

JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

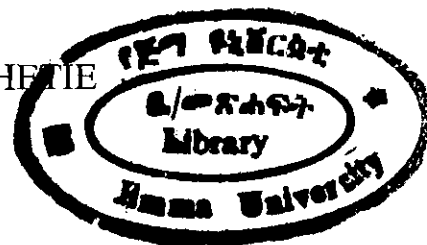
GRADUATE PROGRAMME (MA in TEFL)

INVESTIGATING TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
TIME FACTOR AND THEIR ENGAGEMENTS__IN TEACHING AND
LEARNING ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS: JIMMA PREPARATORY SCHOOL
IN FOCUS.

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
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FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL)

By

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JUNE, 2014

ETHIOPIA

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Investigating Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of the Time factor and Their Engagements _in Teaching and Learning English Writing Skills: Jimma Preparatory school in Focus.

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, not presented for any degree in any Universities, and that all the sources used for it are duly acknowledged.

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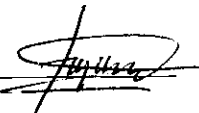
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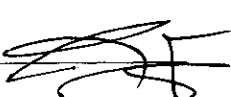
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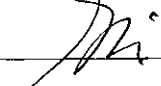
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate students' and teachers' perceptions of the time factor for English writing skills and their writing engagements. The research was conducted in Jimma preparatory school at grade 12 level in the months of March and April, 2006E.C.

The sample size was 10%, 98 students out of 981 students and 5 English teachers. The research method employed was descriptive study with that of qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Instruments for data collection were: Questionnaire, Interview, Classroom observation, and Writing skill syllabus content VS allocated Schedule.

Results of research findings showed that students and teachers had unfavorable perceptions about the writing skills time factor (time allocation) which in turn led them to relegate the textbook and took their own way into cramming exam oriented writing skills subject-matters. Moreover, it was found out that size of syllabus content mismatched with the allocated schedule; and in the classroom writing engagements instead of covering the pre-writing, drafting, and revising stages- the 40 minutes period restricted them to the drafting stage. Above all, the complex, productive and thoughtful process, and time consuming nature of writing skills was not well considered by syllabus designers in getting adequate time allocation, which deterred students' and teachers' writing engagements.

According to the data obtained, 65% of the students reported that time were inadequate for them to complete their classroom writing lessons and the writing syllabus content in the school year. Likewise, 83.3% of the teachers indicated as they found the time allocation was inadequate for classroom practice and to cover the annual syllabus content. With classroom observation, it was seen that the three stages of writing (pre-writing, Drafting, and Revising) were not manageable, and they stopped at the drafting stage. The syllabus content versus time allocation showed just one 40 minutes period was assigned for each of the writing tasks respectively, even to the essay writing.

As a whole, poor perceptions of students' and teachers' of the time factor and inadequate time allocation influenced little engagements to their writing practices.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Writing as Toy (1997) describes, is an “act of cognition,” on an essential activity to objectify and preserve thought, to form relations and manipulate ideas as one makes academic experiences personally and intellectually meaningful. The students’ writing competency plays an important role in their academic performance and achievements. To proceed in their field of studies writing skills ability is an inevitable requirement both to acquire and convey ideas, feelings, knowledge and views. In this regard, students need favorable situation which can help them realize the potential of writing in communication. But, Italo (1999: P.9) states that there seems to be a general tendency among language teachers in Ethiopia to relegate writing to homework for fear of the amount of work and time involved in correcting students’ writings because of the large class size.

To improve the students’ writing ability, there should be ample time to practice their writing, and should be supported by methods that encourage their efforts. As suggested by several authors (Breen, 1987; Skehan 1996; and swales, 1986) there has to be a room for both the instructors and students to grow into; and in this kind of relationship, methods and techniques are facilitating devices. This research inquiry, emanated (emerged) from the researcher’s teaching experience in the practices, questioning the syllabus and the activities designed to be carried out within the schedule, and from discussions made with the English department colleagues.

The research attempts to add some more findings to the writing skill researchers done, so far. In particular, it aims at to add few things to Mohammed Yibre’s research findings (June, 2009, AAU). In his research entitled “An Analysis of the structure of group writing activities in grade 11 English text book,” he analyzed the subject matter of the writing skill tasks and suggested for further research to be done on writing skill tasks. According to many studies in Ethiopia (Dereje, 1990; Taddle, 1990; Italo, 1990) have shown that acquiring the writing skill seems to be laborious and demanding for many Ethiopian students. As a result, students have low writing

ability in relation to what is expected of them. And also, Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) suggested that if learners are likely to develop writing skills, they need to work on writing skill tasks in class under the teachers supervision as well as out of class.

Hence, the researcher believed that, investigating students and teachers' perceptions and practices; and examining the time factor and the syllabus of the writing tasks might contribute something significant to improve the teaching and learning process. In this determination, learning and teaching writing skills seemed time consuming and laborious, which requires students' and teachers' commitment to practices. And to the fact, this research was worth noting and timely to be conducted.

1.2 Statement of the problem

This research was designed to investigate the students' and teachers' perceptions of the time factor and their engagements— in teaching and learning the English writing skills at preparatory schools level. And the writing skill tasks at this level seemed had fallen into difficulties with regard to: The mismatch of tasks and time allotment, and the efforts exerted to induce practices both in the classroom and outside the classroom. According to J. Michael O' Malley (1996), sufficient time is to be given for students to complete their writings. And Lew (1999) argues, it is a dis-service to allow students learning English to write without the close supervision of teachers. And Atkins John(1998, P. 85) suggested that large class sizes which deter teachers from setting and making writing tasks, and the reluctance of teachers to give students the freedom to express themselves in writing. Further, bias of teachers' and students' perceptions of time constraint which distracts them from achieving the expected practices and the writing skills development. As stated by (Free man, 1989; Richards and Numan, 1990; Johnson, 1992) recently the field of EFL has begun to recognize the importance of exploring the cognitive and affective dimensions of how language teachers' thoughts, judgments, and decisions influence the nature of language instruction (Erickson, 1991:26) suggested, examining teachers beliefs is important in that it gives as insight into how language teachers make instructional decisions, choose instructional materials, and select certain instructional practices in line with students' interest. And in our context, the syllabus designed didn't seem to be completed within the given

two 40 minute's periods in a couple of weeks. Writing needs to take time to think, and patience to take time to practice it. Pass Man and Katherine (2007) suggested that "writing is a productive process that can be taught and learnt mostly through practice"

So that, this study attempted to investigate the threats under which the writing tasks seemed had fallen within the two domains which are perceptions of the time factor and their writing practices.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions are the specific objectives turned in the other round to add clarity one on to the other.

1.4.1 What are teachers' and students' perceptions of the time factor in teaching and learning English writing skills at the preparatory schools grade 12 level?

1.4.2 Is the writing tasks schedule appropriate in implementing teaching _learning writing skills at the preparatory schools grade 12 level?

1.4.3 How is the actual engagement of the writing practices in the preparatory schools grade 12 level?

1.4.4 Does the time allow peer correction, whole class, or written correction by teachers?

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General Objective:

It was assumed that the teaching of English writing skills at the preparatory schools level was challenged by: a) shortage of time is against the proper practice of the writing tasks. b) Students' and teachers' perceptions of the time inadequacy deterred their writing activities. Thus, the general objective of this study was, to investigate the students' and teachers' perceptions of the time factor and the time appropriation to their writing practices __in order to bring about some better change in the teaching and learning of the writing skills.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

As stated by Kumaravadivelu (1991), effective teaching and learning develop from the similarity between instructors' and students' perceptions about a subject discussions; otherwise, the teaching –learning practice results in poor learning outcomes. Therefore, the specific objectives which were expected to be met were as follows:

1.4.2.1 To investigate teachers' and students' Perceptions of the Time factor in teaching-learning English writing skills in the Preparatory schools at grade 12 levels.

1.4.2.2 To check the English writing tasks schedule appropriateness in implementing teaching-learning writing skills at the preparatory schools at grade 12 levels.

1.4.2.3 To assess the actual engagement of the writing practices at the Preparatory schools at grade 12 level.

1.4.2.4 To check, if the time is allowing peer correction, whole class, or written correction by teachers.

1.5 Significance of the study

The study is expected to bring about some change in the improvement of the teaching and learning English writing skills. It may provide some information to the curriculum developers and syllabus designers. Especially, the immediate concerned parties_teachers, students, and the

school administration can benefit from the research findings to take appropriate measures to improve the teaching-learning writing practices. And also, it may lead the researchers for further in-depth study.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study was confined to Jimma preparatory school grade 12 levels. It was the only government school in the city. As long as the public and private schools quite differ from government preparatory schools in their facilities and programming they were excluded from the study. It was the time limitation, budget, and means of transport that prohibited the inclusion of government preparatory schools from the distance woredas.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

It can be said that the study had its own limitations such as: a) the degree of conscious concerns on the side of data informants and their careful and responsible acts to their responses. b) Scope of the study was limited to one school for there were no other government preparatory schools nearby. C) Limitations of a novice researcher. d) Short period of research duration.

1.8 Acronyms used and Definitions of Key Terms

1.8.1 Acronyms

CLL; Collaborative Language Learning

EAWS: English Academic Writing Skills

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ENE: English for New Ethiopia

ESL: English as a Second Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

GWA: Group Writing Activities

JPS: Jimma Preparatory School

NGWA: Non Group Writing Activities

TIP: T= Teach, I= Introduce, P= Practice

1.8.2 Definitions

Period: 40 minutes teaching time

Perception: Perception is a process by which a person interprets and organizes events to produce a meaningful experience of the world. Hence, it is an observer' quality, state, capacity, awareness of appreciation of objects, processes or situations in his environment (Brewer, 1999).

Time factor: Time allotted to teach English writing lessons, tasks or activities in a classroom period, or in terms, or in the school year. In our context, it is 40 minutes for a class room period; and 28 periods are given for the 28 writing tasks/ activities for a school year.

CHAPTERTWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study attempted to be based on the academic writing skills theories. A good theoretical knowledge and understanding about the subject under study can give insight and helps one to be in line with the target research and its objectives. In consideration to their importance and relevance some basic theories and concepts are reviewed as follows:

2. Theoretical Basis

2.1. What writing is...

According to Roger pass man and Katherine S.Mc Knight (2007) writing is the visible form of thinking through which one communicates his broader audience. The aspects of writing are characterized in four unique features:

- Writing is highly related to other language arts. The six skills of language listening, speaking, reading, writing observing and representing are interconnected in the English language arts. The skills are related to their counterpart and to the other skills as well in language production and reception. For example, reading which is the learned skill is paired with the innate skill, that is listening; because neither of the two stands in isolation to make meaning, . both of them need recipient in order to process the words said by others to create meaning. Likewise, writing is also paired with speaking for their common purpose in producing language to bring about communication with others. As speaking and writing require production of language for the communicative acts in between, some teachers encourage their students to write as they speak the language "write it just as you say it" which is inapplicable. Janet Emig (1977) argued that writing is unique way of thinking, writing is more responsible than speaking writing is more formal and recorded evidence which requires acceptable expressions and technical procedures that the discourse community recommends. Especially, with the longer texts write it just as you say it does not work very well. Writing as an information laden vechile its creativity, beauty, weighting in meaning, convincing power, etc, make it unique from the other skills of language.
- A solitary social activity. Writing is conceived in the individual's mind by taking solitary time to think, to plan and to create. A writer needs to stay in a quiet place to think and to

draft his writing “But isolation is only appropriate time for thinking and drafting stages of writing.” They are not only the skills of language which are interdependent, the writers also need to interact with their audience in one way or the other to filtrate the ideas they are involved in.

- An effort in the context of fun. A writer is responsible to his work and to his audience. The product of his/her writing is attributed to the good of bringing change to the art of writing and attitudinal change to the audience. “The art of writing becomes fun when it becomes dear that one is actually thinking responsibly and has something to say and is importunate to communicate ideas to an audience” It is to mean that a writer enjoys his/her work when there is clear understanding with the ideas that he/she is conveying is to the advantage of the audience and it is right to disseminate it.
- Something that can be taught “finally, we believe that writing can be taught” writing is a productive process that can be taught and learnt mostly through practice. The interest, motivation, the theory and experience that one develops are actually the preliminary inputs to the writing tasks. But having whatever good writing knowledge and skills may not result good writing unless it is practiced once and again. The TTP writing process (T= teach appropriate rhetorical strategies, I= introduce skills and mechanics through mini lessons; P= provide frequent and sustained practice both in and outside of the classroom) is way that leads students to be engaged in to the authentic activities of writing. This inter-related balanced process demands teachers to expect more from their students than they ever thought. It is the teacher’s responsibility to practise authentic activities exhaustively. From the above descriptions. What writing is ...all about, one can conclude the following.
 - Writing is highly dependent on and related to the other language skills.
 - The skills of writing are paired and related even to their counterparts.
 - “writing is a unique way of thinking and can not be said write it just as you say it”.
 - Writing is a solitary social activity’ in its planning, creativity and drafting stages.
 - Writing is an effort in a context of fun “ the art of writing becomes fun when it becomes clear that one is actually thinking responsibly and has something to say and is important to communicate those ideas to an audience”.
 - Writing is something that can be taught and learnt through practice, practice and practice.

- The interest, motivation, the theory and experience gained are the preliminary inputs to the writing.
- The TIP writing process is the way that leads students to be engaged in to the authentic activities of the writing tasks.

2.2 Academic writing

- Academic writing is a comprehensive ability involving grammar, vocabulary, conception, rhetoric and other elements. It has everything to do with listening, speaking and reading.
- Academic writing is a process in which ideas are arranged in sentences into paragraphs and the use of words, phrases and other cohesive devices resulting in a stretch of language called composition. It could also be defined as “a purposeful selection and organization of experience logical thinking, refutation of an argument, organization, planning, assertion of a view point and contention. This includes the note making writing examination essays, term papers, periodic reports, and academic report writing (pincas, 1982:45).
- In real life we write for a purpose. Similarly, in the classroom, as with the other skills, any written task needs some purpose behind it. This is more difficult with writing because many learners are never going to write in a foreign language outside the exams and the classroom. In fact, people other than professionals or students seldom write in any language.

We therefore need to try to create writing exercises that are as close to real life tasks as possible, and imitate the sort of purposes students might have for writing outside the English classroom. The will include. Writing for oneself, e.g. notes one can understand oneself, writing messages and letters, directions, instructions, form filling, short essays for other subjects, etc. thus, when we set exercises we need to think about whether the sort of writing being set is realistic to our students .

- Writing as Toby (1997) describes, is an “act of cognition” an essential activity to objectify and preserve thought, to form relations and manipulate ideas as one makes academic experiences personally and intellectually meaningful. Thus, students need favourable situation to realize the potential of writing in communication ... and students writing opportunity is largely restricted to the classroom. Many studies in Ethiopia (Dejene 1990, Taddle 1990, Hailemichael 1993, Awol 1999, Geremew 1999) have shown that acquiring the

writing skill seems to be laborious and demanding for many Ethiopian students. As a result students have low writing ability in relation to what is expected of them.

2.3 Major Approaches to Writing Skills

(a) Product approaches. (b) Process approaches (c) Balanced approach (TIP). The teachers' beliefs and understanding about the importance of the theory of writing skills development does have its significant effect on their engagement teaching writing skills. But first, to concentrate on the theoretical background and having a base line knowledge is required to help teachers think about the foundations of writing. "Sound practice rests on sound theoretical understanding "without a strong foundation in theoretical constructions the optimal application of the procedures, methods and techniques may be undesirable (Rogers and Katherine, 2007).

2.3.1 Product Approaches

Bell and Burnably (1984), The product approach to writing focuses on the end result of the act of composition, i.e. the letter, essay, story and so on. The writing teacher who subscribes to the product approach will be concerned to see that the end product is reliable, grammatically correct and obeys discourse conventions relating to main points, supporting details and so on. The focus in class will be on copying and imitation, carrying out sentence expansions from cue words and developing sentences and paragraphs from models of various sorts.

Roger pass man and Ed d., Katherine S.Mc knight, Ph. D (2007), the product approach is to understand writing as a sum of its parts. The product approaches are put into two principal parts:

- Development of mechanical skills such as competence in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- Development of rhetorical formulas in order to narrate, compare and contrast, argue persuasively, and closely describe a process, among others. Weaknesses: It is believed that product approaches generally ignore the creative aspects of writing. Besides this, product approaches leave the writer frustrated and often without the tools needed to develop a clear and personally identifiable voice.

There are two types of product approaches: 1 skill approaches 2. Rhetorical approaches

- Skills approaches: as noted, skills approaches to writing concentrate on form and mechanics, such as spelling and grammar often, the skills approach is designed to “fix” that which is wrong in student writing. Perl (1979) points out that with novice writers skills approach tends to cut off any creativity and dampen enthusiasm for continuing to write. Worksheets are used in which students must complete dry and uninspiring exercises designed to drill specific skills in to their heads. It is agreed upon that the correction work in writing is tiresome for the teacher. But here its is to grade .
- Rhetorical approaches: It bases itself on rhetorical forms, such as topic sentence, describing the topic sentence, and finally writing the last sentence summarizing the points made and transitioning to the next paragraph.

2.3.2 Process Approaches

The process writing focuses on drafting, out lining, dividing or sub dividing the topic into major divisions and minor subdivisions. Thus, the goal is restructuring the format rather than accuracy of the final production in order to develop organizational skills of the learner. It is described as a process approach, because it is concerned with helping students develop writing skills by focusing on the components of the writing process.

For Example

- a) Teacher sets a title, if appropriate, teacher and students study a model text to see how it is organized.
- b) Students work in groups and write in any order the points they think are relevant.
- c) The teacher collects these points on the blackboard, also in any order.
- d) Teacher and the class organize the points, deciding which are important, relevant, and which are irrelevant.
- e) Students and the teacher decide on a heading for each paragraph and discuss the introduction and conclusion..
- f) Students and teacher rearrange the points under paragraph headings.

- g) Students work in groups or individually to write the first draft, teacher monitors and gives support, encouragement.
- h) The first draft is exchanged and communicated on by other individuals or groups.
- i) Students then revise their drafts and preplan in response to comments.
- j) Students write their final version a group version or individual versions, from the improved draft (skills development methodology, AAU 1998).

Roger passman, Ed. D., Katherine S. McKnight, Ph.D (PP 10-11, 2007) suggest that the process approaches focus on movement toward authenticity. The writing process which includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing is a recursive process and a unique thinking process./

- Pre-Writing: The first draft (before the first draft (which is thinking)).
- Writing: The first draft (draft writing, including revision).
- Rewriting: Reconsideration of subject, form, and audience (discourse rhetoric, including editing and publishing).

There are two kinds of process approaches: The linear model and The workshop model.

- (a) The linear model. The linear model divides the writing into five parts; prewriting, first draft writing, peer editing, revision and publishing. However, the problem with this model is that it doesn't represent the way in which writers actually work.
- (b) The workshop model: originally made popular by Calkins (1994) and later, specifically in the model schools by Atwell (1987). The workshop model rests on the idea that writing is highly personal requires doing rather than talking about it and in the end, the students will find all of the mechanical aspects of writing they need by producing appropriate pieces, writing that mirrors their thinking processes as they develop a working sense of authorship and voice. The main argument against using the workshop model exclusively is that it fails to address authentic notions of academic rigor, mainly because rhetorical choices are left entirely up to the student.

As a result, "we argue that neither product, process, nor workshop models fully explain either how writers work or teachers can best teach writing in the classroom. Our solution to the

problem is the balanced approach that we call TIP. Blending both and direct teaching approaches; TIP emphasizes the development of authentic approaches to writing.”

Murray (1997) states, they also believe that writing instruction must be both balanced and authentic for students to find voice and a sense of authorship. In short, effective writing instruction must include aspects of process, product, and workshop models if students are to benefit from the experience.

2.3.3. The TIP writing process (Genre Approach) : is a balanced, authentic approach.

The TIP writing process: is a balanced, authentic approach. The TIP writing process balances the needs of activity. TIP writing process balances the needs of writers by addressing writing as an authentic classroom activity. TIP is an acronym: T= teach (teach appropriate rhetorical strategies), I= introduce (skills and mechanics through mini lessons), P= practice, practice, practice (provide frequent and sustained practice both in and outside of the classroom). During each phase the TIP writing process students are exposed to authentic writing activities that in turn lead to significant success in writing (Roger Pass man, 2001, 2003, 2004).

2.4 Academic writing Skills Practices

2.4.1 Teaching writing skills and some of the principles: Though writing was the most ignored of the language skills in the previous time; changes in attitude have been seen regarding writing skills in a second language classroom (Leki, 1994, P: 170). In traditional classrooms, the purpose of writing is to reinforce grammar, or vocabulary items learnt. According to Lek (1994) the focus in such types of writing activities is primarily on language structure. However, methodology for the teaching of writing in ELT classrooms made dramatic departures (shifts) from traditional approaches (Hedge, 2000, P: 300).

Teaching writing has been shifted from the product approach to the process oriented approach. The former gives emphasis on what the learners can do at the end of a learning process focusing on imitating, copying and transforming models of correct language. The later views writing as a process that needs planning, writing, editing and revising (Hedge 2000; Ramies, 1983).

In using the process approach, there are three stages of writing in which different activities are practical as recommended by Broet and Gill (1986) as they are cited in Richards and lockhart (19986 :119-120). These are:

- (a) Pre-writing stage includes activities designed to generate ideas for writing or focusing the writers' attention on particular topic.
- (b) Drafting stage- includes activities in which students produce a draft of their composition, considering audience and purpose.
- (c) Revising stage- is a stage in which students focus on rereading, analyzing, editing, and revising their writing.

Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) write that if learners are expected to develop writing skills, they need to work on writing skills, they need to work on writing skills activities in class under the teachers supervision as well as writing out of class. To this end, appropriate writing activities based on the following principles should be planned and designed in the textbook for the students in practicing writing skills (Atkins, Hailom and Nuru, 1996, P.111). Some of the principles indicate that writing activities should consider:

- (a) Prepare students thoroughly before you tell them to write.
- (b) Collaboration on a writing task increases interest and motivation.
- (c).Monitor during the activity.
- (d) Writing skills should be practiced in class as well as at home.
- (e) Plan writing activities for students to work on in class that:
 - a) are interesting to do.
 - b)where possible have a realistic purpose.
 - c) are contextualized.
 - d) are graded in terms of language and are appropriate to the experience of the students.
 - e) enable students to express their own ideas/write about themselves.

f) if not, at least lead to a piece of meaningful writing in groups.

g) are suitable for discussion and writing in groups.

h) have clear instructions.

i) encourage students to draft, then improve and draft work.

j) integrate writing with other skills. Writing should arise from go together with speaking, listening and writing

- Give helpful and supportive feedback during monitoring. E.g. identifying those who are struggling and assist them. Praise and encourage as much as you can offer help, mark and comment work as students write. Take an interesting students' ideas and encourage them to express their ideas as clearly as accurately as possible.
- As students increase in confidence and ability, relax and control and plan free and less controlled activities to challenge them.
- Encourage students to write for each other. Get them to exchange and read each other' work and comment on it (Atkins, John, 1996).

2.4.2 Time to Practice Writing Activities

In the process approach of teaching writing which encourages CLL, learners do not write on a given topic in a restricted time and hand in the written text for the teacher to be marked (Ramies, 1983, P.10). Rather, learners are supposed to explore a topic through writing, showing the teacher and peers their drafts and read what they write again and again, think about and move them on to new ideas. This implies that pair (group) work writing activities which are aimed at enhancing learners writing skills through CLL take a lot more time than the usual writing activities (P.10). As learners do different activities in the stage of writing during practicing writing, they need enough time. This is because learners, to work on writing activities in a group, jot down any and all ideas associated with the topic they plan to write. Learners also rely on the ideas of group members to accomplish the writing works. Being able to rely on the ideas of

others to supplement their own ideas helps student writers feel less alone and thus less anxious about what to write on a topic (Loki, 1999, P. 63) and this process need much time. Therefore, it is important for syllabus designers to include enough time for learners to explore a topic thoroughly and to try again since learners can interact with each other at all points in the process; before writing, while they are writing and after they have written (Ramies, 1983 :10; Richards and Lockhart, 1994).

2.4.3 Types of Discourse/ writing

The scope of discourse ranges from a paragraph to on extended essay. There are four forms of discourse namely: exposition, description, narration and argumentation.

- A. Exposition: A type of writing that expresses, explains an idea, object or phenomenon. In expositions, the material which is communicated is primarily information. So when you write exposition, your purpose is to make clear the reader how something works, how something is made, or how something happened. It usually combines all or some of the following methods of development: cause and effect, classification, analysis, definition, comparison, contrast and illustration.
- B. Description: physical description creates a word picture. It is the kind of writing which attempts to appeal to the reader's sense, recreating for him the author's original impressions like sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Description can be objective or impassionistic. Description rarely appears alone in modern writing. It is most often used with narration. If is usually based on with spatial relations.
- C. Narration: narration is a writing that 'narrates' or tells what happened. It is concerned with describing a series of events, happenings or incidents which may be either real, historical or imaginary that leads to a conclusion. It is the kind of writing most people habitually turn to for recreation. They find it in short stories and novels as well as in news stories, historical accounts and essays. Rarely does narrative writing occur in pure form; most often it includes description and exposition for additional interest. It usually involves some kind of conflict, its resolution and conclusion.

- D. Argumentation: when one writes argumentation, his main purpose is to convince his reader about some issue, and persuade him to take some action or reconsider his perception towards something. A writer of argumentation presumes that he and his readers hold different positions on a subject. The writer attempts to convince readers through logical reasoning. Thus, argumentation is a process of reasoning in which a series of facts and judgments are arranged to establish a conclusion for argument (Melakneh M 2004. PP 189-191).

2.5 Academic Writing Techniques

2.5.1 Process Writing Technique

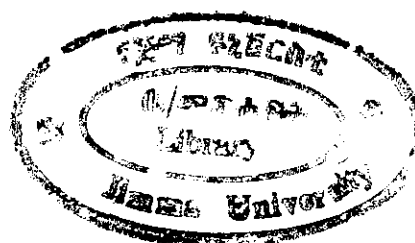
This kind of writing focuses on drafting, outlining, dividing or subdividing the topic into major divisions and minor subdivisions. Thus the goal is restructuring the format rather than accuracy of the final production in order to develop organizational skills of the learner. It is described as a process approach, because it is concerned with helping students develop writing skills by focusing on the components of the writing process.

- a. Teacher sets title, if appropriate, teacher and students study a model text (to see how it is organized, etc).
- b. Students work in groups and write in any order the points they think are relevant.
- c. Teacher collects these points on the blackboard, also in any order.
- d. Teacher and the class organize the points, deciding which are important, relevant and which are irrelevant.
- e. Students and teacher decide on a heading for each paragraph and discuss the introduction and conclusion.
- f. Students and teacher rearrange the points under paragraph headings.
- g. Students work in groups (or individually) to write a first draft; teacher monitors and gives support, encouragement etc.
- h. The first draft is exchanged and commented on by other individuals or groups.
- i. Students then revise their drafts and re-plan in response to comments.
- j. Students write their final version, either group's version, or individual versions, from the improved draft.

2.5.2 Controlled writing Technique

All writing done by students for which a great deal of content and form is supplied (Ramies, 1983). The difference between controlled and guided writing is that in the former every detail is presented, so that the students do a little more than an error-free copying; while in the latter, they have a choice, or can add something of their own and, are thus likely to make mistakes (Pincas, 1982). These typically involve blank filling, transformation from one pattern to another, or combining sentences, reordering jumbled sentences, copy sentences from a substitution table, etc. Here the teacher has complete control over what the student writes, the aim is accuracy and there is a little opportunity for making mistakes.

2.5.3 Guided writing Technique



Writing in which students follow an exact instruction so as to produce a correctly written word. Thus content and pattern is strictly controlled. High school students should be at a language where a majority of their writing can be through guided activities. Obviously this covers a very wide range of control from activities where they really have very little choice to those which are close to free writing. Such activities should be the basis for teaching paragraph writing.

Here the students are given guidance; e.g some content by way of ideas notes etc, but in the exercise they have some choice and far more opportunity to make mistakes. While the aim may still be accuracy, there should be a higher tolerance of error.

Some of the activity types that can be used

- a) Notes from listening: students can be given a series of notes that they then have to expand in to a paragraph. These notes can ideally be made by students while following a listening passage.
- b. Notes from parallel passages: students read and make notes from a particular passage. Further notes are then given them on a different but similar topic that has the same organization. They then use the model structure of the first passage and the information given in the notes to write

their own paragraph. Through this technique students can practice using both discourse markers and a variety of different paragraph organizations, e.g. descriptive, narrative, argumentation, etc.

c. Dialogue completion: students are given one side of a conversation, and then they have to write the other side, either by predicting from what is already known, or by selecting from given jumbled alternatives.

d. Questions to answers: A series of questions can be given on a text or picture. The answers to these questions can then be arranged to form a coherent story.

e. charts tables and diagrams: these can give a wide range of materials suitable for writing at a high school level students can be given a description followed by a diagram to label.

2.5.4 Free writing Technique

A final stage writing showing the extent to which the students have mastered the lesson and how they produce a piece of writing without guidance. Its major role is generating ideas. It means writing freely whatever comes to one's mind without regard to punctuation, grammar or spelling. Thus, the students are provided with the bare topic and are supposed to focus on content. The better students in high schools will be ready for this stage during grades 11-12 and should be encouraged to develop their talents, whether their free writing is limited to just a few sentences or whether it runs to a longer essay or story in English.

Here students are given a title or an idea or choose a writing purpose of their own and are expected to write using their own ideas and whatever language is at their disposal, with rather less guidance from the teacher. For example students can be given the following topics using the instruction. Write an essay on any one of the following topics:

- How to make coffee
- The disadvantages of smoking
- The role of mass media
- Nelson Mandela
- The most memorable day in my life

2.5.5 Information Transfer writing Technique:

- This is a sub-skill involving the transfer of information from one medium to another. In other words, tabular information (flow-chart, graphs, diagrams,) can be described in words. (Melakneh M. 2004:174-200).

2.6 Challenges of Teaching Writing Skills

2.6.1 Problems Related to Assessments

Not using appropriate writing skills assessment tasks is one of the barriers for teaching writing skills effectively. Teachers are likely to be skilled and knowledgeable about authentic writing assessment tasks to help their students. Writing in its very nature is creative and productive which needs the learners' motivation. Especially in assessing and scoring unless the learners are involved the teacher cannot cover it by himself.

Hence, then, teachers need to familiarize authentic assessment tasks to their students. According to J. Michael O' Malley (1996):

- a. Teachers should make the writing assessments to reflect the content of classroom instructions.
- b. And sufficient time is to be given for them to complete their writings. The other argument is that, whether a single topic is to be given or multiple topics of writing to choose among however, research results are mixed on whether students write better with single or multiple prompts (Hamp- Lyons 1990) and California assessment program (1990) set the following criteria for a single or multiple prompt assessment tasks. The topic should-
 - Invite the desired type of writing or genre.
 - Engage the thinking, problem solving, composing, and text makes process centre to the type of writing.
 - Be challenging for many students and accessible to all.
 - Provide equitable opportunities for all students to response.
 - Produce interesting, not just proficient writing.
 - Be liked by many students.

The other feature of authentic assessment is to tell students in advance the criteria that their writing is to be evaluated. J. Michael O' Malley (1996) gave checklist example criteria for the students to use to edit and revise their writing example (writer's check list)

- Did you write on the assigned topic?
- Did you write for the assigned audience?
- Did you identify a central audience?
- Did you identify a central theme?
- Did you explain the key ideas or events for the them?
- Did you use complete sentences?
- Did you correct errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage?

Still, kolls (1992) states "one way to use writing assessment in instruction is to share the scoring rubrics with students ...so they can plan their writing effectively" moreover, with the 'holistic and analytic' scoring rubrics, it is within analytic rubrics that the relationship between writing and scoring be seen clearly. This is to mean writers sometimes need specific feedback, but it does not mean analytic assessment is required at all times. Both analytic and holistic assessments are to be used where they are appropriate and to the right situations.

J. Michal O' Malley (1996) further suggested the following guide lines to increase the relationship between writing assessment and instruction:

- Select prompts that are appropriate for the students.
- Select rubrics that students can use
- Share the rubrics with students.
- Identify benchmark papers.
- Review how students write, not just they write.
- Provide time and instructional support for self- assessment and peer assessment.
- Introduce self-assessment gradually.
- Use conferencing to discuss writing with students.

More significantly, they are the teachers who play the prime role in the teaching and learning process. Likewise, in the writing proficiency assessment, teachers are expected to consider these things according to J.Michael O'Malley (1996):

- ✦ Assess the stages of writing development as student gradually gain control of writing processes, particularly for beginning writers.
- ✦ Assess writing in the context of other language skills, when appropriate as with integrated language assessment.
- ✦ Assess all domains of writing, especially composition in addition to sentence construction, word usage and mechanics.
- ✦ Include self assessment writing share scoring rubrics, and involve students in setting criteria as well as in developing and selecting writing prompts.
- ✦ Assess writing processes and strategies as well as the products of written efforts.
- ✦ Use multiple assessments of writing across various purposes, genres, and content areas, including written summaries and learning logs.
- ✦ Include writing samples in portfolios to illustrate students' growth overtime and to show accomplishments relative to classroom objectives.
- ✦ Use the results of writing assessment and conferences with students to plan instruction, identify student strengths, educational needs, and interests and determine what works most effectively in instruction for each student.

2.6.2 Problems Related to Methodology

- (i) Avoidance of native languages in the classroom activities.

_ The use of native languages in the classroom is not a totally ignored act especially in introducing instructions and feedbacks. Lucas and Katz (1995) emphasized that teachers should ensure that the students' native languages have a place in the classroom even though the design of the program and the teachers' limited linguistic resources suggest an English only learning environment.

- (ii) When there is imbalance between supervision and free writing.

_ Lew (1999) argues that it is dis-service to allow students learning English to write without the close supervision of teachers, pointing out that students who do not speak standard English have little confidence that their friends can help them with grammar or usage "when work sheets and isolated skills are emphasized in the classroom students cannot embrace writing as anything but difficult and meaningless, and hence, boring.

(iii) Not using the steps of writing may be a short coming especially in process writing.

_The steps: idea generation, drafting, reading the draft, editing- meaning, order, spelling, punctuation help a lot in producing a creative writing.

(iv) Writing is highly dependent on the other skills of language learning

_ The six processes in the language learning are often considered to be inter connected in the English language arts: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and more recently, observing and representing (Rager Passman, 2007) and again, dyson and fredman (1991) stressed the need to meet the social and cultural backgrounds of the students' L1 for their English writing.

(v) The little the theoretical understanding is the little writing skill mastery.

_ “Without a strong foundation in theoretical constructions one can never be completely sure of one's practice in the classroom. This is especially true when teaching writing” according to roger pass man and Katherine(2007).

- Teaching writing is an enterprise that encourages and emancipates. It empowers students with language and voice expression.

“I don't write, I don't like it, I don't write really well”... doesn't happen when the writing lessons and learning environment embody patience, creativity and the expectation to write.

2.6.3 Problems Related to Students and Teachers

(i) Writing is time consuming and takes much of the students' time to produce any text, and similarly, teachers are burdened with the feedback and scoring.

_ Writing is highly personal to plan, to think and to create; and it requires doing and practice. Above all, writing is a skill to be practiced more than ever to master it. According to Smith (1982:199-200) writing is learnt by writing by reading and by perceiving oneself as a writer,... it is fostered rather than taught.

_ On the teachers side, they should plan and budget their time, and as it is discussed earlier in the assessment analysis to encourage self and peer assessments, and to have good models: such as, Dr Rodolf Flech (1960) said, "I spend every week end buried under a mountain of papers. It is a terrific chore".

2.6.4. Problems Related to Administration

- (i) Large class size, highly dependent on the other skills, and difficulties in L₂ writing are to be discussed.
- Athkins, AA (1998:85) Large class- sizes which deter teachers from setting and making writing tasks, and the reluctance of teachers to give students the freedom to express themselves in writing...
- For the effective writer there is no question for him to be good at the functional grammar and lexis. Not only 'how to writer; for 'what to write' also, he has to sit-down and read. Horace coon (1954: 235) Great writers are always great readers. They read voraciously, omniously, as if they were trying in as a short time as possible to encompass all of human knowledge.
- Based on his synthesis of 72 studies, Silva (1993) concludes significant differences exist between practically all aspects of L₁ and L₂ writing. He emphasizes that the learning needs of L₂ are crucially distinct from those of basic or proficient L₁ writers and that L₂ writing pedagogy requires special and systematic approaches that take in to account the cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic differences between L1 and L2 writers. Similarly, Hinkels (2002)... even after years of ESL and composition training, L2 writers' text continues to differ from that of novice L1 writers in regard to most linguistic and rhetorical features.

From the above descriptions one may easily detect at least 3, Main factors that affect the writing practices, and they are:

1. The time consuming nature of the subject in both teaching and assessment.
2. Significant and differences exist between L1 and L2 writing pedagogy which requires special treatment in the cultural, rhetorical and linguistic aspects.
3. The participant's motivation and commitment to take time and do the writing in real life context practically is essential.

2.7 The Current Integrated Approach

Writing is inevitably integrated with other skills. In the classroom it often comes after exercises using the other skills, e.g. from oral grammar to a written exercise, from reading or listening to making notes or writing comprehension exercises. Furthermore, it is not possible to learn to write at any level unless one can also read. Firstly, one needs to read what one writes, and secondly, as a writer one has to consider who the reader is, what he knows, and how he will understand and read to what is written. As a matter of fact one can only improve one's writing by modeling it on reading texts. Much of the current integrated instruction in L₂ writing, grammar, and vocabulary takes place in conjunction with reading, content based, and form focused instruction to improve the overall quality of L₂ prose (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Hedgcock, 2005; Williams, 2005).

Achieving proficiency in writing requires explicit pedagogy in grammar and lexis and is important because one's linguistic repertoire and writing skills determine one's social, economic, and political choices (Clace-Murcia, 2001). Christie (1998) and Martin (1992) have similarly argued that a lack of instruction in L₂ grammar and lexis disadvantages L₂ learners in their vocational, academic, and professional careers and ultimately reduces their options. These researchers have continued to emphasize the importance of language quality in L₂ writing because grammar and lexis are inextricable from meaning in written discourse and because L₂ writers are ultimately evaluated based on their control of language and text construction in their written discourse.

Frodsen and other experts, such as Birch (2005), Byrd (2005), Byrd and Reid (1998), and McKay (1993) point out that the curriculum design in L₂ writing instruction has to include grammar and vocabulary to enable L₂ writers to communicate meaningfully and appropriately, with this objective in mind the prominent current positions advocate the integration of grammar and vocabulary curricula with L₂ writing instruction.

2.8 Problems Facing in Teaching Academic Writing

Writing is one of the most important skills for students learning English for academic purposes to develop. As a world language it is said to be “the window of the world.” To join the discourse community, to be involved in the international business and to make use of the overgrowing technology English is the medium. And yet, there are notable barriers in teaching the writing skills some of them are as follows:

- ❖ Large class sizes which deter teachers from setting and making writing tasks, and the reluctance of teachers to give students the freedom to express themselves in writing, (Atkins, John 1998: 85).
- ❖ Time consuming: particularly for the teacher it requires him a lot of time and energy. The renowned authority on writing improvement Dr. Rodolf Flech (1960) said, “I spend every week end buried under a mountain of papers. It is a terrific chore” Likewise, students are heard that writing takes much of their study time when they are asked to practice writing.
- ❖ Highly dependent on the other skills. For the effective writer there is no question for him to be good at the functional grammar and lexis. Not only ‘how to write; for ‘what to write’ also, he has to sit down and read. Horace coon (1954:235) Great writers are always great readers. They read voraciously, ominously, as if they were trying in as a short time as possible to encompass all of human knowledge.
- ❖ Difficulties in L₂ Writing: based on his syntheses of 72, studies, Silva (1993) concludes significant differences exist between practically all aspects of L₁ and L₂ writing the emphasizes that the learning needs of L₂ are crucially distinct from those of basic or proficient L₁ writers and that L₂ writing pedagogy requires special and systematic approaches that take into account the cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic differences between L₁ and L₂ writers. Similarity, Hinkels (2002)... even after years of ESL and composition training, L₂ writers’ text continues to differ from that of novice L₁ writers in regard to most linguistic and rhetorical features.
- ❖ Problems related to the L₂ Learning strategy:



According to Ernesto Macaro (2006) a further unsolved problem is the semantic- equivalence dilemma, with words like strategy, operation, routine, process, procedure, action, tactic, technique, plan and step being interchange able in the literature (P.324).

- Lack of standardization presented major difficulties...to synthesize studies (P,322).
- Dornyei (2005) catalogued the inability of researchers to explain the difference between “engaging in an ordinary learning activity and strategic learning activity” (P:164).Lastly, Ernesto macro recognizes that an enormous amount of research effort has gone into the learner strategy area and that some progress has been made. For the rest, it is his view that there is no other solution. It could remain a research agenda that takes an additional decade (P 332).

2.9 Perceptions and Beliefs

It is not as much easy to distinguish between the constructs of “belief” and “perception” indeed, these constructs seem to be used interchangeably in much of the literature (Mori et al 2007; Schulz, 2001; Tse 2000) Mori et al (2007) refer to the many studies that have focused on learner strategies and their correlations with learner beliefs as “belief studies” that have contributed to our better understanding of learner perception... the specificity of learner perceptions” which they define by way of giving an example “task-specific beliefs” (P.58). Therefore, for the purpose of this study “beliefs” and “perceptions” are synonymous. If for example, a person, a person “believes” that something is ineffective, he/she “perceives” the thing to be ineffective.

The word ‘Perception’ comes from the latin-perceptio, meaning” receiving, collecting, action of taking possession, apprehension with the mind or senses (Wikipedia Encyc llopedia) perception is a process by which a person interprets and organizes events to produce a meaningful experience of the world. Hence, it is an observer’s quality, state, capacity, awareness or appreciation of objects, processes or situations in his environment (Brewer, 1999).

Like beliefs, perceptions also have the following functions: they

- a) Help people understand themselves and others and adapt to the world.
- b) Provide meaning.

- c) Help individuals to identify with another group and form groups and social systems.
- d) Provide, structure, order, direction and shared values, and.
- e) Reduce dissonance and confusion (Pajares, 1992). Other functions of perceptions refer to framing and defining tasks and facilitating the memory process (Nespor, 1987). Thus, perception indicates a reality in space or in time. Likewise, perception has a place in language learning; according to Nespor, (1987) a person without any perceptual ability would not be able to learn language.

2.9.1 The Role of Students' Perceptions in Language Learning

Beliefs about language learning refer to students' notions, perceived ideas, insights, concepts, opinions, representations, assumptions or mini-theories of the nature of language or language learning (Horwitz, 1987); Hosenfeld, 1978; Wenden, 1987). It is generally agreed that individual language learners hold different beliefs about how language is learned individual beliefs about language learning may consciously or unconsciously influence learners' approaches or behaviors in language learning students.' Beliefs about language learning have been studied using various methods. In research into the link between students' beliefs and learning strategies, it was found that students' beliefs often underlie and guide the strategies they choose to employ in language learning (Wenden, 1987). Clark and Peterson (1986) argue that students' beliefs can be affected by the environment, their interest and ability in the subject they learn. Ridely (1997) states that, in many cases, lack of self confidence is associated not only with lack of ability but also with negative- self- perceptions.

The interest in investigating factors affecting language learning process arose from the recognitions that some learners approach the language learning task in more successful ways than others (Rubin 1987; Ellis, 1994: 469).

When the cause of this variation was investigated, three interrelated factors were identified: external factors, internal factors and individual differences (Ellis, 1994:193). The first of these factors refers to the social factors; the setting in which the learning takes place. The second one could be interpreted as a learner's existing knowledge and the internal mechanisms that guide the process of language learning. The third factor is most significant considering the present study, as it includes perceptions about language learning as one of the factors causing individual variation in learning processes and outcomes. Other variables that are included in individual learner differences are age, sex, attitude, motivation, personality, aptitude and learning strategies (Ellis, 1994 : 471-472).

2.9.2 The Role of Teachers' Perceptions in Language Teaching

Teachers' established beliefs influence their perceptions and judgment. The perceptions and judgments in turn influence their behaviors in class (Pajares, 1992). The practice and process in language learning and teaching reconstruct teachers' perceptions. This indicates, perceptions influence actions and actions in turn modify perceptions. Hence, perceptions guide desires and shape actions by preparing individuals to act in a context. Teachers' perceptions of language learning influence the constructions of the teaching environment, even though learners are the focus of the teaching activities. Marcher cited in Brook hart and freeman (1992) states that if any significant change is desired in the teaching profession, the change should include the perceptions of teachers. Fang, cited in Brophy and Good (1974) also shares the view of that change in teachers' perceptions significantly influences the effectiveness of education. Still others believe that teachers' perceptions and theoretical beliefs affect not only the way they teach but also how they interact with their students. Brophy and Good (1974:52) state "Not only were instructional practices found to be consistent with teachers' theoretical beliefs, but the interactions between teachers and students were found to differ according to teachers' theoretical beliefs about writing instructions" in the above account it is shown how perceptions are seen to affect the outcomes of language learning either directly or indirectly. Teachers' perceptions affect their actions in the classroom and students can be affected by their teachers approach to language teaching. Cuban, cited in Brook hart and Freeman (1992) believes that the changes made so far are due to the changes in perceptions of teachers; scholars have substantiated the idea that perceptions impact actions and actions in turn impact perceptions. Thus, perception and action interact and shape each other in a context. Similarly, students' perceptions can be related to their earlier experiences. Therefore, perceptions are experience based and context bound.

2.10 Time for writing and working Together on writing

2.10.1 Time for writing

There is a widely held belief that in order to be a good writer a student needs to read a lot. This makes sense. It benefits students to be exposed to models of different text types so that they can

develop awareness of what constitutes good writing." I would agree that reading is necessary and valuable but it is not sufficient. My own experience tells me that in order to become a good writer a student needs to write a lot." This is especially true of poor writers who tend to get trapped in a downward spiral of failure; they feel that they are poor writers. So they are not motivated to write and, because they seldom practice, they remain poor writers.

This situation is exacerbated in many classrooms where writing is mainly relegated to a homework activity. It is perhaps not surprising that writing often tends to be an out-of-class activity, many teachers feel that class time, often scarce, is best devoted to aural/oral work and homework to writing, which can then be done at the students' own pace.

However, many students would benefit from classroom practice in writing for which the teacher can prepare tasks with carefully worked out stages of planning, drafting, and revision. If poorer writers feel some measure of success in the supportive learning environment of the classroom, they will begin to develop the confidence they need to write more at home and so start on the upward spiral of motivation and improvement.

Students need time in the classroom for writing. The teacher's task is to select or design activities which support them through the process of producing a piece of writing.

Working together on writing :

Another very good reason for spending classroom time on writing is that it allows students to work together on writing in different ways. Although the teacher's ultimate aim is to develop the writing skills of each student individually, individual students have a good deal to gain from collaborative writing.

Group composition is a good example of an activity in which the classroom becomes a writing workshop, as students are asked to work together in small groups on a writing task. At each stage of the activity the group interaction contributes in useful ways to the writing process, for example:

- a. Brainstorming a topic in group discussion produces lots of ideas from which students have to select the most effective and appropriate. Careful selection of content is an important part of the art of good writing.

- b. Skills of organization and logical sequencing come into play as the group decides on the overall structure of the piece of writing.
- c. While writing out a first draft, with one student acting as 'scribe' or secretary, and the other students arguing out the structures of sentences, the choice of words, and the best way to link ideas, there is a spontaneous process of revision in progress.

Group composition has the added advantage of enabling students to learn from each other's strengths. It is an activity where stronger students can help the weaker ones in the group. It also enables the teacher to move around from group to group monitoring the work and helping with the process of composition.

Collaborative writing in the classroom generates discussions and activities which encourage an effective process of writing.

2.10.2 A Typical Week's Writing Schedule

A typical week's writing schedule using the TIP (Balanced) approach.

Mondayteach strategy

Tuesday practice writing

Wednesday introduce skills, generally mini lessons

Thursday reteach strategy

Friday practice writing (pass man & Katherine, 2007:19).

2.11 . Grade 12 English Writing Skills Features and Contents

2.11.1 Features and Contents

Grade 12 English for Ethiopia is designed to encourage interaction amongst students through pair work, group work and whole class activities. A balance is provided between interactive, communicative activities in the form of discussion, debate, dialogue, role play and soon, and independent exercises in the form of composition writing, silent reading, grammar practice etc.

In this way, students learn and practice English which is meaningful to them and which has a real purpose and context. For this reason, the focus is on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Grammar and vocabulary, and social expressions are integrated into practice of these skills. The activities are also designed to encourage students' natural curiosity and appetite for discovery together with the enjoyment of learning through debates, surveys, games and stories appropriate to their age.

Grade 12 English for Ethiopia consists of 12 units based around a topic, with each unit divided into two parts, plus four revision units and an end of year examination. Each unit covers approximately 16 periods based on a 34 week school year and consists of about 15 teaching periods and one to two assessment periods. Every unit is based on a topic and consists several sections that cover a broad range of language. In the writing sections, a variety of skills are developed. Students learn to write for different purposes and to use the appropriate register and style. Exercises aim to develop a range of writing including descriptive, narrative, discursive and expository texts. Students are also taught to take notes and to summarize texts in their own words. They are taught to write paragraphs using topic sentences and support sentences. In addition, punctuation forms an important component of this section, and students are encouraged to punctuate their writing correctly. They are also encouraged to revise and edit their work. Suggestions are given to guide students through the writing process from planning a first, rough draft to produce a final, 'polished' piece of writing,

Table 2.1: Writing Periods in the School Year.

Periods	1 (page 15)	2 (p 20)	3(p. 40)	4 (p 42)	5(p 47)	6(p 60)	7(p70)
Lessons	Writing memories (discuss with a partner and write)	writing: A formal letter (read a model and write	Writing: A mind map (written in a small group)	Writing an essay (follow the seven steps)	Writing: A report (in a small group)	Writing: self assessment (interview and write	Writing: an essay (about 250-300 words)

		your own)					
Periods	8(p98)	9(p111)	10(p123)	11(p 132)	12(p 141)	13(p 144)	14(p 161)
Lessons	Writing: A film review (work with a partner)	Writing: title: A good leader (discuss and write)	Writing: A report (about UN 400-5500 words)	Writing: A leaflet on fair trade (use the sheet)	Writing: aAsummary (write the summary of the notes)	Writing: A business letter (disuss with partner and write)	Writing: A profile (research your in for mation and write)
Periods	15(p 169)	16(p 192)	17(p 200)	18 (p 212)	19(p 227)	20(p229)	21(p 230)
Lessons	Writing: A letter of application and your own	Writing: an essay (on a given title)	Writing: A report (in 500 words and present to the class)	Writing: an essay (follow the 7 steps)	Writing: A description (group work)	Writing: A report (work with a partner)	Writing: A formal letter (work in a small group)
Periods	22(236)	23(p240)	24(p244)	25(p249)	26(p256)	27(p263)	28(273)
Lessons	Writing: Graffiti posters (work in a small group)	Writing: 10 rules for a new society (in a small group)	Writing: summary (use the notes)	Writing: A dialogue (an interview)	Writing: a review of a television show	Writing: formal letters (read the information in the box)	Writing: a class magazine (distribution of roles in small teams)

(Teacher guide, grade 12, page xi)

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The English writing skills practice in the preparatory schools at the grade 12 level was assumed to be unlikely due to the inadequacy of time in implementing the daily writing lessons and to cover the annual writing tasks in the syllabus. With this, it was found to be essential to assess the students' and teachers' 'perceptions of the time factor and their writing practices which were determinant to deter their actions. In research into the link between students' beliefs and learning strategies, it was found that students' beliefs underlie and guide the strategies they choose to employ in language learning (Wenden, 1987). And also, teachers' perceptions affect their actions in the classroom and students can be affected by their teachers' approach to language teaching. Cuban, cited in Brook hart and Free man (1992) believes that the changes made so far are due to the changes in perceptions of teachers'; scholars have substantiated the idea that perceptions impact actions and actions in turn impact perceptions. Thus, this research study attempted to investigate the students' and teachers' perceptions of the Time factor and their influences on their writing practices.

3.1 The Research Design

The research topic is "Investigating teachers' and students' perceptions of the time factor and their engagements_ in teaching and learning English writing skills: Jimma Preparatory School in focus". In the study the identified domains to be investigated were: Perceptions of the time factor, and practices of the writing tasks. The research method is a 'Descriptive' type. This is because; much of the research analysis was stated in word descriptions. The school was selected in relation to the researcher's convenience where he had identified the research problem and conducted the research.

The research was designed to help students to build a good English writing ability which prepares them for their higher education. And the study tried to determine the students' constant practice; the adequacy of time given for the writing course, and the students willingness to engage themselves to the hard and time consuming writing tasks. Likewise, the extent to which

the English teachers were committed to help their students' writing practices was investigated. With this, the teaching time adequacy, the teachers' and students' perceptions of the time factor and their writing practices were analyzed.

3.2 Participants of the Study

The subjects of the study were: Jimma Preparatory School grade 12 English language students and their English teachers. The total number of the student population was 981 (469 Female, and 512 Male). The total number of teachers was 5 (Male). The grade 12 level was chosen for the reason that, firstly, they had been for two years in the preparatory school and they were able to give appropriate information than the grade 11 student. Secondly, the students' were expected to join university by their next year. And the students' writing competence might have highly affected their success in their university achievements. Thus, assessing their writing tasks effectiveness was timely to make the necessary improvements.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The study population consisted of 981 students of the English learners and 5 English language teachers. The sample size for the students' population was 10% which gave 98 students; and this number was considered as a good representative of the students' population for the questionnaire data collection. The teachers' population was just 5 in number, in which the whole population was treated for the interview.

The sampling method which was used was probability sampling, in particular 'Simple random sampling: this was because probability sampling gives equal chance to every member of the population. For the teachers' population 'Purposive or Non probability' sampling was used, which took the whole population into account for the interview.

3.4 Instruments Used for Data Collection

The data requirements for the study were collected through multiple techniques: (i) Questionnaire (ii) Interview (iii) Observation (iv) Text analysis VS schedule allocation

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is useful in collecting data on phenomena “which are not easily observed, such as attitudes, motivation, and self concepts” (Sleiger, 1989 :172). And in this study the questionnaire was used to identify the perceptions of the time factor students had developed and their writing practices of the writing tasks. The questionnaire had three parts: (A) Perceptions of the time factor: which had 6 questions asking the students feelings and understandings towards their writing skill tasks (B) Writing practices: there were 6 questions which might indicate how well the students were doing in the actual teaching and learning writing practices (C) Appropriation of syllabus: There were 6 questions that might reflect how far the writing course materials were suitable for the assigned schedule. The questionnaire was close ended with 5 options: strongly agree- Agree- undecided- Disagree- _Strongly disagree.

3.4.2 Interview

The interview questions were used to collect data from the English teachers. As (Kumar, 1999 :109) states, interview is any person to person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind there are three types of interviews, i.e. structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. According to Dyer(1995),structured interview is an interview which is organized in every advance by interviewer; unstructured interview sometimes may result in drifting out of the topic and poor time management as the interviewee keeps on talking about things that come to his/her mind; and the semi-structured interview is the one which combines structured and unstructured forms. For this study it was the ‘semi – structured’ interview which was assumed to be suit. Because, it is partly structured, in the sense that there is an “interview schedule” to give direction to the interview (Sleiger, 1989:167).The interview consisted 12 semi-structured questions on the Perceptions of the Time factor, Writing practices, and the English Language Syllabus in use.

3.4.3 Syllabus Content Analysis in Contrast to the Allocated Time

There were two writing lessons in a couple of weeks. The two writing periods in a couple of weeks were occupied by two writing tasks respectively all throughout. Totally, there were,28

periods in the school year. Each period consisted its own writing activity, and did not give room for the preceding or proceeding lessons.

3.4.4 Observation

The observation was used to collect data on the writing skill classroom practices. Lesson observation is important, because supplements the questionnaire and the interview methods in cross checking what the respondents say and do is the same. Action can be best understood when it is observed in the context in which it occurs (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). Accordingly, the methods for data collection preferred in this study include classroom observation. There were two classroom observations, and along with the classroom observation checklists were used. The observation checklist consisted items that might confirm the items in the interview and questionnaire. The observation was to be done before the interview and questionnaire data collection. It was because, if the observation were to be after the interview and questionnaire data collection, the students' and teachers' classroom behaviors might have been influenced.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Tools

The data collection Tools_the Questionnaire, Interview, Observation, and Text analysis; and the items which were used within the instruments were analysed and improved by:

- a) Comments from the professionals who were given the items and asked to comment on.
- b) The main advisors' and co-advisors' comments.
- c) Pilot study, which was intended to tryout the data collection instruments and to decide the procedure for the administration to the actual data collection. In the tryout stage, 20 questionnaire, 2 interview, and 1 classroom observation with its check list were used.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedure for this study used the 4 scientific instruments which were questionnaire, interview, observation, and text analysis.. The questionnaire was filled by the sample representative population which was 98 students. For the interview the researcher dealt with the 6 English teachers using the semi-structured interview questions. And the observation

was held during the English writing lessons. Two writing lessons were observed using the observation check- lists. The English language writing tasks schedule and the writing activities were analyzed from the English language syllabus for grade 12.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data which was collected through questionnaire, interview, observation, and Text analysis were tallied, tabulated and discussed descriptively. In the data analysis both the qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The qualitative method states its description in words, where as the quantitative method gives quantified results. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods for the research analysis strengthens the construction and clarity of the information.

Specifically, the descriptive statistics such as, frequency, arithmetic mean, and percentage (%) were used in the analysis of data. The preference of using arithmetic mean was that, it was easy to calculate and understand. The analysis of data followed by the discussions of the research results. The analysis was categorized into 4 groups, i.e. the questionnaire, interview, observation, and text analysis. Each data group followed numerical tables and word descriptions. Finally, attempts were made to relate the information identified from each group of analysis and was discussed to conclude the results of the research studied.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the data collected through questionnaire, interview, observation and syllabus content analysis in contrast to the assigned schedule is discussed in detail.

Firstly, the qualitative data were analyzed using likert-type item analysis. In the Likert scale numerical values to responses and the numerical representation (the coding) of the items were made in the following two ways: - the favorable items (statements which directly address the writing skill teaching (principles) were coded as. Strongly agree (SA)= 5; Agree (A)= 4; Undecided (U)= 3; disagree (D)=2; and strongly disagree (SD)=1. The unfavorable items (statements which do not address the teaching of English writing skill principles) were coded in the reverse manner as: strongly agree = 1; Agree= 2; undecided= 3; disagree= 4; strongly disagree=5. The data gathered using questionnaire were tallied, tabulated and analyzed using the statistical techniques such as mean, percentage and frequency. Secondly, descriptions of the data on questionnaire, interview, observation and syllabus content analysis in contrast to the assigned schedule, were made at length. And finally, the results of the questionnaire, Interview, observation, and syllabus content analysis vs schedule were discussed and summarized.

4.1 Data Obtained through students' questionnaire

As stated earlier in chapter one, the specific objectives of the study were: to investigate students' and teachers' perceptions of the time factor in teaching- learning English writing skills in the preparatory schools at grade 12 level; to check the English writing tasks schedule appropriation in implementing teaching_ learning writing skills in the preparatory schools at grade 12 level; to assess the actual engagements of the writing practice in the preparatory schools at grade 12 level; to check, if the time is allowing peer correction, whole class, or written comments by teachers. Accordingly, in order to collect information for the study questionnaire for students was developed. The items in the questionnaire were subcategorized in to three groups:

1. The students' perceptions (beliefs) of the time factor in teaching- learning English writing skills.
2. The actual engagements of the writing practice.
3. Time for correction and feedback.

The results of the students' questionnaire were organized and analyzed as follows.

Part One: The students' perceptions (beliefs) of the time factor in teaching- learning English writing skills.

Frequency, percentage and mean of responses for students' perceptions of the time factor.

Table 4.1:

	Statements (Items)		5	4	3	2	1	Mean
			SA	A	U	DA	SDA	
1*	Teachers who teach only the mechanics and some other writing lessons which might appear in (UEE) university entrance exam are in favor of their students in saving their time than those who teach writing from the text book.	F	29	41	7	12	9	3.76
		%	29.6	40.8	7.1	12.3	9.2	
2	In the English writing class rooms shortage of time to do the activities is not a serious problem to stop students' writing practices.	F	14	17	11	22	34	2.54
		%	14.3	17.4	11.2	22.4	34.7	
3	The given 40 minutes period is quite enough to tryout the lessons in the English writing activities	F	14	13	6	28	37	1.87
		%	14.3	13.3	6.1	28.6	37.8	
4*	Students who are not to take English as their major subject at the university level should not waste their time on the writing tasks at the grade 12 level in the preparatory schools	F	24	27	10	21	16	3.23
		%	24.4	27.6	10.2	21.4	16.3	
5*	Compared to reading speaking, vocabulary and grammar- writing takes less number of questions in the university entrance exam, and actual writing is not included in the exams, so that, it is no need to spend much time on writing skills of the grade 12 level	F	23	32	8	29	6	3.38
		%	23.5	32.7	8.2	29.6	6.1	
6*	Writing takes much of the students' study time, so that it is not necessary for grade 12 students to spend much of their time on the writing tasks.	F	15	44	5	21	13	3.28
		%	15.3	44.9	5.1	21.40	13.3	

(*) unfavorable items

() favorable items

The above section of the questionnaire was aimed at to reveal the facts that the students conceived in order to the development of their beliefs towards the writing tasks. These are: (1) In using the English writing text book, (2) Their attitudes towards their English writing skill teachers, (3) The effects of the time allotment for the writing tasks, (4) The students understandings of the advantages of writing skills for their tertiary education. And the analysis of the results of data from the questionnaire is presented as follows:

4.1.1 As shown above (table 1) statement (item 1) just a few number of respondents (21.4%) of them agreed with the importance of using the text book for learning the writing tasks. The rest (70.4%) of them disagreed to support learning writing from the text book; and said, entrance exam oriented subject matters' to be focused on; and the other (7.1%) were undecided. Richards (2001:254) writes:

Text books are used in different ways in language programs. For example, a reading textbook might be the basis for a course on reading skills, providing both a set of reading texts and exercises for skills practice. A writing text may provide model compositions and a list of topics for students to write about. A grammar text book might serve as a reference book and provide examples as well as exercise to develop grammatical knowledge.

Text books have vital and positive roles to play in the day to day teaching languages and their importance has become even greater and greater from time to time (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994:317-327). But most of the students' replies (70.4%) indicated that, the simple shallow reason 'time saving' had hidden to them the vital role of textbooks in making learning easier, clearer, faster, better, innovative and complete.

4.1.2 Text books bring together teachers, students and curriculum. Teachers and learners use the textbooks and they have their own opinions about the textbooks. Therefore, textbooks play important roles in creating opportunities for learners to work cooperatively (Richards and Rogers, 2001:200). For teachers, it saves time, gives direction to lessons, guides discussions, and facilitates giving of homework, making teaching easier, faster, and better (Hunchinson and Torres, 1994). On the contrary, the students' beliefs deny being stick to the text book writing materials, where only 21.4% (item 1) replied positively.

4.1.3 The items in questions 2 and 3 were meant to reveal the students' perceptions of the time factor. And there, more than half of the respondents 65 % (item 3) of them replied that they could not complete their classroom writing activities in the given 40 minutes period. Similarly, 56% (item 2) of the students again, said that as they were deterred with the unfavorable length of the time to practise their writing tasks. It is generally understood that individual language learners hold different beliefs about how language is learned. In research in to the link between students' beliefs often underlie and guide the strategies they choose to employ in language learning (wenden, 1987). Clark and Peterson (1986) also, argue that students' beliefs can be affected by the environment, their interest and ability in the subject they learn. From the above discussion one can infer that students' perceptions could control their actions.

4.1.4 In the very beginning, during the problem identification stage it was assumed that students at grade 12 level had perceived as the writing tasks were time consuming and would take much of their study time. Because of this perception, it was assumed that students had pushed aside the writing tasks which asked much effort to practice. Here then, (items 4,5and 6) in the students' questionnaire were set to reveal the fact that the students' awareness which resulted to their perceptions of the time factor in doing the expected writing practices. It was to investigate the conscious recognition they gave to their writing tasks, having internalized that their writing abilities were to be decisive to their higher education competence and successes.

The 3 statements in (items 4, 5 and 6) convey one core message and seek answers in one way or the other. Above all, along with passing the exams and achieving higher scores, have students got appropriate knowledge and developed positive attitudes towards the writing tasks? The advantages of the writing tasks at the preparatory schools level is to enhance students be able to well communicate in writing in their university studies which needs much of their writing skill competence. The organized data results in items (4,5and 6) showed, (52%) 56.20%, and 60.20%) which were above average indicated that students did not want to spend their time on the writing tasks.

According to smith (1982:199-200) writing is learnt by writing, by reading and perceiving oneself as a writer, it is fostered rather than taught. Roger pass man (2007) also states, writing is something that can be taught "finally, we believe that writing can be taught and learnt mostly through practice "the interest, motivation, the theory and experience that one develops are

actually the preliminary inputs to writing tasks. But having whatever good writing knowledge and skills may not result good writing unless it is practiced. But, more than half of the students bring together themselves to their perceptions: “we are not to be English major students when we join universities; practical writing practice is not induced in the (UEE) university entrance exams; if we try to do, writing is complex and takes much of our study time;” ... which deters their active participations in the writing tasks. Thus, the students’ perceptions of the time factor lagged behind the advantages of giving the appropriate time in accordance to the writing principle theories.

Part Two: Students’ Responses on the Actual Engagements of Their Writing Practices:

One of the specific objectives of the study was to investigate the students’ actual writing practices. The purpose of the questionnaire was mainly to obtain information that might indicate, how well they were doing with their writing practices.

Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) write that if learners are expected to develop writing skills, they need to work on writing skills activities in class under the teacher’s supervision as well as writing out of class.

The table below shows the results of students’ responses to their writing practice

Table 4.2: Frequency, percentage and mean of responses for classroom writing practices.

Item No	Statements (Items)		SA	A	U	DA	S#SDA	Mean
1	I am interested and get the time to produce writing texts, such as paragraphs, letters, reports essay, completion of a story, both in the classroom and out of class	F	5	18	14	33	28	1.1
		%	5.1	18.4	14.2	33.7	28.6	
2	It is possible to complete the daily writing lessons within the give 40 minutes period	F	32	20	7	23	16	3.3
		%	32.7	20.4	7.1	23.5	16.3	
3	I have improved my writing ability through classroom and out of class	F	10	24	6	35	23	2.0

	writing practices, and now, I am able to produce, paragraphs, letters, reports, short stories, etc	%	10.2	24.5	6.1	35.7	23.5	
4*	I use one single exercise book for learning English reading, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, and writing for it is easy to carry.	F	47	28	5	7	11	3.9
		%	47.9	28.6	5.1	7.2	11.2	
5	We do individual or group writing practice every week either in the classroom or as home take assignments.	F	14	3	7	46	28	1.5
		%	14.3	3.1	7.2	46.9	28.6	
6*	Grade 12 English teachers should not insist their students to write as they are running in short of time preparing for the university entrance exam.	F	21	15	13	17	32	2.8
		%	21.4	15.3	13.3	17.4	32.7	

(*) unfavorable items

() favorable items

4.2.1 In the above table 2(item 2.3) was set to find out the progress the students were making through their classroom and out of class writing activities. But, only 34.8% of the students replied that as they had improved their writing abilities, and 6.1 of them were undecided whether they had made any progress or not. On the contrary 59% of the students replied as they didn't make up any competence to produce any text on their own. They were in confident after their two years stay in the preparatory schools. This indicated that either they were demotivated or there were unfavorable teaching and learning environments.

4.2.2 Similarly, (item 2.1) was set to add to the clarity of the information which was stated in (item 2.3)

It asked the interest and effort they showed in their writing works. So 23.4% of them replied as they were making significant effort and strived with the writing tasks. And not less than 14% replied still they could not decide with what they were doing. But 61% of them replied that they running in short of and did not do much on their writings.

In light of items (2.1 and 2.3) 60% of the respondents in both questions came together into the same category. There was not ample effort made toward the practical engagements.

4.2.3 Further, item (2.5) and item (2.4) again tried to prove the extent of the students' practical activities in the writing tasks. There, with the weeks writing lessons, 17.5% of the students replied that as they were active with their writing tasks. Compared to the whole population of the sample size, the number is 1/5 of the total population. And 7.2% of them were yet undecided. But 75.30% replied that they were unable to complete the writing work either in the classroom or out of class. And also 76.5% of the students replied that they were using one single exercise book for all the language skills including the writing tasks, which indicated the limited practice of the writing tasks.

4.2.4 In the above four questionnaire statements (items 2.1,2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) it had been seen that the practical activity of (items 2.2 and 2.6) the students replied that 36.7% of them wanted their teachers to insist on their writing lessons, where as 49% of them were in need to be left freely as they were in short of time preparing for the entrance exam.

As a whole, from the above data analysis and descriptions, it was found out that there was low practical engagement for the writing tasks. But some scholars state that learning is not so much a matter of taking in and possessing of knowledge but rather of the taking part in activities (Ellis, 2003:176).

Part Three: Time for correction and feedback

Feed back is an essential element in the implementation of continuous assessment. It enables students to build up their strengths and learn from their comments given and try to resolve their drawbacks through guidance. Teachers can also get information about how well they are teaching, so that they can make needed changes and continue doing things effectively (Brown 2004:160). Feedback improves learning when it provides constructive comments and guidance on how to improve learning. Thus, in part 3 questionnaires, it was aimed at to investigate how far this important tool had been used effectively in teaching grade 12 writing skills. Hereafter, the data results in table 3 are to be discussed as follows.

Table4.3: Frequency, percentage and mean of responses for correction and feed back of the writing practices

Item No	Statements (items)		5	4	3	2	1	Mean
			Strong agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strong agree	
1	It is a good habit if teachers collect their students' writing works every week end for written comments and feedback	F	24	18	11	20	25	3.0
		%	24.5	18.4	11.2	20.4	25.5	
2*	Students do not need to bring their English textbooks for writing classes, because writing is not like other activities to be done from the textbooks.	F	41	14	10	17	16	3.5
		%	41.8	14.3	10.2	17.3	16.3	
3	Sometimes, we exchange our writing tryouts and do peer corrections in the classrooms.	F	38	19	5	22	14	3.5
		%	38.8	19.4	5.1	22.5	14.3	
4	Till now, our writing works, were collected and taken by the English teacher for feedback for more than 3 times	F	17	13	19	15	34	2.6
		%	17.4	13.3	19.3	15.3	34.7	
5	Our English teachers give corrections and feedback to our writing works both in written form and orally to the whole class.	F	18	12	13	26	29	2.6
		%	18.4	12.2	13.3	26.5	29.6	
6	I am willing to exchange my English writing exercise book with my class mates for correction	F	14	7	6	33	38	2.1
		%	13.3	7.1	6.1	33.7	38.8	

(*) unfavorable items

() favorable items

The statements in (items 4.3.1 and 4.3.6) were meant to reflect the students' willingness or reluctance to make the writing practices ready for teachers' feedback and their feelings on peer correction and feedback. There, 45.9% of the students responded that they didn't like their writing exercise books to be collected in the weekends for teachers' written comments, and 42% of the students responded positively, and 12.1% undecided. Similarly, 72.5% of the respondents showed their unwillingness to exchange their English writings for peer feedback. This indicates that more than half of the students' population were not active to make their writing works ready for the weekends, and for the peer correction as well. The other statements (items 4.3.3, 4.3.4 and 4.3.5) were also meant to infer the actual feedback experiences data. As a result, 50% of them informed that as there were no written comments till then; 56.1% of them responded for oral and whole class feedback. And 58.2 responded for sometimes peer correction. The rest up to 19.7% informed as they were undecided. They didn't have clear idea how the feedback was being held. Along with the writing practices and feedback investigations the text book consideration was viewed in statement (item 4.3.2). Then, above average (55.1%) of them relegated using the text book for writing classes, having thought writing as productive skill which requires producing effective thoughts. But, a writing text book might provide model compositions and a list of topics for students to write about (Richards 2001:254). Textbooks have vital and positive roles to play in the day to day teaching and learning languages. For learners, textbook helps them to do activities and exercises, studying on their won, doing home work; for teachers, it saves time, gives direction to lessons, make teaching easier, faster, better, and most of all text books provide confidence and security (Hutchinson and Tarres, 1994:317-327).

4.4. Data Obtained through Teachers' Interviews

Interview is mostly seen as a discussion between an interviewer and respondent (s), which sets out to provide data for the former. Interview is any person to person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind (Kumar, 1990:109).

The 3 commonly used types of interviews are: structured, unstructured and semi-structured. Structured interview is organized a by the interviewer in advance. The structured interviewee is advantageous to collect topic related information, but it has limitations in allowing flexibility to

the interviewee. Unstructured interview on the other hand provokes flexibility and self organizations of respondents. Dyer (1995) states that unstructured interview sometimes may result in drifting out of the topic and poor time management as the interviewee keeps on talking things that come to his/her mind. Dyer has also a third category, semi-structured interview, which combines structured and unstructured forms. And in this study it was semi-structured interview which was employed (see appendix IV).

The interview questions were organized to collect information from grade 12 English teachers particularly on teaching and learning English writing skills. The purpose of the data collection was to investigate the English teachers' perceptions of the time factor and their engagements in teaching and learning English writing skills at preparatory level; and also to check the appropriation of the writing tasks schedule to the writing tasks syllabus. The interviewees were 6 grade 12 English teachers, and the interview questions were 12 into 3 parts with 4 interview questions respectively. Those interview questions were meant to provide data for the hypothesized statements in the specific objectives and research questions in chapter one.

Thus, the core elements of the investigation can be classified into: Perceptions of teachers on the time factor in teaching English writing skills, their practical writing engagements, how the writing feedback was done, and the appropriation of writing tasks schedule in contrast to the writing tasks syllabus.

So then, the discussions of the interview results were presented as follows.

Selected Interviewees' Responses for the Subsequent Discussion.

Question 1: Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom?

Teacher__U: “ *Infact it is not enough Plus it depends on the nature of that daily lesson.*

If not, what do you do ?.....”I tell them to write it at home as a homework.”

Question 2 : Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

"...Even though it doesn't have direct relation with the exam, they have to take it for general knowledge."

Question 3: Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situation?

" ... I don't think so..." Please say what you have in brief? *"...As I mentioned above in (1.2) I give different types of writing in addition to the writing activities in the textbook."*

Question 4: Some individuals argue that, " all grade 12 students are not to be English major students when they join universities. So, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters and leave the rest for a while." What is your opinion and comments here?

Unless students who join universities are able enough to use the language, he/she can't be "... I, don't agree with this idea because English language is key fo every field of study. successful in the course."

Question 5: Approximately, how many period(s) does each writing lesson take you to teach?

"... It is difficult to measure, but to say some points, most of the periods are used for writing. Because they daily take notes on any discussion, do exercises. So, they write along with the other subjects of leanings."

Question 6: At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion in the given a 40 minutes period?

"... They do some of the students but not all students. But they don't finish it within the given time."

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

"... As I think there are many reasons. But the main reason is lack of good background knowledge."

Question 7: Do students often come to class with their writing home works done? If not what do you think the reasons might be?

"... There are some students who come to class with their writing home works done. But majority of them are not interested in doing the writing works."

Question 1.8: How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

"...If it is in their daily activity, I give the feedback by telling or giving the right way in the class, But if it is given as an assignment just I try to give them the feedback in writing as much as possible."

Question 9: Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school year?

"... No, it is difficult to cover within the school year, because the textbook is too bulky even it is not easy to carry and bring it to the classroom, and I found that this is one of the reasons that students do not like to bring their textbook to class."

Question 10: Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to them suit to the teaching situation?

"... in fact not, even when we select at the department level we focus on the language use, meaning grammar, and the review mainly."

Question 11: Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class?

"...Most of the writing activity feedback is addressed the class one at a time, and writing some important points on the blackboard. And instead of giving the feedback by myself, I give chance to my students to participate in the answers and I should be selective for the feedback."

Question 12: Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and how to teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2003)?

"...No, not at all, I haven't been to any orientation or workshop."

Note to the Discussion: Here after, there is no need to write the interview questions repeatedly. Just, (Qn...n0, for the question number) is to be indicated as to be referred from the above discussions and follow the respondents responses:

Question...n0... 2.....

"...It is advisable to teach the four types of writing (Descriptive, Expository, Narrative, and Argumentative), and the mechanics which mostly appear in the Entrance Exam to us the limited time resource economically."

Question...n0...4.....

".... The importance of learning writing skills goes beyond preparing for the university entrance exam. To be competent in the higher education sectors good writing ability is inevitable."

Question...n0...6.....

"...Writing is highly dependent on the other English skills such as reading, vocabulary, grammar; and discrepancy of these skills is high among students which stops them from writing."

Questions.. n0...7.....

"... It were the literature in the prose fictions and poems that arouse students' motivations for writing, but nowadays such like movements are rarely seen in the high schools."

Question...n0...10.....

"... I have had the idea in mind that literature in language teaching were to provide good models for reading and writing. But in our context such like materials are not available."

Question...n0...11.....

"...And in our case all the English skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar) are being taught by one individual English teacher, and the teaching environment is not motivating."

Question...n0...12.....

"...Orientations on how to use and teach the text book is needed to effectively practices the textbook according to the varying situations."

Question...no...1.3.....

"...I don't think that the teaching of writing is to be improved with the current teaching and time table; because currently, writing is taught in the inclusion with the other English skills, and teachers do not have sufficient time to concentrate on writing which requires much time."

Question.. n0...5.....

"...On an average each writing lesson takes me 2 periods to teach, but it varies according to the type of the writing lesson , such as essay writing ma take more time."

Question...n0...2.....

"...It is obvious that writing is time consuming and needs to be practiced rather than theoretically learnt. But unfortunately it unique characteristics didn't get due attention by syllabus designers and teachers."

Question...no...4.....

"...what is seen here is that, writing as a tool for higher education has not gained the consideration of learners and syllabus designers."

Question...n0...3.....

"...I don't think writing at grade 12 be effective at the present situation, because, whether we like it or not , writing skill can't be improved without giving much time and practice."

Question..no... 7.....

"...Most of the students do not come to class with their home works done. The reasons might be, they have born in mind that as it were to waste their time, and in addition too, they have lacked the awareness, of the importance of the writing skills for their higher education."

Question...n0...7.....

"...It is not possible to cover the syllabus in the school year, because the syllabus content and the time allotted to the writing tasks do not match."

Question...no...12.....

"...specially, when a new textbook is to be implemented it is necessary to introduce the teachers, so that they could adapt to their actual and local situations."

Question...n0...7.....

"...I think the students do not have a good practice of writing in the past and this makes them to ignore doing the writing practices, mostly."

Question...no...4.....

"...We practically focus on the exam oriented writing subject-matters, but for one thing, English is not learnt for the sake of only English, and rather it is a medium of instruction for the other courses given in the universities."

Question...n0...8.....

"...In the first place it needs to persuade students for peer correction and feedback, and secondly, it needs the teachers commitment to deal with the hard and complex writing work."

Question...n0...7.....

"... Because of the large class size and high period load, it is not easy for the teacher to handle written feedback."

Discussions on the Above Interview Questions and Their Replies.

4.4.1 Perceptions of teachers on the time factor in teaching English writing skills (items 1 to 4): with the statement (item 1) five of the six informants responded that most often their students were not in a position to complete their daily writing lessons within the given 40 minutes period, but one of the six respondents replied that it depended on the type of the writing tasks. This implies that 83.3% of the teachers had the attitude that time (a 40 minutes period) would hinder the writing tasks accomplishments. And statement (item 3) was meant to reveal the courage the teachers had to overcome the problems that had affected their writing practices. Questions item .3, " Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situations?" Replies: (Teacher -Z) "I don't think that it might be effective; because whether it is acceptable or not, writing skill cannot be improved without giving much time and practice." (Teacher -V) "I don't think so, the time allotted is inadequate, and students are not motivated and interested." (Teacher- W) "I don't think that can be true, because currently, writing is taught in the inclusion with the other skills of English and teachers do not have sufficient time to concentrate on writing which requires much time."

The replies of the informants interacted with the beliefs reflected in the above (item1.1) that indicated as time inadequacy deterred their writing practices.

The other two statements (items 2 and 4) were designed to find out whether the writing tasks practices drifted from their set objectives due to the perceptions developed by the (teachers and students). Questions” ... what if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the university entrance exam be left off to save time for their study?”..... it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented writing subject matters and leave the rest for a while.”

Replies obtained: (Teacher – U) To prepare my students for the university entrance exam, I use some of their time by teaching the most important writing concepts and the like. (Teacher_ W) “It is advisable to teach the four types of writing (Descriptive, Expository, Narrative and argumentative), and the mechanics (punctuation marks) which mostly appear in the university entrance exam to use the limited time resource wisely.” (Teacher –V) “This can’t be a good idea, but the situation in which we are urges us to teach exam oriented subject matters. The portion in the syllabus is larger than the given time to teach. In addition too, students are not willing and interested to work on the details of the writing tasks.” The responses obtained above, indicated that there was a tendency to push aside the writing tasks in the syllabus because of two major outcomes. Firstly, both the teachers and students inclined to view their teaching and learning in light of the university entrance exam and were uncomfortable with the details. Secondly, the time limitations and unmanageable syllabus coverage prevented them from striving to complete the writing tasks in the syllabus.

4.4.2 The actual engagements in the writing practices (items 3 to 7) according to (Rogers and Katherine, 2007), sound practice rests on sound theoretical understanding; without a strong foundation in theoretical constructions the optimal application of the procedures, methods and techniques might be undesirable. Writing which is a productive process is learnt through writing. Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) write that if learners are expected to develop writing skills, they need to work on writing skills; they need to work on writing skill activities in class under the teachers’ supervision as well as writing out of class. And in this part of the interview questions what was desired to investigate was the extent of the efforts made both by teachers and students to practice the writing skills. How often did they have the writing tasks practice in the classroom

and out of class? The students' competence to produce texts to the level of expectation and the feedback practices.

Replies: (Teacher- U) "At the present situations, some grade 12 students try to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, but it is not with all students."

(Teacher -W) "Most of the students find it as difficult task to produce any text on their own. The reasons might be, as writing is highly dependent on the other skills such as reading, vocabulary and grammar; and discrepancy of these skills is high among students."

(Teacher_ X) "To some extent grade 12 students try to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports and the like; but they lose interest, motivation and commitment to do the writing."

(Teacher -Y) "They try to do the writing practice to some extent, but I think the students are not willing to do much writing practices."

(Teacher -V) "The students at grade 12 level are not good at producing written texts; the reasons might be -time constraint, inability to do the tasks, and lack of interest."

(Teacher - Z) "It is not easy to give written comments, feedback and corrections to students' writing activities: they don't show willingness to peer corrections, mostly they come to class with their assignment undone, and large class size is another problem and so on." In the above information obtained the theory 'which is the basis for practice, invites more and more practice and time allotment; on the other hand all the six respondents confirmed that due to time constraint, students little interest, difficulties of large class size for feedback and corrections, minimized the actual engagements of students writing practices.

4.4.3 The English writing tasks in grade 12 in contrast to the assigned schedule (items 9 to 12).

Table 4.4: Interview respondents and their responses

Seq.	Interview questionnaire	Responses given	Respondents	
1	Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school term/year?	No, it is not possible (time doesn't allow)	z,y,x,w,v,u	
2	Have you ever thought/ tried to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?	No, I haven't ever thought	z,y,w,x	
3	Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class only?	Mostly orally and on the black board	z,y,w	
	Have you ever been to any work shop or training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English text book (2006 E.C)?	No, I have never been to any work shop or training .	z,y,w,x,v,u	

According to the above respondents: the teachers had never been to any workshop, training or orientation on how to use and how to teach the grade 12 English textbook. Obviously, this resulted, teachers' reservation to act on writing tasks adoption to their environment (item 3.2). Except one teacher out of the six, five of them confirmed that as they could not cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school year.

In regard to the feedback and written comments, all of the respondents mentioned the difficulties they faced, and told as they were mostly using oral and blackboard corrections. Therefore, it was possible to infer unsolved problems among the writing syllabus uncoverage; the inappropriate schedule for the writing tasks, and the uniformed (not well oriented) teachers about the textbook they use.

4.5 Data Obtained through Classroom observation

Lesson observation was important because it supplemented the interview and questionnaire methods in cross checking if what the respondents 'say and do' corresponds. Action can best be understood when it is observed in the context in which it occurs (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992).

4.5.1 Classroom conditions

4.5.1.1 Description: There were 16 sections of grade 12 with 60 to 62 students each (A-P).

4.5.1.2 Sitting arrangements: 3 students were made to sit in a desk.

4.5.1.3 Spacing: row sitting ($3 \times 7 = 21$ desks), the space didn't allow to rearrange the desks for groups works.

4.4.1.4 Objective of the writing lesson: To enable students to write 10 rules for a new society.

4.5.1.5 Date of observation: March 24th (3rd period in the morning shift) and March 25th (1st period in the morning), sections were 'A' and 'E', 2006 E.C.

4.5.2 Classroom observation: Lesson content (Grade 12 English Textbook, page 240).

Unit B 10.7 writing: 10 rules for a new society.

The group of seven professionals, plus one or two VIPs who were able to find a place for themselves, have now arrived at the earth colony on Mars. There are equal number of men and women.

Before you left earth, it was decided that the colony should be run on cooperative principles: there is no leader and decisions are made collectively by two- thirds majority vote. You have now been here for a few weeks and it is obvious that a set of rules is needed to govern how your small society runs. You are all agreed that to keep things as simple as possible, there should be only ten rules.

1. Work in a group. Brain storms some possible rules.
2. Reduce your possible rules to a list of ten. You must agree these rules by two- thirds majority.
3. When you have agreed them, write them as formally as possible on a piece of paper.
4. Display them to the rest of the class, and then read the lists produced by all the other groups.
5. Nominate the best rules from each group lists and come to a two- thirds majority agreement on a class list of rules for the new colony.

4.5.3 Lesson procedure (Method)

1. Go through the instructions with the students.
2. Revise social expressions like: what I mean is ..., what I meant was ..., Let me put it another way .., what I'm trying to say is....
3. Students brainstorm in their groups.
4. A scribe (secretary) in each group writes these on a sheet of paper and a spokes person from each group read them aloud to the rest of the class.
5. Get students to nominate and vote on the 10 best rules for a new society and write them on the black board.
6. Note: Point out to your students that it is better to use positive statements when starting rules, rather than negative ones. E.g. we respect and care for our environment is better than 'don't damage the environment'. Modal verbs are useful for starting rules as well. E.g. we must/should respect one another's differences [Source: Grade 12 English, teacher guide, page 102].
7. The classroom observations were made based on the observation checklist which was prepared to investigate students' and teachers' engagements of the writing tasks in the classroom. The observations were made in two classes, on similar content of the writing task. This was done (12 'A' and 'E') to strengthen the information obtained prove/disprove. The observations were made to the students in the specific objectives and to answer the research questions (1.4.3 and 1.4.4) about the time adequacy and their practical engagements. And the observation results were discussed as follows teacher's role; student's role; and the time factor.

- A. **Teacher's role:** The teacher attempted to present the writing task in accordance with the lesson procedure (Grade 12 English teacher's guide, page 102). But the 40 minutes period made him to stop at the drafting stage. The teacher had gone through the instructions and made students brainstorm in groups, noted that it is better to use positive statements when starting rules, E.g. we respect and care for our environment, is better than, don't damage the environment.
- B. **Students' role:** Majority of the students showed interest and participation. They discussed the instructions and were organized in a group of 3 students (because the row sitting didn't allow more than 3 students). Each group had a scribe/secretary and brainstormed and listed the 10 best rules for a new society. But because of the time constraint (a 40 minutes) they couldn't run (process) all the planning, drafting, and writing the final version stages; and they were made to stop at the drafting stage.
- C. **The time factor:** There were 28 writing tasks assigned to be completed in the 28 given periods in the school year. This is on an average one 40 minutes period in a week's schedule. But as observed in the two observation classes the period was over at the drafting stage. One important point that should be clear here is that if that writing lesson was extended to the next period, it was to take the forth coming tasks period which affects the syllabus coverage. According to the syllabus schedule an average of one 40 minuets period in a week, and 28 writing tasks were assigned to the 28 periods in the school year. In addition too, when the writing periods lack continuity, the lesson interval may lead to the difficulty of linking the subject-matters.

4.6 Analysis of writing skills syllabus content versus writing skills time allocation

The grade 12 English syllabus consists the following contents of writing skills;

4.6.1 Map of the Book

Unit (1) B 1.4 memories	Unit (8) B 8.7 An essay
B 1.7 A formal letter	Unit (9) A 9,7 A report
Unit (2) A 2.11 A mind map	B. 9.9 An essay
A 2.12 An essay	Unit (10) A 10.5 A description

B 2.4 A report	A 10.7 A report
Unit (3) A 3.4 self assessment	A10.8 A formal letter
B 3.6 An essay	B 10.7 Ten rules for a new society
Unit (4) B 4.7 A film review	Unit (11) A 11. 3.A summary
Unit (5) A. 5.7 A good leader	A. 11.8 A dialogue
B 5.12 A report	B. 11.3 A review of television show
Unit (6) A 6.7 A leaflet on fair trade	B 11.9 Formal letters
B 6.6 A summary	Unit (12) B 12.1 planning, preparing and producing a class magazine
B. 6.11 A business letter	
Unit (7) A 7.9 A profile	
B. 7.8 A letter of application	

Source: grade 12 English: teacher guide (PP iv and vi). MOE (2003 E.C).

The above list of writing skill contents accounts that there are 28 writing skill tasks respectively

4.6.2 Guide to lesson planning

The following guide to lesson planning is for the teacher's convenience. It is based on a 36 weeks school year, with each of the 12 units divided into 6 periods a week, and includes 4 revision units and an end of year examination. It is meant as a guide and is not a prescriptive. Teacher's should adapt it to suit their own class and local conditions.

Unit (1) 2 Writing lessons in 2 periods

Unit (2) 3 writing lessons in 3 periods

Unit (3) 2 writing lessons in 2 periods

Unit (4) 1 writing lessons in 1 periods

Unit (5) 2 writing lessons in 2 periods

Unit (6) 3 writing lessons in 3 periods

Unit (7) 2 writing lessons in 2 periods

Unit (8) 1 writing lessons in 1 periods

Unit (9) 2 writing lessons in 2 periods

Unit (10) 5 writing lessons in 5 periods

Unit (11) 4 writing lessons in 4 periods

Unit (12) 1 writing lessons in 1 periods

Source: Grade 12 English teacher guide (pp.xi and xii) MOE(2003 E.C) note: the duration of one period is 40 minutes.

The above writing tasks lesson distribution (4.4.1) and time tabling (4.4.2) shows that for each of the writing tasks what is provided is one 40 minutes period

4.7 A typical writing schedule

A typical week's writing schedule using (TIP) Balanced approach

Monday ----- teach strategy

Tuesday ----- practice writing

Wednesday ----- introduce skills, generally mini lessons

Thursday ----- re- teach strategy

Friday ----- practice writing

Source: Rogers and Katherine (2007:19).

This standard guide line to the writing schedule indicates that teaching the writing lesson's strategy the day before is followed by writing practice the day after.

4.8 Summary of the Research Findings

4.8.1 Questionnaire data analysis results of the students'

4.8.2 Interview questions data analysis results of the teachers'

4.8.3 Classroom observation data analysis results

4.8.4 Writing skills schedule allocation

From the very beginning the aim of this study was to investigate: the influence that the time factor created on the students' and teachers' perceptions; the practical engagements of the writing practice; the writing tasks feedback and the appropriateness of the writing skills syllabus versus to the writing skills schedule.

4.8.1 Questionnaire data analysis results of the students'

4.8.1.1 In questionnaire part one (table 1, items 2.3) the data results and discussions revealed the students' perceptions of : a) more than half of the students (65% , 56%) replied as the duration of a 40 minutes period was inadequate to complete their writing tasks.' b) In using the textbook for the learning of the writing tasks (item1), 70.4% of them did not like it. C) Having had the reasons, "I will not be an English major student," "the writing tasks in the textbooks are not exam oriented." "It may take much of my study time," (table 1, items 4, 5, 6); rather they had the attitude not to spend much time and effort on the writing tasks practice.

4.8.1.2 Questionnaire part two (table 2, items 2.1-2.6) was on the students' actual engagements of their writing practices. The highlighted findings were, 61% of the students said, they faced shortage of time to do their writing practice both in the classroom and out of class; 59% of them replied, they felt as there was no much progress or improvement with their writing competence; 49% of them did not like that their teachers to insist on the writing tasks; and 76% of them were using only one single exercise book for all the English skills (listening, speaking

rereading writing, grammar and vocabulary) which implies that there was no much need of the writing materials and less writing practice.

4.8.1.3 Questionnaire part three (table 3, items 3.1-3.6) was on the students' writing tasks feedback and comments.

In consideration of the writing feedback and comments the data analysis indicated the following results 45.9% of the students reported as they were not ready to submit their writing works for the weekends teacher feedback and comments, 72.5% of the students replied as they lost confidence with peer correction, 50% of them confirmed as they had not had any written feedback till then, 56.1% of the students said, they were given oral and blackboard feedback and corrections.

4.8.2 Teachers' interview questions data analysis summary

According to the interviewee informants the data information obtained was: (i) five of the six informants which is 83.3% of the teachers had reflected their perceptions that the 40 minutes period was inadequate to accomplish the given writing tasks (item 1.1). (ii) the teachers' beliefs showed that they viewed the writing tasks in light of the (UEE) university entrance exam and were uncomfortable with the details of the grade 12 writing tasks (items 1.2 and 1.4). (iii) the four out of six teachers which is 66.6% said that most of their students found it as a difficult task to produce texts of their level on their own (item 2.2). (iv) teacher respondents indicated that most of their students didn't show interest in the peer feedback; and as it was hard for the teachers to handle as they had never been to any orientation, workshop or training about how to use and how to teach the grade 12 English textbook (item 3.4). (vi) the teacher respondents confirmed that as they could not cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school year (item 3.1).

4.8.3 Classroom observation data analysis summary

With the classroom observation the teacher's and the students' roles were fairly done well. The teacher followed the lesson procedure (method) in the Grade 12 English, Teacher Guide: 102). The students were organized in a group of 3 students. They had a group secretary and students brainstormed in their groups. the writing tasks would have gone through the pre- writing

(planning), Drafting (organizing of the body) and revising (writing the final version); but the 40 minutes period was over when they were working at the drafting stage.

4.8.4 Writing skills syllabus content versus writing skills schedule summary

The grade 12 English writing skills syllabus consisted 28 writing tasks (Ref. grade 12 English. Teacher guide. Pages iv and vi).

The lesson planning time allotment for each of the writing tasks was one 40 minutes period respectively.

Likewise, 28 periods were assigned for the 28 writing tasks in the school year.

Therefore, The data presentation, Analysis, and Discussion followed by the above summary of the research findings, answered the research questions as follows:

1. Students' questionnaire and teachers' interview results revealed that, as they were uncomfortable with the time allocation to the English writing tasks and had unfavorable perceptions.
2. The text analysis versus schedule finding indicated that, the writing syllabus content mismatched with the time allocation.
3. With the classroom observation it was found out that, time limitation deterred the actual writing engagements.
4. Student informants showed unwillingness and disinterest with peer correction and feedback.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objectives of this study were to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of the time factor in teaching and learning English writing skills, to examine their engagements in the writing practice, to compare the writing tasks syllabus content Vs schedule, and to check the feedback and comments. It was learnt from the literature review that English writing tasks were: productive and thoughtful process, time consuming, Complex and laborious, highly dependent on the other English skills, and learnt through practice, practice and practice. Moreover, significant role of perceptions is mentioned in the theory of language learning. In consideration of the English writing skills principles and theoretical concepts, the above mentioned research objectives were set and the study was conducted.

5.1 Conclusions

The conclusion of the study focuses on the statements raised in the specific objectives and research questions: perceptions of teachers' and students' of the time factor in teaching and learning writing skills; their actual engagements of the writing tasks; the writing tasks syllabus content Vs schedule allocation; and the feedback. Accordingly, the following conclusions were reached.

1. The time allocation for the writing tasks mismatched the writing tasks syllabus content. The data analysis from the students' questionnaire, teachers' interview, classroom observation, and syllabus Vs schedule analyses confirmed that students were not able to complete their writing tasks in the given 40 minutes period. Besides this, all teacher interview respondents informed that they could never complete (cover) the writing tasks in the school year with in the allocated 28 periods for 28 writing tasks. This implies that the writing tasks were not well learnt and practiced.
2. The writing skills syllabus content Vs the allocated schedule analysis revealed that even the essay writing report writing, letter writing, and the like, were given one 40 minutes period respectively; which indicated that, it deterred the students' and teachers' writing practices.
3. It was understood from the teachers' interview and students' questionnaire data analyses that most of the students were not interested in spending much time on the writing tasks practice

and were not able to produce thoughts and texts to the level on their own. Such perceptions of teachers' and students' did not bring change in improving students' writing abilities.

4. In the writing syllabus content Vs schedule data analysis findings had made clear that, there was a big mismatch between the size of the writing syllabus content and the allocated time table. The time limitations, a 40 minutes one period for every writing task in the syllabus confined the 28 writing tasks in the syllabus to 28 periods. The time constraint might have developed negative perceptions which may result in turn, ineffectiveness in the students' and teachers' writing tasks engagements.
5. The writing tasks were not evenly distributed throughout the units. For example, in unit four (1), in unit eight (1), but in unit ten (5), in unit eleven (4) writing lessons are assigned. Similarly, the writing lessons distribution was not in the consecutive days (few days interval) which might inhibit uncompleted lessons continuity in the upcoming period.
6. The three stages of writing (pre-writing, drafting and revising) were not fully exercised; rather the period was over at the drafting stage.
7. The students' questionnaire, teachers' interview, and classroom observation data analyses have revealed, the misconceptions that students developed: writing as a time consuming task; the writing tasks as were not exam oriented; as sufficient time was not allocated to the writing tasks-influenced their perceptions of the writing tasks practice which in turn resulted low performance of the writing tasks in minimizing their motivation and participation in the actual writing practice.
8. It was found out from the students' questionnaire and teachers' interview questions analyses that they had the attitude to relegate the English textbook. They perceived as the student textbook writing tasks were not exam oriented and time consuming. The implication would be that the objectives in the students' textbook were not met.
9. The students' questionnaire and teachers' interviews indicated that most of the students were in confident with the peer feedback and unwillingness to exchange their exercise books. This implies that, it had hindered the motivation that feedback creates, and overburdened teachers, which in turn affected the advantages of feedback and comments.
10. The overall teachers' interview data analysis showed that teachers had never been to any orientation, workshop or training in how to use and how to teach the English textbook. This

might be the case that prohibited teachers from seeking solutions for the problems faced in implementing the writing tasks.

In general, we cannot ignore that problems can appear and occur as we implement writing tasks, but, the successful implementation of the writing tasks partly depends upon changes in students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes to practice writing skill tasks. Unless students are given the opportunities to write by themselves and develop confidence in their writing abilities, they may often think that as they were unable to write. The writing skill tasks can be effective if it is adapted to a given teaching and learning situation. And if favorable conditions are to be created for students and are to be given the necessary support, such as adequate time for peace, improve their writing attitudes through discussions, encourage out of class writing engagements,... they can improve their perceptions and experience to build up their writing skills.

5.2 Recommendations

The study in this research attempted to investigate: the students' and teachers' perceptions of the time factor for English writing skills and their writing engagements in preparatory schools at grade 12 levels. And the writing skills syllabus Vs allocated schedule, and feedback comments were included. Having gone through the investigation processes and results found, the following recommendations are suggested for further improvements of English writing skills practices in preparatory schools.

1. To start with what we have in hand, one of the ways to improve the duration of a 40 minutes period which prevented students from completing their writing tasks lessons, can be lengthened to an 80 minutes period by arranging the two writing periods consecutively_ one after the other in the school timetable.
2. One important thing that can be done at the school level to raise the students' perceptions and attitudes positively is that: even if the time constraint is there and less exam oriented writing tasks, the writing practice cannot be passed by to any excuse, because, their writing competence is a decisive factor for the students' higher education successes and achievements. So then, this consciousness and awareness can be cultivated with in the students through well thoughtful and planed discussions organized by collaborative effort of supervisors, school directors and the English department representatives.

3. To create teachers' motivation and build up their perceptions positively, which may result in bringing about effective application of the writing skills syllabus, teachers need to be introduced with the teaching and learning materials (textbook, syllabus, teacher guide) through orientation seminars, workshops, and updating trainings by syllabus designers.
4. Syllabus designers should consider the complex, productive, and time consuming nature of the writing tasks- and allocate adequate time for the writing skill practices and also should balance the size of course content Vs writing tasks schedule.
5. To regain the advantages of feedback and comments to the students' writing skill improvements, rather than letting the English writing skills be taught with the other skills inclusively by one English teacher, it would be effective if it were to be taught separately by the concerned writing skills responsible teacher.
6. English teachers need to give time in their CPD(Continuous Professional Development) program with special focus on how their students could improve their writing skills.

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APPENDICES

Appendix “A” : Students Questionnaire(English Version)

Part one: Perceptions (Beliefs) of the Time factor.

Direction: Five options are given (Strongly agree, Agree, undecided, Disagree, Strongly disagree) and put the cross mark (x) under the column of your choice.

		5	4	3	2	1
Seq.	Statements (Items)	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.1*	Teachers who teach only the mechanics and some other writing lessons which might appear in the University Entrance Exam are in favor of their students and are best liked by their students than those who teach writing from the English textbook.					
1.2	In the writing classroom shortage of time is not a serious problem to stop students' writing practices.					
1.3	The given 40 minutes period is quite enough to tryout the lessons in in the English writing activities.					
1.4*	Students who are not to take English as their major subject at the university level should not waste their time on the writing tasks at grade 12 level.					
1.5*	Compared to reading, speaking, vocabulary and grammar, writing					

	takes a few number of questions in the University Entrance Exam, and actual writing is not included in the exams. So that it is not needed to spend much time on writing skills for grade 12 students.					
1.6*	Writing takes much of the students' study time, so, it is not necessary for grade 12 students.					

PART TWO: THE ACTUAL ENGAGEMENTS IN THE WRITING PRACTICES.

		5	4	3	2	1
Seq	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2.1	I am interested and get the time to produce writing texts, such as paragraphs, letters, reports, essay, and completion of a story, both in the classroom and out of class.					
2.2	It is possible to complete the daily writing lesson within the given 40 minutes period.					
2.3	I have improved my writing ability through classroom and out of class writing practices, and now , I am able to produce ,paragraphs, letters, reports, short stories, etc.					
2.4	I use one single exercise book for learning English reading, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, and writing for it is easy to carry.					
2.5	We do individual or group writing practice every week either in the classroom or as homework writing practices.					
2.6	Grade 12 English teachers should not insist their students to do writing tasks as they are running in short of time.					

PART THREE: TIME FOR CORRECTION AND FEEDBACK

		5	4	3	2	1
Seq	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
3.1	It is a good habit if teachers collect their students' writing works every week end for written comments and feedback.					
3.2	Students do not need to bring their English textbooks for writing classes, because writing is not like other exercises (activities) to be done from textbooks.					
3.3	Sometimes, we exchange our writing tryouts and do peer corrections in the classrooms.					
3.4	Till now, our writing works , were collected and taken by the English teacher for feedback for more than 3 times.					
3.5	Our English teachers give corrections and feedback to our writing works both in written form and orally to the whole class.					
3.6	I am willing to exchange my English writing exercise book with my classmates for correction.					

ጅማ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የእንግሊዘኛ ቋንቋና ስነፅሁፍ ትምህርት ክፍል

የምርምር መረጃ መሰብሰቢያ ቅፅ

ተመራማሪው አቶ መኮንን እሸቴ (የሁለተኛ ዲግሪ ማሟያ ጥናት) መጋቢት 2006 ዓ.ም

መጠይቅ:- በጅማ መሰናጸ ስ/ቤት 112ኛ ክፍል ተማሪዎች የተዘጋጀ፡፡

ተማሪዎቹ፡ ይህ መጠይቅ የ12 ክፍል የእንግሊዘኛ ቋንቋ ትምህርት በተለይም የፅህፈት ክህሎት ትምህርትን ይመለከታል፡፡

ስም መፃፍ አያስፈልግም፡፡ ነፃ ሆናችሁ አርፍተ ነገሩን ካነበባችሁ በኋላ በምትስማሙበት ሳጥን ውስጥ ይህን ምልክት ☒ አድርጉ፡፡

ተ.ቁ	የመጠይቁ አርፍተ ነገር	5	4	3	2	1
		በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	አልወሰንኩም	አልስማማም	ፈጽሞ አልስማማም
	ክፍል አንድ					
1	የእንግሊዘኛ የመጻፍ ክህሎት ትምህርትን በሚመለከት የተማሪዎችን ጊዜ ለመቆጣጠል ሲሉ ከመማሪያ መጻፉ ውጪ፤ ፈተና ላይ ሊመጡ የሚችሉ ነገሮችን ብቻ እየፈለጉ የሚያስተምሩ መምህራን የመማሪያ መጻፉን ከሚጠቀሙት ተመራጭ ናቸው፡፡					
1.2	በእንግሊዘኛ የጽህፈት ትምህርት ክፍል ጊዜ የሚፈለገውን የጽህፈት ስራ ለማጠናቀቅ የጊዜ እጥረት አሳሳቢ ችግር አይደለም፡፡					
3	የእንግሊዘኛ የጽሁፍ ስራ መልመጃዎችን ለመስራትና ለማጠናቀቅ የ 40 ደቂቃ ክፍለ ጊዜው በቂ ነው፡፡					
1.4	በዩኒቨርሲቲ ትምህርታቸው እንግሊዘኛን መርጠው ለመማር ያላሰቡ ተማሪዎች በ12ኛ ክፍል ቆይታቸው፤ ለእንግሊዘኛ የጽህፈት ስራ ልምምድ ብዙ ጊዜ እንዲሰጡ የሚጠበቅባቸው አይሆንም፡፡					

1.5	በዩኒቨርሲቲ የመግቢያ ፈተና ሲታይ ቀጥተኛ የእንግሊዘኛ የጽህፈት ፈተና አልተካተተም፡፡ በእንግሊዘኛ ፈተና የሚካተቱ የእንግሊዘኛ የጽህፈት ጥያቄዎችም ብዙ ስላይደሉ፤ እዚህ 12ኛ ክፍል ላይ ብዙ የጽህፈት ስራ በመስራት ጊዜ ማባከን ተገቢ አይደለም፡፡					
1.6	የ12ኛ ክፍል ተማሪዎች በጥናት የተወጠሩ ናቸው፡፡ ስለዚህ በሌላቸው ጊዜ የእንግሊዘኛ የመጻፍ ልምምድ እንዲያደርጉ ከማስጨነቅ ተወት ሊደረጉ ይገባል፡፡					
	ክፍል ሁለት					
2.1	ተገቢውን ጊዜ በመስጠት በክፍል ውስጥና ከክፍል ውጪ እንደ ድርሰት፣ ደብዳቤ፣ ሪፖርት፣ ጎደሎ ፅሁፍን ማሟላት የመሳሰሉትን ለመስራት ፈቃደኛና ደስተኛ ነኝ፡፡					
2.2	የክፍል ውስጥና የክፍል ውጪ የጽሁፍ ስራዎችን በሚገባ አጠናቅቃለሁ፡፡					
2.3	በክፍል ውስጥና ከክፍል ውጪ በማደርጋቸው ልምምዶች የእንግሊዘኛ የጽሁፍ ችሎታዬን ከጊዜ ወደ ጊዜ እያሻሻልኩ መጥቻለሁ፡፡					
4	ለአያያዝ ስለሚያመች ለሁሉም የእንግሊዘኛ ክህሎቶች (ለንግግር፣ ለንባብ፣ ለቃላት፣ ለግራመር ለጽህፈት) የምጠቀመው አንድ ደብተር ነው፡፡					
2.5	በየሳምንቱ ሁለት ቀናት በግል ወይም በቡድን በክፍል ውስጥና ከክፍል ውጪ የመጻፍ ልምምድ እናደርጋለን፡፡					
2.6	የ12ኛ ክፍል ተማሪዎች ለዩኒቨርሲቲ መግቢያ ፈተና እየተዘጋጁ ስለሆነ መምህራን ፅሁፍ እንዲጽፉ በማድረግ ጊዜያቸውን መሻማት ተገቢ አይደለም፡፡					
	ክፍል ሶስት					
3.1	መምህራን በየሳምንቱ መጨረሻ የተማሪዎችን የጽሁፍ ስራዎች እየሰበሰቡ የሚያርሙ ቢሆን ጥሩ ልማድ ነው፡፡					

3.2	የጽሀፊት ትምህርት ከመማሪያ መጽሃፍ የሚጻፍ ስላይደለ ተማሪዎች በእንግሊዘኛ የጽሀፊት ትምህርት ክፍል ጊዜ መጻፋቸውን ይዘው እንዲመጡ አይጠበቅባቸውም፡፡					
3.3	ለእንግሊዘኛ የጽሁፍ ልምምዳችን በየጊዜው የእርስ በርስ ደብተር ልውውጥ እርማት ይደረጋል፡፡					
3.4	ት/ቤት ከተከፈተ እስካሁን ከሶስት ጊዜ በላይ የእንግሊዘኛ የጽሁፍ ስራዎችን ተሰብስበው ታርመዋል፡፡					
3.5	አንዱን የጽሁፍ ስራ ስንጨርስ፤ ወደሚቀጥለው ከማለፋችን በፊት ለቀደመው የጽሁፍ ስራ በግል ወይም በጥቅል እርማት መስጠት የተለመደ ነው፡፡					
3.6	በእንግሊዘኛ የጽሁፍ ስራዬ ከክፍል ጓደኞቼ ጋር ተለዋውጬ ለማረም ፈቃደኛ ነኝ፡፡					

Appendix “C” : Teachers’ Interview Questions

Jimma University

College Of Social sciences And Law

Department Of English Language And Literature

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: For Grade 12 English teachers At Jimma Preparatory School.

I am conducting research for the fulfillment of MA Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Dear Teacher: These interview questions focus on teaching and learning writing skills at grade 12. You are kindly requested to provide your replies without any reservation. There is no need of writing your names. Your replies are secured and they are to be used only for academic purposes.

Researcher: Mekonnen Eshetie (March, 2006 E.C.)

Thank you for your cooperation

PART ONE: Perceptions (Beliefs) Of The Time factor.

1.1 Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom? _____

If not, what do you do? _____

1.2 Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

State your opinions please:

1.3 Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situations? _____

Please say what you have in brief:

1.4 Some individuals argue that, "all grade 12 students who are to join university are not to be English major students. So, to avoid time limitations, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters' and leave the rest for a while."

What is your opinion and comments here? _____

PART TWO: The Actual Engagements In Writing Practices.

2.1 Approximately, how many teaching period(s) does each writing lesson (activity) take you to teach?

2.2 At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, in the given period?

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

2.3 Do students often come to class with their writing home works done?

If not, what do you think the reasons might be? _____

2.4 How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

PART THREE: The English Writing Tasks Schedule Appropriateness.

3.1 Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school term/year? _____

3.2 Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?

Please discuss what you feel on this point:

3.3 Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class orally?_____

Please state what you have further

3.4 Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2006 E.C.)?

Please brief your opinion:

APPENDIX "D" : CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (TEFL)

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE LINE

School_____

Textbook_____

Grade_____

Unit_____ Lesson_____ Page_____

No. of Students_____

Date_____ Time_____

Researcher_Mekonnen Eshetie

Phase	Guide Line	Activities Observed	Comments
Stage 1 Planning(think, Brainstorm, plan)	<p>1. Does the instructor give preliminary introduction about the topic?</p> <p>2. Do students show readiness in listening, and having instructional materials and taking notes?</p> <p>3. Is proper instruction given and students understand what to do and how to do?</p> <p>4.Is brain storming done with the whole class participation, in pairs, or in groups?</p>		
Stage 2 Drafting	<p>5. As drafting is the most important part of writing, is emphasis being given to this part?</p>		

	6. Does the instructor go round class and help students?		
Stage3 Final Version (check, rewrite, Proof read)	<p>7. Does the period still allow doing the final version and are students able to write the finale version?</p> <p>8. What has been said about the Correction, feedback and rewriting based on comments?</p> <p>9. In general, are the steps of writing processed through the teaching and learning?</p> <p>10. Does the writing lesson end up in producing any script as set in the objective?</p>		

Source (for the stages): Grade 12 English Teacher Guide (2006 E.C.) page 137.

Any other

comments: _____

Appendix “ E”: Teachers’ Interview Questions and Their Replies.

Jimma University

College Of Social sciences And Law

Department Of English Language And Literature

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: For Grade 12 English teachers At Jimma Preparatory School. *(Teacher "U")*

I am conducting research for the fulfillment of MA Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Dear Teacher: These interview questions focus on teaching and learning writing skills at grade 12. You are kindly requested to provide your replies without any reservation. There is no need of writing your names. Your replies are secured and they are to be used only for academic purposes.

Researcher: Mekonnen Eshetie (March, 2006 E.C.)

Thank you for your cooperation

PART ONE: Perceptions (Beliefs) Of The Time factor.

- 1.1 Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom? In fact it is not enough plus it depends on the nature of that daily lesson.

If not, what do you

do? I tell them to write it at home as a home work.

- 1.2 Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

Even though it does not have direct relation to the exam, they have to take it for general knowledge.

State your opinions please:

To prepare my students for the university entrance, I use some of their times by teaching the most important parts (concerning writing) such as narrative writing, argumentative writing, expository writing, descriptive writing and the likes.

- 1.3 Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situations?

I don't think so, because most of the writing activity is repeated in each unit.

Please say what you have in brief:

As I mentioned above (1.2) I give different types of writing in addition to the writing activities in the text book.

- 1.4 Some individuals argue that, "all grade 12 students who are to join university are not to be English major students. So, to avoid time limitations, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters' and leave the rest for a while."

What is your opinion and comments

here? I really don't agree with idea because English language is key for any field of study. Unless the student who enter the university is able enough to use the language, he/she can't be successful in the course.

PART TWO: The Actual Engagements In Writing Practices.

2.1 Approximately, how many teaching period(s) does each writing lesson (activity) take you to teach?

It is difficult to measure. But to say some points here, most of the periods are used for writing. Because they daily take notes on any discussion, do the exercises/as class or home works) so, they write.

2.2 At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, in the given period?

They do these thing (but not all students) but they don't finish it within the given time.

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

As I think the reasons are many, but the main one is lack of background knowledge. In the previous class^{es} (grades) they are not exposed for such activity as we do now.[^]

2.3 Do students often come to class with their writing home works done?

If not, what do you think the reasons might

be? There are some students who come to class with their writing homework regularly, but majority of them are not maybe because of lack of interest, being so careless and the like.

2.4 How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

If it is in their daily activity, I give the feedback by telling (giving) the right way in the class, but if it given as an assignment (individually or in small groups), I try to give the feedback on their paper.

PART THREE: The English Writing Tasks Schedule Appropriation

3.1 Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school term/year?

No, it is difficult to cover within the term (year) because the text book is too bulky even it is not simple to carry it and I found that this is one of the reason that students don't like to carry.

3.2 Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?

In fact not; even when we select (at the department level)

We focus on the language use (meaning grammar) and the review questions mainly.

Please discuss what you feel on this point:

Most teachers are running to cover the portion whether the learner understood or not but as to me, I try to focus on each skills of language because all are equally important

3.3 Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class

orally? It depends. Most of the writing activity feedback is addressing the whole class orally but also in written form on the board.

Please state what you have further

Instead of giving the feedback by my self, I give chance to my students to participate in the answers and I should be selected for the feedback.

3.4 Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2006 E.C.)?

No, but I have got opportunities to get training in ELIP and this helps me in my teaching.

Please brief your opinion:

Jimma University

College Of Social sciences And Law

Department Of English Language And Literature

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: For Grade 12 English teachers At Jimma Preparatory School. *(Teacher "Z")*

I am conducting research for the fulfillment of MA Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Dear Teacher: These interview questions focus on teaching and learning writing skills at grade 12. You are kindly requested to provide your replies without any reservation. There is no need of writing your names. Your replies are secured and they are to be used only for academic purposes.

Researcher: Mekonnen Eshetie (March, 2006 E.C.)

Thank you for your cooperation

PART ONE: Perceptions (Beliefs) Of The Time factor.

- 1.1 Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom? Most of the time they don't complete.

If not, what do you

do? I make them to do it out of class but to your wonder, the next period is occupied by its own daily writing lesson.

- 1.2 Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

Learning the writing skill is not meant only to sit for the University Entrance Exam.

State your opinions please:

It is obvious that writing is time consuming and needs to be practiced rather than theoretically learnt. But unfortunately its unique characters didn't get significant consideration by practioners such as syllabus designers and teachers.

- 1.3 Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situations? I don't think that it ~~may~~^{might} be effective.

Please say what you have in brief:

because, whether it is acceptable or not, writing skill can not be improved without giving much time and practice.

- 1.4 Some individuals argue that, "all grade 12 students who are to join university are not to be English major students. So, to avoid time limitations, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters' and leave the rest for a while."

What is your opinion and comments

here? What is seen here is that, writing as a tool for higher education has not gained the understanding by the learners and practioners.

PART TWO: The Actual Engagements In Writing Practices.

2.1 Approximately, how many teaching period(s) does each writing lesson (activity) take you to teach?

Most probably one to two periods.

2.2 At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, in the given period?

To some extent they try to do.

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

The reasons might be, the ~~discrepancies~~ discrepancies of reading, vocabulary, grammar, and moreover, background of the students' writing practices.

2.3 Do students often come to class with their writing home works done? It rarely happens.

If not, what do you think the reasons might be? They have born in mind that as it were to waste their time; and in addition too, they have lacked the awareness of the importance of the writing skills for their higher education.

2.4 How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

It were to be through encouraging peer feedback and correction and ~~but~~ students to do not show good will in doing so.

PART THREE: The English Writing Tasks Schedule Appropriation

3.1 Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school term/year?

No, it is impossible, because, the syllabus content and the time allotment do not match.

3.2 Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?

No, I haven't ever done.

Please discuss what you feel on this point:

Ull now, writing in particular hasn't got special attention to treat its difficulties which are being discussed.

3.3 Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class

orally? *It is oral and on the blackboard.*

Please state what you have further

It is not easy to do the written feedback with the large class.

3.4 Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2006 E.C.)?

No, not all.

Please brief your opinion:

Specially, when ever a new textbook is to be introduced it is necessary to reach the teachers with the introductory orientations and workshops.

Jimma University

College Of Social sciences And Law

Department Of English Language And Literature

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: For Grade 12 English teachers At Jimma Preparatory School. *(Teacher "W")*

I am conducting research for the fulfillment of MA Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Dear Teacher: These interview questions focus on teaching and learning writing skills at grade 12. You are kindly requested to provide your replies without any reservation. There is no need of writing your names. Your replies are secured and they are to be used only for academic purposes.

Researcher: Mekonnen Eshetie (March, 2006 E.C.)

Thank you for your cooperation

PART ONE: Perceptions (Beliefs) Of The Time factor.

1.1 Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom? Most of the time they are not able to complete in the given 40 minutes period.

If not, what do you

do? It is made to be a homework to be done at home.

1.2 Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

This can be a good idea to save the student's time for their study.

State your opinions please:

It is advisable to teach the four types of writing (Descriptive, Expository, Narrative and Argumentative), and the mechanics (Punctuation marks) which mostly appear in the Entrance Exam to use the limited time resource wisely.

1.3 Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present

situations? No I don't think so. But because currently, writing is taught in the inclusion with the other skills and the teachers do not have

Please say what you have in brief: sufficient time to concentrate on writing which requires much time.

1.4 Some individuals argue that, "all grade 12 students who are to join university are not to be English major students. So, to avoid time limitations, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters' and leave the rest for a while."

What is your opinion and comments

here? The importance of learning writing skills goes beyond preparing for the University Entrance Exam. To be competent in the higher education sectors good writing ability is inevitable (can not be avoided).

PART TWO: The Actual Engagements In Writing Practices.

2.1 Approximately, how many teaching period(s) does each writing lesson (activity) take you to teach?

It varies according to the type of the writing tasks; such as essay writing may take more time. In an average it can be said two periods.

2.2 At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, in the given period?

Most of the students find it as a difficult task.

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

Writing is highly dependent on the other skills such as reading, vocabulary and grammar; and discrepancy of these skills is high among students.

2.3 Do students often come to class with their writing home works done? *The majority do not do.*

If not, what do you think the reasons might be?

It is the literature in prose fictions and poems that arouse students' motivations for writing, but nowadays such like movements are rarely seen in high schools.

2.4 How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

As much as possible, teachers should engage different methods; peer or group corrections, oral and blackboard corrections, group turn giving, and sometimes to face the challenges of the whole class writing works.

PART THREE: The English Writing Tasks Schedule Appropriation

3.1 Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school

term/year? It is not possible to do that, and the size of the portion does not suit to the schedule which is provided to cover within it.

3.2 Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?

I have had the idea in mind that literature in language

Teachers were to provide good models for reading and writing. But in high schools such like resource materials are not available.

Please discuss what you feel on this point:

To do that one has to have participation in the syllabus design and implementation.

3.3 Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class

orally? To give written feedback it needs much time and hardwork.

Please state what you have further

: And in our case all the skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar) are being taught by one individual teacher, and the teaching environment is not motivating.

3.4 Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2006 E.C.)?

I haven't been to workshops or any other training concerning the grade 12 English textbook.

Please brief your opinion:

Orientalions on how to use and ^{teach} the textbook is needed to effectively practise the textbook according to the varying situations.

Jimma University

College Of Social sciences And Law

Department Of English Language And Literature

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: For Grade 12 English teachers At Jimma Preparatory School. *(Teacher "X")*

I am conducting research for the fulfillment of MA Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Dear Teacher: These interview questions focus on teaching and learning writing skills at grade 12. You are kindly requested to provide your replies without any reservation. There is no need of writing your names. Your replies are secured and they are to be used only for academic purposes.

Researcher: Mekonnen Eshetie (March, 2006 E.C.)

Thank you for your cooperation

PART ONE: Perceptions (Beliefs) Of The Time factor.

- 1.1 Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom? No, it is not sufficient.

If not, what do you

do? I ~~must~~ give them home taken assignment.
• Group work

- 1.2 Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

It is not advisable to do that, because nowadays
English language is

State your opinions please:

a medium for academic, business and political
communications.

- 1.3 Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situations? I think so.

Please say what you have in brief:

I think I think the tasks which are given in students' text
books are effective and meets the goal of writing.

- 1.4 Some individuals argue that, "all grade 12 students who are to join university are not to be English major students. So, to avoid time limitations, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters' and leave the rest for a while."

What is your opinion and comments

here? According to my opinion, the students are not learning
the language to be English major students. They learn to
use the language for communication and to understand
Science technology easily.

PART TWO: The Actual Engagements In Writing Practices.

2.1 Approximately, how many teaching period(s) does each writing lesson (activity) take you to teach?

30 periods. It takes an average of two periods each.

2.2 At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, in the given period?

to some extent.

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

The main reason is lack of background knowledge (practice) of writing.

2.3 Do students often come to class with their writing home works done?

If not, what do you think the reasons might be?

I think, the students do not have a good practice of writing in the past this makes them to ignore doing the home works every time.

2.4 How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

by using different signs which is conventional for the students and teachers to identify the mistakes easily.

PART THREE: The English Writing Tasks Schedule Appropriation

3.1 Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school term/year? yes.

3.2 Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?

yes.

Please discuss what you feel on this point:

Suiting essential writing tasks with the level of
students is an essential activity. It helps to motivate
the students to practice a lot.

3.3 Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class

orally? yes

Please state what you have further

: Besides I use some kinds of signs which is conventional
for me and my students in their exercise book to correct
their mistakes.

3.4 Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2006 E.C.)?

No.

Please brief your opinion:

I haven't been any workshop or any other training this year.

Jimma University

College Of Social sciences And Law

Department Of English Language And Literature

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: For Grade 12 English teachers At Jimma Preparatory School. *(Teacher "V")*

I am conducting research for the fulfillment of MA Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Dear Teacher: These interview questions focus on teaching and learning writing skills at grade 12. You are kindly requested to provide your replies without any reservation. There is no need of writing your names. Your replies are secured and they are to be used only for academic purposes.

Researcher: Mekonnen Eshetie (March, 2006 E.C.)

Thank you for your cooperation

PART ONE: Perceptions (Beliefs) Of The Time factor.

- 1.1 Does the 40 minutes period allow your students to complete the daily writing lessons in the classroom?

No, it doesn't allow them to complete their writing tasks within the given period.

If not, what do you

do? *I get my students to take it as homework and do it out of class.*

- 1.2 Grade 12 students are to take the (UEE) University Entrance Exam in the near future. What if the writing course which does not have direct relation to the exam be left out to save their time for their study?

This can^{not} be a good idea, but the situation in which we are forced ~~to~~ to do so.

State your opinions please:

The portion in the syllabus is quite larger than the given time to teach. In addition too, the students are not interested to learn and do such like lessons or activities.

- 1.3 Even if much effort is to be exerted both by the teachers and students, do you think the writing tasks at grade 12 level be effective in the present situations?

No, I don't think so.

Please say what you have in brief:

Time is inadequate, students are not motivated and interested.

- 1.4 Some individuals argue that, "all grade 12 students who are to join university are not to be English major students. So, to avoid time limitations, it is desirable to teach those entrance exam oriented 'writing subject-matters' and leave the rest for a while."

What is your opinion and comments

here?

This is what we practically do, but for ^{one} thing, English is not learnt ~~for~~ only for the sake of English. Rather it is a medium of instruction for the courses ~~in~~ given in the universities.

PART TWO: The Actual Engagements In Writing Practices.

2.1 Approximately, how many teaching period(s) does each writing lesson (activity) take you to teach?

It takes me an average of two periods.

2.2 At the present situation, are students at grade 12 level able to produce texts such as paragraphs, letters, reports, medium size text completion, in the given period?

They try to do to some extent.

If not what do you think the reasons might be?

The reasons might be; time constraint, large size of syllabus content discouraged teachers and students, and lack of competence to produce the above mentioned texts.

2.3 Do students often come to class with their writing home works done? Most of them not

If not, what do you think the reasons might be?

Unconsciously, we teachers and students have formed a habit of self-insufficiency to do the writing to its productive level ("we can't do it" and prevented us from doing it).

2.4 How would it be possible to give written feedback for students' writings?

In the first place, it needs to persuade students for peer feedback and correction, and secondly, it needs the teachers commitment to deal with the hard and complex work

PART THREE: The English Writing Tasks Schedule Appropriation

3.1 Do you cover the writing tasks in the syllabus in the school term/year?

No, it is not possible to do that, because of the mismatch of the size of the writing course syllabus and the inappropriate time allotted.

3.2 Have you ever thought or tried to select or to modify the writing tasks in the syllabus individually or at the department level to make them suit to the teaching situation?

No, I haven't ever thought.

Please discuss what you feel on this point:

~~To your wonder! No, any orientation, workshop or training ever been given on how to use or how to teach the English skills in the syllabus as a whole.~~

3.3 Is the writing feedback mostly done in written comments or through addressing the whole class

orally? ~~It's done orally and on the blackboard.~~

Please state what you have further

~~: Because of the large class size and high period load, it is not easy for the teacher to handle written feedback.~~

3.4 Have you ever been to a workshop or to any other training on how to use and teach the current grade 12 English textbook (2006 E.C.)?

~~Never, and ever.~~

Please brief your opinion:

~~Is there is any responsible body in the education structure to do this? I wish I would know.~~