



An integrated approach to enhancing prospective English language teachers' writing skills

Recep Şahin Arslan^a *

^a Pamukkale University, Faculty of Education, Department of English Language Teaching, Denizli 20070, Turkey

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Abstract

This study reports on the experience of a group of pre-service teachers of English in a compulsory writing course in the preparatory program of an English language teaching department in the Turkish context. This study specifically attempts to investigate to what extent the writing course contributes to the acquisition of basic conventions of written discourse in English when prospective teachers of English are involved in an extensive writing practice which is based upon integration of product, process and genre based approaches to writing. The study lasted for a period of 28 weeks with fifty-nine pre-service teachers of English who participated in the study. The participants studied the basic genre types which included expository writing such as classification, process, argumentation, opinion, cause and effect, compare and contrast, and narrative paragraphs and essays. The participants specifically received instruction as to the basic constituents of paragraph and essays writing; namely, organization, process, unity, coherence, word choice, language use, grammar, and mechanics which were further put into 49 observable competencies. Data were collected through an analytic assessment rubric applied to participants' pre-study and post-study essays. In addition, participants were distributed a pre-study and a post-study self-perception questionnaire in order to evaluate any possible improvements in their writing competence. The results of the study suggest that exposing pre-service teachers of English to various genres by involving them in an extensive writing practice adds to their writing competency positively in learning the process of writing practice, organizing the text, including relevant content in the text, using language appropriately, producing correct grammar, coming up with relevant vocabulary, and following correct mechanical conventions.

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1. Introduction

Producing an effective piece of written work in English may be relatively a weak language skill on the part of prospective teachers of English in Turkey when compared with the acquisition of grammar and vocabulary knowledge in English (Aydın & Başöz, 2010). One of the major reasons for failing to produce an effective piece of written work in English may be closely related to student teachers' background education. Since central foreign language university entrance exams in Turkey focus on testing grammar, vocabulary, translation and reading skill, especially writing skills may get ignored in English language teaching programs in state schools in Turkey as 'a backwash effect' of this exam (Hughes, 2003). Hence, high school graduates who are aiming at majoring in English at tertiary level ELT program are likely to commence English departments with major weaknesses in writing in English. However, competency in writing is a requirement for prospective language teachers for their academic and future professional lives as English language teachers and this particular study aims to

* Recep Şahin Arslan Tel.: +90-258-296-1030
E-mail address: receparslan@hotmail.com

investigate and also seek ways to improve prospective English language teachers' writing in English through an intensive writing program based on integration of product, process and genre approaches.

1.1. Literature review

Basically three common views have shaped the nature of writing in English: writing which is viewed as product, as process or as genre or writing with “focus on form, focus on the writer, and focus on the reader” (Tribble, 1996, p. 5), respectively. Emergence of a new way of teaching writing does not necessarily mean ignorance or disappearance of the early ones (Kroll, 2001). In fact, writing simply defined as “clear, fluent, and effective communication of ideas” (Raimes, 1983, p. 6) or composing “a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing” (Nunan, 1999, p. 271) requires “learning a new set of cognitive and social relations” and entails writers to consider such “questions of social role, power, and the appropriate use of language” (Tribble, 1996, pp. 12-14). Writing practices that merely focus on production of grammatically well-formed texts may not reflect the exact nature of writing as a communicative event. It has also to be kept in mind that producing an effective piece of writing takes time and goes through several stages. To this end all these varying views can be integrated in a writing course, complementing each other rather than replacing each one.

A closer look at the basic features which are contained in these varying views can illuminate how the nature of writing practice can change. In a product-based view of writing, due emphasis is given to correctness in the finished product and the main focus is on the end product with correct language and mechanics. Therefore writing practice with such a view will attempt to “instill notions of correctness and conformity” (Tribble, 1996, p. 37). In such an approach, writing skill requires knowledge of the target language structures or learner's grammatical knowledge and students also develop their writing through the study of texts offered by the writing teacher through controlled or guided writing activities and transfer these patterns to their written work (Hyland, 2003). Additionally, product-based approach puts special emphasis on the end product with special emphasis to correctness in writing; namely, using verbs, articles, prepositions, pronouns, tenses, simple and complex grammatical structures correctly, as well as using spelling, punctuation, and capitalization correctly (Tribble, 1996; Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003). However, such a view ignores reader(s), the process of writing, coherent or relevant content in the text, and also writers' personal knowledge as well as text's social context (Badger & White, 2000), all of which receive due attention in a process view or a genre-based view.

A process approach to writing attempts to make up the limitations inherent in a product-based approach, focusing “on the writer as an independent producer of texts” and puts emphasis “on a cycle of writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data to the publication of a finished text” (Tribble, 1996, p. 37; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Harmer, 2004). In a process approach emphasis is on the ‘process’ rather than the ‘product’ (Matsuda, 2003) and writing seen as process is not fixed to a limited time but takes time and involves brainstorming, getting ideas, getting started, narrowing a topic, making an outline/plan of writing drafts, receiving and giving feedback, revising, and editing until the text is complete or published (Tribble, 1996; Hyland, 2003; Harmer, 2004). There is also a need to focus on “the ways in which writers and texts need to interact with readers” (Tribble, 1996, p. 37) and the purpose and social context of writing need to be considered when writing (Badger & White, 2000), which a process approach to writing may ignore but a genre based view considers.

A genre based approach follows the conventions of genre as the writer produces the text for a specific reader(s) in order to achieve a purpose to communicate her message (Swales, 1990). In a

genre based writing, focus is on ‘discourse’ and ‘context’ of language in a text and writing is viewed “as an essentially social activity in which texts are written to do things, the assumption being that if the reader cannot recognize the purpose of a text, communication will not be successful” (Tribble, 1996, p. 37). Therefore, the focus in genre approaches to writing is on the ‘reader’. Tribble (1996, p. 46) argues that “... approaches which focus on the reader emphasize the constraints of form and content that have to be recognized when a writer attempts to match a text to a social purpose, and have come to be associated with the notion of genre.” According to Swales (1990, p. 58) “[a] genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes.” In genre approaches to writing students improve their writing skill through sample texts as they analyze common genre and then produce similar texts by following the conventions of specific text types (Hyland, 2003). Effective writing encompasses consideration of the purpose (the reason for writing) of writing and also the audience (the reader (s) for this piece of writing as genre-based writing requires student writers to ask questions as to why they are writing and also who will read their writing). Furthermore, effective writing entails effective organization of texts in line with a specific genre; namely, organization of paragraphs and essays with relevant topic and support and also with cohesion and coherence (Harmer, 2004). The organization of a written text is therefore related to “the layout, or physical organization on the page, of conventional texts ... the ways in which texts are organized as a result of the social functions they fulfill ... relationships between clauses and clause complexes within written texts, irrespective of the purpose for which they were written” (Tribble, 1996, p. 23). As these elements are closely linked to organization, having a clear purpose for writing, writing with an awareness of the reader, focusing on the main idea throughout writing, presenting new ideas that make up of content (relevance, clarity, originality, logic, etc.) are also of high importance. Word choice is also linked to relevant content and requires using appropriate word forms and making accurate and powerful word choice. In addition, student writers need to use language appropriately as well: they need to consider sentence structures, sentence boundaries, and stylistic choices by avoiding sentence fragments, comma splices and fused sentences, but using subordination, sentence variety, parallelism, misused modifiers, dangling modifiers, subject-verb agreement, etc. correctly. Student writers also need to use relevant language style (e.g. formal, informal) and a variety of sentence types. A writing practice in a non-native setting can incorporate the basic elements contained in all these varying views so that student writers involved in such a practice learn to produce effective written texts.

Production of an effective piece of writing depends upon careful consideration of a number of basic constituents of writing; namely, content, organization, language use, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics which need to be integrated into writing basic paragraph and essay types (Harmer, 2004; Raimes, 1983). When student teachers are offered practice opportunities to write by considering such basic elements in their writing, they will not be able to produce only grammatically well-formed texts but they will also compose coherent written texts in line with social conventions. A pre-service English teacher is to develop skills in transferring these basic constituents into their writing since any one component that is missing in the text affects the total quality of writing. Student writers, therefore, need mastery in basic rhetoric; namely, such types of paragraphs and essays as exposition, examples, contrast, narration, description, process, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, argumentation, persuasion, classification, definition, etc. (Smalley, Ruetten & Kozyrev, 2001). Each type has its own genre which student writers need to be conversant with. Martin (1989) cited in Tribble (1996, p.48) uses the term “communicative purpose” and gives “REPORT (impersonal account of facts), DESCRIPTION (personal account of imagined or factual events and phenomena, which are largely unchallengeable), RECOUNT (stories about the writer’s own experiences), and PROCEDURE (objective accounts of processes taking place in the world around the writer which generalize

experience” (p. 48) as the core or factual genres (Hyland, 1996). Tribble (1996, p.85) also provides a list of rhetorical modes such as exposition, examples, process, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, division and classification, description, narration, argumentation and persuasion student writers are expected to develop mastery in learning to relate “language system knowledge to context knowledge.” Assuming an ‘intellectual/rhetorical approach’, writing courses can be based upon imitation of basic conventions of specific texts (Tribble, 1996). However, Tribble (1996, p.85) points out that according to “the social/genre approach” students can be encouraged “to discover how their own specific discourse communities function and how this affects the way in which members of that community write” through analysis of academic journals, textbooks and students’ examinations which can be “analysed, imitated, and, as the learner becomes more proficient, may well be challenged and transformed.” Similarly, Hyland (1996) stresses the importance of genre study as “it incorporates discourse and contextual aspects of language use that may be neglected when attending to structures, functions, or processes alone” (p. 18). Textbooks, journals, magazines and newspapers offer a large sample of paragraphs and essays written in line with certain genres which student writers can study in regard to style (organisation and typical structure), purpose (context), content included and language used in each text type as Swales (1990, p. 58) states “[i]n addition to purpose, exemplars of genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.” Integrating the features of both ‘intellectual/rhetorical approach’ and ‘social/genre approach’ (Tribble, 1996, p.84) into process and product approaches, student writers can be encouraged to produce well-formed texts considering the features of a specific genre, which takes place along a process after having analyzed a specific genre.

As part of the process of writing, written work is likely to be more effective provided that it receives feedback and assessment. Holistic and analytic assessment techniques can be used to this end. While holistic assessment can offer writers general ideas about their writing performance under general categories, analytic assessment can offer deeper insights into specifics of the basic categories based upon “... separate qualitative judgments on a limited number of properties or *criteria* ... usually *preset*, that is, they are nominated in advance. Each criterion is used for appraising each student’s work” (Sadler, 2009, p. 1). Analytic assessment is common among writing specialists since Weigle (2002, p. 114) states that this form of assessment offers “more detailed information about a test taker’s performance in different aspects of writing”. Specialists like Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, & Hughey (1981) and Tribble (1996), and also Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2011) developed and used analytic assessment scales. Jacobs, et al. (1981, p. 30) came up with five aspects of writing in the field of L2 writing: (Content (13-30 points), organization (7-20 points), vocabulary (7-20 points), language use (5-25 points) and mechanics (2-5 points) in terms of such band scales as ‘very poor, fair to poor, good to average and excellent to very good’. Tribble (1996:130-1) offered five major categories for the evaluation of a piece of written work; namely, “Task Fulfillment/Content 0-20; Organization 0-20; Vocabulary 0-20; Language 0-30; and Mechanics 0-10.” In terms of such band scales as ‘inadequate, very poor, fair to poor, good to average and excellent to very good’. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2011) 6+1 Traits of Analytic Writing Assessment Scoring Guide (Rubric) included ‘ideas/content; organization; voice; word choice; sentence fluency; conventions; and presentation’ in terms of band scales such as ‘wow (exceeds expectations); strong (shows control and skill in this trait; many strengths present); competent (on balance, the strengths outweigh the weaknesses; a small amount of revision is needed); developing (strengths and need for revision are about equal; about half-way home); emerging (need for revision outweighs strengths; isolated moments hint at what the writer has in mind); not yet (a bare beginning; writer not yet showing any control). Adopting and applying an analytical assessment rubric can teach prospective

teachers of English the basic conventions of writing which they can also transfer to their future professional lives.

1.2. Research questions

With a major focus on the interaction between the reader and the text and also on the process of writing, integrating product, process and genre approaches can serve towards production of an effective piece of written text. Thus, the study seeks to answer two research questions: 1) What are the basic constituents of an integrated writing program in an ELT department and 2) To what extent can student teachers acquire the basic constituents of writing through an integrated writing program?

2. Method

2.1. Research setting and participants

The study setting is an English language preparatory program in an English Language Teaching Department in Turkey. A convenience sampling method was used to select the participants of the study since fifty-nine prospective teachers of English (41 females and 18 males) were enrolled in the course and all were selected for research purposes. The participants had similar characteristics: they had similar background in English as all came to the department through a central university entrance exam and also all failed in the English proficiency exam administered by the ELT department and they were to attend a compulsory English language program for a period of 28 weeks. The preparatory program focused on the development of four language skills such as reading, speaking, listening and writing as well as grammar and vocabulary. As part of the compulsory English program, the writing course had a four hour schedule each week. The course aimed at teaching expository writing with special focus on expository paragraph and essay types, mainly classification, process, argumentation, opinion, cause and effect, compare, contrast and narration as well as such basic constituents of writing skill as organization, process, unity, coherence, word choice, language use, grammar, and mechanics.

2.2. Instruments

One-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental research design was applied in the study in order to reveal whether the integrated product-process-genre based writing instruction contributed to the development of student teachers' writing skill. Data were collected through a self-assessment questionnaire and also through an analytical assessment rubric applied to participants' essays prior to and also after the program.

In the study two main data collection instruments were used: an analytic assessment scale which was applied to participants' pre-study and post-study essays and a questionnaire which was administered at the beginning and also at the end of the program. Both the pre-study and post-study questionnaires and analytic assessment of essays aimed to investigate the participants' development of writing skill in terms of the basic constituents of writing. The self-assessment questionnaire and the analytic assessment scale were based upon the specific constituents of writing developed from the studies of Tribble (1996), Jacobs, et al. (1981), and Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2011).

The analytic assessment scale was adapted from the works of Tribble (1996), Jacobs, et al. (1981) and Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2011) and included "Content/Ideas, Organization, Vocabulary/ Word Choice, Language Use, and Mechanics/Conventions" as general categories. Essays which were produced by the participants were assessed using an Analytic Assessment Scale for

Written Work (see Appendix A) that displays all the basic constituents and the related scoring for each category.

As another data collection instrument, the questionnaire included 49 items of elements of writing under the basic constituents of writing such as ‘Organization, Content/Ideas, Vocabulary/Word choice, Language Use (Style-Syntax), Grammar, and Conventions (Mechanics) as can be seen in Appendix B. The questionnaire was piloted with a group of 19 freshman students who had passed the screening exam and were exempt from the compulsory preparatory program. The alpha co-efficiency of the pilot questionnaire was .968 (Number of Items 46). The number of items increased from 46 to 49 in the main study. The pre and post questionnaires were distributed to the same 59 students. Alpha reliability test showed that the questionnaire distributed as the pre and post study was highly reliable since the pre-questionnaire had Cronbach's Alpha value of .944 (Number of items: 49) and the post-questionnaire had Cronbach's Alpha co-efficiency of .946 (Number of items: 49). Items in questionnaire were developed in line with the related literature and were later checked by ELT writing specialists for validity purposes.

2.3. Procedure

The study adopted a process approach to producing written texts, integrated with genre and product approaches. This study was also based upon integration of both ‘the intellectual/rhetorical approach’ and ‘the social/genre approach’ (Tribble, 1996) as the specific texts were not imitated only but analyzed in order to produce similar texts in line with social conventions. The participants first learned the basic constituents of paragraph writing for a period of 14 weeks (the fall term) and then the second term (spring term) courses focused on essay writing for another 14 weeks. The courses started with an analysis of authentic texts written in line with specific genres, followed by teaching the participants basic conventions of that piece of genre and then asking them to produce similar texts on their own. The first stage of the study included analysis of different paragraphs and essays such as giving instructions, description of operations or technical processes, narration of events, argumentative writing or opinion essays taken from textbooks, newspapers and magazines. First, the course instructor offered sample paragraphs and essays which were analyzed by the participants in the classroom. Further, the participants were encouraged to get and study similar paragraphs and essays on their own, some of which were presented by the participants in the classroom as well. Having learned the basic conventions of a specific type of paragraph or essay such as classification, process, argumentation, opinion, cause and effect, compare, contrast and narration as well as such basic constituents of writing skill as organization, process, unity, coherence, word choice, language use, grammar, and mechanics through classroom instruction and analysis of sample texts, the participants were asked to produce their own texts. Writing a text took place along a process as they had to write several drafts until the text was composed in line with the basic elements of writing. Each draft was reviewed by the course instructor and also by another peer. It was compulsory to pair up with another peer and each participant was to give and get feedback from each other. Peer feedback was based upon a rubric (see Appendix A) developed and used by the course instructor to evaluate student writers’ written text. The course instructor informed the participants of the basic conventions of genres and asked them to consider these while giving feedback. In some cases each text had to be written and revised several times based upon teacher and peer feedback. Table 1 shows the basic elements writing courses included in the study and Table 2 displays the basic stages the study was based upon.

Table 1. Basic constituents of an integrated approach to writing

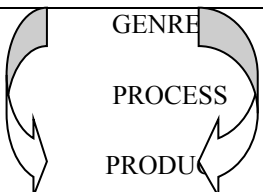
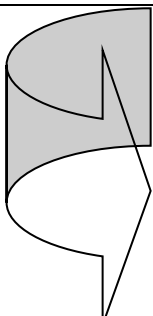
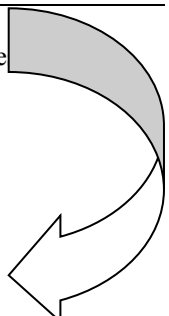
	GENRE	↔	Purpose-Reader-Context-Discourse-Social Conventions-Style
	PROCESS	↔	Drafts-Feedback-Revision-Editing-Publishing
	PRODUCT	↔	Content-Organization-Language Use-Vocabulary-Grammar-Mechanics

Table 2. Basic stages of an integrated approach to writing

	<p>Stage 1-Pre-writing Stage: Modelling (GENRE STUDY) Analysis of sample genres collected from textbooks, newspapers and magazine</p>	
	<p>Stage 2-Writing Stage: (WRITING PROCESS) Writing drafts-teacher and peer feedback-revision-editing according to basic conventions of specific genres</p>	
	<p>Stage 3-Post-writing Stage (PRODUCT) Publishing texts according to basic conventions of genres</p>	

2.4. Data analysis

All quantitative data obtained through an analytic assessment scale were compared and contrasted using statistical analyses. There was no normal distribution for any of the items ($p < 0.05$) and data were analyzed using 2 independent Mann-Whitney-U test and also Wilcoxon sign test (two related samples) as non-parametric tests. On the other hand, questionnaire data were evaluated descriptively in order to see participants' views of the effect of writing practices.

3. Results and discussion

The participants of this particular study attended the writing courses without much prior skill in writing in English due to heavy emphasis of state level English courses on English grammar and vocabulary rather than on productive skills. However, producing an effective piece of written work in English was not far from reality. It took time and was realized along a process; however, all pre-service students were able to achieve a certain writing competency when they were offered chances to write in and outside the classroom. 59 participants who took part in the study compared their writing competency before and after the study and the majority reported poor writing competency before the study while they significantly improved their writing competency at the end of the study: only 10.2 % had reported “good” writing competence before the study but this increased to 61.0 % “good” and 10.2 % “very good” competence after the study while no participant reported ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ writing skill at the end of the study (see Table 3).

Table 3. Self-evaluation of writing competency: pre-study and post-study

	F		%	
	Pre-study	Post-study	Pre-study	Post-study
Very Good	0	6	0	10.2
Good	6	36	10.2	61.0
Average	22	17	37.3	28.8
Weak	21	0	35.6	0
Very poor	10	0	16.9	0
Total	59	59	100.0	100.0

It is important to consider that the writing process may start with a broad topic and end up with publishing or sharing a written work based upon the agreed conventions of writing. The quality of a written work depends upon the time and effort writers put into their written work and also on the realization of the basic conventions of writing along the writing process. When the participants' pre-study and post-study essays were evaluated by writing specialists as to the general components of writing such as organization, content, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, it was seen that the participants were able to improve their writing concerning all of these components as the results of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test show in Table 4.

Table 4. Essay evaluation: pre-study and post-study- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Mean (x) value		Z Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) (P)	
	Pre-study	Post-tudy		
Organisation	10.05	15.64	-5.485 ^a	.000
Content	14.27	21.44	-5.779 ^a	.000
Vocabulary	9.59	15.98	-6.504 ^a	.000
Grammar	8.74	15.16	-6.289 ^a	.000
Mechanics	5.01	8.33	-6.283 ^a	.000
Total	47.61	76.59	-6.620 ^a	.000

Further, the participants were asked to evaluate the basic constituents of each basic category. The participants reported significant changes as to the specific constituents related to the process of writing. As Table 5 displays the participants were significantly better in brainstorming, narrowing a topic, making an outline of writing, writing the first draft, getting feedback, revising, preparing the final draft, and editing as the basic stages of writing process.

Table 5. Constituents of process- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Z Asymp.Sig.	(2-tailed) (P)
Brainstorming	-6.749 ^a	.000
Narrowing a topic	-6.579 ^a	.000
Making an outline of writing	-5.800 ^a	.000
Writing the first draft	-6.078 ^a	.000
Getting feedback	-6.360 ^a	.000
Revising	-6.402 ^a	.000
Preparing the final draft	-6.408 ^a	.000
Editing	-6.123 ^a	.000

In terms of 'content' the participants also improved their writing. There was a significant change in having a clear purpose for writing, writing with an awareness of the reader, focusing on the main idea, and presenting ideas creatively as the specific constituents of 'content' of their writing (see Table 6).

Table 6. Constituents of content- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Z Asymp.Sig.	(2-tailed) (P)
Having a clear purpose for writing	-5.825 ^a	.000
Awareness of the reader	-5.651 ^a	.000
Focusing on the main idea	-5.718 ^a	.000
Presenting creatively ideas	-5.763 ^a	.000

As to ‘organization’ the participants were better at organizing their writing including all the related constituents as can be seen in Table 7. The participants all learned how to organize a text with effective titles, an introduction, support and conclusion for different paragraph and essay types. They were also able to produce coherent texts by presenting unified ideas, connecting ideas logically, providing support with relevant details, and using reminders effectively.

Table 7. Constituents of organisation- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Z Asymp.Sig.	(2-tailed) (P)
Organizing writing	-6.576 ^a	.000
Effective titles	-3.765 ^a	.000
Paragraph topic sentence	-6.415 ^a	.000
Paragraph support sentences	-6.494 ^a	.000
Paragraph conclusion	-6.412 ^a	.000
Thesis statement for an essay	-6.581 ^a	.000
Introduction for an essay	-6.691 ^a	.000
Essay conclusion	-6.747 ^a	.000
Presenting unified ideas	-6.367 ^a	.000
Presenting ideas logically connected	-5.653 ^a	.000
Supporting with relevant details	-6.260 ^a	.000
Presenting ideas coherently	-6.412 ^a	.000
Using transitions effectively	-5.212 ^a	.000
Using reminders effectively	-5.650 ^a	.000

The participants also reported significant improvement in their use of correct, accurate and powerful vocabulary as is seen in Table 8.

Table 8. Constituents of vocabulary- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Z Asymp.Sig.	(2-tailed) (P)
Using correct word form	-4.825 ^a	.000
Making accurate word choice	-5.025 ^a	.000
Making powerful word choice	-4.467 ^a	.000

In terms of language use the participants also improved their writing skills significantly. As can be seen in Table 9, the participants reported that by the end of the study they were able to use relevant language style and produce sentences of various types by writing complex and compound sentences as well as simple sentences. Concerning language use the participants also learnt how to use parallel structures and avoid sentence fragments, run-on sentences and dangling expressions.

Table 9. Constituents of language use- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

	Z Asymp.Sig.	(2-tailed) (P)
Using relevant language style	-5.322 ^a	.000
Using a variety of sentence types	-5.706 ^a	.000
Writing simple sentences	-4.863 ^a	.000
Using parallel structures	-5.580 ^a	.000
Avoiding sentence fragments	-5.851 ^a	.000
Avoiding run-on sentences	-5.523 ^a	.000
Avoiding dangling expressions	-5.607 ^a	.000
Writing compound sentences	-3.961 ^a	.000
Writing complex sentences	-4.228 ^a	.000
Avoiding comma splices	-4.517 ^a	.000

The study results also show a significant difference between the pre-study and post-study results of the participants in terms of specific constituents of ‘grammar’ such as using verbs, articles, prepositions, pronouns, tenses and simple and complex structures, as is displayed in Table 10.

Table 10. Constituents of grammar- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Z Asymp.Sig	(2-tailed) (P)
Using verbs	-2.933 ^a	.003
Using articles	-3.117 ^a	.002
Using prepositions	-3.610 ^a	.000
Using pronouns	-4.213 ^a	.000
Using tenses	-3.144 ^a	.002
Using simple structures	-4.222 ^a	.000
Using complex structures	-4.094 ^a	.000

Concerning ‘mechanics’ the participants reported significant changes in correct punctuation, spelling and use of correct punctuation as well (see Table 11).

Table 11. Constituents of mechanics- Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

	Z Asymp.Sig.	(2-tailed) (P)
Correct Punctuation	-4.841 ^a	.000
Correct Spelling	-3.899 ^a	.000
Correct Capitalization	-3.145 ^a	.002

The study findings may indicate that pre-service teachers of English in non-native teaching settings of English needed support in learning how to teach writing before they commenced their professional lives (Nguyen & Hudson, 2010). This study may also show that non-native student teachers of English can learn how to write in English through an integrated approach to writing. To this end, all the varying views needed to be included in this particular writing course. It should be borne in mind that product-based approaches may contribute to student writers in producing correct grammatical sentences and mechanics of writing by analyzing and imitating sample texts; however, they need to keep in mind that “the examples they read are examples rather than models to be slavishly followed” (Harmer, 2004, p. 29). Harmer (2007) therefore pinpoints that student writers need “knowledge of the

topic, the conventions and style of the genre, and the context in which their writing will be read, as well as by whom” (p. 327). The genre approach included in this particular study had such a purpose and proved to be strong in introducing writers to different discourses through authentic texts. The genre approach may sound strong in considering the social contexts in which different discourses occur; whereas, it may fail to reflect the true nature of writing as writing is a process. With a purpose to alleviate such a possible limitation of genre-based writing, a process approach was also incorporated in the study by engaging the learners actively in the writing process from the beginning to the end similar to Matsuda’s study (2003) with an emphasis on “teaching writing not as product but as process; helping students discover their own voice; allowing students to choose their own topic; providing teacher and peer feedback; encouraging revision and using student writing as the primary text of the course” (p. 67). Our study showed very positive results as the participants were able to improve their writing competency significantly, which was largely due to the process-based view integrated in the study. Several other studies have also shown the positive contribution of a process-based writing. Atay & Kurt (2006, p. 112) advocate a process-based view of writing and defend that students should be given chances “to express their ideas and knowledge in writing from the early stages of education on” to build up their self-confidence. In another process-based study conducted by Akyel and Kamişlı (1997) in Turkey students were able to increase their composition grades significantly by devoting time to pre-writing, planning, pausing and reorganization as a result of a 1.5 semester process-oriented instruction. Archibald’s (2001) study also showed that students improved in discourse organization and argument as a result of an eight week writing program. A process-based writing program can produce more fruitful results if integrated with a genre view of writing. In addition to a process-based orientation this particular study also adopted a genre-based view of writing, since student writers needed to learn basic genre types in order to write better paragraphs and essay. Cumming (2001, p. 8) proposes that writing instruction “should include not only modeling of text forms but also modeling of composing processes and of the socio-cultural purposes and functions that writing in the second language serves.” Flowerdew (2000, p. 375) highlighted the importance of genre study as part of a process of writing since “knowledge of a genre is not an end in itself, but should be regarded as the starting point for helping students to acquire competence in a particular genre.” Similarly, study of basic genres formed the basis of our study along the process of writing, helping the participants to analyze and understand how specific texts are organized, how relevant content is included in the text and also what specific language is used. In a study similar to this study, Weber (2001, p. 20) concluded that genre work can be helpful for student writers “to explore at least some structural characteristics of academic essays and their possible lexical correlates.” All in all, all these varying views seem to contribute to student writers’ competency to a large extent, complementing each other instead of being alternatives as Badger & White (2000, pp. 157-8) defend:

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).

This particular study attempted to highlight and utilize all the benefits of these approaches to the teaching of writing. The courses started with analysis of authentic texts written in line with a specific genre, followed by teaching the participants basic conventions in producing a certain piece of text and then asking them to produce similar texts on their own, which required several drafts, revision, and editing in and outside the classroom. Such an integrated approach was effective in introducing the participants to the basic conventions of writing, in involving them actively in the writing process, and

also in helping them to produce well-organized texts with relevant content, language use, and powerful vocabulary in line with specific genres.

4. Conclusions

Learning to compose an effective piece of writing can be rather difficult unless students are given instruction as to what effective writing involves and also offered practice chances to apply the basic conventions of writing. Any writing program which is merely based upon a certain view may not reflect the true nature of writing. Hence, a writing program that views writing as a production of a piece of text that is realized along a process and that reflects the social conventions expected from a specific genre is likely to secure better success. In this particular study student writers, prospective teachers of English, showed major improvements in all the basic components of writing, producing similar texts on their own as a result of the study of a variety of genres along a process. A major focus on specific genre types may therefore teach student writers how to write in line with the basic conventions of writing. In fact, a prospective teacher of English as well as any student writer can compose socially recognized, coherent and well organized texts through an intensive writing program that attempts to integrate product, process and genre approaches. After graduation these prospective teachers are likely to transfer such competency to their academic and professional lives ready to produce written texts in academic courses and also ready to teach their possible students how to write effective texts as well. In addition, all teachers of English, teacher trainers and materials writers can also consider the basic elements of integrated approach to writing in the language classroom, in teaching how to teach writing, and also in producing writing materials, respectively.

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Appendix A. Analytic assessment scale for written work: Adapted from Tribble (1996), Jacobs, et al. (1981), Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2011)

Area	Criteria	Score
Content/ Ideas	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Excellent to very good treatment of the subject or topic; topic narrow enough; considerable variety of ideas; independent and thorough interpretation of the topic; content relevant to the topic; accurate details; original ideas; clear purpose for writing.	30 -24
	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Adequate treatment of topic; some variety of ideas or argument; some independence of interpretation of the topic; most content relevant to the topic; reasonably accurate detail.	23 -18
	FAIR TO POOR: Treatment of the topic is hardly adequate; little variety of ideas; some irrelevant content; lacking detail.	17 -10
	VERY POOR: Inadequate treatment of the topic; very broad topic; no purpose for	9-

	writing; no variety of ideas or argument; content irrelevant; almost no useful detail.	6
	INADEQUATE: Fails to address the task with any effectiveness. NOT ENOUGH FOR ASSESSMENT	5-0
Organization	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Fluent expression, ideas clearly stated and supported; appropriately organized paragraph(s) or sections; effective introduction, strong support and effective conclusion; logically sequenced (coherence); connectives appropriately used (cohesion).	20 -17
	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Uneven expression, but main ideas stand out; paragraphing or section organization evident; logically sequenced (coherence); some connectives used (cohesion).	16 -12
	FAIR TO POOR: Very uneven expression, ideas difficult to follow; organization does not help reader; logical sequence difficult to follow (coherence); connectives largely absent (cohesion).	11 -8
	VERY POOR: Lacks fluent expression; ideas very difficult to follow; little sense of organization; ineffective introduction, weak support and poor conclusion; no sense of logical sequence (coherence); connectives not used (cohesion).	7-5
	INADEQUATE: Fails to address this aspect of the task with any effectiveness. NOT ENOUGH FOR ASSESSMENT	4-0
Vocabulary/ Word Choice	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Wide range of vocabulary; accurate word/idiom choice and usage; appropriate selection to match register.	20 -17
	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Adequate range of vocabulary; occasional mistakes in word/idiom choice and usage; register not always appropriate.	16 -12
	FAIR TO POOR: Limited range of vocabulary; a noticeable number of mistakes in word/idiom choice and usage; register not always appropriate.	11 -8
	VERY POOR: No range of vocabulary; uncomfortably frequent word/idiom choice and usage; no apparent sense of register.	7-5
	INADEQUATE: Fails to address this aspect of the task with any effectiveness. NOT ENOUGH FOR ASSESSMENT	4-0
Language Use	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Confident handling of appropriate structures, sentences well-built and structures strong and varied; hardly any errors of agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions; meaning never obscured.	20 -17
	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Acceptable grammar- but problems with more complex structures; mostly appropriate structures; some errors on agreement, tense, number, word order, articles.	16 -12
	FAIR TO POOR: Insufficient range of structures with control only shown in simple constructions; frequent errors on agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions; meaning sometimes obscured.	11 -8
	VERY POOR: Major problems with structures- even simple ones; sentences and structures poor, incomplete or awkward; frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions; meaning often obscured.	7-5
	INADEQUATE: Fails to address this aspect of the task with any effectiveness. NOT ENOUGH FOR ASSESSMENT	4-0
Mechanics/ Conventions	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Demonstrates full command of writing conventions such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and layout.	10 -8
	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and layout.	7-5
	FAIR TO POOR: Frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and layout.	4-2
	VERY POOR: Very poor mastery of conventions; full of errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization; layout is distracting. Fails to address this aspect of the task with any effectiveness. NOT ENOUGH FOR ASSESSMENT	1-0

Appendix B. Questionnaire on basic constituents of writing

The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate your writing skill in English.
Would you please tick (√) the best option that fits you for each item below?

1. Gender:

Male Female

2. How would you evaluate your personal competence in writing in English?

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Writing skill	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. How would you evaluate your personal competence in writing in English in the following components of writing skill?

	Very Good	Good	Unsure	Poor	Very Poor
A) Process:					
1) Brainstorming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) Narrowing a topic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) Making an outline/plan of writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) Writing the first draft	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) Receiving and giving feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6) Revising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7) Preparing the final draft	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8) Editing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B) Content:					
9) Having a clear purpose for writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10) Writing with an awareness of the reader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11) Focusing on the main idea throughout writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12) Presenting creatively/new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C) Organization:					
13) Organizing writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14) Writing effective titles;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15) Writing an effective topic sentence for a paragraph	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16) Writing effective support sentences in a paragraph	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17) Writing effective conclusion for a paragraph	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18) Writing an effective thesis statement for an essay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19) Writing an effective introduction for an essay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20) Writing an effective essay conclusion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21) Presenting unified ideas (unity)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22) Presenting ideas logically connected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23) Supporting the topic with relevant details	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24) Presenting ideas coherently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25) Using transitions effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26) Using reminders effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D) Word Choice:					

27) Using correct word forms	0	0	0	0	0
28) Making accurate word choice	0	0	0	0	0
29) Making powerful word choice	0	0	0	0	0
E) Language Use					
30) Using relevant language style (e.g. formal, informal)	0	0	0	0	0
31) Using a variety of sentence types	0	0	0	0	0
32) Writing simple sentences	0	0	0	0	0
33) Writing compound sentences by using <i>and, but, so, nor, for, or</i>	0	0	0	0	0
34) Writing complex sentences using <i>therefore, hence, however, etc.</i>	0	0	0	0	0
35) Using parallel structures	0	0	0	0	0
36) Avoiding sentence fragments	0	0	0	0	0
37) Avoiding run-on sentences	0	0	0	0	0
38) Avoiding dangling expressions	0	0	0	0	0
39) Avoiding comma splices	0	0	0	0	0
F) Grammar:					
40) Using verbs correctly	0	0	0	0	0
41) Using articles correctly	0	0	0	0	0
42) Using prepositions correctly	0	0	0	0	0
43) Using pronouns correctly	0	0	0	0	0
44) Using tenses correctly	0	0	0	0	0
45) Using simple grammatical structures correctly	0	0	0	0	0
46) Using complex grammatical structures correctly	0	0	0	0	0
G) Mechanics:					
47) Using spelling correctly	0	0	0	0	0
48) Using punctuation correctly	0	0	0	0	0
49) Using capitalization correctly	0	0	0	0	0

İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının İngilizce yazma becerilerinin geliştirilmesinde bir karma yaklaşım uygulaması

Öz

İngilizce yazma becerisi edinimi İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının hem lisans hem de mezuniyetleri sonrası mesleki yaşantılarında önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. İyi bir yazma becerisi bir metnin kurgusunu, içeriğini, dil kullanımını, kelime seçimini ve noktalama işaretlerinin etkin kullanımını içeren belirli unsurların edinimini gerekli kılmaktadır. İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının bu unsurları edinebilmeleri farklı yaklaşımlardan oluşan karma bir İngilizce programının izlenmesi ve bu doğrultuda yoğun bir yazma uygulaması ile mümkün olabilecektir. Bu çalışmada bir grup İngilizce öğretmen adayının üretim (product), süreç (process) ve türsel (genre) odaklı yazma yaklaşımları ile oluşturulan bir yazma programı sonucu yazma yetilerinin ne kadar geliştiği incelenmektedir. Bir üniversitenin İngiliz Dili Eğitimi İngilizce hazırlık programının zorunlu İngilizce Yazma dersinde 59 öğretmen adayı 28 hafta boyunca süreç, tartışma, sebep, sonuç, karşılaştırma, zıtlık, anlatı (öykü) odaklı yazma türlerinin nasıl yazılacağı konusunda uygulamalı ders almışlardır. Katılımcılar özellikle bu türlerde nasıl yazılacağı ile ilgili kurgu, süreç, bütünlük, içerik, dil kullanımı, kelime seçimi, doğru yapı ve noktalama işaretlerinin kullanımı ile ilgili ayrıntılı çalışma yapmışlardır. Katılımcıların başlangıç ve sonuç makaleleri belirlenen bu unsurlar açısından değerlendirilmiş ve ayrıca katılımcılardan çalışmaya başlamadan önce ve çalışma sonrası kendi yazma becerilerini belirlenen alt unsurlar açısından değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Çalışma sonuçları uygulanan programla öğretmen adaylarının yazmanın temel unsurlarından olan metnin doğru kurgusu, uygun içeriğin oluşturulması, dilin uygun kullanımı, doğru dilbilgisi kurallarının uygulanması, etkin kelime seçimi ve doğru noktalama işaretlerinin kullanımı gibi unsurlarda belirgin bir yeterliliğe ulaştıklarını göstermiştir. Bu çalışma ayrıca yazma becerisinde belirgin bir yeterliliğe ulaşan katılımcıların hem daha sonraki yıllarda akademik yaşantılarında yazma konusunda daha başarılı olacaklarını hem de yazma becerisinin ana unsurlarının neler olduğu ve nasıl öğretileceği konusunda belirgin bir bilgi ve beceri edineceklerini göstermiştir. Bu çalışma yazmayı bir süreç olarak kabul eden ve belirli bir topluluğun beklentileri doğrultusunda metin oluşturmayı hedefleyen karma yaklaşım odaklı yazma programı ile İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının İngilizce paragraf ve makale yazmanın temel unsurlarını edinmede başarı gösterebileceklerini ortaya koymuştur. Tek bir yaklaşım yerine yazma üretimini süreçsel ve türsel yaklaşımlardan yararlanarak oluşturmayı temel edinen karma yazma programları bu çalışmaya benzer şekilde İngilizce yazma öğretimi programlarında uygulanabilir.

Anahtar sözcükler: İngiliz dili eğitimi; İngilizce öğretmen adayları; yazma becerisi

AUTHOR BIODATA

Recep Şahin ARSLAN is an assistant professor in the Department of English Language Teaching at Pamukkale University, Denizli, Turkey. He received his Ph.D. degree from Bristol University, England. His current research interests focus on pre-service English language teachers' education, teaching writing and speaking skills, and teaching young learners English.