in my study groups (both experimental and control) groups had access to internet facilities while they were at college; so, they could log onto their accounts which were connected to my account and see what instructional materials had been uploaded with instructions for the students in my web portal. They were able to listen to oral instruction I had given them by accessing the function of 'Speak' instead of 'Type'. Figure 6.11 shows an example of uploaded materials on '*Kaizena'*, with instructions to students in group 1 of my study groups during the research. Given the positive results associated with immediate and oral feedback in my study as well as from other studies cited above, I have proposed that the teacher feedback should be immediate and mostly oral in the proposed process genre model as shown in Figure 6.7 above.

Finally, in the proposed genre model of writing, the last step included is 'evaluation' and 'allocating marks or a grade'. The purposes of grading students depending on their performance in a given test, examination or a project are manifold. According to Airasian (1994, cited in Morzano, 2000) educators use grades primarily for (1) administrative purposes, (2) to give students feedback about their progress and achievement, (3) to provide guidance to students about future course work, (4) to provide guidance to teachers for instructional planning, and (5) to motivate students. One of the most obvious purposes for grades is to provide feedback about student achievement. Moreover, those who advocate using grades to motivate students assume that they encourage students to try harder both from negative and positive perspectives. On the negative side, receiving a low grade is believed to motivate students to try harder. On the

positive side, it is assumed that receiving a high grade will motivate students to continue or renew their efforts (Austin & McCann, 1992).
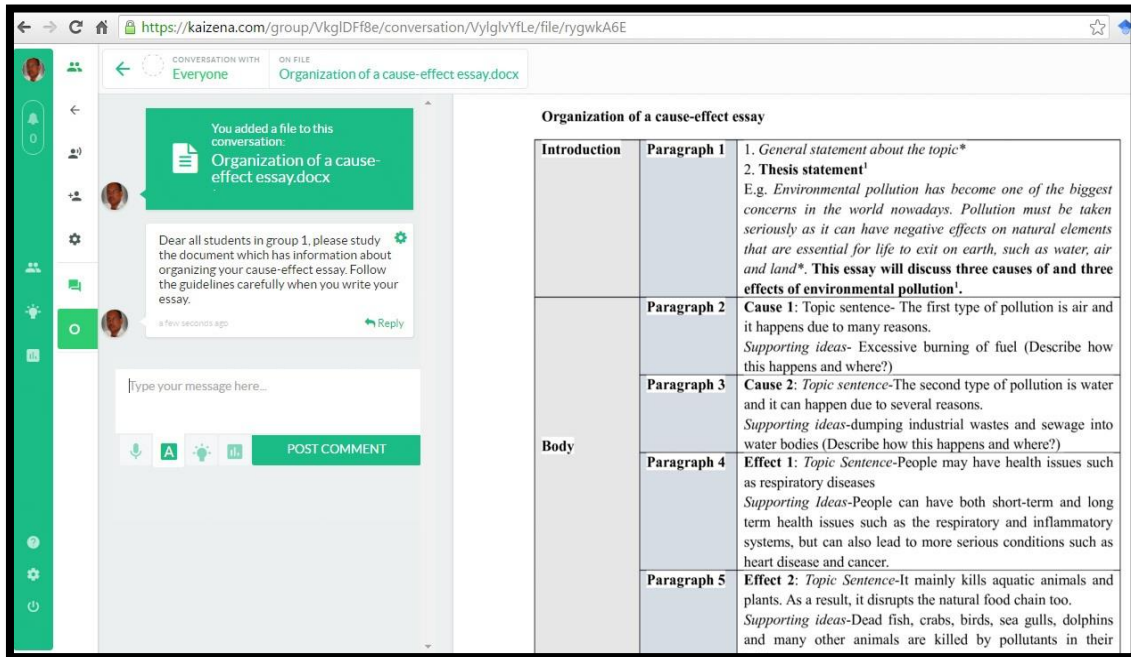
Figure 6.12. An example of uploaded material to *'Kaizena'* with instructions to students

Summarising, in terms of pedagogy, the present study affirms previous notions that while certain instructional procedures can be the primary component of an explicit and individual teaching procedure, many procedures (such as 'prewriting', 'inquiry activities', 'peers working together to compose a composition' and 'feedback') are also integral to the process approach. In a perfect world, writing instructors would perhaps have to include all 11 elements mentioned in Graham and Perin (2007a) in their writing programs to improve writing achievement (i.e. writing strategies, summarization, collaborative writing, specific product goals, word processing, sentence combining, prewriting, inquiry activities, process writing approach, study of models, and writing for content learning) (discussed in Chapter 3). However, as shown in this study, these elements should not be treated as isolated but rather as interlinked; and a teacher may construct a unique blend of elements to suit to specific needs of his or her students. As Graham and Perin (2007a) rightly noted: "a mixture of these elements is likely to generate the biggest return (p. 11)". It remains to be seen what that optimal mix is, and it may be different for different subpopulations of students".

6.5.1. How does the proposed process genre model of writing work in an examination setting?

It should be noted at the outset that students, who are trained to use the process genre model of writing to improve their writing proficiency, cannot apply some of the strategies (peer-review, writing multiple drafts and immediate teacher feedback) in an examination setting as they would do in a classroom context. Given this situation, one might argue that the enhanced performance of the experimental group in the LEE (as discussed in Chapter 5) is not the direct effect of having used the process genre model intensively during the intervention. This question can be answered in two ways: one is by referring the reader to the section 2.2.3 where the importance of cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities and strategies in writing are discussed in detail or by providing the reader with more information about strategy training in writing. The main objective of strategy training in any skill is to train learners how to learn a skill successfully and apply that skill effectively in the academic or social situation in which that particular skill is required (Weinstein & Hume, 1998). Speaking about strategy training, Mayer (2003) has observed that strategy training should help learners to become independent and autonomous.

Given the positions expressed by the authors above, it can be argued that even though learners were unlikely to apply all the strategies they acquired in writing class *in a visible manner* in an examination setting, they probably still would have applied these strategies cognitively, working from an autonomous position (Wenden, 1991). For example, when students work with a group in a class, they can use the strategy of peer-editing or review. However, when a student works alone (in an exam or a test), he/she can use the strategy of self-editing (see figure 6.13) or self-review instead of peer-editing. Similarly, in an examination setting, students cannot write multiple drafts, but it is possible for a student to improve his/her essay (test task) using other strategies he/she has already mastered in a formal classroom learning. The autonomous position taken by the experimental group was evident from the qualitative analysis which the researcher did with students' writing samples extracted from the LEE (see Appendix K). In contrast, a similar analysis of answer scripts extracted from the control group from the LEE indicated that cognitive and meta-cognitive wiring strategy use were very low compared to the experimental group (see Appendix L and section 5.5.2 for a detailed discussion). Moreover, Sturm and Rankin-Erickson (2002) stated that strategy instruction helps students to develop strategies for all aspects of the writing by dividing the writing task at

hand and by making the sub processes and skills much more explicit. Similarly, Brown (2000) wrote that "…we probe its implications for your teaching methodology in the classroom, specifically, how your language classroom techniques can encourage, build, and sustain effective language-learning strategies in your students" (p.130).

Finally, many scholars have found that the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies improve students' writing processes (Panahandeh & Esfandiar, 2014; Paris, 2003; Teng, 2016; Wei, Chen & Adawu, 2014). Given the positive results that emerged from the studies that investigated the role of cognitive and metacognitive strategy training on developing writing skills among students across the world, and based on the findings of the current study, it seems reasonably fair to conclude that strategies that students learn in a class can be applied in whatever context students have to write in (i.e. irrespective of whether students write in an examination or in a social situation).

6.6. Sustained effect of context-specific materials and the proposed process genre model of writing

The researcher, as described in Chapter 1, conducted the current study with a group of foundation level (Level 3) students during the second semester of 2015. The experimental group (consisting of 60 participants) underwent an intervention in which they were taught academic writing using context-specific materials designed in line with the process genre approach. The control group (also consisting of 60 participants), were instructed using their prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*). The students who studied in the foundation program were promoted to the post foundation program after completing their studies in Level 4. In the post foundation phase, students study subjects such as Technical Writing 1, Technical Writing 2, Technical Communication and Public Speaking, because post foundation programs mainly target their specialisations (Engineering, IT and Business Studies). The course Technical Writing 1 ensures that students develop English language skills to communicate at a level that meets the learner's needs in various academic situations and in the labour market, while the course Technical Writing 2 ensures that the learners develop an increased awareness and knowledge of how English is used in the technical environment they will encounter in their chosen professions (ELC-Post foundation program, n.d.)

In 2016, the researcher was assigned to teach Technical Writing 1 and 2 to the post foundation level where he encountered several students (four students in Technical Writing 1 and five students in Technical Writing 2) who had been participants of the

current study. In Technical Writing 1 class, there were two students from the experimental group that underwent the intervention and two students from the control group who were taught using their prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*). The researcher noticed that the two students (both male) who were from the experimental group fared better than the other students of the class, which consisted of 26 students (9 males and 17 female). In the MSE (conducted in May 2016), those two students performed better than the rest of the class - one student scored 14 out of 15 while the other scored 13 out of 15 for the writing section of the paper (securing the top positions in the class). The performance of the other two students in the MSE, who studied in the control group in Level 3, were more limited, in that they scored 10 and 9 out of 15 respectively.

In the Technical Writing 2 class, there were three female students from the experimental group and two male students from the control group. In the MSE, they had to write a technical product specification report using the technical specifications given in respect of a product and it was scored out of 15. The three students from the experimental group scored 14, 13, and 13 out of 15 respectively in the MSE and became the top of the class while the two male students who were from the control group scored 10 and 10.5 out of 15 in the MSE respectively. While this data is obviously too limited to reach firm conclusions about the sustained effect of the intervention programme presented in this study, it is worth mentioning that the five students who underwent the writing intervention were performing at the top of their respective classes, which does seem to indicate that one year after the intervention, they were still benefiting from the programme When asked about it specifically, these students indicated that they continued to use the same writing procedure (prewriting, composing, re-reading and revising, peer editing and teacher feedback), but said that they don't use peer editing when writing their assignments in their specializations, the reason being that the teaching methodology used by their subject specialist lecturers does not accommodate this. In order to find out how the post foundation students, who were in the control group during my study, approach their writing, I asked several of them the same question and found that they do not use the process genre approach when they write. This indicates that the context specific materials really 'unlocked' the process genre approach for students, in a way that a text book could not.

While limited, the available evidence from the two post foundation writing classes tentatively suggests that the use of context specific teaching materials is more likely to motivate students to employ the process genre approach in a successful manner; not only

in a given writing course but also in their further studies. Thus, there is some evidence that context-specific materials designed in line with the proposed process genre model of writing as shown in Figure 6.7 have a sustained effect on students' writing performance.

Given below are the answers which the students from two writing courses (Technical Writing 1 and 2) produced in the MSE (May, 2016).

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Staff
FROM: Manager of Bank Muscat
DATE: May 24, 2016
SUBJECT: Opening of the New Office

I would like to inform you that the Opening of the new office.

I am writing this memo to all staff in Bank

Muscat, Shinas branch, because the bank has decided to move to a new office as the present one has a small parking area and insufficient work space.

The new office is opposite AL-Jazeera shopping complex, Shinas suq. I want to the employees in Bank Muscat, Shinas branch come to see the new office, because this building has modern office facilities and sufficient parking space.

The new bank address is bank Muscat, Shinas branch and I want the employees know the telephone and email address remain unchanged, but there is new ATM.

Your cooperation in this regard would be appreciate and let me know if you need more information about the Opening of the new office.

Regards,
Manager of Bank Muscat

Figure 6.13. Sample 1 of a post foundation student's writing in the MSE-Technical Writing 1

Kenmore Elite 29.9 cu. ft. French 4 Door Refrigerator (stainless)

Introduction:-

Science and technology contribute to improve human life and made great impact on the life of people today. Many inventions and discoveries have changed our life in several ways. A number of stainless have been introduced to the markets nowadays. One such product is kenmore Elite. This product help us to keep our food cool, Fresh and healthy for eating. In addition you can saves your food in this product many days. This product is useful for both common and business people. It is available in all hypermarkets and showrooms.

Performance:-

The Kenmore Elite is Refrigerator and freezer. It is use in many places home, college and business place for save your different food. It has many special features such as; Eco friendly, fast and effective diagnosis for problems. Also, it includes stylish panel to control refrigerator functions from outside and Antibacterial Deodorization. Moreover, This product comes with freezer shelves and drawers which 3 x basket - Plastic and LED interior lighting. In addition it includes 4 doors and 5 shelves. It's Automatic

2

210

Defost and is eqquipped with 29.9 cu. ft. capacity.

Validity:-
The kenmore Elite company provides one year international warranty and it costs R.O 220 inclusive of all taxes.

Quality:-
This product is made of glass, plastic and steel. It measures 35.7×37.8×70.2 inches (WxdxH) and weighs 397.05 lbs.

Conclusion.
E As can be seen, kenmore Elite is one of the greatest devices. Offers it's user a wide range of feature that makes your different type of food cool, and healthy and fresh pleasant experience. The reasonable price also makes this product very affordable for all buyers. One of the most interesting features of this product that it comes with one year international warranty. Also, it comes in different colors; white, silver and grey. Having a product like this at home or in you business place really will make you feel comfortable.

Figure 6.14. Sample 2 of a post foundation student's writing in the Mid-Semester Exam-Technical Writing 1

6.7. How will the current study close existing gaps in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing?

As explained and described above, the writing model in Figure 6.7 clearly and explicitly outlines the possible language input sources and the other required phases that deal with the logical flow of the writing process as being conceptualised in terms of an adapted process genre model of writing in ESL/EFL contexts. Moreover, the interaction patterns that are assumed to take place in between and among each possible input source, and the stages involved in writing are illustrated with arrows.

In the proposed model, dash-lines indicate that interaction is not always a requirement between a possible language input source and a particular stage of the writing

process. Unlike the process genre model proposed by Badger and White (2000), which does not fully cover all aspects needed for academic writing in an EFL/ESL context, the proposed model provides a comprehensive overview not only of how writing instruction will work in an EFL/ESL classroom setting, it also displays what actions are needed in each phase (by teachers and learners) and how the writing task is planned in line with the principles and views of the process genre approach.

The most significant difference with earlier models (such as the one by Badger and White 2000) is that model texts were replaced with context-specific teaching materials. Based on the positive results of the current study, it can be confirmed that the use of such materials is more effective in helping EFL/ESL tertiary level learners to improve their academic writing proficiency in the target language than using only model texts (as presented in the prescribed text book that was also used in this study). Given some external and internal factors (instructor's expertise of designing and developing teasing materials, time constraints and institutional demands) that can directly or indirectly affect writing instructors, I would suggest that a better textbook should be designed and developed that would suit a wider tertiary level student audience and that is somehow more similar to the context-specific materials presented in Appendix I. While no strong claims can be made about the usefulness of the proposed model in conceptualising writing instruction to younger learners, this would definitely be a worthwhile avenue for further research.

6.8. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined an adapted model of the process genre approach to writing; mainly focusing on factors that should inform the understanding of how the teaching of writing should be conceptualised in an academic setting where tertiary level EFL/ESL learners study English for specific purposes. In outlining the framework of the proposed process genre model of writing, the process genre model of writing proposed by Badger and White (2000) was considered as the basis. The possible language input sources needed for learners to engage in the writing process and how the process genre model operates in academic writing tasks were described, with an explanation of the interaction pattern that is assumed to occur between the language input sources and the process of writing at each stage. In addition, specific reference is made to the design of the context-specific materials which should ideally be informed by factors such as the developmental level of students; because it might be the case that the majority of tertiary

EFL students are, for whatever reason, still in the *developing* or *transitional* stage of writing.

This chapter concluded with a description of how the current study bridged some of the knowledge gaps in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing. Therefore, the current study can be credited as contributing to the field of applied linguistics in general and to the foreign language acquisition research in the context of technological education in Oman in particular.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

This chapter contains a summary of the major findings and their contribution to the domain of SLA, more specifically to the domain of EFL instruction. This chapter also includes recommendations for EFL practitioners and it highlights avenues for further research on the effects of context-specific writing materials delivered through an adapted process genre model on in different teaching contexts across the world.

7.1. Introduction

The aim of the current study was to investigate the effect of context-specific materials, developed in line with the process genre model, on the academic writing proficiency of tertiary level Omani EFL students. In order to address this aim, the researcher posed three main research questions and two sub-questions relating to the first research question. The first research question aimed to determine whether the application of context-specific materials, designed on the basis of the process genre approach, helped tertiary level students to perform better in academic writing in an examination setting; and whether the success of the intervention program depended on the instructor and on social variables such as student's prior exposure to English as well as their interest in learning English as a foreign language. The second research question aimed to determine whether the application of the context-specific materials tested here helped tertiary level students to improve their academic writing fluency (as measured by the T-unit analysis) while the third research questions aimed to determine whether the application of the context-specific materials helped tertiary level students to improve their academic writing accuracy (again as measured by T-unit analysis)

In order to answer the three main research questions and two sub-questions in this study, the researcher designed a quasi-experimental study, which consisted of five research instruments (including a writing pre-test, a writing test in the middle of the semester, a final writing test after the intervention (i.e. the final examination), intervention materials and a qualitative examination of a subset of the students' writing. The participants for the current study were Omani students studying in the General Foundation Program (GFP) (Level 3) at the Shinas College of Technology in Oman. Of the 14 Level 3 classes, 4 classes were randomly selected to participate in the study. Two classes formed the experimental group, and likewise, two classes formed the control group. In order to

control for the role of the instructor, one class from the experimental group was taught by the researcher while the other class in the experimental group was instructed by a second instructor from the English Language Centre of Shinas College of Technology. Similarly, one class in the control group was instructed by the researcher, while the other class in the control group was instructed by the second instructor.

As instructional materials, in addition to the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*), context-specific materials designed in line with the process genre model of writing (Figure 6.8) were used to teach the experimental group while the control group was instructed using the prescribed textbook (*Ready to write-2*) and the teaching method suggested in each chapter of the textbook. Before the classroom instruction began, the researcher conducted a pre-test on writing for both the experimental and control groups and then started classroom instruction for 28 weeks.

At the end of the study, the data gathered from the five research instruments were analysed using descriptive, inferential and non-parametric statistical tests in order to answer the research questions posed at the beginning of the study. The pre-test, MSE and LEE measured the participants' writing performance at different phases of the study, while the writing fluency and accuracy were measured using T-unit analysis as suggested by Elola (2005), Larsen-freeman and Strom (1977), Perkins (1980, 1983) and Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki and Kim (2001). On the whole, the results obtained from the various statistical tests confirmed that the experimental groups' writing proficiency improved significantly more than that of the control group, which lends support to the hypothesis that he context-specific materials and the adapted process genre model of writing (as depicted in Figure 6.8) are effective in enhancing EFL/ESL tertiary level students' academic writing proficiency. The main findings related to each of the research questions will be summarised in the next section.

7.2. Conclusion on the first research question

The results related to the first research question revealed that teaching materials which included context-specific writing tasks delivered through the adapted process genre model to writing led the participants in the experimental group to perform better than the control group after 28 weeks of writing instruction. Multivariate test results indicated that there was a significant main effect for group in the MSE as well as in the LEE. This indicated that the experimental group performed significantly better in both the MSE and the LEE tests than the control group.

Context-specific writing activities provided the students with more opportunities to engage in different writing tasks, in which they followed a five-step construction approach as suggested in the adapted process genre model (Figure 6.8). This kind of interaction and engagement allowed the students in the experimental group to write several drafts in the composing process. As Flower and Hayes (1981) have described in their cognitive process model of the composing process: a writer has to go through several stages before he or she arrives at a finished written document. When students write several drafts, they cognitively engage in a number of processes such as thinking or generating ideas relevant to the topic at hand, casting them into sentences, reading them as a way of revision to edit, add new ideas or delete what is irrelevant to the flow of the text or context (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Perl, 1979; Tribble, 1996). Writing several drafts provides learners with a good practice in which learners are informed of the progress they are making form one draft to another and most probably this triggers their interest in the writing task they are engaged in. Boice (1994) suggests that writing is the primary means by which we get new ideas and become smarter. Considering all these positive effects of writing multiple drafts, and given the results of the present study, one may conclude that context specific teaching materials, designed on the basis of the process genre model is more effective in enhancing EFL/ESL students' writing proficiency in an examination setting, than instruction based on the process genre model as it appears in a writing text book.

As described in the Chapter 2, the process genre approach, moreover, provides students with an opportunity to work as groups where they find social interaction with their peers and the teacher in the classroom. Hyland (2007) noted that genre-based pedagogies employ the ideas of Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1990). These writers emphasised the notion of scaffolding in which the role of interaction with peers and experienced others help learners move from their existing level of performance 'what they can do now' to a level 'what they can do without assistance'. The existing literature shows that students are able to reach much higher levels of performance by working together and with an expert than they might have achieved working on their own (Donato, 2000; Ohta, 2000). The degree of teacher intervention and the selection of tasks, therefore, play a key role in scaffolding writing.

By engaging in interaction with their peers and the teacher, the students in the experimental group in the present study received corrective feedback either from peers or from the teacher in the context of writing activities which helped the students to receive

language input in a gradual manner. This shows that when corrective feedback is fine-tuned to suit the learner's individual needs (as suggested in Han, 2010), it is effective. Moreover, maximising opportunities for students to engage in meaningful interaction with regard to different types of writing (descriptive, expository and persuasive), as suggested in the context-specific writing materials and the process genre approach, allowed the students to repeat and revise the language over and again. For example, when students rewrite, they are expected to do four things to change what they have physically written down. They can add information, subtract information, move information and change or substitute less pertinent information for more pertinent information in order to make their writing clearer, more unified, or more descriptive (Sunny Empire State College (n.d.). The process of revising and rewriting of what they had written made the learners acquire the writing skills with more confidence and writing became a less daunting task for them. Therefore, the classroom activities which the experimental groups engaged in, as described above, led the experimental group to improve in terms of their writing proficiency at the end of the study.

The control group also improved in terms of their writing; as was evidenced from the improved average score from the pre-test to the LEE. However, it can be inferred that the control group made more limited progress in writing proficiency, because the mean differences from the pre-test to the MSE and from the MSE to the LEE were relatively low, compared to the experimental group. The researcher firmly believes that the main reason for this limited gain was that the control group was not taught using the context-specific materials, which meant that students in the control group had limited opportunities to practice writing. For example, the students in the control group did not write several drafts, nor did they participate in peer editing in which students read each other's work and offered feedback on content, structure and grammar. The writing procedure suggested in the prescribed textbook, which the control groups used in the study, included only three steps namely prewriting, writing and revising (*Ready to write-2*, p. 61) even though it was described as process writing. However, according to authors like Geyser (1996), Shih (1986), Tessema (2005), Williams (2004, 2005), Yan (2005) and Zamel (1983), the process approach consists of five stages such as prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing.

The writing activities which the students in the control group did from the prescribed textbook were neither interactive nor engaging in that students received more limited language input. According to Krashen (2011) and Krashen and Bland (2014),

input should not only be interesting but also compelling to have an effect on language acquisition and literacy development. The input which the students in the control group received from the prescribed text cannot be claimed to be compelling on the ground that it was, strictly speaking, not organised in line with the principles of the process genre approach. Therefore, the students in the control group did not interact with their peers to discuss or share their ideas or views with regard to the writing tasks they did in the classroom situation. Moreover, they did not receive any feedback from their colleagues concerning their writing to the degree which the students in the experimental group received from their peers. Given the more limited improvement of the control group in writing in examination setting, the researcher wishes to conclude that it is of crucial importance to design context-specific instructional materials to help learners to engage in writing as an interactive and engaging process. Using only a textbook may not be sufficient to improve academic writing performance in the target language in EFL tertiary students who study in contexts similar to the one described in the current study.   With regards to the role of the instructor, the results indicated that the instructor had a significant effect on the outcome of writing proficiency, but only in the LEE where one of the instructor's students performed better than the other instructor's. Given the results from MANOVA, it is evident that the instructor can influence the performance of a group of students in an examination. More importantly though, it should be noted that both the experimental groups/classes performed significantly better than the control groups/classes in the LEE. Based on this, it can be inferred that the writing intervention program was successful, despite it being implemented by two different instructors. Finally, it was found that students in the experimental group who showed an elevated interest in and a high level of exposure to English benefited more from the intervention than students who showed a lower interest and low level of exposure to English. Given this, it seems that EFL/ESL instructors working in contexts where learners have limited exposure to English should encourage their learners to engage in reading, accessing the internet and getting additional English instruction as much as possible. Even though the writing intervention had a positive outcome, it cannot be guaranteed that individual learners will succeed if they don't have (or create) sufficient opportunities to use English outside of the classroom. This finding is in line with existing beliefs that reaching native or near-native like command of a second/foreign language requires more input than an "hour a day" (Lightbown, 2000, p. 448).

7.3. Conclusion on the second research question

T-unit analyses were conducted on 40 answer scripts extracted from the LEE (20 from the experimental group and 20 from the control group) in order to answer the second research questions, which aimed to determine whether the writing intervention program helped students to improve their writing fluency in an examination setting. Non-parametric testing (the Mann-Whitney U-test) showed that the study groups were somewhat different from one another in the pre-test (as indicated by four measures (the number of words per composition, the number of sentences per composition, the number of T-units per composition and the T-unit length). In the pre-test, the control group performed better in some areas of writing fluency (The number of sentences per composition and the number of T-units per composition), while the experimental group showed better writing fluency than the control group in (the T-unit length). However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in writing fluency in both the MSE and in the LEE. In the LEE, the experimental group was significantly more fluent in writing than the control group on all four measures.

The observed differences between the experimental and the control group in the construct of fluency can be credited to the effectiveness of the instructional method used in the current study. According to the 'Goldilocks Principle', proposed by Metcalfe and Kornell (2005), assignments given to students should not be too hard or too easy, but at the right level of difficulty for the student's level of skill or prior knowledge. Researchers have identified a number of zones that reflect how much learning, memory, mastery, or satisfaction occurs along a continuum of task difficulty and that is sensitive to individual differences among learners. When the material is too easy for the learner, the student is not challenged and may get bored. When it is too difficult, the student acquires very little and gets frustrated or tunes out. In terms of stimulating writing fluency via instructional tasks, teachers should tailor their materials to ensure sure that they are not too difficult, but also not too easy. In the context of writing, tasks that are too easy will not stimulate students to expand their written texts beyond the simple assignment that was given to them, whereas tasks that are too difficult will cause students to give up. The materials which the researcher developed and used with the experimental groups in the current study were in line with the principle of Goldilocks. When the students in the experimental group were doing the writing tasks included in the developed materials (see Appendix I), they found them neither too easy nor too difficult for their current level of fluency in writing. For example, writing an opinion paragraph about the topic 'Using mobile phones

in the classroom should be banned' is not seem particularly difficult for an intermediate ESL student studying at a college but when it comes to expressing their ideas with reasons and supporting ideas to support their claims in a logical manner, EFL students will also find this task not too easy or too boring. Writing involves several variables such as linguistic knowledge, cognitive and meta-cognitive writing strategies (as described in Chapter 2) and also knowledge about writing processes. Therefore, given the right level of the materials combined with appropriate instruction, students in the experimental group found the writing tasks included in the context-specific materials challenging on one hand but manageable on the other hand. As a result, the participants in the experimental group were stimulated and motivated to stretch themselves and to incorporate a larger number of words, as well as longer sentences (and thus more T-units) in their writing, showing an improvement in writing fluency

7.4. Conclusion of the third research question

The third research question in this study aimed to determine whether the writing intervention helped tertiary level students to improve their academic writing accuracy. Error-free T-unit ratio was used to measure the construct of writing accuracy in the study groups. According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, the experimental and control groups were not significantly different in terms of writing accuracy before the writing intervention. However, in the LEE, the Mann-Whitney U test results indicated that the error free T-unit ratios were significantly different between the groups, with the experimental group obtaining a significantly higher error free T-unit ration than the control group. Therefore, given the findings related to the construct of accuracy, it can be concluded that the context-specific materials and the process genre approach assisted students in the experimental group to improve their writing accuracy more than the control group.

Many researchers have stressed that grammar instruction is essential for academically oriented and advanced L2 learners if they are to achieve their educational and professional goals (Celce-Murcia 1991; Schmidt 1994; Shaw & Liu 1998). Celce-Murcia (1991) has emphasised the importance of a reasonable degree of grammatical accuracy in academic writing. Moreover, she noted that high frequency of grammatical errors in non-native speaker's academic writing (an average of 7.2 errors per 100 words) most probably makes their writings unacceptable to the academic communities. Given the difficulties faced by L2 learners in writing accuracy, Chang and Swales (1999)

suggested that explicit instruction in advanced academic writing and text is needed. Similarly, Ellis (1990) and Ellis et al. (2008) believed that formal classroom teaching with its emphasis on linguistic accuracy will engage the learner in planned discourse and develop the corresponding type of competence. Despite this, meta-analyses of the writing intervention literature suggest that traditional explicit grammar instruction methods in writing classes have a negative effect on learners' writing, and that grammar instruction has to happen in a manner that highlights the real-life functions of different forms (Graham & Perin, 2007a). The focus on form instruction which the researcher included in the context-specific materials (see Appendix I) can be assumed to have helped the experimental group to produce grammatically correct sentences in their writing, and as a result, they composed text that were more coherent and cohesive than the control group. It can, moreover, be assumed that the 'Be the Editor' task included in every chapter of the context-specific materials was helpful for the students in the experimental group to learn a number of aspects relating to grammatical issues in writing. When editing, it is expected that students should look into different aspects in a text such as fragment sentences, run-on sentences, use of punctuation, articles, plurals and possessives, pronouns and pronoun/antecedent agreement, modifier misplacement, subject-verb agreement, capitalisation, tense sequence, italics and underlining, using numbers, wordiness, parallelism and spelling (McNamara, n.d).

Another striking feature of the editing tasks included in the context-specific materials was the use of authentic texts which were drawn from students' writing with no modification or alteration. One of the advantages of including tasks such as editing in the students' materials is that, according to Sharwood Smith (1993), the theoretical premise of any instructional intervention should be to effect changes in learners' focal attention when they are processing the L2, so as to increase the likelihood that certain linguistic features are noticed (Schmidt, 1997) and eventually acquired. Norris and Ortega (2000), furthermore, argue that certain instructional techniques, which contextualise the new L2 material within meaningful episodes in a manner that is relatively unobtrusive but salient enough for further cognitive processing, may help learners direct their attention to the relevant features in the input, and thus may expedite the acquisition process. Given the theoretical premises as noted above and pedagogical implications of the materials, it can be argued that focus on form and editing activities in the context-specific materials were effective in helping the experimental group to improve their writing accuracy.

The results obtained from the Mann-Whitney U test analysis with regards to the construct of accuracy levels of the control group indicated that the control group did not make an improvement on accuracy. In the pre-test, the error-free T-unit ratio for the control group was M = 19.80. However, in the LEE, the error-free T-unit ratio was M = 14.15, indicating a decrease in mean score of 5.65, whereas the experimental group recorded an increase in mean score of 5.65. Therefore, given the significance of the results in the LEE, it can be concluded that the experimental group improved more in writing accuracy than the control group due to instructional.

It would seem as if the textbook which the control group used during the study did not play a crucial role in helping learners to improve the grammar skills required for them to produce a piece of writing that was free of errors. Even though *Ready to write-2* contains a section called 'grammar guide' where a particular grammar rule is explained with an example, the textbook does not provide learners with adequate activities to practice such grammar rules in order to master them. Moreover, providing students with activities which cater for their present and future linguistic needs is useful in terms of interaction. In the case of the experimental groups, the context-specific materials the researcher used with classroom instruction allowed the students to interact with their peers and the teacher in a communicative context. Therefore, the students had more opportunities to discuss or brainstorm the topic at hand, write multiple drafts, have their peers check their work, and comment on the content. Rereading and revising their writing benefited them to improve their writing accuracy in the end. Even though the control group also followed a process procedure in writing instruction, the accuracy levels achieved by the control group was limited.

Another reason for the limited accuracy in the writing of the control is possibly the nature of the writing tasks which the control group completed from the prescribed textbook. Tasks were given with fewer guidelines and some were rather difficult for the students to deal with. For example, writing topics included in the prescribed textbook for cause-effect essays included a) Computers have had several important effects on society; b) There are a number of consequences of global warming and c) The birth of my twins has had several effects on my life (*Ready to write-2*, p. 176). Because of the difficulty level of these topics, students in the control group did not attempt to write about them and as a result, they did not receive enough practice in writing in the classroom. Moreover, as described above in this chapter, since most of the writing activities in the prescribed textbook have been organised around individual work, students did not have an

opportunity to experience the benefit of group work. This also could have been another possible reason why the control group could not improve in writing accuracy.

7.5. Limitations of the study

The current study, which was conducted at Shinas College of Technology in Oman with a group of 120 students from the Foundation Level (3) in the second semester (January-June), lasted for 28 weeks with a total of 78 hours of classroom instruction. It was a case study in nature and quasi-experimental in design (which presupposes certain limitation, as discussed in Chapter 4). Even though the results of the study were encouraging in respect of using context-specific materials and the adapted process genre model of writing in enhancing ESL learners' academic writing proficiency, there are limitations which must be acknowledged. The first limitation is the sample selection. Even though the study group sample was selected from a college student population which shares the same characteristics such as age, sex, and first language, the sample was limited to 120 students. Therefore, it cannot be implied that the population sample is representative of the entire college of technology student population either in Oman or outside of Oman. As such, the results in this study, strictly speaking, cannot be generalised to a bigger population of college of technology students who study English in EFL contexts. (However, it should be stressed that since the current study was a foreign language classroom-based research which focused on a specific linguistic aspect of a given group of students, the size of the subject population should not always be seen as a relevant factor (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989)).

The second limitation is that the outcomes of this study cannot be generalised to learners who are not cognitively mature enough or old enough to study writing tasks delivered through the adapted process genre model of writing as suggested in the context-specific materials (see Appendix L) which were used in the current study. In other words, young learners, learners with learning difficulties and learners with very with low levels of proficiency in English may find the writing tasks included in the context-specific materials difficult to accomplish, even when they are guided through the tasks. Therefore, instructors will have to judge the applicability and usefulness of what this study proposes to their own foreign language teaching contexts.

A third limitation is that it was not possible to control for all the environmental and social variables that could have influenced the outcome of the study, which is a typical limitation of quasi-experimental research designs.   Further research is needed to

investigate the effect of context-specific materials and the proposed process genre model of writing in other teaching contexts so that one can make more informed decisions about the success of context-specific materials and the proposed process genre model of writing in enhancing tertiary level learners' academic writing proficiency in the target language.

7.6. Significance of the study

Al Seyabi and Tuzlukova (2014) claim that Omani students finish their secondary school education (post-basic education) with high English symbols (ranging from a C+ to an A), and thus they should manage to cope with the demands of completing certain aspects of their higher education in English relatively easily. However, their English writing skills are recorded to be limited. Students at tertiary levels are expected to be able to write academic assignments in English, in which they should produce concise, coherent and well-reasoned academic essays belonging to different genres. However, a number of studies conducted both in ESL/EFL (and even in English as a first language) contexts have suggested that the students entering tertiary educational institutes have limited writing proficiency irrespective of their chosen study programs (Ahmed, 2010; Chin, 2007; Kim, 2005; Leki, 1992; Thuy, 2009).

From arguments, discussions and critiques advanced by authors such as Al Seyabi and Tuzlukova (2014), Ahmed (2010) and from the key findings presented in the World Bank Report (2012) concerning the present status quo of English teaching practices in Oman, it would seem as if such practices are often ineffective. In other words, English teaching practices do not cater for the learners' linguistic needs; the reason being that there is a lack of trained teachers in Oman, which leads to low teaching quality in Omani public schools (The Ministry of Education and the World Bank, 2012). The present study was motivated by the researcher's observation that the majority of students both in the general foundation and post foundation levels at Shinas College of Technology fail to acquire academic writing proficiency in English, even though they can read and speak the language fairly well. As discussed in Chapter 1, given the learning outcome standards set out for English Language in the General Foundation Program (GFP) by the Oman Academic Accreditation Council and the Ministry of Higher Education, it is mandatory for the students in the general foundation program to be able to a). write texts of a minimum of 250 words, showing control of layout, organisation, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary and b) produce a written report of a minimum of 500 words showing evidence of research, note taking, review and revision

of work, paraphrasing, summarising, use of quotations and use of references (Oman Academic Accreditation Council, 2008).

Given these learning outcome standards, it is imperative that the students in General Foundation Program improve their academic writing proficiency in English in order to fulfil not only their academic goals in higher studies but also to contribute to the development process of their country. Moreover, the Education in Oman: The Drive for Quality summary report (The Ministry of Education and the World Bank, 2012, p. 163) states that "in addition to core competencies, employers recruiting professionals are looking for skills in English and IT - Indispensable in the globalised economy" Given this context, the present study is significant since it provides insights into how academic writing proficiency of tertiary level students in Oman can be enhanced. The Colleges of Technology are the leading technological institutions that produce Omani professionals, in the fields of Applied Sciences, Engineering, Business Studies and Information Technology, who will contribute to national socio-economic development of Oman, and it is crucially important to ensure that students leaving the colleges can in fact write text in English in a manner that would be acceptable in a professional environment.

Moreover, the finding that the process genre approach, if utilised via context-specific teaching materials, do improve the ability of tertiary students to compose better writing in an examination setting presents a novel contribution to the literature. Previously, it has been suggested that encouraging students to use a process approach in an examination setting would result in students not finishing on time, as process approaches take too long to complete. This study disputes previous findings that process approaches may even have a negative effect on writing proficiency.

In terms of the design of context-specific instructional materials, it is important to highlight that while the combination of instructional elements used in the intervention program implemented here was successful in enhancing student's writing ability, this same combination may be less appropriate for other teaching contexts. The context specific teaching materials in this study included collaborative writing, peer feedback, teacher feedback, specifying product goals, genre instruction, sentence combining, focus on form activities, prewriting and inquiry activities, digital teaching aids and the process approach. This combination was based on the researcher's teaching experiences in the specific EFL context, and the materials were designed with prior knowledge of the students' needs. Even so, it is not the case that all instructional elements will necessarily be successful in all contexts. For example, modelling existing texts forms part of the

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process genre approach, and was thus also included as an activity. However, it became clear in this study that EFL learners with very weak writing skills will not use a model to inform their own writing process; rather, they will copy it verbatim when instructed to compose their own text. Thus, the researcher suggested an adaptation of the process genre model in EFL contexts.

The adaptation of the process genre model for EFL context is the most crucial theoretical contribution of the current study to the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing instruction. I propose an adapted framework of the process genre model of writing, which is specifically suited to an academic setting where tertiary level EFL/ESL learners study English for a specific purpose. The conceptualised framework of the proposed process genre model of writing mainly focuses on the factors that influence learning to write in an academic setting where tertiary level students learn English as a foreign language for specific purposes. The process genre model of writing proposed by Badger and White (2000) was considered as the basis. The possible language input sources needed for learners to engage in the writing process and how the process genre model operates in academic writing tasks are described, with an explanation to the interaction pattern that is assumed to occur in between the language input sources and the process of writing at each stage (as was explained in Section 5.5 and Figure 6.8). Therefore, the current study enhances our understanding of factors that contribute to the successful implementation of the process genre approach in a tertiary context (specifically in Oman), and thus fill a gap in the domain of EFL/ESL academic writing.

The present study supports the findings of the previous studies conducted by Abd-ElFattah (2013), Foo (2007), Jackson (2012), Nordin, Halib and Ghazadi (2010), Chelli and Hassinia (2012) in different teaching contexts using the process genre approach to improve EFL learners' writing proficiency, and also are in line with previous meta-analyses of the literature which established a positive effect for process writing in adolescent writers.

McCarthy and Carter (1994) argue that most current language textbooks are inadequate in developing learners' overall communicative competence and they have explicitly illustrated that language textbooks are biased towards linguistic, rather than sociolinguistic, rules. Therefore, this study can be used as a guideline for teachers wishing to use context-specific materials and the adapted process genre model of writing to teach academic writing proficiency of Omani learners in particular and other foreign language

learners in general rather than depending on commercially produced materials which fail to account for a writing needs of a particular group of students.

7.7. Practical implications and applications for the ESL/EFL classroom

Providing a functional definition for proficiency, Spolsky (1989) states that proficiency is not how much of a language someone knows, but one's ability to operate in a specified sociolinguistic situation with specified ease or effect. The linguistic components include phonology, syntax, semantics and lexicon; modality involves comprehension and production through the oral channel and reading and writing through the written channel; sociolinguistic performance involves the dimensions of style, function, variety and domain.

The major concern of this study has been to assist EFL teachers in improving the design and implementation of future instructional materials for General Foundation English Programs in the colleges of Technology in Oman and in the Arabic countries in general. Judging from the effectiveness of context-specific materials and the adapted process genre model to writing, this study suggests that a better textbook should be designed and developed that would suit a wider tertiary level student audience and that is somehow more similar to the context-specific materials (see Appendix I) which the researcher developed and used in the current study. The evidence from the current study suggests that students will become bored and disinterested in an EFL writing class where practicing writing happens in a manner that is not context-appropriate and does not include a broad range of activities (including stimulating learning materials and digital technology aids such as videos, *Power Points* and pictures)). Retaining learners' attention on a given writing activity until it is accomplished in the class or outside of it may be seen as one of the most challenging tasks that EFL teachers experience in their teaching practices every day. The present study shows that learners' attention can be kept focused until a given activity is complete by employing context-specific materials and the adapted process genre model to writing in which the digital technology to a certain level has been blended with writing tasks. Digital technologies are now commonplace for our learners and they are getting much easier to use.

Thus, it is highly encouraged, if facilities are available in classrooms, to use videos, *PowerPoint* presentations and pictures to go with the writing tasks because, as described in Chapter 4, information is encoded and remembered better when it is delivered in multiple modes (verbal and pictorial), sensory modalities (auditory and

visual), or media (computers and lectures) than when delivered in only a single mode, modality, or medium (Mayer, 2001).

Concerning the application, it was demonstrated that the techniques used in the study were effective in promoting academic writing proficiency in tertiary level EFL learners studying in a classroom context. It is imperative that EFL writing instructors encourage learners to do collaborative writing tasks in which they receive adequate opportunities to interact with their peers and the teacher in the process of writing in the class as well as out of the class. This kind of collaboration in classroom writing tasks helps reduce teacher talk time and creates a context in which students are encouraged to discuss the writing topic at hand, exchange ideas, re-read the peer's writing and provide feedback. It was found that the use of pair and group work resulted in active student involvement in accomplishing a given writing task. Moreover, using context-specific materials which are designed to meet the writing needs of a particular group of students is more effective than using only commercially produced materials which are written with no target group in mind, because the writers of such books do not know the particular group of learners' linguistic needs, interests, culture specific issues and proficiency level. When it comes to feedback, it is suggested that providing learners with oral feedback on task is more effective than providing written feedback which may become too much for the learners to read. Face-to-face verbal feedback is generally interactive as the teacher can judge the effects of his other words are having and add further explanation when it appears as if a student requires it (Race & Brown, 2005). Providing verbal face-to-face feedback was found highly effective in the current study. Writing instructors should adopt the role of facilitator and guide and be flexible and open to new approaches and techniques which are more effective in promoting the learners' academic writing proficiency in the classroom context. The creation of a positive, relaxed, and non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom is vital for reducing negative effects such as anxiety, fear, and shyness. Students who feel secure and comfortable with each other and their instructor who provides the students with appropriate materials and writing tasks are more open to work with their peers collaboratively and share information with others. On the whole, the students, who engage in learning to write in English in an environment described above, enjoy learning and benefit from learning more than those students who experience constraints imposed by orthodox writing approaches and materials that do not cater for their academic writing needs.

7.8. Suggestions for further research

Given the findings of this study and the researcher's classroom observations, it can be concluded that one of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is the that context-specific materials, designed in line with the proposed process genre model of writing will be effective in enhancing academic writing proficiency in tertiary level EFL learners. Previous studies reviewed in the current study had used only the process genre approach in classroom instruction in different teaching contexts. However, the present study investigated the effect of context-specific materials (and the process genre approach) and found it to be more effective in improving EFL learners' academic writing proficiency than more traditional instruction using a textbook.

Therefore, using context-specific materials along with the adapted framework of process genre model of writing is worth further investigation in different teaching contexts with different groups of learners using bigger samples and different population groups. In addition, offers guidelines for researchers wishing to investigate variables that can impact on learners' achieving academic writing proficiency in situations and contexts where English is studied as a foreign or a second language across the globe.

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Shinas College of Technology
English Language Center

FOUNDATION PROGRAM- Level 3
Pre-test-Writing

Name: _____   **Marks:**

20

Group: _____

Time: 30 Minutes

Write a paragraph about the topic given below. Include a topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion.

Why do students use internet a lot?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B: MSE USED IN THE MAIN STUDY (WRITING SECTION)

Choose any of the following questions

Read the following advertisement which was published in 'The Oman Observer' on 10/3/2015 and write a job application letter for the post of an Electrical Engineer (Marks 20).

OMAN AIR الطيران العماني

OMAN AIR JOB VACANCY

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

Education: University Degree/Diploma in Electrical Engineering.

Experience: Two years experience in project management.

Other Requirements:

> Candidates should be Omani.
> Good communication. Both spoken and written skills in English.
> Must have good technical skills.
> Should have the ability to work in a team.

Interested candidates may send a copy of their CV and two pasport size photographs before 25 Feb, 2014 to the following address.

Manager HRD

P.O.BOX 322

Muscat

Sultanate of Oman

OR   *Turn over*

Write a three-paragraph essay of comparing and contrasting the features of the two hotels given below. In the third paragraph, you are required to give your opinion (Marks 20)

Information	Crowne Plaza	Al Wadi Hotel
Location	Falaj	Sohar
Rating	5 star hotel	3 star hotel
Room Rent	RO 100 per day	RO 70 per day
Swimming Pool	Available	Available
Sea View	No	No
Food	All types	All types
Distance from main road	3 km	1 km
Indoor Games	Available	Not Available
Car rental service	Yes	No
Sightseeing services	Available	Available
Holiday package	Yes	Yes

APPENDIX C: MARKING CRITERIA FOR JOB APPLICATION LETTER: MSE

	Level 3: Writing Rubric/ Job Application Letter			
	Content	**Organization**	**Vocabulary**	**Grammar and spelling**
6	☐ Letter clearly states the purpose ☐ Appropriate explanations or facts used to support the main idea ☐ Easy to follow	**6** Accurately uses correct job application letter format (heading, greeting, introduction, body, closure, signature, enclosure)	**4** Accurate use of a rich variety of vocabulary.	**4** No errors in grammar. Few / no errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling and use of connectors.
4-5	☐ Letter clearly states the purpose ☐ Some explanations or facts used to support the main idea ☐ Somewhat hard to follow	**4-5** Mostly uses correct job application letter format (heading, greeting, introduction, body, closure, signature, enclosure)	**3** Almost adequate and accurate use of vocabulary Some words are used inappropriately. Response may lack descriptive words.	**3** A few grammar errors. Mostly accurate use of punctuation, capitalization, spelling and connectors.
2-3	☐ Purpose of letter is unclear ☐ More explanations or facts need to be used to support the main idea ☐ Hard to follow	**2-3** Some noticeable errors in use of correct job application letter format (heading, greeting, introduction, body, closure, signature, enclosure)	**2** Somewhat adequate and appropriate use of vocabulary. Response contains very few vocabularies.	**2** Obvious grammar errors. Somewhat accurate use of punctuation, capitalization, spelling and connectors.
1	☐ Purpose of letter is unclear ☐ Main idea is not supported by explanations or facts ☐ Letter rambles; hard to follow or understand	**1** Several noticeable errors in use of correct job application letter format (heading, greeting, introduction, body, closure, signature, enclosure)	**1** Vocabulary is barely appropriate and out of context.	**1** Frequent grammar errors. Frequent errors, missing and misplaced use of punctuation, capitalization and connectors.
0	☐ No purpose of letter exists ☐ Ideas are completely irrelevant.	**0** No use of correct job application letter format / ideas are completely irrelevant.	**0** No vocabulary/ completely irrelevant vocabulary	**0** Numerous errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling and use of connectors.

APPENDIX D: MARKING CRITERIA FOR COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAY: MSE

Level 3: Writing Rubric/ comparison and contrast paragraph							
Content		**Organization, structure and vocabulary**		**Transitions**		**Grammar and spelling**	
6	The paragraph compares and contrasts clearly. The topic sentence, supporting details and concluding sentence included, all information relevant.	6	The paragraph follows a consistent order or point by point structure. Basic language structures are used correctly most of the time. Evidence of an extended / rich and an appropriate vocabulary.	4	Paragraph moves smoothly from one idea to the next. Comparison and contrast transition words used.	4	No errors in grammar. Few / no errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling and use of connectors.
4-5	The paragraph compares and contrasts clearly, but supporting information is general. The topic sentence, supporting details and concluding sentence, all information relevant.	4-5	The paragraph follows a logical order, but has some inconsistencies. Basic language structures are mostly used correctly. Some evidence of an extended / rich and an appropriate vocabulary.	2-3	Paragraph moves smoothly from one idea to the next, but there is little variety. Comparison and contrast transition words are evident.	2-3	A few grammar errors. Mostly accurate use of punctuation, capitalization, spelling and connectors.
2-3	The paragraph compares and contrasts clearly, but supporting information is incomplete, some irrelevant information.	2-3	Some effort made to organize paragraph logically, but some details are used out of context or out of expected order. Somewhat in control of basic language structures. Some structures are often used inappropriately. Limited vocabulary used.	1-2	Some transitions work well but connections between other ideas are fuzzy. Repetition of transition words.	1-2	Obvious grammar errors. Somewhat accurate use of punctuation, capitalization, spelling and connectors.
1	The paragraph compares or contrasts but not both. Supporting information is incomplete.	1	Lacks proper structure and organization. No evidence of the correct use of basic language structures. Vocabulary is barely appropriate and out of context.	1	Transitions between ideas are unclear and nonexistent.	1	Frequent grammar errors. Frequent errors, missing and misplaced use of punctuation, capitalization and connectors.
0	Wrong content / ideas are completely irrelevant. No comparison and no contrasting.	0	No logical or expected organization or structure. No vocabulary/ completely irrelevant vocabulary.	0	No transition words used.	0	Numerous errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling and use of connectors.

Writing Question 1 (10 Marks)

Question 1

Write a paragraph of about 150 words using the information given in the graph.

Include a **topic sentence, supporting details** and a **concluding sentence**.

Use appropriate signal words wherever necessary.

Employment Growth in different GCC countries

Employment Growth

Number of employees in thousands

Oman
UAE
Bahrain

2012: 22, 50, 6
2013: 38, 51, 9
2014: 56, 57, 30
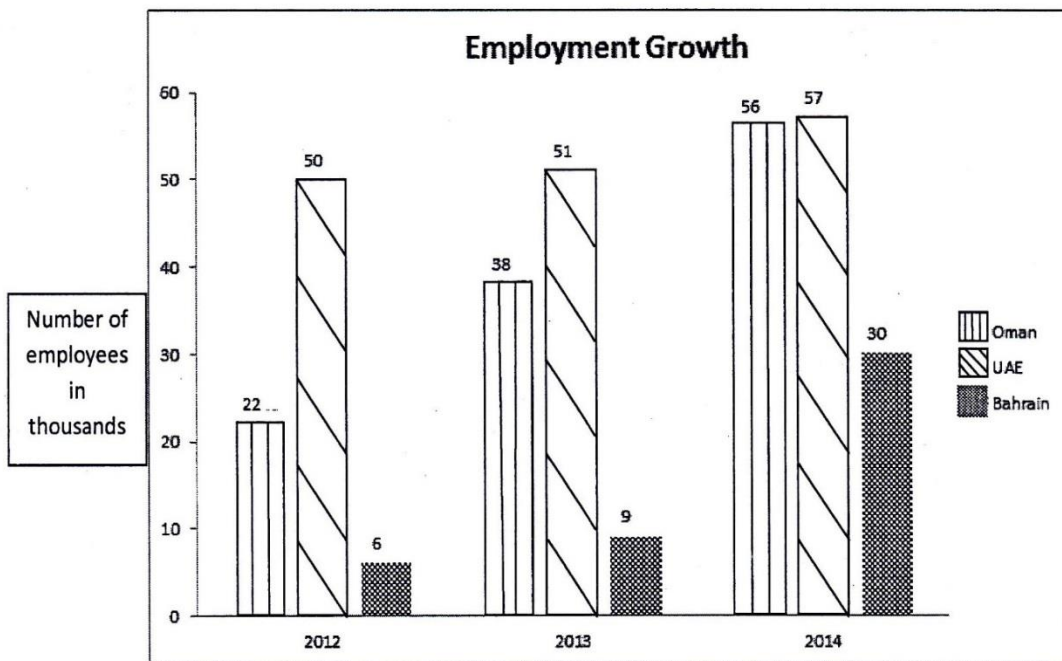
Question 2 (15 Marks)

Write an essay of about 180-200 words on the **causes and effects of living in cities rather than in villages**.

Include a **topic sentence, supporting details** and a **concluding sentence**. Use signal words wherever necessary.

APPENDIX F: MARKING CRITERIA FOR LEE: WRITING QUESTION 1

English Language Center Level 3					
Mechanics / Marks	**0.5 - 1**	**1.5 – 3**	**3.5 –4.5**	**5 - 6**	**Marks 20**
Content/Ideas	Answer is barely related to the topic. Ideas are unrelated to each other. Word count is below 90	Addresses the requirements of the task. Ideas are few and related to task, but not elaborated. Word count is between 91 and 119.	Covers the requirement of the task. Writing is purposeful and focused. Word count is between 120 and 149.	Fully satisfies all the requirements of the task. Word count is not below 150.	6
	0.5 - 1	**1.5 – 3**	**3.5 –4.5**	**5 - 6**	
Organization	Writing is disorganized and underdeveloped with no introduction, thesis statement, conclusion, and transitions.	Writing is underdeveloped with weak introduction, thesis statement, or conclusion. Minimal transitions.	Writing is well organized. Adequate introduction, thesis statement, and conclusion. Adequate use of transitions.	Writing is exceptionally well organized; includes effective introduction, thesis statement, and conclusion; uses effective transitions.	6
	0.5 - 1	**1.5 - 2**	**2.5 - 3**	**3.5 – 4**	
Vocabulary & Conventions	Uses only a few isolated words. Many spelling mistakes, even of common words. Poor punctuation and incorrect or missing capitalization	Uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary. Noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation and punctuation.	Uses an adequate range of vocabulary. Occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation.	Uses a wide range of vocabulary to convey precise meaning. Produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation.	4

	0.5 - 1	**1.5 - 2**	**2.5 - 3**	**3.5 – 4**	
Grammar and Sentence structure	Errors in grammar and sentence structure are so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.	Errors in grammar and sentence structure are predominant and may distort the meaning	Some errors in grammar, or sentence structure; but majority of sentences are comprehensible	Very few errors in grammar, or sentence structure.	4

APPENDIX G: MARKING CRITERIA FOR LEE: WRITING QUESTION 2

(20 X 0.75 = 15 MARKS)

Mechanics / Marks	0.5 – 1	1.5 – 2.5	3 – 4	4.5 – 6	6.5 – 8	Marks 20
Content/Ideas	Answer is barely related to the topic. Ideas are unrelated to each other. Word count is below 99	Ideas are few and some related to task, but not elaborated. Word count is between 100 and 149.	Addresses the requirements of the task. Word count is between 150 and 199.	Covers the requirement of the task. Writing is purposeful and focused. Word count is between 200 and 249.	Fully satisfies all the requirements of the task. Word count is not below 250.	8
	0.5		1 – 1.5	2 – 2.5	3 - 4	
Organization	Writing is disorganized and underdeveloped with no introduction, thesis statement, conclusion, and transitions.		Writing is underdeveloped with weak introduction, thesis statement or conclusion. Minimal transitions.	Writing is well organized. Adequate introduction, thesis statement, and conclusion. Adequate use of transitions.	Writing is exceptionally well organized; includes effective introduction, thesis statement, and conclusion; uses effective transitions.	4
	0.5		1 – 1.5	2 – 2.5	3 - 4	

	0.5		1 – 1.5	2 – 2.5	3 - 4	
Vocabulary & Conventions	Uses only a few isolated words. Many spelling mistakes, even of common words. Poor punctuation and incorrect or missing capitalization		Uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary. Noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation and punctuation.	Uses an adequate range of vocabulary. Occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation.	Uses a wide range of vocabulary to convey precise meaning. Produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation.	4
	0.5		1 – 1.5	2 – 2.5	3 - 4	
Grammar and Sentence structure	Errors in grammar and sentence structure are so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.		Errors in grammar and sentence structure are predominant and may distort the meaning.	Some errors in grammar, or sentence structure; but majority of sentences are comprehensible.	Very few errors in grammar, or sentence structure.	4

Give zero if - The student has not written anything. **OR** The writing is completely off-topic and irrelevant.

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO INVESTIGATE SOCIAL VARIABLES

Dear participants,

I am conducting a research study on academic writing issues of Foundation Level students (Level 3) at Shinas College of Technology during the 2nd semester of 2014-2015 academic years. The questionnaire which is stated below is a part of the above study and it seeks to investigate the participants' previous and current knowledge, practices and experience in learning and using English in educational and social contexts.

I would appreciate your taking time to complete the following survey and your responses are voluntary and confidential. Your responses will be used study purposes only.

If you have any question or concern with regards to this survey, please contact me at 91075564 or mailwita@yahoo.com for clarification.

Thank you.

Sarath W. Samaranayake
English Language Center
Shinas College of Technology

Questionnaire: Foundation Level (3) students

Please provide genuine answer for each question below.

ID No:_____   Sex: _____

Parents' employment: 1. Father:_____ Mother:_____

Q 1). At what age did you start to study English?
a. 5
b. after 5
c. at primary school
d. at secondary
e. at high school

Q 2). How long did you study English from primary to high school? (In years)_____

Q 3). Did you study English outside school?

a. Yes
b. No
If yes, (please specify)_____

Q 4). How long have you have been learning English at the college?

a. 3 months
b. 6th months
c. one year
d. other (please specify)_____

Q 5). Do you study English outside the college?

a. Yes
b. No
If yes, (please specify)

_____

_____

Q 6). Do you have English books at home?
a. Yes
b. No

Q 7). Do you read English books at home?

a. always
b. sometimes
c. never

Q 8). Do you watch English movies on TV?

a. always
b. sometimes
c. never

Q 9). Do you access the internet in English?

a. Yes
b. No
If yes, How often?

a. always
b. sometime
c. when I need it
d. never

Q 10). Do your parents want you to improve your English proficiency?
a. Yes
b. No

Q 11). What is your idea about English proficiency?
a. Essential
b. Not very necessary
c. No idea

Q 12). Your overall impression about the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing: Which skill or skills are more important?

a. Listening & Speaking
b. Reading & writing
c. All the four skills

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Context-specific writing materials

FOR GENERAL FOUNDATION PROGRAMME-LEVEL 3

Sarath W. Samaranayake

English Language Centre

Shinas College of Technology

Sultanate of Oman

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English Language Center

Context-specific writing materials designed on the basis of the process genre approach for Foundation Program (English)

Level 3

Introduction

Writing is one of the most important tools of communication. The ability to write helps develop imaginative and critical thinking abilities. It is stated that writing is more permanent than speaking, and requires more careful organisation. It is also less spontaneous because it involves a process, from organising ideas in the mind to setting the final document on paper. Teaching the skill of writing involves familiarising students with various formats of informal and formal written texts. Moreover, teaching writing includes taking students through a process — a series of steps — such as brainstorming for ideas, organising and sequencing them, revising and editing the draft and so on.

It has been argued that learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult of the macro-skills for all language learners regardless of whether the language in question is a first, second or foreign language. All children, except those with physiological disabilities, learn to understand and speak their native language. Not all learn to read. Fewer still learn to write fluently and legibly. Stressing on the complex nature of writing, Bell and Burnaby (1984, p. 29) write:

> Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the author is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. At the sentence level; these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts.

However, the ability to construct coherent and cohesive texts in a written medium is considered essential for students pursuing higher education in which they have to use the basic rhetoric, linguistic aspects, form and the cognitive processes involved in academic writing at their specific level of education. The students at Shinas College of Technology are expected to master academic writing skills during their respective study programs such as Engineering, Information Technology and Business Studies. Even though there are different views of what constitutes academic writing, the general view is that academic writing displays students' understanding of an expository or argumentative topic and of writing conventions. An academic text should have a clear

and meaningful thesis statement that is discussed in an organized, logical, fluent and accurate manner.

As is clear from the discussion above, you will need to understand that writing involves a process such as pre-writing, drafting, revising, proofreading and producing the final draft. You have to remember that it is this process we are going to study in our writing course during this semester. More information about what you are expected to do in writing is stated below.

The process genre approach

In academic writing, we are going to use an approach called **the process genre approach**. This approach has several stages which are briefly outlined below.

Pre-writing phase:

At this stage, you are supposed to become familiar with the genre and the relating conventions through direct instruction by your teacher or models you are provided with. Moreover, you have to use the background knowledge about the possible subjects or topics, the linguistic features and linguistic skills to write your own text in the specified genre. Make sure that you understand exactly what you have to do. Otherwise, the best way to start is to ask yourself the questions listed below:

What shall I write about?

This is a question about the **topic** or **theme** of your writing. If you choose something that moves you in some way, your writing is more likely to be interesting to the reader.

Why do I want to write about it?

This is a question about the **purpose** of your writing, and it is linked to the first question. Here are some of the possible purposes you may have for a piece of work:

> **to explain, to inform/instruct, to describe, to narrate, to persuade, to move, to amuse/entertain**

What kind of writing shall I do?

This is a question about the **genre** of your work. Here are some of the genres you could choose from:

> **A short story, poem, letter, narrative, news story, an essay, a book/film review, a report, a biography**

Who am I writing it for?

This is a question about the **audience** for your writing. For example: Will it be posted on a bulletin board? Do you want to publish it in a school magazine? Is it a letter addressed to a HR Manager of a company? When you have answered these questions, you are ready to start planning your writing. Depending on your topic, you can collect ideas and make notes by doing one or more of the following activities:

> **thinking/ brainstorming, reading and researching, observing, interviewing, discussing, imagining, note-taking**

The final task of the prewriting stage is to organise your ideas and notes into a logical order. You may find it helpful to write an outline or use some kind of chart or table to organize the information you have collected. You are now ready for the next stage of the writing process – drafting.

Composing

Once you have finished planning your work, you are ready to start on the first writing of it. This is often called the *first draft*. It is recommended that you should not worry too much at this time about spelling or grammar mistakes. If you need to use a word or express an idea but you don't know how to in English, then write it down in your own language. You can use your dictionary later.

Start your paragraph with a topic sentence followed by supporting ideas and finally, you need an effective conclusion. Always follow this procedure when you write a paragraph or an essay (More information about paragraph writing is discussed below). It is better to writing on a paper and make it double-space. This will allow you to make corrections and changes more easily.

While you are writing your first draft, you may find that you need some more information. In this case you will need to repeat one or more of the steps in the prewriting stage. You may also change some of the ideas you collected or the way you organised them. Better ideas/thoughts will come to you only after you have started writing.

In composing, you should structure the ideas in meaningful sentences based on the conventions of the specific genre. Moreover, you need to construct sentences and paragraphs, but, your ideas may not be completely formulated before you write a first draft, therefore, you need to produce multiple drafts at this stage.

Re-reading and revising

As Tribble (1996, p. 115) states, "Composing and drafting don not usually mark the end point of the writing process". Once the first draft is completed or while you are still busy composing, you are encouraged to re-read your text firstly to determine whether your subject content matches the topic and what you intended to say. Furthermore, you should

check whether your paragraphs have a logical order with clear topic and supporting sentences. The questions below will help you to perfect your work. (Not all of the questions apply to all kinds of writing, so you will have to be selective.)

- Does the writing say what you want it to say?
- Does it make sense? Is it clear what you're trying to say?
- Is there anything you need to add or delete?
- Is it well-organised, or do some parts seem to be in the wrong place?
- Is there a strong topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion?
- Is the vocabulary strong and precise?
- Are sentence connectors, appropriate signal words, transitions used?
- Are the links between sections clear? Do they guide my reader through the writing?

It is very useful to ask another student or your teacher to help you revise your work. You know what you are trying to say, but it may not be clear to everyone else. When you get someone to check your writing, it is helpful if you tell them exactly what you would like them to concentrate on, so that you get specific answers. Don't leave all the revising for another person to do, however. The goal is for you to become a good writer, independent of other people's help, and so you need to be able to answer the above questions yourself. Read through your work once before giving it to someone else, so that you can make sure it says what you want it to say.

While you are revising your work, you may find that you need to return to the prewriting stage and do a little more research to find extra information. This is perfectly normal. You may also spot some grammar or spelling mistakes. Although it is tempting to correct them immediately, it is probably better to wait until you have finished revising the writing.

Peer-editing

Peer-editing means that you read each other's work, and then offer feedback on content, structure and grammar. Peer-editing is also a form of input, as discussion on content with your peers might lead to the addition of ideas. After the peer-editing session, you are allowed more time to re-write the text if necessary.

Teacher feedback

I will edit and evaluate your first draft once it is written, self-edited, peer-edited and revised, possibly re-written. I can provide you with oral feedback after going through your essay and make suggestions on how to improve the text.

CHAPTER 1

PARAGRAPH WRITING

This chapter will help you with the following basic aspects of paragraph writing which are considered essential to be mastered by you to become a proficient academic writer.

Objectives of this chapter
At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Identify and use the steps of writing process.
2. Practice prewriting and organising ideas into simple outline.
3. Recognise parts of a paragraph.
4. Learn to use signal words.
5. Write a first draft and revise it.
6. Write multiple drafts.
7. Edit others' paragraphs and provide feedback on how to improve a text.
8. Learn to write simple paragraphs with topic sentences, supporting ideas and conclusions with appropriate signal words.

Writing: Descriptive writing

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; personal pronouns (possessive)

Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic. Good paragraphing also greatly assists your readers in following a piece of writing. You can have fantastic ideas, but if those ideas are not presented in an organisational fashion, you will lose your readers (and fail to achieve your goals in writing). There are many different ways to organize a paragraph. The organisation you choose will depend on the controlling idea of the paragraph. Below are a few possibilities for organisation, with brief examples.

Narration: Tell a story. Go chronologically, from start to finish. **For example,**

One North Carolina man found quite a surprise last year while fishing in the Catawba River: a piranha. Melton could not identify it, but a nearby fisherman did. Melton at first could not believe he had caught a piranha. He said, "That isn't a piranha. They aren't piranhas around here." Melton was right: the fish is native to South America, and North Carolina prohibits owning the fish as a pet or introducing the species to local waterways. The sharp-toothed, carnivorous fish likely found itself in the Catawba River when its illegal owner released the fish after growing tired of it. Wildlife officials hope

that the piranha was the only of its kind in the river, but locals are thinking twice before they wade in the water.

Description: Provide specific details about what something looks, smells, tastes, sounds, or feels like. Organise spatially, in order of appearance, or by topic. For example:

Piranhas are omnivorous, freshwater fish, which are mostly known for their single row of sharp, triangular teeth in both jaws. Piranhas' teeth come together in a scissor-like bite and are used for puncture and tearing. Baby piranhas are small, about the size of a thumbnail, but full-grown piranhas grow up to about 6-10 inches, and some individual fish up to 2 feet long have been found. The many species of piranhas vary in color, though most are either silvery with an orange underbelly and throat or almost entirely black.

Process: Explain how something works, step by step. Perhaps follow a sequence - first, second, third. For example, you can safely swim with piranhas, but it's important to know how and when to do it. First, choose an appropriate time, preferably at night and during the rainy season. Avoid piranha-infested waters during the dry season, when food supplies are low and piranhas are more desperate. Piranhas feed during the day, so night-time swimming is much safer. Second, simplify your movement. Wild or erratic activity attracts the attention of piranhas. Swim slowly and smoothly. Finally, never enter the water with an open wound or raw meat. Piranhas attack larger animals only when they are wounded. The presence of blood in the water may tempt the fish to attack. If you follow these simple safety measures, you will have little to fear.

Classification: Separate into groups or explain the various parts of a topic. For example:

Piranhas comprise more than 30-60 species of fish, depending on who you ask. The many species fall into four genera: Pygocentrus, Pygopristis, Serrasalmus, and Pristobrycon. Piranhas in the Pygocentrus genus are the most common variety, the kind you might find in a pet store. Pygopristis piranhas are herbivores, feasting on seeds and fruits, not flesh. In contrast, fish in the Serrasalmus genus eat only meat, and their teeth are razor-sharp. Pristobrycon are the least friendly of all piranhas; they often bite the fins of other fish, even fish of the same species. The label piranha, then, refers to a wide variety of species.

Illustration: Give examples and explain how those examples prove your point. For example:

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, except in   two main situations, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' instinct is to flee, not attack. But there are two situations in which a piranha bite is likely. The first is when a frightened piranha is lifted out of the water—for example, if it has been caught in a fishnet. The second is when the water level in pools where piranhas are living falls too

low. A large number of fish may be trapped in a single pool, and if they are hungry, they may attack anything that enters the water.

The basic rule: Keep one idea to one paragraph.

Keep one idea to one paragraph. If you begin to transition into a new idea, it belongs to a new paragraph. There are some simple ways to tell if you are on the same topic or a new one. You can have one idea and several bits of supporting ideas within a single paragraph. In formal academic English, paragraphs have **three principal parts**. These three parts are the **topic sentence** (thesis statement), **supporting ideas** and the **concluding sentence**.

The topic sentence:

The topic sentence usually comes at the beginning of a paragraph. This means it is usually the first sentence in a formal academic paragraph. Suppose that you want to write a paragraph about the natural landmarks of your hometown. The first part of your paragraph might look like the following:

Topic sentence

My hometown is famous for several amazing natural features. **First**, it is noted for the Wheaton River, which is wide and beautiful. **Second**, on the other side of the town is Wheaten Hill, which is very steep. **The third** amazing feature is the Big Old Tree. This tree stands two hundred feet tall and is probably about six hundred years old. *These three landmarks are truly amazing and make my town a famous place.*

Supporting ideas   *Concluding sentence*

Supporting sentences

The second, third and fourth sentences are called **"supporting"** because they **support or explain** the idea expressed in the **topic sentence**. *Paragraphs* in English often have *more than two supporting ideas.*

Details in Paragraphs

The short paragraph above is fairly complete paragraph, but it lacks details. Therefore, you should include enough details in your paragraph to help your reader understand exactly what you are writing about. In the paragraph about Wheaton, three natural landmarks are mentioned, but we don't know very much about them. For example, we could add a sentence or two about Wheaton River concerning **HOW wide it is** or **WHY it is beautiful**. Consider the following revision (and note the additional details in **bold**).

My hometown is famous for several amazing natural features. First, it is noted for the Wheaton River, which is wide and beautiful. **On either side of the river, which is 175 feet wide, are many willow trees which have long branches that can move gracefully in the wind. In the autumn, the leaves of these trees fall and cover the river banks**. Second, on the other side of the town is Wheaten Hill, which is very steep. **Even though it is steep, climbing this hill is not dangerous because there are some firm rocks along the sides that can be used as stairs. There are no trees around this hill, so it stands clearly against the sky and can be seen from many miles away.** The third amazing feature is the Big Old Tree. This tree stands two hundred feet tall and is probably about six hundred years old. *These three landmarks are truly amazing and make my town a famous place.*

If we wished, we could also add more details to the paragraph to describe the third natural feature of the area, the **Big Old Tree.**

Why are details important?

Consider a hamburger you can buy from a fast food restaurant. If the hamburger buns are the topic and concluding sentences, then the meat, the cheese and the lettuce can be the supporting details. Without the food between the hamburger buns, your hamburger would not be very delicious. Similarly, without supporting details, your paragraph would not be very interesting to read.

Topic sentence

Concluding sentence

Supporting ideas
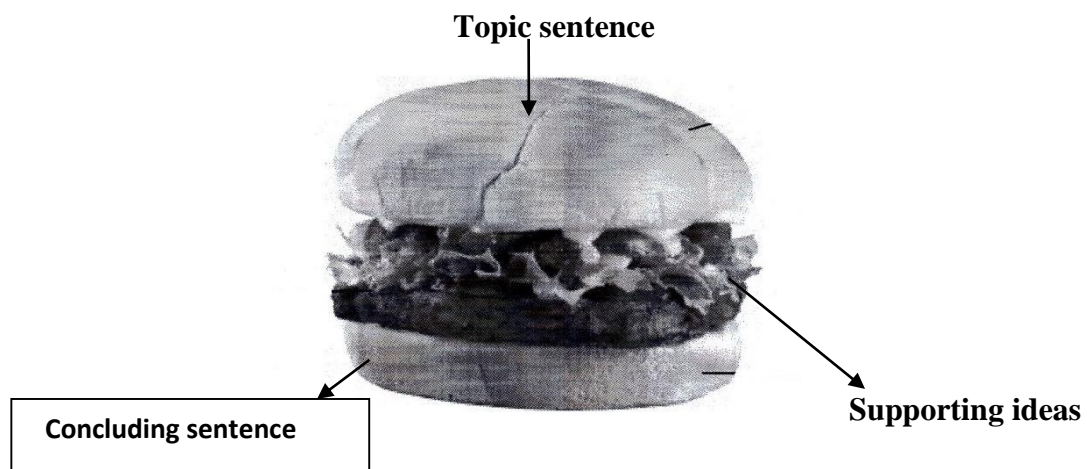
The concluding sentences

In formal paragraphs, you will see a sentence at the **end of the paragraph which summarizes the information that has been presented**. This is the concluding sentence. You can think of a concluding sentence as a sort of topic sentence in reverse.

Activity 1. Read the paragraphs below and answer the questions

Parents should read to their young children every day. First of all, reading to young children is important because it is an excellent way to bond with them. In addition, young children whose parents read to them have better language skills when they start schooling. Parents should spend time talking about the stories and pictures. They should also explain the meanings of new words. Most importantly, these children often develop a love for reading as they grow older. There are only a few of the reasons that parents should not think reading to young children is a waste of time.

(Extracted from *Ready to write 2* by Blanchard and Root, 2010)

1. What is the topic sentence?
   _____

2. How many supporting sentences are there in the paragraph?
   _____

3. What is the concluding sentence?
   _____

Activity 2. **Read the paragraphs below and answer the questions.**

Headaches can have several causes. One obvious cause is stress. People have hectic lives and frequently have multiple stressors everyday such as work, family and money. Another reason for headaches in some people has to do with diet. Some get headaches because they are dependent on caffeine. Other people may be allergic to salt, or they may have low blood sugar. The environment can also cause this uncomfortable condition. Allergens such as household chemicals including polishes, waxes, bug killers, and paint can lead to headaches. Lowering stress, controlling your diet and avoiding allergens can help avoid headaches.

1. What is the topic sentence?
   _____

2. How many supporting sentences are there in the paragraph?
   _____

3. What is the concluding sentence?
   _____

Write topic sentences for the following short paragraph with no conclusions.

1. _____.
   English has become an international language. Most countries around the globe have been making so much effort in providing facilities and encouraging learners to study English. One might ask why English is important. The answer can be simply, because English is the global language of academics, businesses, sciences, medicines and all the other important disciplines.

2. **Identify the main parts of the following paragraph and name them.**
   Write (A) for topic sentence, (B) for supporting ideas and (C) for conclusion
   In 2008, the year the phrase monophobia (an abbreviation of "no-mobile-phobia") was coined in Britain, two Spanish children, aged 12 and 13, were admitted to a mental health institution Lleida, near Barcelona. The pair was reported to be unable to function normally if separated from their phones. Dr. Maite Ulges who ran the facility at which they were treated told Spanish newspaper at the time that, "They both showed disturbed behavior and this exhibited itself in failure in school. They both had serious difficulties leading normal lives." _____
   In short, there are more reasons than ever for people to fall into monophobia, and more ways for the people to lose the art of face-to-face conversation. _____.Mobile overuse has been a concern for several years. _____

Study the words/phrases below

Home town   location   landmarks   situated
facilities   famous for   farms   fort
ancient   friendly

Now you are going to start writing a paragraph about your home town and think of a suitable topic sentence and what to include in supporting sentences with a conclusion. At this stage, as a group or a pair, you can talk about the topic with your partner/s and try to generate ideas. Then write them down below.

3. Write a short paragraph about your home town. First draft.
My home town

_____

_____

Once you finish writing the first draft or while you are still composing, you may re-read your text to see whether your subject content matches the topic. You can look at your ideas critically and evaluate the meaning and message; if you need to make changes, you can do during this stage. Furthermore, you should check whether your paragraphs have a logical order with clear topic and supporting sentences. After re-reading and making any changes to your first draft, if necessary, give it to your partner to review your writing. Your partner can use the checklist below.

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the paragraph end with a concluding sentence?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the paragraph?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the paragraph has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adopted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, write your second draft taking the suggestions and comments made by your partner.

Rewriting is the essence of writing well—where the game is won or lost.
—William Zinsser

Second draft

My home town

_____

_____

After the second draft, re-read and revise your writing if necessary. If you find any errors either in the content or language, don't forget to edit it before you give it to another friend to edit your writing. After the peer-editing, you may have to re-write the text if necessary. If your text in not necessary to re-write, you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing process.

Teacher's oral/ written

_____

_____

_____

Marks: _____

Third draft

My home town

_____
_____
_____

4. Put the words in the right order to make a meaningful sentence.

1. why/ many reasons/ are/there/people_____

_____

2. move / from place to another/ jobs/ some want/ to find/ better/ or/ advance/ careers/ their_____

_____

3. others/ to/ want/ visit/ with good weather/ places_____

_____

4. still/ want/ move/ to/ place/ a/ with/ others/ to/ less population

_____

_____

5. Finally/ often/ want to/ people/ move/ a place/ to/ with/ cost of living/ a lower

_____

_____

6. For the reasons/ every year/ of/ people/ millions/ above/ to new places/ move

_____

_____

5. Be the Editor

The paragraph below is about a typical day written by a student. It has a number of mistakes. Work with a partner and first identify the mistakes and underline them.

> Write a paragraph of about (75-100 words) a typical day in your life. Include a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence and adverbs of frequency.

I alwayes have a buse diley routine. I gut up at foure o'clock in the morning. I wash my face and broshe my teeht. Then I take a shwer. after that. I go to mosgr and pray. After that I sleep three hours and get up at nine o'clock. I have my break fast. Next I whatch TV, play viduo Game and go to gym. At one o'clock I take my dinner. After that. I sleep three hours. Next. I drink coffe and go to play foot ball. After come home I take a shwer.

Now discuss the possible ways of improving the paragraph with your partner. Then write the improved version below.

_____

_____

_____

6. Match the sentences in column A with their right parts given in column B to make them meaningful.

A	B
1. Lots of people believe that	you can do to help keep your brain active.
2. But this doesn't have to be	circulation of the blood.
3. Research shows there are some things	function better.
4. Both physical exercise and mental exercise	their memory gets worse as they grow older.
5. Physical exercise improves	true for you.
6. This helps your brain	by walking, swimming or riding a bicycle.
7. Keep your body active	will help your memory.

Now write the complete sentences as a paragraph below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Use the information given below to write an essay about "Britain is one of the best countries in the world"

1. Three reasons:

First, excellent transport system- buses, trains, taxies

Second, high standard of education- good schools and universities with facilities to learn, well-trained teachers

Third, cities are clean and beautifully kept.

As a result, Britain is a desirable place to live in.

Now write your paragraph and exchange it with your partner. Ask him/her to read it and edit it for you. Use the same checklist below.

_____

_____

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_____

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the paragraph end with a concluding sentence?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the paragraph?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the paragraph has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adapted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your second draft.

Second draft

_____

_____

After the second draft, re-read and revise your writing if necessary. If you find any errors either in the content or language, don't forget to edit it before you give it to another friend to edit your writing. After the peer-editing, you may have to re-write the text if necessary. If your text in not necessary to re-write, you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing process.

Teacher's oral/ written feedback

_____
_____
_____

Marks:

Write your <u>third</u> draft

_____

_____

_____

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CHAPTER 2

EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION

This chapter will help you to be acquainting with the writing process used in expressing your opinions with reasons to your arguments in a logical order.

Objectives of this chapter
At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Use convincing reasons in a logical order to develop an opinion essay.
2. Recognise what to include in a topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion for an opinion paragraph.
3. Recognise and use signal words in an opinion essay
4. Write a first draft and revise it.
5. Write multiple drafts.
6. Edit others' essays and provide feedback on how to improve a text.
7. Learn to write opinion essays with topic sentences, supporting ideas and conclusions with appropriate signal words.

Writing: Descriptive writing

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; simple past; structural patterns for future ideas, adjectives, adverbs and personal pronouns (possessive)

Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

Expressing your opinions

When people speak, they express their opinions. When they give opinions, they often speak for and against something.

Look at what some tourists say about Indonesia.

Indonesia is a very beautiful country. I like India very much. The people are kind and friendly. I think India is an excellent place for a holiday.
Your beaches are lovely. There's plenty of sand and sun. In my opinion, you have the finest beaches in the world. But there's something that I don't like about India. Your beaches are full of men, women and children asking for money from tourists.
I came to Indonesia three weeks ago, I'd like to stay longer, but I can't. Your hotels are very expensive. They don't serve local food or drinks. I don't think I'll come back to Indonesia again

I would like to say that we were very happy in Indonesia. My wife and I like your country very much. But we hope there will be fewer thieves in Indonesia. We lost our camera here. Our friends have lost things too

The three weeks in Indonesia have been the happiest in our lives. We hope to come back here again next year. We like the villages more than towns. The villagers are friendly and pleasant. In the towns, there are too many beggars.

Some tourists have said good things about Indonesia and some have not. Read their opinions and find out which sentences are for and which are against. **Write down 5 sentences expressing opinions FOR**

1_____

2_____

3_____

4_____

5_____

Write down 5 sentences expressing opinions AGAINST

1_____

2_____

3_____

4_____

5_____

Writing an opinion essay

When we write, it is often necessary to express our opinion. Our goal is to persuade the reader that our opinion is correct. After you have state your opinion, you need to give reasons, facts or example to support it.

When you write an opinion essay:

1. Take a stand on the given topic.
2. Have an opinion.
3. Choose either agree or disagree.

Organisation

1. First, write some general information about the topic before writing your opinion or the thesis statement (see How is an opinion essay organised below). **Introduction.**

2. Write your thesis statement which should be linked with the general information you have already written about the topic sentence (showing whether you agree or disagree) as well as with the reasons that follow in your opinion essay. **Introduction.**

3. Write the first reason and supporting details (examples or evidence to show your arguments or disagreement). Then, the second reason and supporting details same as the first and then write the third reason followed by supporting details. **Body**

4. A concluding sentence (summarizing the main reasons or restate the topic sentence in different words). **Conclusion.**

Sentence structure and transition signals

For the introduction/ a topic sentence

- I agree/ disagree that……….
- I agree/ disagree with ……. For…… reasons
- I am for /against the idea that …………
- There are ……. reasons why………….

Sentences structure and transition signals

For the reasons (transition signals, sequence markers, sentence connectors)

- The first (second, third) reason is ………
- Another reason is ………
- First (firstly, second, secondly)
- Moreover, furthermore, In addition, apart from that…….

Sentence structure

For the conclusion

In conclusion, ……………In summary, ……………...To sum up, ……………….
To conclude, ……………...In short, …………………. In brief, ………………….

Other useful expressions for giving opinions

I believe / feel/ think that ………. I strongly/firmly believe that…….
I am convinced/ certain that………It seems to me that…………
My opinion is that………… In my opinion/ in my view/ from my point of view………

Topic: A paper-recycling program at Shinas College

Opinion: Agree- First, write some general information about recycling before writing your opinion (see How is an opinion essay organised below)

Opinion statement: I strongly agree with a paper-recycling program at Shinas Vocational Training Centre (VTC) for three reasons.

Support an opinion statement with reasons and evidence

List reasons for a paper recycling program at Shinas VTC
1. A paper-recycling program can help conserve our forests.
2. Recycling paper is easy and inexpensive.
3. Recycling is an opportunity to show that students are responsible and thoughtful.

I strongly agree with a paper-recycling program at Shinas VTC for three reasons. →

A paper-recycling program can help conserve the forests in the world

Recycling paper is easy and inexpensive.

Recycling is an opportunity to show that students are responsible and thoughtful about the environment where they live in.

How is an opinion essay organised?

| **General information about the topic which links your topic sentence (Thesis statement) clearly stating your opinion about the chosen topic** | In today's world, recycling has become an important issue because we want to save our planet for the current and future generations. As we know, a large number of trees are felled for paper production every day and anywhere in the world. As a result, our forests which provide food and shelter to humans, animals and birds are dwindling. Destroying trees can have adverse effects on human in several ways. Therefore, given such a condition as stated above, I strongly agree with the paper-recycling program at Shinas VTC for three reasons. |

| Evidence
Reasons to support your opinion. You may use:
a) facts/statistics
b) events
c) anecdotes
(reference to personal experience | Reason 1: A paper-recycling program can help conserve our forests.

Supporting details: We know that students and staff of the VTC use about a ton of paper a year. This means that we have to cut more and more trees from the forests to produce new papers to supply for the demand. So, if we recycle the paper, we can save a number of trees per year.

Reason 2: Recycling paper is easy and inexpensive.

Supporting details: It takes less energy to recycle paper than it does to produce it from raw materials. For example, if we make a new product, we need more energy, more people, chemicals and raw materials. However, when we recycle paper, first we need to collect papers and transport them to a factory. This can be done at a low cost.

Reason 3: Recycling is an opportunity to show that students are responsible and thoughtful.

Supporting details: We must make our students understand the value of protecting our planet from disasters. Then all of us can live together by sharing its natural resources. If we start a process such as recycling at a college level, it gives our students to think and act wisely about the importance of caring for the nature. |
| **Conclusion**
Restate your opinion and make a recommendation | In conclusion, considering the positive effects of paper recycling as discussed above, I can say that a paper-recycling program at Shinas VTC is very important because paper-recycling can help save energy, save trees, people and animals. Most of all, it can save our environment from pollution. |

Activity

Teenagers today are lazy, dishonest and uninterested in anything that involves hard work or personal sacrifice. For example, a recent study in Great Britain found that teens today are more obese, drink more alcohol and do more drugs than any generation before. Diabetes in adolescents, and other illnesses related to lack of physical fitness, are much more common today than ever before. In addition, today's teens are less honest, as 65% of Canadian teenagers do not believe that downloading music illegally from the internet

was wrong. Finally, most teens today would rather be given an allowance by their parents so they can spend the weekend in front of the X-Box, rather than use some of their free time actually earning their own money at a job. In conclusion, I think that most teenagers do not appreciate the comfortable lives they live – and I think their parents should force them off the couch, and out into the workplace to find out what real life is like!

Fill out the table below. Use the information from the opinion paragraph above

Topic sentences Clearly state your opinion about the chosen topic	
Evidence Reasons to support your opinion. You may use: a) facts/statistics b) events c) anecdotes (reference to personal experience	
Conclusion Restate your opinion and make a recommendation	

Be the Editor

Following is a part of an opinion paragraph written by a level-3 student. It has some grammar mistakes. Work with a partner and first identify the mistakes and underline them.

There are several reasons why I am learning English.

First, we learning English for communication. For Example, we can use English is an international language. It is used almost in any country in the world. We can used internet to search for information. To understand different cultures and people.

Second, reason is that we use ~~learning~~ English for my for example, If I know English, I can my education. ~~we can use to read~~ and understand subject matters easily. Many books on subjects such as Engineering and Business studies and ~~It~~ IT are in English. We can use pursue higher education in my chosen field.

Third, we can use English for my future work. For example, If I know English, we can use Finding a job

Now discuss the possible ways of correcting and improving the paragraph with your partner. Then write the corrected version below.

_____

_____

_____

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_____

_____

Write an opinion essay about the topic given below.

"Using mobile phones in the classroom should be banned"

Use the ideas below to write your essay about the topic given above. Include your own opinions in the essay.

- A bad practice (when and how it becomes a bad practice).

- Disturbs others (how it disturbs others).

- Will not be able to understand the subject matters taught.

- Behavior as a student is important (Why is it important?).

- Conclude your paragraph with a strong conclusion.

Begin your essay like this: Using mobile phones in a classroom while teaching is going on is not accepted by many cultures because it causes some problems to the classroom atmosphere in several ways. In this paragraph, I will describe three reasons why we should not use mobile phones in a classroom while a teacher is teaching. In my opinion, using a mobile phone to talk to someone in a classroom while a teaching session is progressing is considered as unacceptable behavior. Therefore, I strongly feel that it should be banned for the following three reasons.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the essay end with a concluding sentence?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the essay?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the essay has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your second draft.

Second draft (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

_____

After the second draft, please re-read it and revise if necessary. If you find any errors either in the content or language, don't forget to edit it before you give it to another friend to edit your writing. After the peer-editing, you may have to re-write the text if necessary. If your text in not necessary to re-write, you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing process.

Teacher's oral/ written

_____
_____
_____

Marks: _____

Write your <u>third</u> draft (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

Write an essay of about 180-200 words giving your opinion either for or against the statement given below.

"English is an important language for students to learn".

Use the information from one of the columns given below to support your opinion.
Add some of your own points and ideas.

For	Against
1. For communicating with people across the world. 2. For doing higher studies. 3. For finding a well-paid job.	1. A small number of people need to communicate globally so all people do not need English. 2. Higher studies can be done through one's first language. 3. Most local jobs demand a better communication skills in the first language rather than a foreign language.

Your essay should include the following.
1. Introduction with a thesis statement
2. Supporting paragraphs with topic sentences (You may use facts/statistics, events, or reference to personal experience)
3. Concluding paragraph
4. Good use of appropriate signal words (Therefore, moreover, furthermore, in addition,

Select one of the topics from the list below and write an opinion essay about it. This is an assignment for which you will be given marks. Use a separate sheet of paper for writing.
1. Drinking alcohol and driving can be dangerous.
2. Some say computer games are harmful for children. What is your opinion about this?
3. Does Internet do more harm than good?
4. Computer lessons should be made compulsory for college level students in this age and time.
5. Parents are always the best teachers.
6. Students must learn an international language like English in this age and time
7. Television influences people's behavior in several ways
8. Television has destroyed personal communication among friends and family.
9. Governments should spend as much money as possible on developing health facilities of their respective countries.

CHAPTER 3

WRITING PERSONAL AND BUSINESS LETTERS

In this chapter, you will learn to write both personal and business letters which are assumed to be an important part of our daily as well as academic life.

Objectives of this chapter

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Recognise the difference between formal and informal letters.
2. Identify the parts of a personal and a business letter.
3. Use formal and informal language.
4. Write personal letters to friends/ family and others known to you.
5. Write business letters of requests, complaints and applying for jobs advertised in newspapers/ company websites.

Writing: Persuasive

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; simple past; present perfect, structural patterns for future ideas, adjectives, adverbs and personal pronouns (possessive)

Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

Personal Letters

Personal letters are informal and they are generally written to your family, friends or the ones you personally know. Therefore, you can include personal information about you, your studies, your weekends, or anything you want to communicate with your loved ones. Even in a personal letter, there is a format which you should stick to when you write.

There are **five parts** to a personal letter. Study the example given below.

November 23, 2013. **(Date)**

Dear Ali, **(Greeting)**

I'm writing to tell you that I am coming to meet you next weekend because I have some problems with grammar. Especially, I still can't understand the difference between simple past and present perfect. Although when the teacher explained to us the rules in the classroom, when I tried to write answers to the exercise which our teacher gave, I find it confusing. So, I hope you can help me with this. Anyway, I will call you before I come**. (Message)**

Bye, **(Closing)**

Mohamed **(Signature)**

Write short text messages to the situations given below.

1. You are not coming to the college tomorrow.
2. You want to borrow your friend's car because your car is in the garage.
3. Tell your friend you are going to watch a football match in Muscat next Saturday and ask if your friend would like to go with you.
4. Next Friday, you are planning to go to Dubai and ask your friend what he/she wants you to bring from Dubai.
5. Tell your brother that you will get a little late to come home today because your friend and you are going to participate in a funeral of one of your classmates.
6. Write a letter to your mother that you want to do the IELTS exam next year so you need to enrol for the IELTS course conducted at the college. Tell your mother that you want 200 Riyals for the course and ask your mother to credit it into your bank account next week. Inquire about the other members of your family and close the letter.

Business letters

Business letters are formal and there are different types of business letters such as sales letters, letters of complaints, letters of requests and letters of job applications. There are six parts to a business letter. Study the model business letter given below.

Afra Ali Al Kindi,
P.O. Box 444,   **(Writer's address)**
Al Buraimi,

23rd November, 2013.   **Date**

HR Manager,
HCN Company,   **(Inside address)**
P.O. Box 333,   (Name or position and address of the person
PC 112,   receiving letter)
Ruwi,
Muscat.

Dear Sir,   **(Greeting or Salutation)**

Application for a position of a personal assistant (Subject line)

I am writing to apply for the position of a personal assistant in your company which was advertised in the Times of Oman on 20th of November, 2013.

I am an Omani and 22 years old. I obtained my Diploma in Mechanical Engineering from Shinas College of Technology in 2012. After that I had six-month training at Shohar Aluminum Company. After the training, I was offered a job as an assistant engineer at DMX Company in Muscat and worked there for 3 years. Moreover, I have good communication skills. I can speak and write both Arabic and English fluently.

As you can see from my CV, I believe my qualifications, experience and skills match the requirements of your position. I am available for any interview or a meeting with you at any day convenient for you. You can contact me through my email address (Ahmed123@gmail.com) or my phone number (96775498).

Thank you for your time and interest in this regard. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Message   **Reference to future contact**
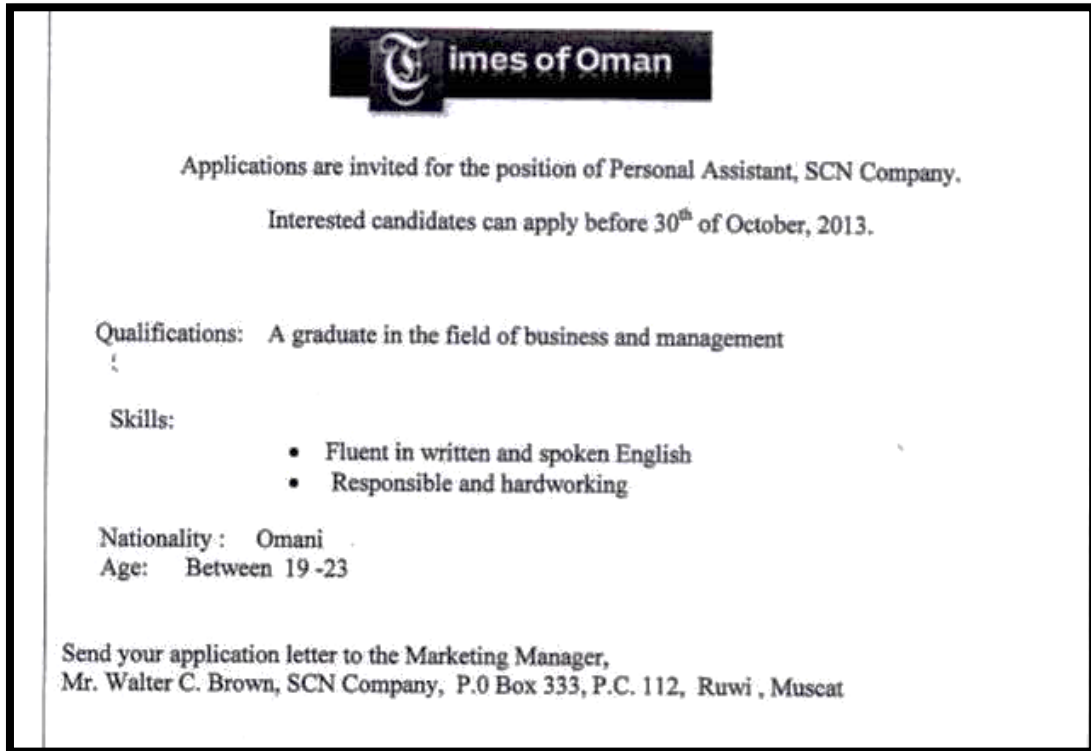
Sincerely yours,   **(Closing or complementary closing)**
_____   **(Signature)**
Abdulla Mohamed Ali   **(Full name of the sender)**

Activity 1

Write an application to the Marketing Manager of SCN Company applying for the position of Personal Assistant (150-200 words)

imes of Oman

Applications are invited for the position of Personal Assistant, SCN Company.

Interested candidates can apply before 30th of October, 2013.

Qualifications: A graduate in the field of business and management

Skills:
- Fluent in written and spoken English
- Responsible and hardworking

Nationality : Omani
Age: Between 19 -23

Send your application letter to the Marketing Manager,
Mr. Walter C. Brown, SCN Company, P.O Box 333, P.C. 112, Ruwi , Muscat

---

Study the words and phrases below
Apply   vacancy   work experience   training   degree
CV   Educational qualifications   language skills   interpersonal skills
professional experience

Write the _first_ draft of your letter below. (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

_____

_____

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a heading that contains the sender's address?		
2	Are the receiver's address and greeting included?		
3	Does the letter end with a closing, signature and the name of sender?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the letter?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the letter has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adapted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your second draft. (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

_____

After the second draft, please re-read it and revise if necessary. If you find any errors either in the content or language, don't forget to edit it before you give it to another friend to edit your writing. After the peer-editing, you may have to re-write the text if necessary. If your text in not necessary to re-write, you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing process.

| **Teacher's oral/ written** |

_____
_____
_____

Marks: _____

Be the Editor

The following is a first draft of a letter of job application written by a foundation level (Level 3) student and it has some mistakes. Work with a partner, identify the mistakes and re-write the letter below.

> I am writing to you to aplay the position of the electrical engineer that advertised in the oman observes on 10. 2. 2014
>
> based on my CV I have a Diplom Degree in electrical Engineering and also I have a two years experience in Project managment and I like to work in teams because I have a good communication Both spoken and writen skills in English also I have good technical skills.
>
> I look forword to you so let me know if I have a Interview soon to the Job.
>
> your faithfully

(Author's data, 2014)

I am writing to apply for the position of an Electrical Engineer

_____

_____

_____

_____

Activity 2

You noticed the following advertisement publish in a local newspaper. You have an idea to buy a house in Ruwi area in Muscat. Write a letter to the owner of the house requesting the following information.

- Location of the house
- Total price of the house
- Number of rooms
- Facilities available (pipe water, telephone etc)
- Convenient time and date for you to inspect the house

Luxury House for Sale in Ruwi

For more information, please contact the following address:

Abdul Rahman (Owner)

Way 2038

Ruwi, Muscat   phone no: 96789901

_____

_____

_____

_____
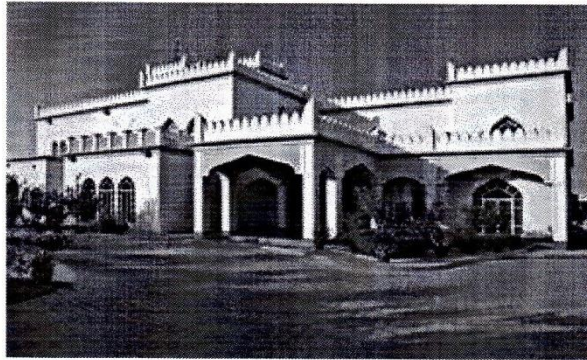
Activity 3

Select any position you would like to apply from the two advertisements below and write a letter of application to send to the email address included in the advertisements. Imagine you have the educational qualifications and experience requested for any of the position appearing in the advertisements.

ANNOUNCEMENT

AN established HVAC Company in Oman located in Muscat, is looking out for Operators /Technicians in the following candidates for immediate recruitment.

Candidates must be fluent in English & preferably Good knowledge of MS Office particularly Excel:

1.HVAC,
Diploma holder; particularly having experience in operation & Maintenance of Large water cooling centrifugal chillers.

2.Electrical,
Diploma holder; particularly having experience in operation & Maintenance of MV Switchgears

3.Controls & PLC,
Diploma holder; skills and experience in operation & Maintenance of HVAC system controls.

Interesting Candidates may send their

ANNOUNCEMENT

A well reputed Contracting Company in Oman is looking for potential candidates for the following posts with experience in respective fields and also all the candidates must have a <u>Valid Driving Licence (Oman or GCC)</u>

1. Site Engineer — 3 Nos.
   (Degree Holder with 5 years Road experience preferably in Structures).
2. Sr. Electrical Engineer — 1 No.
   (With 5-7 years Building experience. Able to prepare shop drawings, carry out all electrical works in co-ordination with Mechanical & HVAC works).
3. Quantity Surveyor — 2 Nos.
   (5 years experience in Road works)
4. Quantity Surveyor — 1 No.
   (with experience in Asphalt works)

TO

HR Manager
HVAC Company
P.O. Box 29
P.C. 120
Muscat.

Write your <u>first draft</u> of your letter and have it checked by your partner. (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a heading that contains the sender's address?		
2	Are the receiver's address and greeting included?		
3	Does the letter end with a closing, signature and the name of sender?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the letter?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the letter has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adapted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your second draft. (Use a separate sheet of paper)
_____

After you have finished writing the second draft, please re-read it and revise if necessary. If you find any errors either in the content or language, don't forget to edit it before you give it to another friend to edit your writing. After the peer-editing, you may have to re-write the text if necessary. If your text in not necessary to re-write, you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing.

_____
_____
_____

Marks: _____

Activity 4. Imagine you have the required qualifications, experience and skills needed for the job advertised in the job advertisement below. Write a letter to the HR Manager of Julpgur-Gulf Pharmaceuticals Industries applying for the position in it.

Times of Oman- Mon, Feb, 2015

Production Technician
Julphar - Gulf Pharmaceuticals Industries

Julphar - Gulf Pharmaceuticals Industries based in UAE invites application from the suitably qualified persons for the post of production Technician.

Skills: Requirements: (Knowledge, Skills & Attributes)
o Diploma in Chemical Engineering, Pharmacy, Bio Technology, Medical Lab (Fresh Graduates Preferred)
o 2 years' experience in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing industry
o Willing to work in shifts
o Age limit 18 - 25 Yrs.
o Should be able to Read, write and speak in English

Education: Diploma   **Send your application to:** HR Manager, Julphar-

- Gulf Pharmaceuticals Industries
No. 123
Ras Al Khaimah
United Arab Emirates.

LETTERS OF INQUIRY

Business letters

An inquiry letter is what we send to a person or a company when we need more information about a product or service offered by that person, institution or a company. These letters are often written in response to an advertisement. As described above, there are six parts to a business letter. Study the **model inquiry letter** given below.

Letters of enquiry describe what the writer wants and why.

In a letter of inquiry,

Introduce yourself and state your purpose of inquiry (in the first paragraph)
State your requested action briefly and clearly (in the second paragraph)
End your letter with a complementary close

You may use the following formulaic phrases commonly used in business letters

Please send me...
Could you please send me...
I would be grateful if you could tell me…
I am writing to enquire whether…
I would be grateful if you could…
I would especially like to know…
Could you send me more details…
Could you also…
I would also like to know...
Could you tell me whether...

Reference to future contact

I look forward to hearing from you.
I am looking forward to hearing from you.
Thank you for your assistance.
Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

A sample letter of inquiry

Afra Ali Al Kindi,
P.O. Box 444,   **Writer's address**
Al Buraimi,   (Your name and address)

28 January, 2016.   **Date**

HR Manager,
HCN Company,   **Inside address**
P.O. Box 333,   (Name or position and address of the person
PC 112,   receiving letter)
Ruwi,
Muscat.
Dear Sir,   **(Greeting or salutation)**

M
E
S   I am a 2nd year Engineering Diploma student at Shinas College of Technology. As a
S   part of my study program, I must complete an industrial training in a company for 8
A   weeks because this kind of training gives me an opportunity to apply my knowledge
G   and skills practically. On the Job Training Department (OJT) of my college has
E   informed me to select a training site and send required details of the company to the
       OJT before the end of this month. I am interested in undergoing my training in your
       company since it is one of the most reputed companies in Oman.

I would like to know if you can provide me with an opportunity to undergo my
training in your company. If possible, please send me a reply as soon as possible to
my email address or contact me through my phone no (_____) so that I can send
you other details regarding my training requirements.

I look forward to hearing from you. **(Reference to future contact)**

Sincerely yours,   **(Complementary closing)**

_____   **(Signature)**

Afra Al Al-Kindi **(Full name of the writer)**

Activity 1. Study the sample business letter given below and name the parts of the letter correctly using the words in the box.

Inside address	Complementary closing	Body	Full name of the Writer
Date	Writer's address	Reference to future contact	Position of the writer
Signature of the writer			

Ken's Cheese House
718 – 90th Avenue
Birmingham, WI 53100 _____

May 1, 2016   _____

Charles Flintstone
1818 Henry Street
Kingston, IN 48391 _____

Dear Mr. Flintstone, _____

With reference to our telephone conversation today, I am writing to confirm your order for 120 Cheddar Deluxe Ref. No. 856. I am enclosing a copy. The order will be shipped within three days via UPS and should arrive at your store in about 10 days.
_____

Please contact us again if we can help in any way.
_____

Yours Sincerely, _____

_____

Kenneth Beare   _____

Director, Ken's Cheese House _____

Activity 2. Use the words in the box below to answer the following questions.

salutation	date	complimentary	closing	signature
inside	addressreturn address	writer's full name		body

1. _____ is the place for the writer to handwrite their name.

2. The recipient's name, company name, and address are called the _____.

3. The purpose of the letter is included in the _____.

4. Yours truly, is an example of a _____.

5. The last line in a business letter is the _____.

6. The _____ is when the letter is written.

7. The _____ is the address of the letter writer.

8. Dear Mr. Johnson is a _____.

9. Write your own formal business letter, using a separate piece of paper. Include ALL parts of a formal business letter and be sure it is the in correct format. There should not be any spelling or grammatical errors and it must be written in clear, concise language.
(Retrieved fromhttps://www.moneyinstructor.com/businesswriting.asp)

Another sample of an inquiry letter to a university requesting information about a study program

Rayan, Al-Balushi,
Sultan Qaboos University,
Department of Journalism,
Al Khoudh,
Muscat 123,
Oman.

29th January, 2016

Registrar,
Monash University,
Wellington Road,
Clayton VIC 3800,
Australia.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Requesting information about a study program

I am Ryan Al-Balushi, a student of Sultan Quboos University following a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication. I am currently in my final year, and will be sitting for my final exam next month. I am writing this letter to request information about the master's program in Journalism conducted at your university. I would like to know about the following information:

1. Hostel facilities
2. Your scholarship program for international students

I would really appreciate if you could send me all the course information and an application for admission to the above study program. Could you please send me the information requested above to my email address at ryans@gmail.com.
I look forward to hearing from you.
Sincerely,

_____

Ryan Al-Balushi

Activity 4: Write a letter of inquiry to the situation given below.

You are a final year undergraduate student studying for your BSc-IT degree at Nizwa University in Oman and you have received a government scholarship to study a software engineering course at Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. Write a letter to the registrar asking information about the course details including hostel facilities. Address of the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi is as follows: Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110 016, India.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

LETTERS OF COMPLAINTS

Letters of complaint are written for different purposes. They are mainly written to express your dissatisfaction about a service you have received from a person or a product you have bought from a shop. In a situation where the product of your purchase has turned out to be defective, as a customer, you have the right to inform it to the concerned person or the company and request a replacement of the defective product or refund your money. (As per the requirements of the course outline-writing skills of Level 3, this lesson will focus only on complaint letters which are written to business firms asking for a replacement of a defective product or a refund of money)

The structure of complain letter

The structure of a complaint letter is similar to the structure of an inquiry letter

Below the recipient's address, **include a subject line** to indicate the product or service that you are addressing in your complaint (see the model complaint letter below).

In the first paragraph of the body, you may begin with a sentence that immediately draws the reader's attention to the matter, e.g.,

I am writing to complain about the faulty installation of my air conditioner.

I wish to express my dissatisfaction with my stay at your hotel.

After the opening sentence with a summary of the events that prompted your complaint. Include the exact date and give all the relevant information in a clear and logical sequence. For example,

I bought a washing machine on 26ᵗʰ January, 2017 from your shop

In the final paragraph of the body, you should state your expectations of how the company should resolve the matter, including specific actions and deadlines, e.g.,

I would appreciate it if you could replace the missing part by next week.
Please let me know as soon as possible what action you propose to take.
I look forward to hearing from you within the next ten days.

An example of a letter of complaint

Ahmed Ali-Abdulla
PO Box 77
PC 324   **Writer's address**
Al-Aqr
Shinas.
1 February, 2017   **DATE**

Customer Services Manager
Lulu Super Hypermarket   **Inside address**
P.O. Box. 1093   (Name or position and address of the person
P.C. 311   receiving the letter)
Sohar.

Subject: Black and Decker Electric Iron (Model No. 2279) **(Subject line)**

Dear Sir or Madam,   **(Greeting or Salutation)**

I am writing to complain about a technical defect with the above iron, which I purchased from your hypermarket on 27th January, 2017. On using it for the first time, I found that the temperature control was faulty; it was not possible to set it for any temperature apart from the highest, for cotton. This causes me a lot of problems since I need an iron on a daily basis.
Given the fault of the iron as stated above, I am writing to you to ask for a replacement of the above item or a full refund of my money at your earliest. **(Body)**

I look forward to hearing from you within a week. **(Reference to future contact)**

Sincerely yours,   **(Complementary closing)**

_____   **(Signature)**
Ahmed Al-Abdulla   **(Writer's full name)**

Activity 1
Complete the letter with the words/phrases in the box below.

40" Sharp LED TV	disappointed	20/01/2017	store
enclosed	2 weeks	shaking horizontally	
happen	replace my TV	Sales Manager	

Nassar Sulaiman Al-Maqbali
P.O. Box:111, P.C.122
Sohar, Sultanate of Oman
Phone: 99637947
Nasser_moqbali@gmail.com

4th February, 2017

………………………………
Allied Electronics
P.O. Box:771
Muscat

Dear Sir/Madam,

Sub: Sharp LED 40" TV (Model No. IC 40 N 6100)

I am writing to complain about the…….………………………………..which I purchased from your ……………………………………. on ……….………The problem with the TV is as follows. The TV worked well for………………….. and one day suddenly the pictures started **…………………………….** for 2 minutes and then again, the pictures seemed normal. I found the same **…………………..** every time I switched on the TV during the last week and I am **………………………….** with this product because of the technical problem stated above.

Therefore, I request you to **…………………………**or refund my money at your earliest. A copy of the invoice is **……………………………**
I look forward to hearing from you at the earliest.

Sincerely,

Nassar Sulaiman Al Maqbali.

Activity 2. Write the name of the parts of a complaint letter against the letters below correctly and then write the complete letter in the space provided

Ravi Electrical Shop
4 Castle Street
No. 5004
New Delhi
A

Please respond within 14 days of receiving this letter**.**   **B**

C

Domic Babu
National High Way-8
Mahipalpur
New Delhi   **D**

The water inlet valve stopped working properly after using the machine for two weeks and as a result, now the water does not enter the tub properly. Therefore, I cannot use the machine for washing purposes. As there was a problem with this machine, I request that you replace this faulty washing machine or give me a full refund. I have enclosed a copy of the receipt in support of my claim**.**   **E**

I wish to complain about the LG Turbo Drum Washing Machine which I bought from your Sales Center, at No. 5004, 4 Castle Street, on 25 October 2015.

I now find the Washing Machine has the following fault**:**   **I**

Dear Sir, **F**

Yours faithfully **G**

2 February, 2017   **H**

Sub: LG Turbo Drum Washing Machine   **J**

Domic Babu   **K**

Letter	Part of the letter	Letter	Part of the letter
A		G	
B		H	
C		I	
D		J	
E		K	
F			

Activity 3. Write a letter of complaint to the Customer Service Manager of Carefour Super Market (PO Box, 234, PC. 78, Sohar) about a technical fault you found in the pedestal fan you bought on 4th of February, 2017. The fault is with the speed setting knob which does not function properly.

You should include the following in your letter.

1. Include all important information about your purchase, including the date, place and any information you can give about the product.

2. State the problem with the product and what specific action you want.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

CHAPTER 4

COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAYS

In this chapter, you will learn to write essays of comparison and contrast.

Objectives of this chapter

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Recognize and use signal words of comparison and contrast.
2. Identify what to include in a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence for essays that compare and contrast.
3. Recognize appropriate topics to compare (write similarities between two things) and contrast (write differences between two things).
4. Write both essays of comparison and contrast using relevant signal words and other mechanics in effective ways.

Writing: Descriptive writing

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; simple past; present perfect, structural patterns for future ideas, adjectives, adverbs and personal pronouns (possessive)

Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

The design of the writing tasks used for the topic "Compare and Contrast"

This chapter includes a *PowerPoint* presentation and a video as teaching aids along with the teaching materials. At the outset of this particular chapter, students are presented with a picture with which they are asked to talk about with the teacher's initiation as a warming activity to the lesson. However, in this particular lesson, a video can also be used as a warmer if the classroom is equipped with a computer. In each of the chapters, the students were presented with clear objectives and outcomes. This is important because the objectives are measurable and should include specific information about what the students will be able to do while learning outcomes specify what learns will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity.

Introducing the topic of the chapter

In chapter 4, the topic (compare and contrast) is introduced as follows:

COMPARING and CONTRASTING

In everyday life, we compare or contrast the neighborhoods we want to live in and the prices of homes we want to buy, or the honesty and policies of political candidates as we decide for whom we will vote. In working life, we compare or contrast the salaries, benefits, and working conditions among several career opportunities. In college life, we compare and contrast leaders, governments, cultures, literature, technology, writers, or philosophies in a wide range of courses. To write a comparison or a contrast paragraph, identify the comparable points between two (or more) topics. Once you identify the points of comparison, brainstorm a list of similarities and differences for each one. Then, list and explain examples of each similarity or difference.

(www.pearsonhighered.com/showcase/.../WFL_P_to_E_2e_ch09.pdf)

In writing, you may need to explain how things are similar or different. Therefore, when you compare, two things, you explain how they are similar. When you contrast, you explain how things are different.

321

After this brief introduction, the chapter contains linguistic examples which demonstrate the concepts of comparing and contrasting, as well as simple exercises which were designed with the aim of familiarising students with the grammatical structures that they needed to master before attempting to compose a compare and contrast text.

Linguistic examples and exercises for comparison

Comparing

      Read and understand the meanings of the sentences below.

1. Oman grows **dates**.   2. The UAE grows **dates.**
*Oman grows dates. **Similarly**, the UAE grows dates. (**Likewise = Similarly**)*

2. Oman has **big supermarkets**.   2. The UAE has **big supermarkets**.

     *Oman has big supermarkets. **Likewise**, The UAE has big supermarkets.*

     ***Both** Oman **and** the UAE **have** big supermarkets.*

     *Oman grows dates, **and** the UAE **does too.***

     *Oman grows dates, **and so does** the UAE.*

At this stage, students are presented with signal words used in comparison because they should know that they should connect one thought or idea to another in order to produce a coherent piece of discourse. Therefore, the students are introduced to various types of signal words as sentence patterns in the examples and exercises below.

More linguistic examples and exercises with comparison

There are <u>many words</u> and <u>sentence patterns</u> to show comparisons in English

Signal words of comparison			
Similarly	Likewise	Both………and	as (adjective) as
As (adverb) as	Like	the same……as	alike similar to

E.g. 1. Ahamed is **tall.**   2. Ali is **tall. (Adjective)**

     *Ahamed is **as** tall **as** Ali*

  1. Fatma sings **beautifully**.   2. Reem sings **beautifully. (Adverb)**

     *Fatma sings **as** beautifully **as** Reem.*

*The weather in Oman is **like** the weather in the UAE.*

Either the clerk **or** the secretary has the keys to the store room.

***Neither** Ahmed **nor** Hussain studies engineering this semester.*

I feel exactly *the same as* I did yesterday.

The two cars are much *alike.*

Price: 4500 OMR   Nissan Juke   Price: 4500 OMR   Nissan Murano

*Nisan Juke has **the same** price **as** Nisan Murano's* (Price is a noun)

Nissan Juke- Colour: Red   Nissan Qash- Colour: Red

*Nissan Juke is **the same** colour as Nissan Qash's*. (Colour is a noun)

Similar to

Population: 3.25 million people   **Population: 3.25 million people**

*The population in Kuwait is **similar to** the population of Qatar.*

Examples for **neither** or **not either**

1. I don't like junk food. My brother doesn't like junk food.
   *I don't like junk food, and my brother doesn't **either**.*
   *I don't like junk food, and **neither** does my brother.*
2. Shinas isn't a big city.   Saham isn't a big city.

   *Shinas isn't a big city, and Saham isn't **either**.*

   *Shinas isn't a big city, **and neither** is Saham.*

Activity 1. Join the two sentences below using the *signal words of comparison* you have just studied from the examples above. Use a *variety of ways* and *different signal words* in your comparison.

1. **Ali** studies at Shinas College of Technology.   2. **Shibli** studies at Shinas College of Technology.

   A._____
   (Similarly)

   B._____
   (Likewise)

   C._____
   (Both_____and)

   D._____
   (and _____ does too)

   E._____
   (and so does_____)

2. 1. The weather in **Oman** is hot.   2. The weather in **Saudi Arabia** is hot.

   A. _____ (
   Similarly)
   B. _____
   (Likewise)
   C. _____
   (and_____is too)
   D. _____
   (and so is _____)

Practice writing more sentences using signal words for comparison. (Use a separate sheet)

1. Omani speaks Arabic.   2. Emirati speaks Arabic.

   _____

2. My father has two cars.   2. My elder brother has two cars.

   _____

3. Oman exports oil to other countries.   2. Saudi Arabia exports oil to other countries.

   _____

4. Shinas College has a football ground. 2. Ibri College has a football ground.

   _____

5. I can speak two languages.   2. My sister can speak two languages.

   _____

6. The price of a Toyota Yaris car is 5000 Riyals. 2. The price of a Susuki Maruti car is 5000 Riyals.

   _____

7. Australia is a continent.   2. Africa is a continent.

   _____

8. Gold is mined in South Africa.   2. Gold is mined in Botswana.

   _____

9. Oman doesn't grow rice.   2. Iran doesn't grow rice.

   _____

10. This dress isn't expensive.   2. That dress isn't expensive.

   _____

At the pre-writing stage, students are provided with models written on different genres. These models will help you to be familiar with the subject content, the audience, the purpose, the style (formal or informal), and grammar issues such as tense and specific syntactic structures demanded by a specific genre.

3.3.2.4. Linguistic examples and exercises with models (Comparison and Contrast)

1. Use the signal words given below to complete the paragraph (A paragraph of comparison).

   (**Both, similarly, secondly, in the same way, Thirdly, Likewise**)
   My hometown and my college town have several things in common. First, _____ are small rural towns. For example, my hometown, Saham, has a population of only 7000 local people. _____, my college town, Shinas, consists of about 6800 local residents. This population increases to 8000 when the college students start attending the classes. _____, they are both located on the coast. Saham has many gardens where people grow different

kinds of vegetables and limes _____ the people in Shinas are mostly farmers who grow vegetables. _____

Saham is famous for fishing and ancient forts. _____, Shinas is also famous for fishing and old forts.

2. **Use the signal words given below to complete the paragraph (A paragraph of contrast).**

(whereas, another difference, but, also differ in, however, while)

Even though Arizona and Rhode Island are both states of the U.S.A, they are different in many ways. For example, the physical size of each state is different. Arizona is large, with an area of 114,000 square miles, _____ Rhode Island in only about a tenth the size. Arizona has about four million people living in it_____ Rhode Island has less than one million. The two states_____ the kind of natural environments that each has. For example, Arizona is a very dry state, consisting of large desert areas that do not receive much rainfall every year. _____, Rhode Island is located in a temperate zone and receives an average of 44 inches of rain per year. In addition, Arizona is a non-coastal state and thus has no seashore, _____Rhode Island lies on the Atlantic Ocean and it has a significant coastline.

3. **Use the signal words given below to complete the paragraph. Some extra signal words are also given but you don't need to use them all.**
   (in the same way, likewise, another similarity, similarly, whereas,

   too, while, both, however, alike)

Even though we come from different cultures, my wife and I are alike in several ways. For one thing, we are_____ thirty-two years old. In fact, our birthdays are in the same month, hers is on 10th of July and mine is on 20th of July. _____is that we both grew up in large cities. Helene was born and raised in Paris and I come from Yokohama. Third, our hobbies are _____. My wife devotes a lot of her free time to play piano. _____, I like to spend time after work playing my guitar. A more important similarity concerns our values. For example, Helene has strong opinion about educating our children and raising them to know right from wrong. I feel _____. Our children should receive a good education and also have strong moral training.

At this stage of the lesson, students are shown the *PowerPoint* presentation which explains to them with examples on how to write a short paragraph of compare and contrast. In this example, students are taught how to write a topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion for a compare and contrast paragraph.

Demonstration of writing a compare and contrast essay step by step using the *PowerPoint* presentation (Comparison and Contrast). This *PowerPoint* presentation is available at (http://www.slideshare.net/sarathwithanarahchchi/compare-and-contras)

In the *PowerPoint* presentation**,** students are presented with two cars with some similarities and differences. First of all, comparable points, one by one, are described and then the student's attention is drawn on how to write a topic sentence for a compare and contrast essay. After that, students are introduced to supporting details followed by a conclusion. When the students reach this stage, it can be assumed that they have already had some practice of linguistic features relevant to writing a compare and contrast essay on a given topic. Based on the premise that students have mastered basic components of composing process, the students are introduced to a writing task based on the process genre approach as below.

A writing task based on the Process genre approach is introduced.
Students are briefly introduced the steps of the Process genre approach (pre-writing, composing, re-reading and revising, peer-editing and teacher feedback) and how they are expected to go about the writing task. The class is shown a video clip (Video clip is also a teaching aid in this chapter) of two hotels: one is located on the beach while the other is located in the center of a busy city. After playing the video clip, the students are asked to talk about their preference (e.g. *Which hotel do you like to spend your weekend/holiday and why*?) A discussion is conducted with the class to know what they know about hotels and the types of facilities they have. Then, the class is informed that they are going to write a paragraph of comparison and contrast of two hotels (one in Muscat, Oman and the other in Dubai, UAE). In accordance with the pre-writing stage of the Process genre approach, the students are put into to a few groups and introduced the task followed by distributing the task sheet to each member of the group in which they could discuss the issues relevant to the topic, content, grammar issues or any specific structure demanded by the task. If they have any issue relating to the topic, they can discuss it with the teacher. Before the students started writing, they were provided with specific guide lines for each part of the essay so that they could follow it throughout the whole process of writing their essay. The following was the guidelines for compare and contrast essay.

Writing compare and contrast essays

Point by point method	Block method
* Introduce the topic in general	* Introduce the topic in general
* Introduce the specific topic	* Introduce the specific topic
Thesis statement: E.g. Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but a right choice depends on the owner's lifestyle, finance and household accommodations.	**Thesis statement:** E.g. Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but a right choice depends on the owner's lifestyle, finance and household accommodations.
Topic sentence: Point 1 **Cats do not make lots of troubles to owner's lifestyle**	**Topic sentence:** Cats are easier and less expensive to be watched during the day.

Supporting idea 1: No need to watch during the day. **Supporting idea 2**: Easier to get care if owner travels. Topic 2: Dogs Point 1: Dogs cannot be left alone Supporting idea: Harder to take care when away *Use a transition sentence*	**Point 1: Lifestyle** Supporting idea 1: Don't have to be watched during the day Supporting idea 2: Easier to get care if owner travels **Point 2: Cost** Supporting idea 1: Food and health care are usually less expensive. Supporting idea 2: Less likely to cause any property damage or present risk to neighbours. **Point 3: Accommodations** Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space. Supporting idea 1: Less troublesome. *Use a transition sentence*
Topic sentence – Point 2 Cats are less expensive to won and care for. Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Food and health care are usually less expensive Supporting idea 2: Less likely to cause any property damage or present a risk to neighbours Topic 2: Point 2-Dogs Supporting idea 1: Food is expensive Supporting idea 2: Over-breeding causes some health problems *Use a transition sentence*	**Conclusion** * Summary of main points * Evaluation and/ possible future developments * Significance of the topic to author: E.g. When considering adopting a pet, the owner must consider his/her lifestyle, finance and household accommodation that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often tend not to care for their pet in a safe manner.
Topic sentence: Point 3 Cats need few special house accommodations Topic 1: Cats Supporting idea 1: Don't take up much space Supporting idea 2: Less disturbing Topic 2: Dogs Supporting idea 1: Often need yard and fence Supporting idea 2: Require more safety and protective measures *Use a transition sentence*	

Conclusion * Summary of main points * Evaluation and/ possible future developments * Significance of the topic to author: E.g. When considering adopting a pet, the owner must consider his/her lifestyle, finance and household accommodation that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often tend not to care for their pet in a safe manner.	

Adapted from http://www.efl.arts.gla.ac.uk/CampusOnly/essays/15web.htm

Composing stage

The students next move to composing stage where they will write a draft (first draft). However, this being the first task, the topic sentence and the conclusion of the essay are included. When composing the first draft, the students are allowed to work in pairs.

Write an essay comparing and contrasting the Grand Hyatt in Muscat and the Grand Hyatt in Dubai.

Grand Hyatt - Muscat	Grand Hyatt – Dubai
Modern luxury hotel	Modern luxury hotel
No of rooms 50	No of rooms 100
Serves Omani and Western food	Serves Indian and Western food
Room charges 25-OMR per night	Room charges 15-OMR per night
Has Wi-fi	Has Wi-fi
Close to beach	Far from the beach
2 restaurants	4 restaurants
Provides transports from the hotel to the airport	Provides transports from the hotel to the airport
Live music concerts on Thursday only	Live music concerts on Friday and Saturday
Has a gym only	Has a gym and a tennis court

Now write the first draft of your essay which compares and contrast the both hotels below. Include a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. Use signal words and transitions where necessary. Topic sentence and concluding sentence have been written for you.

There are some similarities between the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Muscat and the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Dubai.

_____

In conclusion, I can say that these two hotels have a lot of things in common. Therefore, when you visit Muscat, you can stay at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Muscat. However, if you are looking for accommodations in Dubai, I recommend you stay at Grand Hyatt in Dubai.

Re-reading and revising

At this phase, students are encouraged to re-read their texts because they should be able to determine whether their subject content matches the topic and what they intended to say. Furthermore, they should check whether their paragraphs have a logical order with clear topic and supporting sentences. At this stage, students can ask another student to help him/her revise his/her work. The student may give his/her draft to his/her partner along with the following checklist to revise.

After writing, have your <u>first draft</u> checked by your partner.

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	**Yes**	**No**
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the essay end with a concluding sentence?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the essay?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the essay has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adopted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once the student's partner has finished reviewing, the student should go through the checklist and see what he/she have missed or forgotten to include. Next, the student writes his/her second draft.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Peer-editing phase

At this stage, students are supposed to read each other's work, and then offer feedback on content, structure and grammar because peer-editing is also a form of input. As discussion on content with other students most probably lead to the addition of ideas. Therefore, in the Process genre approach, students are encouraged to give their second draft to another student (Male to female or female to male student) to read his second draft and offer his/her feedback on the content and organization of ideas or to include new ideas or delete irrelevant information. After the peer-comments and suggestions, the student may have to re-write the text.

Write your third draft. Use a separate sheet.

_____

_____

Teacher feedback

In the process genre approach, teacher feedback is considered as an important phase in the composing process. Once the first draft is written, self-edited and peer-edited, and revised, possibly re-written, the teacher is responsible for editing and evaluation. Once the final draft is handed over to the teacher, he/she should evaluate the essay using a writing rubric, give oral/ written feedback and allocate marks based on the specific course and genre criteria and marking rubric.

After the second draft, re-read and revise it if necessary. Now you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing.

3. Write an essay contrasting the quality of food, price and the politeness of the waiters of the two restaurants below. Before you begin to write, study the table carefully.

Al- Tajan Grill	Turkish Diwan
Quality of the food Very delicious Nor very spicy Price is fare E.g. A vegetable salad costs 1 Riyal	**Quality of the food** Terrible So spicy Expensive: E.g. A vegetable salad costs 2 Riyals
Atmosphere Better Clean and quiet	**Atmosphere** Dirty and noisy
Waiters Polite and attentive Very efficient and take little time to serve food and drinks	**Waiters** Rude and non-attentive to customers E.g. Take more time to serve food and drinks

Follow the same steps to write the paragraph above.

Write the <u>first</u> draft of your essay. Begin your essay like this.

Last week I was in Muscat and I ate at two different restaurants. I had lunch at Al-Tajan Grill and dinner at Turkish Diwan. First, I would like to write about the quality of food.

_____

_____

4. Write an essay of 200 – 250 words comparing and contrasting the features of the two countries given below. Follow the same procedure as above until you write up to the third draft.

	UAE	INDIA
Location	Continent of Asia	Continent of Asia
Geography	Most part of the country consists of sandy deserts	Large part of the country contains tropical forests
In the past	Under British rule	Under British rule
Became an independent	1971	1947
Population	9.3 million	1.27 billion
National language	Arabic	No national Language-Official languages are Hindi and English
Prime minster	yes	Yes
Skyscrapers	yes	Yes
Economy	Based on oil industry	Based on agriculture and industries
Driving	Left hand driving	Right hand driving
Transport	Public transport system	Public transport system
No of states	7 emirates	28 states

There are several similarities and difference between India and United Arab Emirates. I will first describe the similarities of both hotels.

_____

_____

5. The table below shows the similarities and differences between Samsung Galaxy S2 and S3. Write an essay comparing and contrasting the features of the two mobile phones and then check your essay with the model given below.

The similarities and differences between Samsung Galaxy S2 and S3

	Samsung Galaxy S2	**Samsung Galaxy S3**
Size	125.3 x 66.1 x 8.5 mm	125.3 x 66.1 x 8.5 mm
Display	4.3 inches – No touch screen	4.8 inch HD Super AMOLED touch screen
Screen	480 x 800 pixels	1280x720 pixels
Weight	116 g	116 g
CPU speed	Dual-core 1.2 GHz Cortex-A9	Quad-core 1.4 GHz Cortex-A9
Chipset	Exynos	Exynos
RAM	1 GB	2 GB

SIM Size	miniSIM	microSIM
Internal Memory	16 GB	16GB
Expandable Memory	microSD up to 32 GB	microSD up to 64 GB
Connectivity	WiFi- No	WiFi connectivity avialble
Bluetooth	No Bluetooth device	No Bluetooth device
Primary Camera	8 Mega pixels Auto Focus	8megapixel Auto Focus
Video	1080p	1080p
Available Colors	Black and White	Black and White
Radio	No radio	Stereo FM radio

There are some similarities and differences between Samsung Galaxy S2 and S3. First, I will describe the similarities of both mobile phones.

Both phones have the same size. Galaxy S2 weighs 116 g. **Similarly**, S3 weighs 116g. **Another similarity in both phones is** in chipset. S2 uses Exynos and **so does** S3. Furthermore, S2 comes with a 16 GB internal memory. **Likewise,** S3 comes with a 16 GB internal memory. When we talk about Bluetooth device, we find both phones don't have Bluetooth device. The primary cameras of both phone come with 8 Mega pixels and auto focus and S2 can record videos in full high definition 1080 at 30 frames per second so can S3. **However,** both phones are available in black and white only so customers have no wider choice. **I will now describe the differences of both phones below.**

First, the display unit of The Samsung Galaxy S2 is not **as wide as** S3 and S2 does not have a touch screen too, but S3 has a 4.8 inches HD super touch screen. **Another difference** is in the screen size. S2 comes with a screen of 480 x 800 pixels **while** S3 has 1280 x 720 pixels. When we consider the speed of CPU of both phones, we find that S2 offers Dual-core 1.2. **In contrast,** S3 offers Qusd-core 1.4 which I believe is more powerful than S2. **Furthermore**, S2 has 1 GB RAM, **but** S3 has 2 GB. Sim sizes in both phones are different. S2 uses mini Sim **while** S3 needs Micro-Sim. Galaxy S2 **differs from** S3 in Expandable memory. S2 has a capacity to use a Micro-SD card up to 32 GB, **whereas** S3 has a capacity to use up to 64 GB SD card. **Another important feature is** the Wireless internet connectivity. S2 does not come with WiFi device, **but** S3 has WiFi facility. Finally, S2 does not have a radio. In contrast, S3 has a stereo FM radio.

As you can see from the description above, both phones have similarities and differences in technical features and functions. **Therefore,** I think S3 comes with more advanced devices and features than S2, so I would recommend someone to buy Galaxy S3.

You can use the following words as signals

After all	Nevertheless	nonetheless
Although, although this is true	On the contrary	notwithstanding
At the same time	Similarly	on the other hand
Balanced against	Conversely	still
But	However	where
Compared to/with, in comparison, by comparison	Whereas	when in fact
	Likewise	while this is true
	In contrast	Meanwhile
		In the same way/manner

Be the Editor

The following is a first draft of an essay which has been written by a Level 3 student and it has some mistakes. Work with a partner, identify the mistakes and improve the text.

> There are many similarites and diffrinces between Crown plaza and AL-Wadi Hotel. First I will discripe the similarites.
>
> First of all, the swimming pool in Crowne plaza is as available as AL Wadi Hotel. Bath Crowne Plaza and AL-Wadi Hotel are havent Sea View. In addition, in Crowne Plaza has all types of food. Likewise AL Wadi Hotel has all the types of food. Also Sightseeing services are available Crowne Plaza. Similarly, AL-Wadi Hotel has this Service. I think it's a nice Service. In Crown plaza they have Holiday Package like AL-Wadi Hotel.
>
> Now I will discripe the diffrinces betwen the two hotels.
>
> First Crowne Plaza is located in Falaj, but AL wadi Hote

is in Sohar. Crowne Plaza is 5 star hotel, wereas AL-Wadi Hotel is 3 star Hotel. Crowneplaza is actully costs 100 RO per day, but AL Wadi Hotel is costs 20 BR per day. Crowne Plaza is distant from main road 3 km. On the other hand AL-Wadi Hotel distant 1 km. The indoor games are available in Crowne Plaza. Another diffrince is that AL-Wadi Hotele not avilable the indoor games. When I want to veset Sohar I will choose AL Wadi Hotel and when I want to Veset Falag I will choose Crowne Plaza.

Write the improved text below

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CHAPTER 5

WRITING CAUSE-EFFECT ESSAYS

This chapter will guide you step by step on how to write causes and effects essays.

Objectives of this chapter

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Recognize the link between causes and effects.
2. Identify the signal words that introduce causes and effects.
3. Analyze situations/ events or actions.
4. Recognize what to include in topic sentences, supporting sentences and conclusions for cause and effect essays.
5. Write causes and effects essays relating to a given situation, an action or an event.

Writing: Descriptive writing

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; simple past; present perfect, structural patterns for future ideas, adjectives, adverbs and personal pronouns (possessive)

Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

Causes and effects essays

Most situations, events and actions have causes and effects. For example, when you explain why something happened, you are describing the **causes** or **reasons.** On the other hand, when you explain the results of something that happened, you are describing the **effects (results).** A cause-effect essay tells how one event (the cause) leads to another event (the effect).

> Because I got a new job in a big company

> Naida, you look happy today.
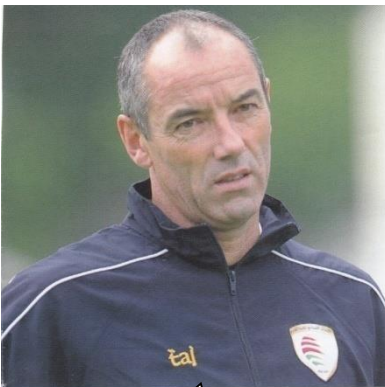
> My new car was badly damaged. I had an accident yesteray.

> Mr. Peter, you look sad today.

Why do we write causes and effects essays?

To understand a situation.   To solve a problem.   To predict an outcome.   To entertain.

To persuade.

A cause-effect essay can perform one of the two things.

1. It can analyse the ways in which one or more effects results from a particular cause.

2. It can analyse the ways in which one or more causes lead to a particular effect.

Your essay should focus on both the causes and effects and discuss the possible relationship between the two events. Moreover, the causes and effects that you describe should be logical.

Signal words that introduce causes

Because	Since	Due to	Because of

Because/ since + Clause

Due to/ because of + Noun phrase

Study the example below:

Eg: Nadia got a new job in a big company – **cause**

She is happy- **effect**   Why is Nadia happy?

Because she got a new job in a big company.

Since she got a new job in a big company.

<u>**Nadia is happy**</u> because <u>she got a new job in a big company</u>.

Effect   **Cause**

Because   she   got   a new job
Subject   verb
Because + **Clause** (subject + verb …..)
Since   + **Clause**

Other signal words: Due to / Because of

If you use **due to** or **because of**, you cannot use a clause. Instead, you need to use a **<u>noun phrase</u>.**

Study the example below:

Due to <u>her new job in a big company</u>

No subject and no verb (Noun phrase)

Because of <u>her new job in a big company.</u>

After **due to** or **because of** + **Noun phrase**

After joining the two sentences together, they read like:

Nadia is happy **due to** her new job in a big company. (Phrase)

Nadia is happy **because of** her new job in a big company- Phrase

Nadia is happy **because** <u>she got a new job in a big company. -</u> Clause

Nadia is happy **since** <u>she got a new job in a big company. -</u> Clause

<u>**Signal words that introduce effects**</u>

So But For this reason As a result Consequently Otherwise Therefore Thus

Eg: Nadia got a new job in a big company. **Therefore,** she is happy.

   My friend lost her money, **so** she is sad.

   We got wireless internet facility. **As a result,** we can use what's up to talk to our friends and relatives cheaply.

Activity

Match the causes and effects in the following exercise**.**

1. We bought a new car.   _____   A. the city was too crowded.

2. He rides his bike to work. _____   B. it was faster than the train.

3. They travelled by plane. _____   C. He likes to exercise in the morning.

4. We moved to a village.   _____   D. The old one uses too much petrol.

5. My friend met with an accident ____ E. He drove his car fast through the city.

You can use the following words as signals that a cause-and -effect relationship will be presented:

Accordingly	For	Hence
As, as a result	In as much	Because, because of
Being that	In that	For this reason
Consequently	In view of the fact that	So that
Therefore	Due to	Thus
		So, so much (so) that
Owing to (the fact that)	Seeing that	

Now write the sentences below.

1._____

2.

_____

3.

_____

4.

_____

Now combine the causes and effects to make new sentences. Use so or therefore.

Use the same sentences as in the previous activity.

Eg. The old car uses too much petrol. Therefore, we bought a new one.

1._____

2._____

3._____

Study the model essay written on causes and effects of going to an English- speaking country to study. Identify the cause-effect signal words used in it.

I have decided to go to an English-speaking country to study for several reasons. **First**, I need to study both oral and written English proficiently. If I am proficient in English, I hope I can find a good job in my county easily. **Second**, I can study the culture and the life style of the people in that country. **Therefore**, I can understand the world better. Understanding differences in the world helps us to live in peace and harmony.

If I have a better understanding about the culture and the language they speak, I may be able to find work even in the same country. **Third**, most importantly, I can get different kinds of experiences relating to academic and social life. **As a result**, I will become better informed about societies and people. With the English knowledge, I can study a course in IT, Engineering, Business or Management in a higher educational institute in an English-speaking country. Nowadays, studying a professional course in English medium makes me easy to find a better job in most countries where there is a high demand for skilled workers.

Finally, with my knowledge and experience, I believe I can help my community to raise their standard of life. Given the positive effects of my decision to go to an English-speaking country to study, one can say that my decision is right.
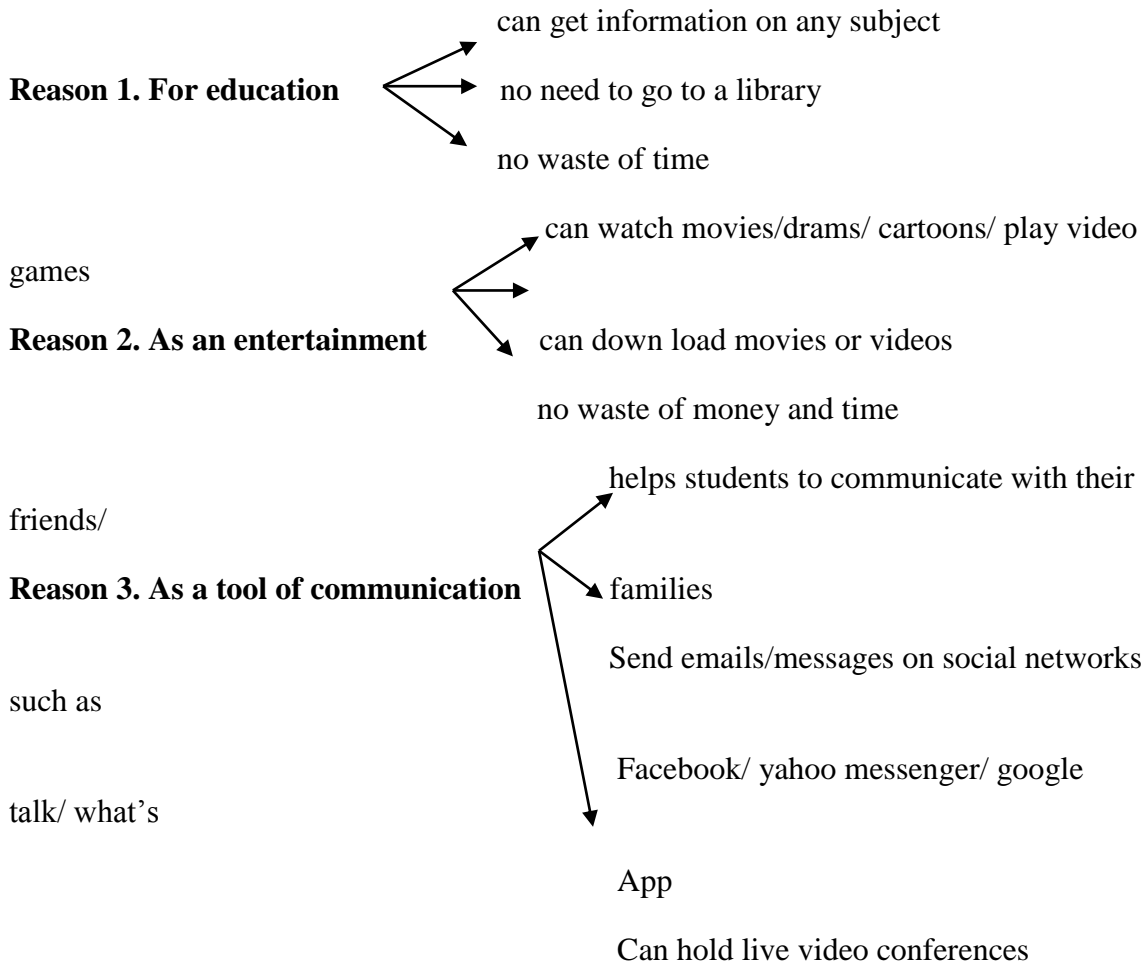
I think my decision is right/ I don't see anything wrong in my decision.

Write a cause-effect essay about the topic below. Use a separate sheet of paper.

Why do students use internet a lot?

Use the points below as a guide line for your essay and you can add some more points.

There are several reasons why students use Internet a lot. -Topic sentence

                                        can get information on any subject

Reason 1. For education ⟵→ no need to go to a library

                                        no waste of time

                                        can watch movies/drams/ cartoons/ play video
games

Reason 2. As an entertainment   can down load movies or videos

                                        no waste of money and time

                                        helps students to communicate with their
friends/

Reason 3. As a tool of communication families

                                        Send emails/messages on social networks
such as

                                        Facebook/ yahoo messenger/ google

talk/ what's

                                        App

                                        Can hold live video conferences

Conclusion- As you can see from the reasons above, students can have a number of advantages of using internet. Therefore, we find that more and more students use internet nowadays.

Signal words that introduce causes: Because	Since	Due to	Because of

| **Signal words that introduce effects:** So   But   For this reason   As a result |
| Consequently   Otherwise   Therefore   Thus |

Organisation of a cause-effect essay

Introduction	Paragraph 1	1. *General statement about the topic** 2. **Thesis statement[1]** E.g. *Environmental pollution has become one of the biggest concerns in the world nowadays. Pollution must be taken seriously as it can have negative effects on natural elements that are essential for life to exit on earth, such as water, air and land**. **This essay will discuss three causes of and three effects of environmental pollution[1].**
Body	Paragraph 2	**Cause 1**: Topic sentence- The first type of pollution is air and it happens due to many reasons. *Supporting ideas*- Excessive burning of fuel (Describe how this happens and where?)
	Paragraph 3	**Cause 2**: *Topic sentence*-The second type of pollution is water and it can happen due to several reasons. *Supporting ideas*-dumping industrial wastes and sewage into water bodies (Describe how this happens and where?)
	Paragraph 4	**Effect 1**: *Topic Sentence*-People may have health issues such as respiratory diseases *Supporting Ideas*-People can have both short-term and long-term health issues such as the respiratory and inflammatory systems, but can also lead to more serious conditions such as heart disease and cancer.
	Paragraph 5	**Effect 2**: *Topic Sentence*-It mainly kills aquatic animals and plants. As a result, it disrupts the natural food chain too. *Supporting Ideas*-Dead fish, crabs, birds, sea gulls, dolphins and many other animals are killed by pollutants in their habitat.
Conclusion		**Restate the thesis statement** **Offer suggestion/opinion/prediction** *E.g.* *As can be seen from the causes and effects of environmental pollution discussed above, it is clear that our lives as well as the lives of animal and plants are threatened and as a result, this will lead to more health issues of people on one hand and on the other it is responsible for creating an unbalance in the biosphere. Therefore, it is everyone' duty and responsibility to protect our environment and keep it safe for the future posterity.*

Write a cause-effect essay about the situations, events or actions stated below.

1. Imagine you have decided to move from Saham to Muscat due to several reasons. Read the list of causes and use this list to write a paragraph about the following topic.

   My decision to move from Saham to Muscat
   - Muscat has good schools both government and international.
   - More job opportunities are available in Muscat because there are many national and international companies.
   - There are better health facilities in Muscat than Saham.
   - Muscat offers various kinds of entertainments and sports facilities.
   - Muscat has a better transport system than Saham.

First draft

There are some several reasons why I decided to move from Saham to Muscat.

_____

_____

_____

After the <u>first draft</u>, have it checked by your partner.

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the essay end with a concluding sentence?		
4	Are signal words/transitions used in the essay?		
5	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
6	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
7	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
8	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
9	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
10	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
11	If the essay has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adapted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your second draft.

There are some several reasons why I decided to move to Muscat from Saham.

_____

_____

_____

After the second draft, please re-read and revise it if necessary. Now you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing.

Teacher's oral/ written feedback

_____
_____
_____
_____

Marks: _____

Write your third draft.

There are some several reasons why I decided to move from Saham to Muscat.

_____

_____

_____

Do the same with the following activities. Write a first draft and re-read and revise it. Then, have it checked by your partner

2. Write an essay about the topic "**There are several causes of diabetes in Adults in Oman**"
   Use the information give below.
   - In Oman, there are about130000 people who suffer from diabetes.
   - Diabetes accounts for 11 percent of all Omani deaths.
   - Reasons for diabetes:
     The lack of physical exercises, eating junk food, obesity-60% of the people in Oman is overweight or obese.
   - Bad effects for the country's economy: Diabetic treatment is very expensive.
   - The productivity of a person with diabetic is less.
   - Diabetes produces depression.

Write your <u>first</u> draft.

_____

_____

_____

After writing the first draft, have your paragraph checked by your partner

	Checklist for editing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the essay end with a concluding sentence?		
5	Are signal words/transitions used in the essay?		
6	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
7	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
8	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
9	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
10	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
11	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
12	If the essay has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adapted from *scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf*)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your <u>second</u> draft.

_____

_____

_____

_____

After the second draft, re-read and revise it. Now you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing process.

Teacher's oral/ written feedback

_____

_____

_____

Marks:

Write your <u>third</u> draft.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Be the Editor

Following is an answer written by a level-3 student to a cause and effect question in an examination setting. 'Causes and effects of watching too much TV' It has some grammatical errors. Work with a partner, identify the mistakes and improve the text.

Watching too much TV has several causes and effects. To begine with~~s~~ causes. Firstly, all house in the world has TV. So, all people watching TV. Secondly people watch news every day ~~Therefore we~~. For example people watch news ~~also~~ about weather. Thirdly: baby or small ~~yung~~ people ~~watch~~ watch TV because that enjoy thing ~~it him~~ about there. Another things that watch TV too much is the young people follow favourit Steamer or some ~~p~~ famouse player~~s~~ Such as Omany ~~p~~ player or player for another country. Now I will took about several effects about ~~several~~ watching TV too much. first of all, people is learn ~~everen~~ many things when they watch TV. For example learn about new country. Seconde things people when they watch TV be relxe and happy. because TV has many programes such us cartoon and drama. In ~~a~~ conclosine, I think TV is very important for life, So when we used TV be carfuly.

(Author's data, 2014)

Write the improved text below. (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Over the past 150 years there has been a large increase in population. Use the given list of causes to write an about the causes of the population increase. Begin with a topic sentence and include signal words.

- Advances in medicines and health care
- Better sanitation
- Improved farming methods that produce more and better food
- Fewer infant deaths and more people living longer

Write your <u>first</u> draft and follow the same procedure as you did with previous paragraphs

_____

_____

_____

_____

More practice activities

3. **Write essays about the following topic sentences. Use separate sheets of papers.**

1. Playing video games can have several negative effects on young children.

2. Causes and effects of unhealthy habit (smoking, drinking alcohol).

3. Why do many people prefer foreign goods?

4. What are the effects of poverty?

5. What are the effects of overcrowding in cities?

CHAPTER 6

DESCRIBING GRAPHS AND CHARTS

In this chapter, you will receive instructions on how to interpret the data included in a bar graph or a chart. In describing a bar graph, you will have to compare or contrast facts and statistics presented in graphs, tables or charts.

Objectives of this chapter

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Recognise the different parts of a bar graph (Title, labels, bars, gridlines and categories)
   and their functions.
2. Study the verbs, nouns, adverbs and adjectives that describe changes or amount of changes shown in a graph or a chart.
3. Describe facts and statistics using appropriate verbs, nouns, adverbs and adjectives that describe change or amount of change.
4. Write description of bar graphs or charts.

Writing: Descriptive writing

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; simple past; present perfect, structural patterns for future ideas, adjectives and adverbs that describe changes or amount of changes
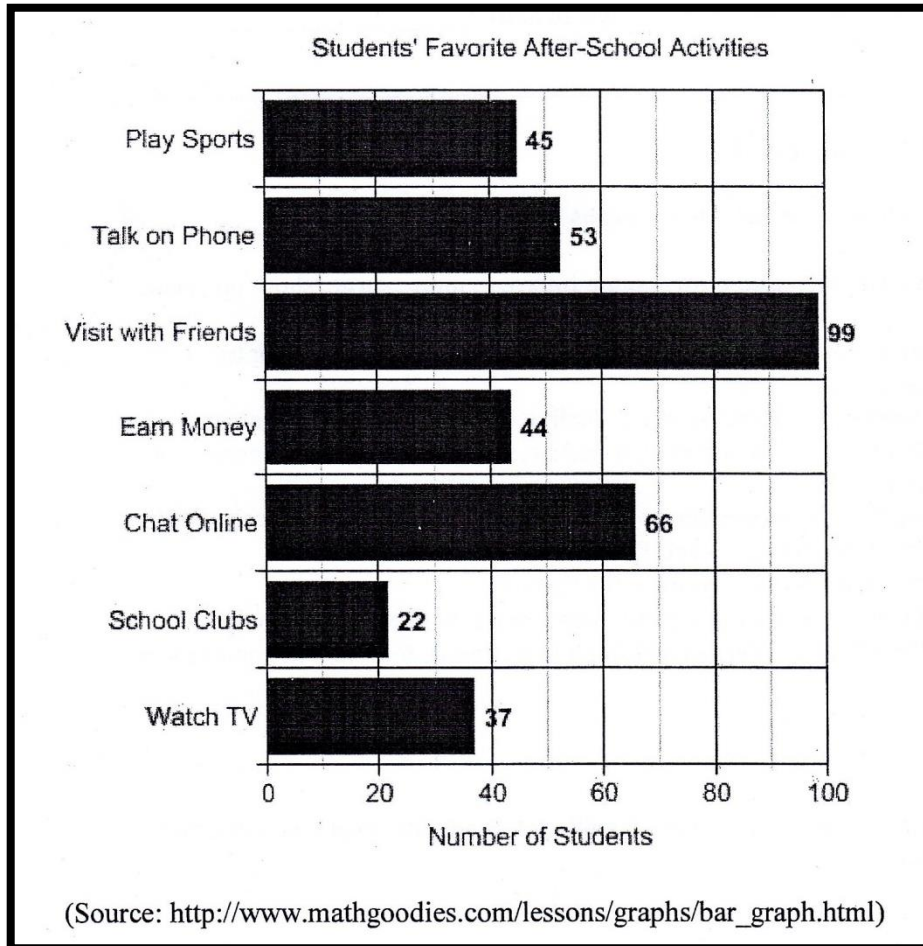
Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

Introduction

A bar graph is useful for comparing facts. The bars provide a visual display for comparing quantities in different categories. Bar graphs help us to see relationships quickly. Each part of a bar graph has a function.

Title	The title tells us what the graph is about.
Labels	The labels tell us what kinds of facts are listed.
Bars	The bars show the facts.
Grid lines	Grid lines are used to create the scale.
Categories	Each bar shows a quantity for a particular category.

Now you have identified the parts of a bar graph so that you can answer the questions below about the bar graph in example 1. Write answers to the questions below in full sentences.

Students' Favorite After-School Activities

Activity	Number of Students
Play Sports	45
Talk on Phone	53
Visit with Friends	99
Earn Money	44
Chat Online	66
School Clubs	22
Watch TV	37

Number of Students (horizontal scale: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)

(Source: http://www.mathgoodies.com/lessons/graphs/bar_graph.html)

Questions

1. What is the title of this bar graph?

   _____

2. What is the range of values on the (horizontal) scale?

   _____

3. How many categories are in the graph?

   _____

4. Which after school activity do students like most?

   _____

5. Which after school activity do students like least?

   _____

6. How many students like to talk on the phone?

   _____

7. How many students like to earn money?

    _____

8. Which two activities are liked almost equally?

    _____

9. List the categories in the graph from greatest to least?

    _____

Vocabulary for describing graphs

Following are some helpful verbs, nouns, adverbs, adjectives and phrases.

When we describe upward movement of something, we can use the following verbs and nouns

Verbs- rise, increase, grow, go up and improve

Nouns- a rise, an increase, a growth, an upward rising, trend, an improvement

E.g. The production of cars **rose** by 50 per cent in 2012. -**verb**

There was **a rise** in production of cars by per cent in 2012. **-noun**

The population in China **went up** by 20 per cent in 2012. -**verb**

There was **a growth** in population by 20 percent in China in 2012. -**noun**

When we describe downward movement of something, we can use the following verbs and nouns

Verbs- fall, decrease, drop, decline, and go down

Nouns- a fall, a decrease, a decline, a downward trend/ falling

The production of cars **fell** by 50 per cent in 2013. -**verb**

There was **a fall** in production of cars by per cent in 2013. **-noun**

The population in China **went down** by 20 per cent in 2013. -**verb**

There was **a decrease** in population by 20 percent in China in 2013. –**noun**

When there is no change, we can use the verbs below.

Verbs: remain, stable/constant, stay at the same level and stabilize

Frequent change- verb- fluctuate   e.g. The price of gold **fluctuated** last month

Frequent change- noun- fluctuation

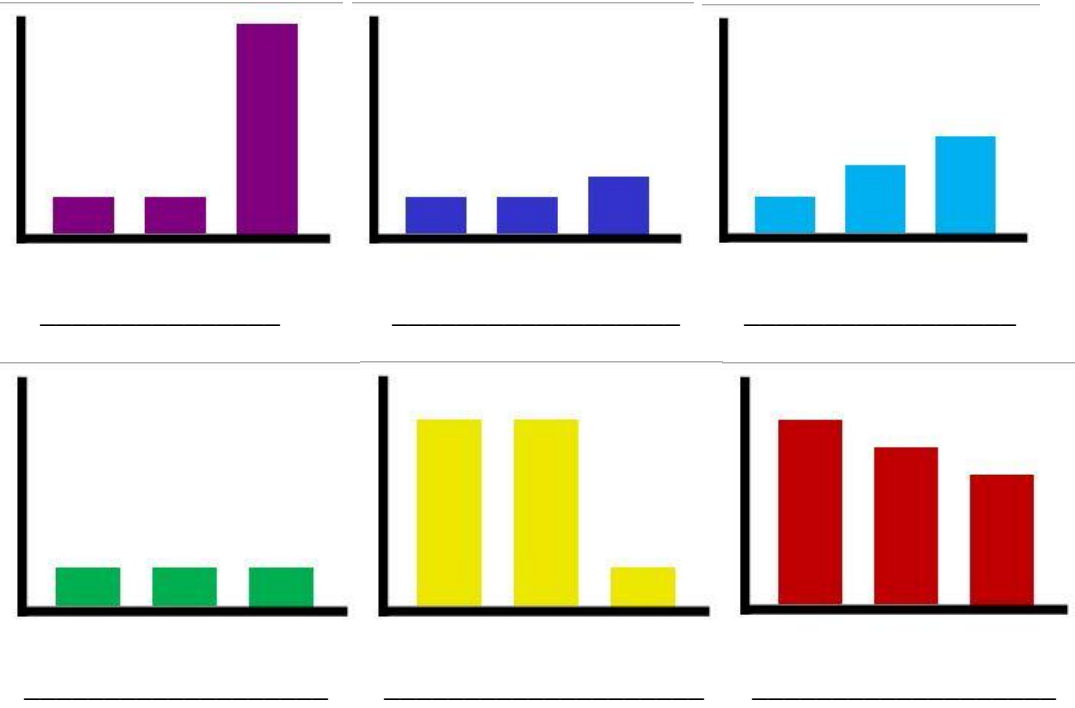**At the top- verbs**- reach a peak, reach its/their highest point

At the bottom- verbs – reach/hit a low (point), hit or reach its/their lowest point

Change

Adjectives- dramatic, considerable, sharp, significant, slight, rapid, steady, gradual, slow

Match the descriptions and the bar charts

A steady rise	A slight fall	A sharp fall	A slight rise	No change

A sharp rise	A steady fall

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

How to describe a bar graph?

First, start writing exactly what the chart shows and the time period.

Next, Describe the changes preciously as you can. Use data and numbers from the bar chart.

Then, compare the information. Talk about differences or similarities between the groups shown.

Finally, conclude by stating what the main trends or changes are.

Bar graph 1

Top Ten Date-Producing Countries, 2001
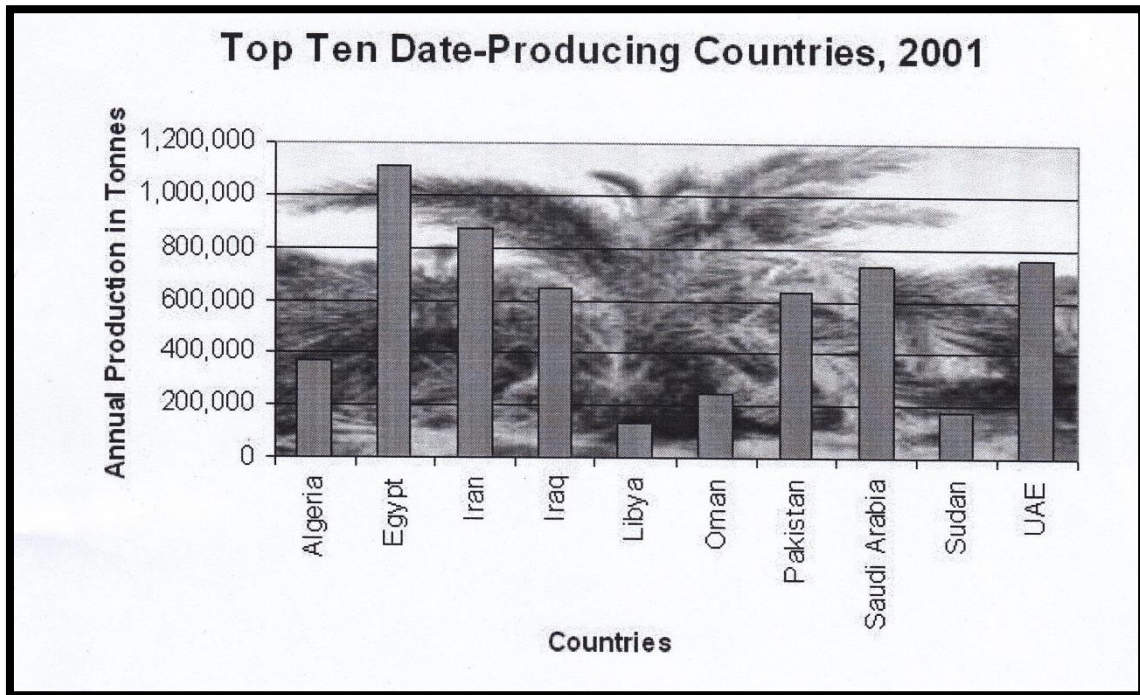
The bar graph shows the top ten date producing countries and their annual production in tones in 2001. Answer the questions below in full sentences. Use your full answers to write a paragraph about the information included in the bar graph.

Questions:

1. What does the bar graph show?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Overall, what were the top three or four producers?

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Which country produced the most dates?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. How much more did Egypt produce than Iran? (in tons)

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. What country was the second highest producer in 2001?

   _____

   _____

6. How many tones of dates did Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE produce?

_____

_____

7. How does Algeria's production compare to the UAE's output?

_____

_____

8. Libya and Sudan each accounted for less than_____ tons.
9. Oman's production is _____Egypt's figure (Insert as a fraction).
10. In summary, how many countries produced over half a million tons a year?

_____

_____

Bar Chart: Mobile Phones and Landlines

Mobile Phones and Land Lines, per 100 people
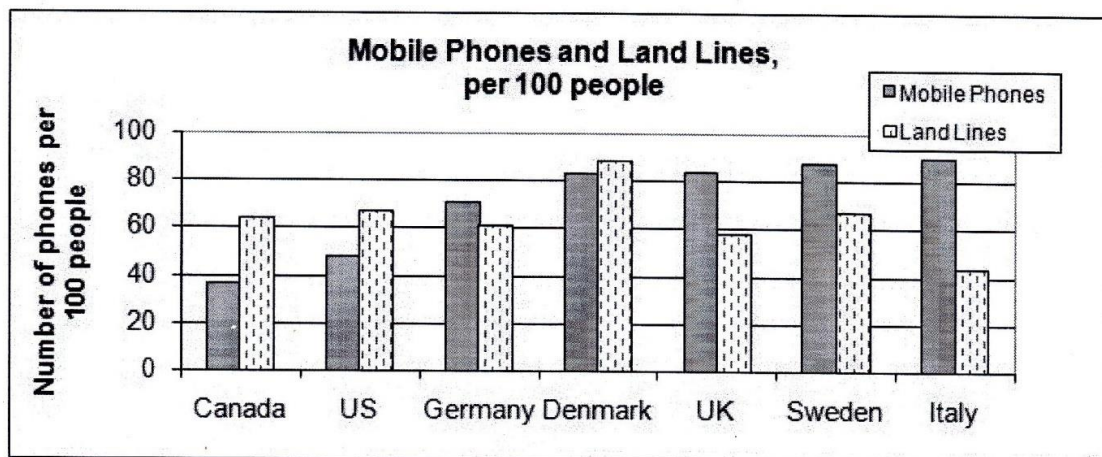
Study the bar graph above and answer the questions below in complete sentences.

1. What does this bar graph show?

_____

2. How many countries are included in the graph?

_____

3. Which country has the highest mobile users?

_____

4. Which country has the lowest mobile users?

_____

5. Why is Denmark unusual?

_____

6. Which country has twice as many mobile phones as landlines?

_____

7. Is mobile phone use in Canada high or low?

_____

8. What is the number of mobile phones per 100 people in USA?

_____

9. What is the number of landlines per 100 people in Germany?

_____

10. Write a conclusion for the bar graph above.

_____

Now use your full answers to write a paragraph describing the use of mobile phones and landlines in the seven countries included in the graph.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Bar Chart: Televisions and Computers

The chart shows the number of televisions and computers per 1000 people in selected countries.
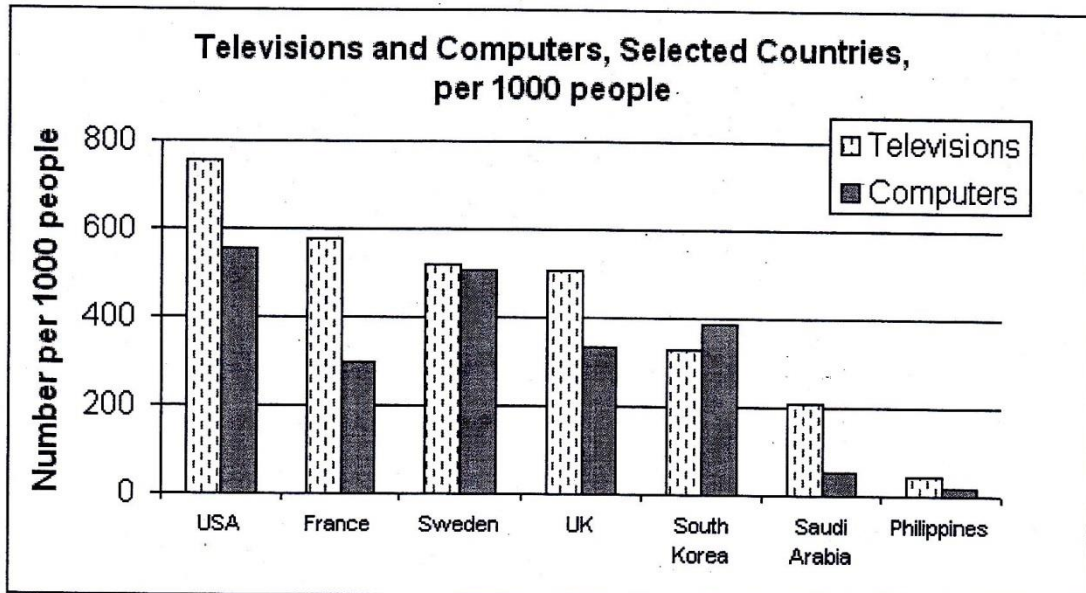
Put the words in the order to make a meaningful sentence.

1. This bar graph/ computers per 1000 people/ shows/ the number of televisions/ and/ in 8 countries

_____

_____

2. USA, France/ Sweden/ The eight countries/ UK/ South Korea/ are/ Saudi Arabia/ Philippines/ and

_____

_____

3. Of the eight countries/ biggest number of TV/ USA has the/and/ computer users/with 750 TVs per 1000 people and 450 computers per 1000 people

_____

_____

4. Whereas the Philippines/ the lowest number of/ has/computer and TV users/ with 25 TVs per 1000 people and 10 computers per 1000.

_____

5. A common feature/ is that the number of TV viewers/ we can clearly see/ in the eight countries/ is high/ except South Korea

_____

_____

6. In my opinion/ people should learn/ to use a computer/ to watch a TV/However, no one needs to learn.

_____

_____

7. This may be/ why / one reason/ the number of TV viewers/high/ is

_____

_____

8. When we think about South Korea/ different from/ the situation/ is/ the other countries

_____

_____

9. In South Korea/ is higher than/ the number of computer users/ the TV viewers

_____

_____

10. I think/ technologically advanced country/ is / South Korea/ a

_____

_____

11. and/ high/ is/ the standards of living/

_____

_____

12. Therefore/ can / most people/ buy/ computers

_____

_____

13. If we/ Sweden/ about/ talk/, we/ see/ that the both/ can/ computer users and TV viewers/equal/ almost/ are

_____

_____

14. Another similarity/ that/ is/ the computer users in UK/ and/ in South Korea/ the computer users/ the same/ are

_____

_____

15. Finally/ Saudi Arabia/ when/ consider/ we/ can/ we/ see/ number of people/ a large/ prefer/ to using computers/ watching TV

_____

_____

16. In conclusion/ can / I / that/ say/ more people/ countries/ selected/ in the/ love/ watch/ to/TV/ it is a good/ because/ source of / entertainment/ computers/ than/

_____

_____

Fill in the blanks in the paragraph which describes the bar graph below with suitable words from the box.

shows	British	fluctuation	approximately	bar graph	rose
40.000	higher	popular	Spain	2004	under	Australia
five	least				

BRITISH EMIGRATION TO SELECTED DESTINATIONS - 2004-2007

SOURCE: International Passenger Survey/ONS
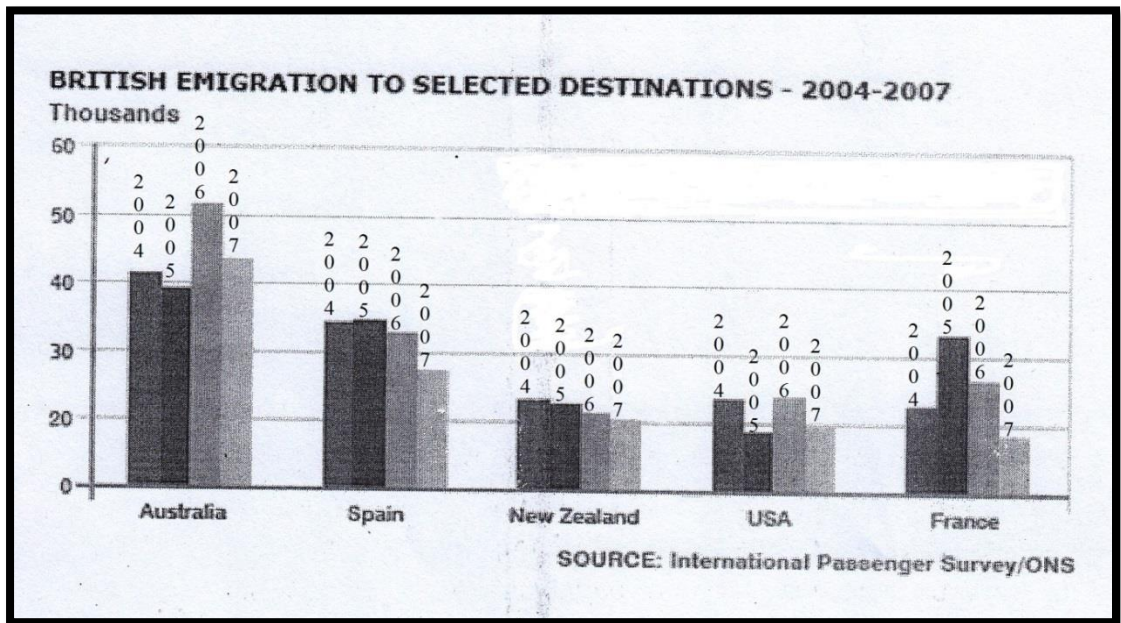
The bar graph_____ the number of _____people who migrated to _____destinations over the period _____ to 2007. It is clear from the graph that throughout the period, the most_____ place to move was_____. Emigration to Australia stood at just over

360

_____People in 2004, which was approximately 6000 _____ than for Spain, and twice as_____ as the other three countries. Apart from a jump to around 52,000 in 2006, it _____ around this level throughout the period. The next most popular country for the British to move to was Spain. _____ 20,000 people emigrated to New Zealand each year while USA had a _____between 20-25,000 over the period. Although the number of visitors to France _____to nearly35,000 in 2005, it became the _____popular country for the British to emigrate at the end of the period, at just _____ 20,000 people.

The bar graph below shows the population of major European countries from 1997 to 2007. Use the words given to complete the text.
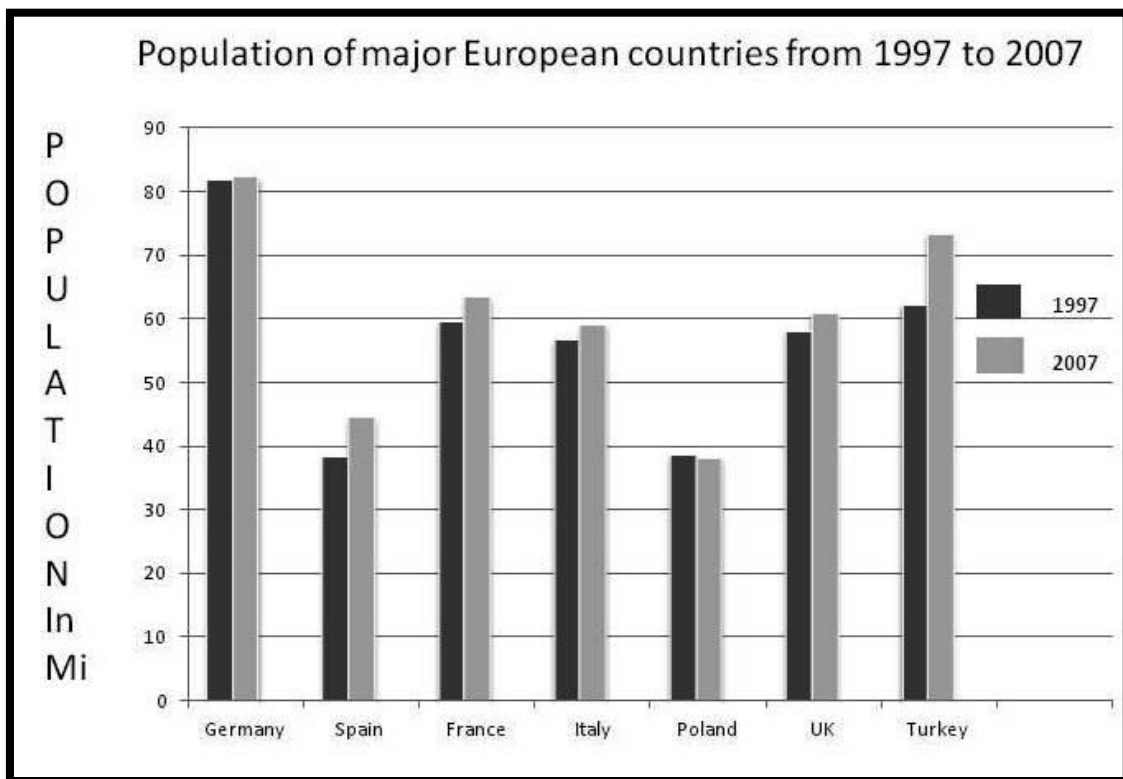
(Shows/ rose/ increased/ fell/ was/ greater/ 73 million/ 39.4 million)

The graph _____the population of major European countries from 1997 to 2007. In all countries except Poland, the population_____ during this period. The largest rise was in Turkey where the population _____ from over 62 to over _____, whereas the smallest increase was in Germany where the population of 82 million rose by a few thousand. Spain also had a fairly large increase from _____to 44.5 million and France was not far behind with an increase of almost 4 million. In the other countries, Italy and the UK, population growth was more modest with an increase of about 2.3 and 2.8 respectively. In Poland, the population _____by half a million. Poland had the smallest population in both 1977 and 2007. Although Spain and Poland had comparable

population in 1996, Spain's population is now nearly six and a half million_____ than Poland's.

The bar graph below shows the number of Japanese tourists travelling abroad between 1985 and 1995. Write a report describing the information shown in the graph.
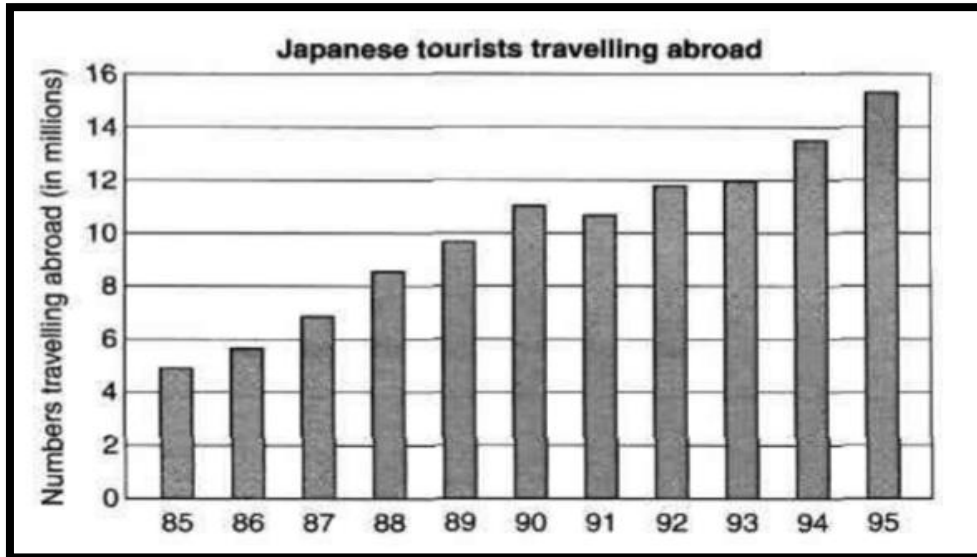
Write your first draft. (Use a separate sheet of paper)

After writing your <u>first draft</u>, have it checked by your partner.

	Checklist for paragraph writing: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Does the paragraph end with a concluding sentence?		
5	Are signal words/transitions used in the paragraph?		
6	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
7	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
8	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
9	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
10	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
11	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
12	If the paragraph has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adopted from scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf)

Once your partner has finished reviewing, go through the checklist and see what you have missed or forgotten to include. Then, study your partner's suggestions and comments and write your second draft.
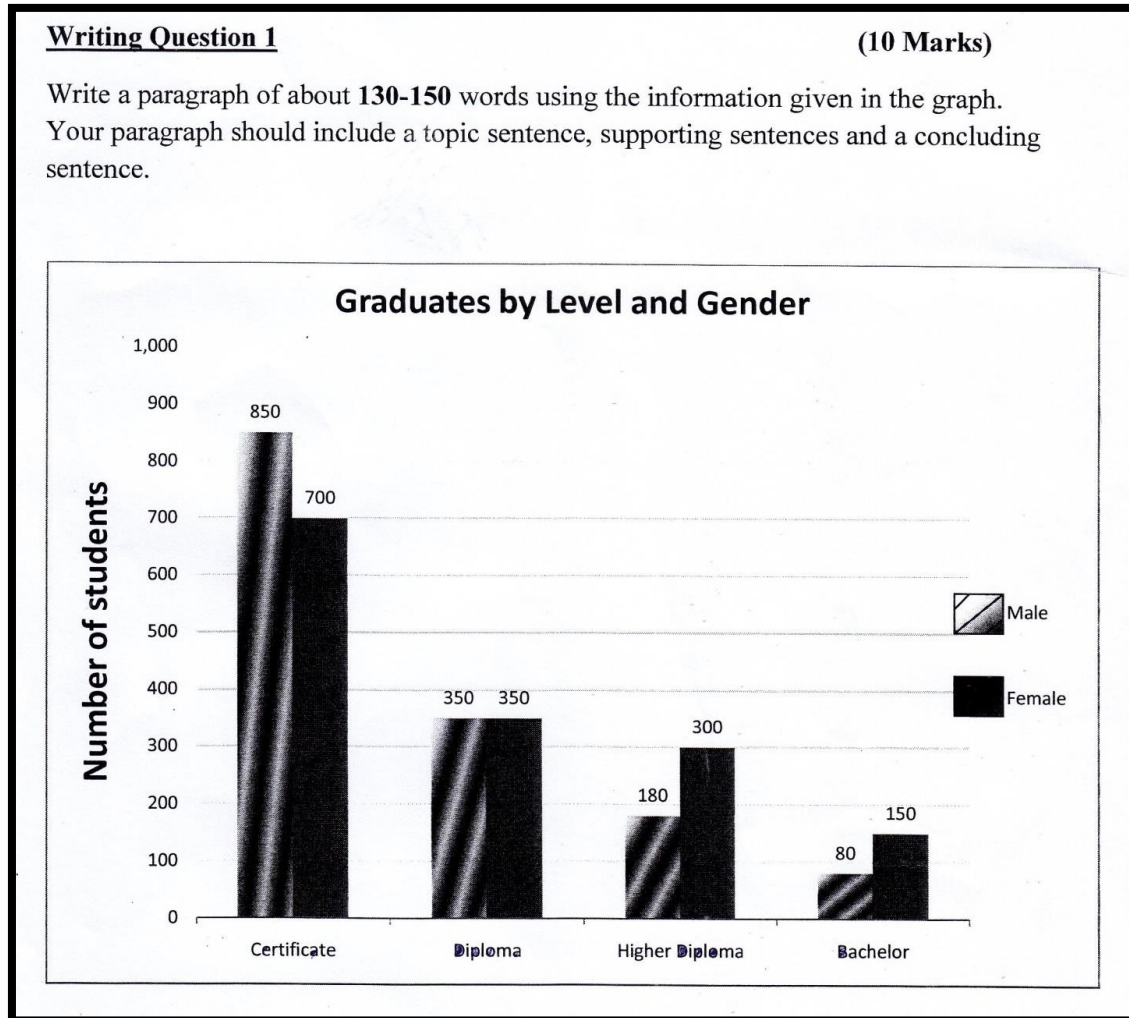
_____

_____

After the second draft, re-read and revise it. Now you can give it to your teacher for feedback. With the teacher's feedback, be ready to improve your text. After improving your text with the teacher's comments and suggestions, this can be regarded as the last stage of your writing process.

Teacher's oral/ written feedback

_____

_____

_____

Marks: _____

Write your third draft. (Use a separate sheet of paper)

_____

_____

_____

Be the Editor

Following is an answer written by a student to a question based on a bar graph in an examination. It has some grammatical errors. Work with a partner, identify the mistakes and improve the text.
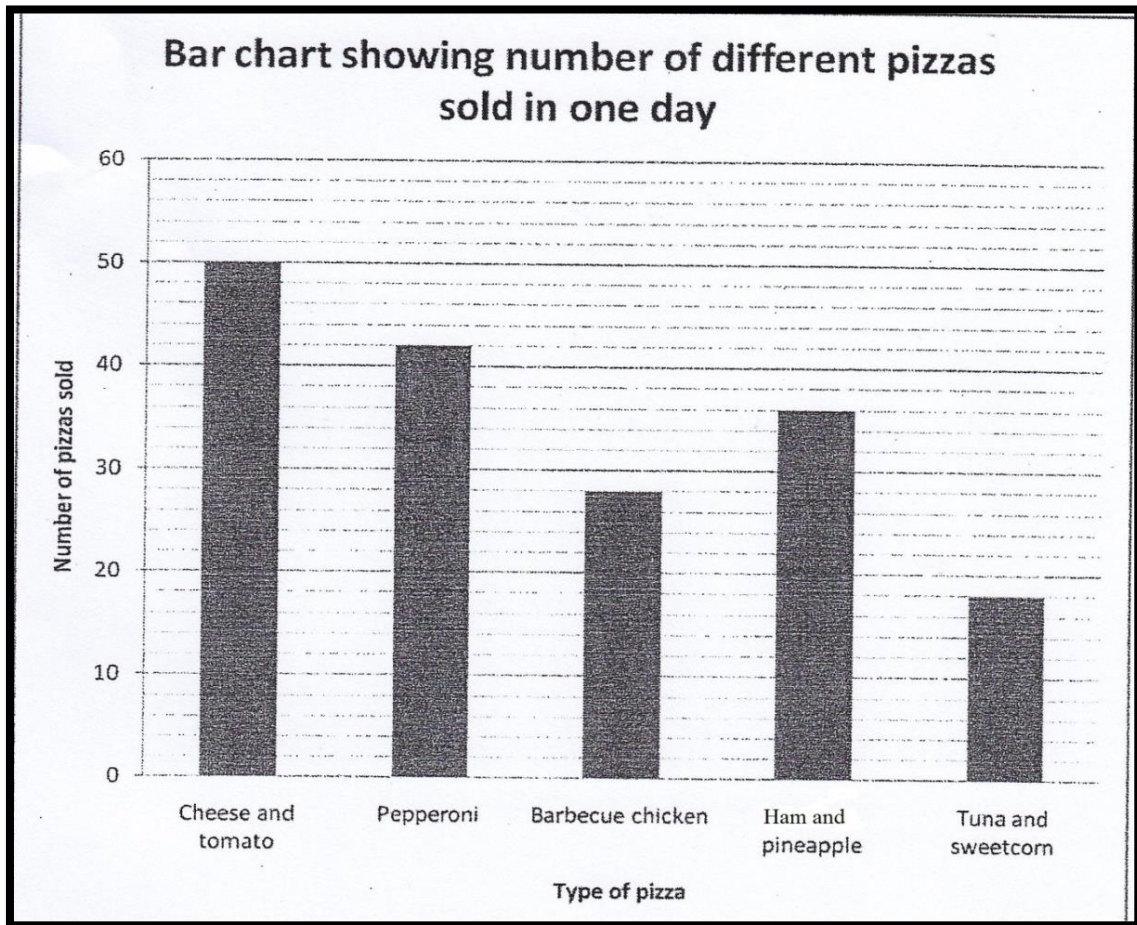

Writing Question 1   **(10 Marks)**

Write a paragraph of about **130-150** words using the information given in the graph. Your paragraph should include a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

Graduates by Level and Gender

(Author's data, 2014)

Writing Question 1

thes bar groph shoa the graduates by level
and gendor, in the X-axis the namber of
students, in the Y-axis the ~~defrintservittent~~
deqve, the hayst is certificate is Male
it is 850 person but ih female it is 700.
it is, the Male incresd and female decresd.
the loest is bachelor in thes graph, the
Male is 80 but female is 150, her the
female incresd than male, in the diploma
and Higher diploma it is big defrent
the diploma is same theing male and
female but ih Higher diplomma decrese
the namber of male but ih female it
smoll defreints it 50 pepole only

More practice activities. Follow the same procedure as described above for each
paragraph.

Bar graph 6: Write a paragraph describing bar graph given below.

Bar chart showing number of different pizzas sold in one day

Write a paragraph of about 150 words using the information in the graph. Write topic sentence, supporting ideas and a concluding sentence.

Reasons for studying according to age

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CHAPTER 7

DESCRIBING A PROCESS

In this chapter, you will study how to describe or explain a process of making or doing something such as cooking rice or doing an experiment in a lab. When you describe a process, you should organize the steps according to time order.

Objectives of this chapter

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:
1. Recognise what to include in a topic sentence for a process essay.
2. Study how to use time-order signal words to describe steps in a process.
3. Identify and use signal words useful for giving directions.
4. Write process essays for different academic and social purposes (writing a lab report, how to study for an examination or how to go to a place in your hometown).

Writing: Descriptive writing

Writing strategies: Complete sentences

Grammar: Be verbs; simple present tense; imperative sentences (Open the door/ Do not take this medicine during the daytime), sequence words (first, then, next, after that, finally).

Interaction: Student to student, Student to teacher, pair and group work

What is a process essay?

When you explain how to do something or how something happens, you use a process to talk about the steps or events. A process paragraph is a group of sentences that talks this sequence. A process paragraph consists of a series of connected steps. The steps must be logical and often chronological order. You can use time words and transition expressions to make the sequence of events or actions clear. Process writing is especially important when you want to explain the steps necessary to complete a task.

1. Giving instructions/ commands
When we give instructions/commands, we can generally use the following structures.

Activity	Thing	Manner
(Verb)	(Object)	(Adverb)
Open	the door	slowly
Read	this passage	carefully
Do	your work	neatly

2. When giving instructions/commands;

1. Join a verb with a suitable noun.
   E.g. Repair this car.
2. Join a verb with a suitable adverb.
   E.g. Walk quickly.
3. Join a verb with a noun or pronoun and a suitable adverb.
   E.g. Telephone the police immediately.

3. Order or sequence is important in instructions
   A. We can use sequence words as follows
      How to open a door?
      First, insert the key in the keyhole.
      Then, turn the key.
      Now, open the door.

Study the following sequence words			
First	Secondly	Eventually	Firstly
Subsequently	Finally	First of all	Next
Last of all	To begin with	After that	Then
At the same time/simultaneously			

4. Imperative sentences: Imperative sentence has no subject. The implied subject is YOU.

   For negative imperative sentence, use DO + NOT + Base form of the verb
   E.g., Don't eat too much sugar.

Read the important instructions extracted from a Telephone user manual and Write PI for positive imperative and NI for negative imperative against each instruction below.

1. Follow all warnings and instructions marked on the product. _____
2. Unplug this product from the wall outlet before cleaning. _____
3. Do not use liquid cleaner, aerosol cleaners or any chemical cleaning solutions for cleaning. _____
4. Never spill liquid on this product. _____
5. Do not place this product near water. _____
6. Do not place this product on an unstable cart, stand or a table. _____

Process essay structure

A process essay has a classical structure depending only on the amount of the process' steps described:

Introduction

In the introduction, you will have to describe the basic aim of the process leaving out specific details. It is better to provide basic background information in which you can mention the true meaning of this process and its everyday life application. Therefore, the reader will be able to learn in which way he can later apply the knowledge of this process. The thesis statement is always the final sentence of the introduction.

Body

The number of body paragraphs depends on the amount of process stages. Therefore, the body is a guide which explains how to carry out the procedure. Each step or stage should have its specific purpose the reader needs to understand. Moreover, all the stages should to be presented in a logical order making one paragraph for each stage. The stages also should include all the necessary details for the procedure including equipment and the stage's main difficulties.

Conclusion

The conclusion paragraph reveals the result of the process. It is also offers a thesis restatement to reinforce the significance of the procedure.

Read the paragraph below and fill in the blanks with *first, next, then*, or *finally*. Some transitions can be used more than once.

It is easy to make a telephone call if you follow these simple directions. To make a call, _____ you must know the telephone number you are dialing. _____, pick up the receiver and listen to the dial tone. _____, you can start dialing the telephone number. If the person answers it, begin speaking. If an answering machine clicks on, wait for the beep and record your message. _____, place the receiver when you have finished your call.

This is an example of a process paragraph that gives you instructions on how to boil an egg.

The topic sentence

The supporting sentences

How to Boil an Egg

You can cook a perfectly boiled egg for breakfast if you follow these six easy steps. First, get a pot big enough to hold one egg. Then fill the pot 4/5 full with water and put in the egg. Next, turn the heat to high until the pot of water is boiling. Boil the egg in the water for three minutes. Take the egg out of the pot and put it in an egg cup. Now the egg is ready to eat. Enjoy it!

The concluding sentences

(Retrieved from ttp://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/sample/intermediate/unit2/u2_ex1.htm)

How to Replace a Burnt Socket?

When an electrical wall socket is burnt, it is very important that you replace it at the earliest. Below is the description of how to replace a burnt socket but the sentences are not in the correct order. The first step has already been written for you.

Task: (Pair work) - Work with your partner and put the sentences in the correct order by numbering them correctly in the spaces provided.

_____Cut the burnt ends of the wires using the pliers.

_____Remove the burnt socket using the screwdriver.

_____Tighten the screws at both ends of the socket using the drill or the screwdriver.

_____The socket is ready for use.

_____Take the new socket. Measure the screw holes. Make new screw hole using a drill.

_____Connect the cables in the new socket using the screwdriver.

_____Check the flow of electricity in the wires using the tester.

___1___Make certain that the electricity is turned off to the circuit that you are working on.

(Retrieved from Shinas College of Technology, ELC, AY 2015-2016, Sem2 NTW1100)

Write a process essay of about 200-250 words describing the steps of making milkshake.

- Begin your essay with an impressive topic sentence as the one already written
- Use imperative sentences and time order signal words
- Use the information given below as a guide
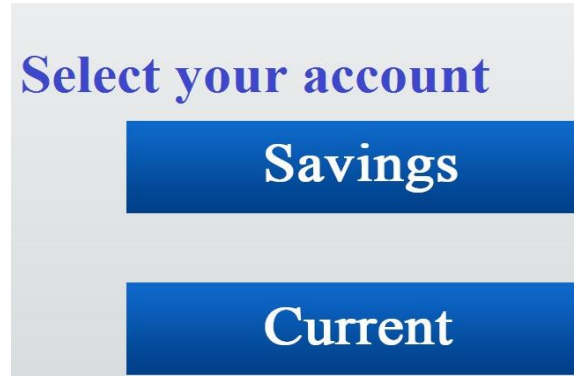- Add any other information you think is necessary

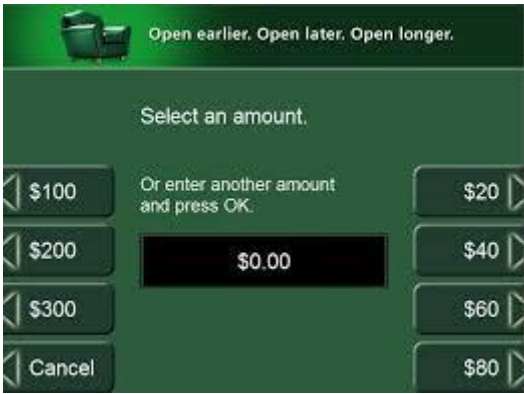| Things you will need	banana / knife / cutting board / milk / sugar / ice / juicer
Verbs *(choose the verbs you need)*	cut put beat pour add mix fold

Milkshake is one of the delicious drinks which we can prepare at home easily. During summer, this kind of drink is highly demanded and if you follow the few steps below, you will be able to make banana milkshake at home and enjoy without going out and paying for things you can make.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The following pictures show the procedure of withdrawing money from an ATM.

Select Language

English -
Others -

Please Enter PIN

＊＊＊＊

Select a transaction

Transfer	Balance Enquiry
Deposit Money	Withdraw Money
Setting	Bill Pay

Select your account

Savings

Current

Write a process essay describing the steps. Include a topic sentence, use the following words: (ATM card, queue, insert, select, pin number, withdraw, press, take back, money) Don't forget to write a concluding sentence for your paragraph. Use a separate paper.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Be the Editor: The following paragraph has some mistakes both grammar and contents. Work with a partner and identify the mistakes and re-write the paragraph. Use the pictures given in the poster below to organize your paragraph in a sequential manner.

Directions: Look at the attached poster. It shows the steps on **how to make Chinese chicken salad.** You can also use words in the pictures. Using the poster as a guide, write a paragraph of 120-150 words about the steps on **how to make Chinese** salad. Be sure to include a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

How to cook ~~chinese~~ salad

Making Chinese _____ Salad is easyed
if you follows the stepss below
you can needed
1- crispy won ton 2, carrot strips
3- Toasted ~~Sen~~ Sesame Seedg, 4 Mandarin Orange
5- green Onian. 6 lettuce 7. Red Cabbage

First you should washed all ingredients.
~~vegetables~~ ~~green~~ ~~Onion~~ ~~the.~~ ~~Slice~~ ~~3~~
Scoened you must chop. Third Should
Put in a large container. Then must
Put some dressing. After that you
Should mix well. Next you must

_____ Put in a serving Plate→ _____
~~you~~ ~~can~~ ~~share~~ ~~with~~ ~~family.~~
Finally, if you follow the steps
above, you can cook a delicious chinese
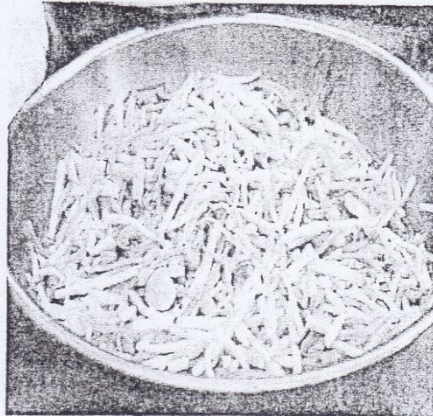chicken Salad, which you can enjoy
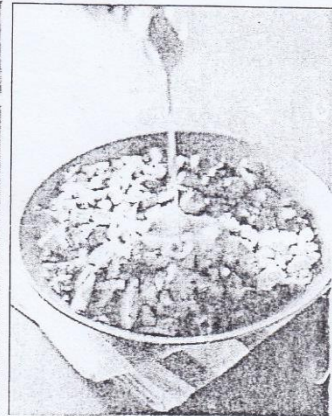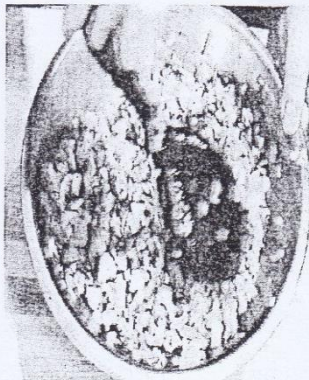with your family.

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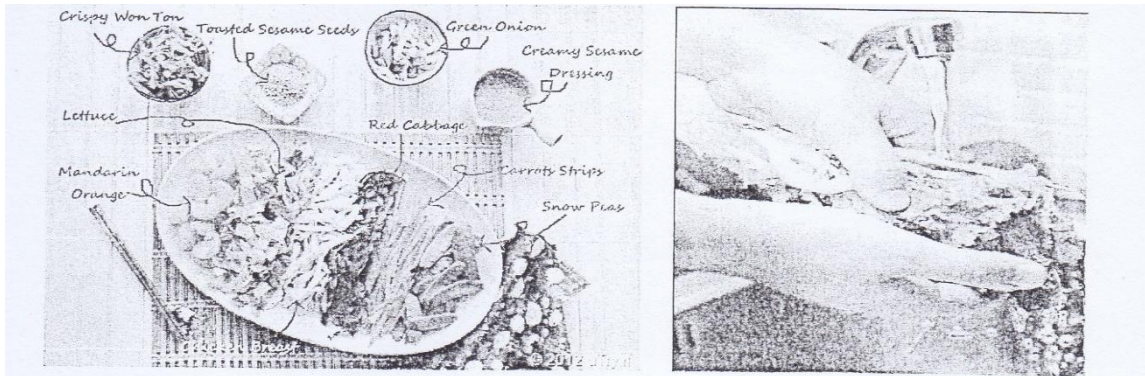
Ingredients

1) wash
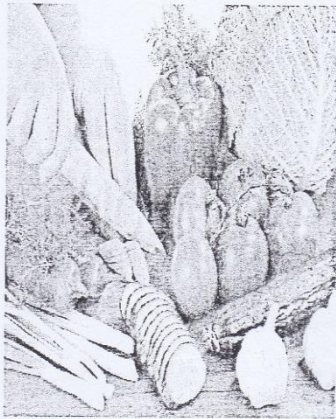
2) chop

3) put in a large container

4) put some dressing

5) mix well

6) put in a serving plate

7) share

More activities for practice writing process paragraphs. Follow the same procedure as described above. Don't forget to include a topic sentence, supporting details and a conclusion.

1. Write a process paragraph on how to succeed at a job interview.
2. Explain the process of getting a driver's license.
3. How to recharge your mobile phone using Ooredoo phone Cards.
4. How to make Omani 'Halwa' (Halwa is an Omani traditional dissert which is made using flour, eggs, sugar, water, ghee, saffron, cardamom, nuts and rose water).
5. How to pot a plant?

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	Checklist for process essays: Mark "Yes" or "No" in the space provided	Yes	No
	Content check		
1	Is there a topic sentence that contains a clear topic and controlling ideas?		
2	Are all the sentences about the topic?		
3	Are all the steps in the process in logical order?		
4	Are all the steps in the process present?		
5	Are signal words/transitions used in the process essay?		
6	If 'Yes' for number 4, are they used correctly?		
	Language and grammar check		
7	Does each sentence have a subject and a verb?		
8	Are descriptive adjectives included in the sentences?		
9	Are different words used instead of repeating the same word too often?		
10	Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?		
11	Does each sentence end with punctuation?		
12	If the essay has any proper nouns, do they begin with capital letters?		

(Adapted from scc.losrios.edu/~thomasb/paragraph-essay-checklist.pdf)

Teacher's oral/ written

_____

_____

_____

Marks: _____

APPENDIX J: ETHICAL CLEARANCE DOCUMENTATION

i)   **Student letter of consent**

<div style="border:1px solid">

Participant consent form

Background Information

Title and researcher

The title of this research is **Academic writing issues of foundation level college students: A case study of Omani students.** My name is **Sarath Withanarachchi Samaranayake** from the **University of South Africa**, Department of **Linguistics.**

Reason for the research

I am studying for my **doctoral degree in linguistics** and I am collecting data from participants to enable me to better understand how I can help foundation level students to improve their academic writing proficiency.

Details of participation

The research involves, pretest, research instrument (use process genre approach to deliver context-specific materials) Mid-Semester and Level-Exit examination scores to determine whether the process genre approach had an impact on the performance in an examination setting. Please feel free to ask questions now if you have any.

Consent statement

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the research at any time, without giving any reason.
2. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
3. I understand that there are no risks involved in the participation of this study.
4. All questions that I have about the research have been satisfactorily answered.

I agree to participate.

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's name: _____

Email address: _____

Tick the box if you would like to receive the summary of the results by email:

Email: _____   Date: _____

</div>

ii)   Letter to the Dean of Shinas College

Sarath W. Samaranayake,
English Language Centre
Shinas College of Technology
P.O Box 77
P.C 324
AL-Aqur, Shinas.
23. 02. 2014.

The Dean,
Shinas College of Technology.

Dear Sir,

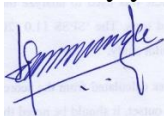**Requesting permission to conduct a research with Level 3 students**

I am planning to conduct research on the following topic "Academic writing issues of foundation level college students: A case study of Omani students". I am focusing on the writing difficulties experienced by foundation level students (Level 3) and want to investigate the effects of the process genre approach in enhancing writing proficiency that will help students to perform better in examination settings. The results will hopefully provide new insights into the writing problems that Foundation level students experience and could possibly be used to recommend new teaching practises in EFS writing classes.

For my study, I need four groups (two experimental and two control) consisting of 120 students in total. Therefore, I hereby request permission to conduct my study with students attending Shinas College. The research will be conducted at agreed upon times that suit both the participants and the college so that it will not interfere with the normal academic programme.

I am conducting this research as a part of my doctoral degree for which I am registered at the University of South Africa (UNISA). Should you require more information, you are welcome to contact my supervisor Dr Carien Wilsenach (E-mail: wilseac@unisa.ac.za; Tel:+27-12-4296045). My proposal which was submitted on the topic stated above has been accepted by the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at UNISA.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you.
Sincerely yours,

Sarath W. Samaranayake

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iii)   Ethical approval certificate – University of South Africa

UNISA university of south africa

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
03 March 2014

Ref: AL_SWS4_2014

Mr SW Samaranayake
Shinas College of Technology
Al-Agar
PO Box 77
PC 324 Shinas
OMAN

Dear Mr Samaranayake

Registered D Litt et Phil student: Mr Samaranayake (42101034)

Proposed title:
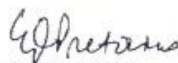**Academic writing issues of foundation level students: A case study of Omani students**

The Ethics subcommittee of the Department of Linguistics hereby approves your proposed research study and your abidance with ethical principles and procedures, as set out in the **Research Proposal Ethical Clearance Form** in Appendix 6 of MLINALL Tutorial Letter 2013, submitted to the subcommittee on 27 February 2014.

- The approval applies strictly to the protocols as stipulated in your application form.
- Should any changes in the protocol be deemed necessary during the proposed study, then you must apply for approval of these changes to the Linguistics Ethics subcommittee.

The date of the approval letter indicates the first date that the project may officially be started.

The Linguistics Ethics subcommittee wishes you well with your research study. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Prof EJ Pretorius
Chair: Higher Degrees Committee and Ethics subcommittee
Department of Linguistics

Sample 1

Causes and effects of living in a city rather than living in a village.

Living in a big city is a dream of most people due' to a number of reasons. However, living in a big city has also some effects. ~~too~~. In this essay, I will discuss ~~both the~~ causes and _{two} effects of living in a big city rather than living in a village. The first reason why most people want to live in a city is that a city ~~of~~ has more facilities than a village has. In a city, one may easily find good schools to study ~~with ease~~ and a number of ways to enjoy. ~~because~~ there are many cinemas, parks and sports clubs unlike in a village. In most villages, we do not find them. So people do not have many ways to enjoy life when they are free. In a city, we have better schools with more facilities to study some subject like science ^{and English} ~~because most of~~ most qualited teachers teach in city schools. Another reason why most people like to live in a city is that they find transport facilities to travel from one place to another ~~using~~ easily. In a city, there are different modes of ~~tran~~ transport such as buses, trains _{and} taxies. ~~However~~

Last reason is for jobs. It is easy to find jobs in cities rather than in villages because most famous companies _{and} goverment ~~building~~ ministries and are located in cities. The three reasons ~~are~~ mentioned above may be the main why most people want to live in a city. ~~However,~~ there are several effects of living in a city. I will describe

two reasons below.

First one is the traffic. ~~Most~~ when everyone goes to the city, they want to buy a car ~~so~~ and as a result, the city ~~tre~~. gets crowded with people as well as different kinds of vehizles. Why there more vehizles mean they release more carbon dioxide and it pollute the air. Air pollution has become a great problem of many cities in the world nowadays.

The second effect is the housing problem. When the population goes up, there should be more houses for them to live in. ~~come~~ Building more houses means : cutting down more trees and cleaning more spaces. This will reduce the land available in cities. As a result of this, the price of lands are going up every day.

As you can see, ~~from the causes and effects discussed above in this essay~~, ~~I can conclude that~~ there are several causes and effects of living in a city rather than living in a village : considenre the causes and effects ~~of living~~, you can decide where you want to live in the future.

Sample 2

There are several causes to live in cities rather than in villages. In this essay, I will describe the causes first. The first cause is that cities offer us better facilities than villages. In villages, people don't have jobs but if you live in a city, you can find a job because there are many companies. Next is education. most schools in villages do not have facilities to study subjects like ~~Mat~~ science and English because there are no good teachers. However, in city schools, ~~lot of~~ many good teachers so we can get good education. Another reason why people like to go to cities for enjoy because there are cinema, parks, beeches. but in villages, no cinema, no beaches. As a result, people in villages, cannot enjoy.

Now I will talk about the effects of living in cities rather than in villages. the first effect is that our life is busy. You have to work hard. Sometimes weekends because you need ~~more~~ lot of money to live in a city. Another reason is more people live in apartments because in cities, housing is a big problem. A lot of pollusion is a big problem in cities so people will be not heathy all the time.

In short, I think living in cities is better than living in village if you want a modern life.

Sample 3

There are several causes and effects of living in cities rather than in villages. First of all. In the cities you have *more* chances to find beter jobs and many jobs while in the villages there, *are* Just a few jobs. Secondly, the transportation. The transportation in the cities *are* better than in the villages. In the cities, you can find easy and comforiabel transport such as bus. sub-way and trains. Thirdly, fashnable shopps. In the cities, there are many shopps that sell fashnable clothes but in the villages, there is now. Now, let me talk about the effects of living in the cities. The cities are big, noysy and crowdy. where ever you go in the cities, you find alot of People so you can't move easily because *everyone* push you, and the cities are so noisy unlike the villages. Another effect is the Polushion. The cities are more polushion than the villages

As you can see, there are some causes and effects of living in cities rather than in villages.

Sample 4

A causes-effect essay about learning English (assignment from experimental group)

There are several reasons why I am learning English. First, I learn English for communication. ~~For example~~ becouse, English is an international language and it is used almost in any country in the world. Also, I learn English to use internet to search for information. So I can get more and more information on any subject. Moreover, I need it to understand different cultures and people becoase, there are many cultures in the world.

Second, I learn English for my education. When I learn English, I can read and understand subject matters easily. Learning English is important becaase many books on subjects such as Engineering, Business studies ~~and it~~ are in English. If I knows English, I can pursue higher education in my chosen field.

Third reason, I learn English becouse it helps me for my future work. If I have language skills, I can find a job easy. Also, I can use English in my work place. If my job is about business, I can communicate with customers successfully.

Finally, I need it for travelling. For example, I can visit any coutry because communication will not be a barrier. It is make friends with foreigners. Also, I can migrate to a European country with ease.

As you can see from the reasons above, learning English is very important for our life becouse it makes our life easy. So I recommend everyone to learn English.

APPENDIX L: STUDENTS' WRITING SAMPLES EXTRACTED FROM LEE (CONTROL GROUP).

Sample 1

There are several causes and effects of living in cities rathe then in villages.

First, I will write causes. The first causes in that but bill city. Then is that connct prentes and visit my avancl and aunt. Then is that visit frinds and visit the mall

Now, I will write effects. The first effects love prentes. Secend effects is that love birnds. Then finlly effcts tme time.

As you can see, The paragraph about of living in cities rather than in villages. You sould live in your cities.

Sample 2

There are many causes and effects of living in cities rather than in villages. First of all, the cities is big and the villages is small. However, in cities we can have alot of different jobs but, in the villages 4 or 5 jobs only. There are many and big market in cities. Also, we have ~~hospital~~ many hospital ~~and~~ alot of garden, and alot of houses. But in villages there is 1 hospital, 1 garden and 10 or 20 houses only. On the other hand in cities there are many and alot of big houses. There are different of people in cities but in villages there are similer. Also, there are alots of rodes and big car in the cities. On the village only 1 rodes. Finally, There are some causes and effects of living in cities rather than villages.

Sample 3

- There are many causes and effects of living in cities rather than in villages. First of all, often the cities beutiful and clean, in cities polition maur than the villages becased in citty there are many cars and many people, but in villages, don't maur cars and ~~not~~ be don't live many people. Second, in citey the weather often not good but in villages the weathe ~~twice~~ nice becaed there are many trug ~~and~~ third, in the ~~ff~~ cities ther are many factores and many automatiue. Thir is effect in people in cities but in village don't have factores. in citing many peaply don't live in cities becaed thies effects and causes. becoud there are amny jobs in cities bus in villages don't many jobs and don't many people. ~~B~~ often the people of villages work in farmse. ~~of~~ ~~As way~~ As you can see the some people like live in cities and some people like live in villages

Sample 4

the cause living cities rather than in villages.

There are several causes living cities rather than in villages. the first causes the cities have many servies For example so education place school, college, universties when people need study or also clinic, hasptiul also places for care for example clinic, les and hosptial. the second causes in cities find any jobs but in village is very diffcult because the cities have many bulidings for work. also the cities have technolgy such as Internet Internet all people use for many thing but in village is very diffcult to get it. Morever the cities have entertaniment place for like cinema, garden and mall. the village is not safe because near from mountain also bad weathe and does not have protection way but in the cities have many ways to protect. the cities have many subermaket and malls for buy any thing like clothes, food, games and drink but in village has alitlle subermaket also far from him house. Next in the cities have Tv and computer are good qualities but in village has some problem to get

things. finally the people would like to live in cities because the life is very easy.