

New Technology and the Process Based Approach to Writing

Sana Lamtara

Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences Ben M'Sik
Hassan II university-Mohammedia-Casablanca, Morocco

Abstract

Writing is one of the most important skills in English language teaching. Yet, the writing skill is not always easy for both teachers and learners. For teachers, writing instruction usually poses difficulties at the level of implementation as well as learners' involvement. As for learners, the production of coherent and meaningful pieces of writing can be problematic due to lack of linguistic competence, writing mechanisms and a learning context. The aim of the present paper is to remediate the aforementioned difficulties that both teachers and learners encounter through a writing activity. This writing activity is a qualitative research method as it is a descriptive case study which demonstrates how technology enhances the different stages of the process writing activity. It has been found that the use of technology reinforces the implementation of the process based approach to writing. This facilitates writing instruction and offers new opportunities for both teachers and learners. Besides, this writing activity adheres to the following pedagogical theories: cognitive constructivism, social constructivism and Behaviourism which are in favor of knowledge construction, collaboration, associative learning and reinforcement. The recommendation part explains that technology is not only limited to the writing skill and refers to some examples of web 2.0 tools that can be used for the teaching of English as a foreign language. Another recommendation refers to the last stage of the process writing activity, publishing, which must benefit from available online services in order to gain wider access and communication.

Key Words: English as a foreign language, learning theories, process based approach to writing, technology, writing instruction

1. Introduction

1.1 The statement of the problem

The learning of English as a foreign language is based on the acquisition of the four well-known skills; writing, reading, speaking and listening. Concerning writing, it is often viewed with general uncertainty from the part of learners as well as teachers. Learners are challenged in terms of their ability to express their ideas in well-structured pieces of writing. As for teachers, they face difficulties in terms of writing instruction and students' involvement and motivation towards the writing skill. In fact, the difficulties that both teachers and learners face are linked to lack of adequate methods and teaching techniques which facilitate the acquisition of the writing skill, and consequently, reduce or reject students' anxiety towards it.

1.2 The purpose of the study

This paper introduces an example of a writing activity which implements the process based approach to writing. At the same time, the activity integrates new technology in a way that responds to the requirements of the process based approach to writing.

1.3 The Rational of the study

The importance as well as the difficulty of the writing skill necessitate pedagogical examination of the issue in order to adopt appropriate pedagogical theories and teaching techniques which make the teaching of the writing skill accessible for both teachers and learners. Besides, the integration of new technology in teaching in general and in writing instruction in particular must be considered for the variety of opportunities it offers to education and especially for the interest and the motivation it triggers in students..

1.4 Research Questions

This paper examines the use of technology in the process based approach to writing in order to answer the following questions:

- How can technology reinforce the implementation of the process based approach to writing?
- What is the added value of technology in writing instruction?

1.5 The organization of the study

The present paper starts with an introduction which gives a general background of the issue of writing instruction. It also informs about the purpose, the rationale and the research questions of the paper. The first part is a literature review which refers to the difficulty of the writing skill for both teachers and students. Then, it introduces the process based approach to writing as an effective method in writing instruction along with the integration of new technology. The second part describes this paper's research methodology. As for the third part, it is devoted to data analysis which provides detailed description of the case study. The following part discusses the case study. Finally, a conclusion ends the paper and it is followed by some recommendations and limitations.

2. Review of Literature

This review refers to the importance and the difficulty of the writing task in the teaching of English as a foreign language. This difficulty is linked to language, students' attitudes and their perceived self-efficacy. Then, the process based approach to writing is proposed as an effective method

in writing instruction. The last part of the review focuses on the integration of technology in writing instruction and highlights the new opportunities it offers for the implementation of the writing process approach.

Nobody can deny the importance of the writing skill in the learning of English as a foreign language. In fact, writing is the visual representation of ideas, opinions, information or spoken language. In school, the writing skill is a prerequisite for learners' academic success (Morgan, Hessler & Konrad, 2007) since learners are required to produce systematized and explicit output. However, writing is often problematic for learners to learn and also for teachers to teach. For learners, it is not always easy to produce a written format which conveys ideas or information. Many learners avoid writing because of its difficulty or engage in it with unsatisfactory results and achievements (Westwood, 2004). This difficulty of writing is due to lack of necessary language elements and mechanisms which help in the process of writing. In Saudi Arabia, for example, Arab learners in the department of English Language Skills at Najran University face a number of writing difficulties at the level of structure, paragraph, spelling problems, capitalization and punctuation (Khan & Khan, 2012). Likewise, postgraduate learners of the college of Business at Universiti Utara Malaysia face problems which are related to vocabulary, organization of ideas, grammar, spelling and referencing (Al-Khasawneh, 2010). According to Judge (2013), "other barriers to writing have been identified and include lack of time, no confidence, anxiety, and the ability to start or finish" (p. 4). Thus, the difficulty of the writing skill is not only related to language per se, but also to learners' attitudes and their perceived self-efficacy. In the case of negative attitudes like anxiety, dislike and pressure, learners find it difficult if not impossible to engage in writing tasks. Similarly, if learners possess pessimistic self-beliefs about their abilities to perform a writing task, their motivation is negatively affected. Consequently, they are unlikely to engage in a writing activity, let alone produce a written text. Those pessimistic self-beliefs about oneself are referred to as perceived self-efficacy which is described as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p.3). Hence, it is very important to refer to the role of teachers not only in helping learners acquire language elements for the production of written texts, but also in reinforcing students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation so that they show readiness and willingness to engage and excel in writing activities. Concerning the acquisition of language elements, it is a long term process which is not necessarily accomplished in one skill only; in this case writing. As for learners' attitudes and self-efficacy, they must be taken into consideration in teaching practices. That is to say, the design of writing activities must stimulate students' positive attitudes and their beliefs in their capabilities to accomplish desired outcomes. Concerning teaching strategies, Troia and Graham (2003) argue that writing is also a challenging task for teachers and that best practices in writing instruction are not incorporated. In fact, teachers must be in possession of teaching strategies that facilitate writing instruction and at the same time enhance students' involvement through positive attitudes and strong degrees of self-efficacy. An example of these teaching strategies is the writing process approach which involves students in the writing process through different stages. Gura (2011) explains that "the writing process, which identifies stages in the development of a writing project, is an almost universally accepted framework for understanding and teaching writing" (p. 13). In her case study, Alhosani (2008) affirms that fifth grade ESL Arab students "believed it was effective to have more than one chance to write starting from brainstorming to drafting, revising, editing and publishing" (p. 282). Thanks to this approach, "students learn which elements of writing are most important at each stage of the process, and they develop a variety of skills to help them communicate their ideas most effectively" (Tyner, 2008, p. xiii). The different stages of the writing process approach also allow for gradual

involvement of students who focus on specific elements at each stage of a writing task in order to acquire adequate skills for the formulation of ideas. Besides, Gura (2011) explains that “students must use problem-solving skills to successfully complete the activities, and they have the support and aid of the planning sheets so they can organize their thoughts and ideas” (p. 13). More than this, the process based approach to writing guarantees teachers’ guidance and support as they assist students in different stages and provide them with appropriate activities. This is considered an opportunity for teachers not only to engage and motivate their students, but also to strengthen their sense of efficacy. Examples of techniques that can help teachers achieve this goal are “classroom discussions, asking questions, sharing life stories or experiences, playing games, learning phonics, modeling the writing process, and most importantly establishing an anxiety-free and relaxing language learning environment” (Alhosani, 2008, p. 279). It is true that these types of activities are able to engage students in writing tasks especially when they feel at ease in the learning environment. Gura (2011) adds that “students feel motivated to do the work, build key literacy skills, and also become more proficient in critical thinking and collaboration” (p.11). Consequently, teachers can resort to group work activities which enrich writing instruction especially that “the writing process approach fit well with cooperative learning” (Alhosani, 2008, 278). Another teaching aid which reinforces students’ engagement in the writing process is the use of visuals. A study which investigates the use of pictures and other illustrative devices in writing instruction reveals that the use of pictures has a positive effect on EFL students’ writing performances (Shirvani & Tajadini, 2014). Other illustrative devices like audio and video material also help teachers in writing instruction as they stimulate students’ creativity and imagination. Nowadays, the functions of the aforementioned illustrative devices have been developed and renovated within new technologies. Ghahri; Hashamdar and Mohamadi (2015) state that “language teachers should introduce technology in language teaching classes as it increases the amount of language that students keep in touch with” (p. 1499). This is true since new technology exposes students to language in an appealing way so that they are motivated and inspired to embrace it. Moreover, technology helps teachers create the need for the target language through authentic situations in videos or images in order to maximize exposure to language and ensure attainment of goals, in this case the production of writing texts. In this respect, Gura (2011) explains that technology integration in writing instruction reinforces “curriculum through its authenticity and real life applications – focus on writing for a purpose” and as a result, “this fosters student motivation, student interest and engagement” (p.11). Accordingly, technology facilitates writing instruction as it provides learners with authentic contexts which trigger their motivation and interest for desirable outcomes in writing.

All in all, this review refers to the usefulness of the writing process approach in writing instruction. The role of technology is also emphasized as it supports the process based approach to writing through the provision of appealing activities which foster students’ motivation, engagement, critical thinking skills and collaboration.

3. Methodology

This part informs of the methodological procedures of the present article, namely the research design, participants and data analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Design

This paper is based on the design of a writing activity which implements the process based approach to writing through new technology. Since “the case study is not confined to the study of an individual but can be used in research involving programs, institutions, organizations,

political structures, communities, and situations” (Thomas; Nelson and Silverman, 2011, p. 295), the writing activity of the present paper is a case study which constitutes a model for the implementation of the writing process approach through new technology. As for its type, it can be referred to as descriptive since “a descriptive case study presents a detailed picture of the phenomena” (Ibid, p. 295). Likewise, the present article examines the implementation of the process writing activity in details. Concerning the research method, “the case study is used in qualitative research to deal with critical problems of practice and to extend the knowledge base of the various aspects of education ...” (Ibid, p. 295). For this reason, the writing activity is a qualitative research method which describes all the stages of a process writing activity.

3.1. 1 The writing activity

The writing activity of the present paper adopts the process based approach and suggests a new creative way to teach writing to learners whose level in the English language is supposed to be intermediate. The design of the writing activity is divided into four parts. The first part introduces a video about the topic of healthy life style. The second part is a drag and drop exercise which is about exercising. The third part is another drag and drop exercise about healthy eating habits. The fourth part is a third drag and drop exercise about quality sleep.

3.2 Participants

The design of the writing activity was developed in an Information Communication Technology (ICT) training in the Morocco-Korean center of ICT training in Rabat, Morocco as an end of module project. The ICT training provided technical assistance concerning the editing of the video on Movie maker as well as the design of the three drag and drop exercises on Mediator.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is based on the different stages of the writing process activity. The added value of technology, teachers’ roles and students’ roles are also examined. The purpose is the development of an instructional design model which can also be referred to as a pedagogical scenario or a lesson plan which integrates technology in the process writing activity.

4. Findings

This part describes the different stages of the writing activity in details, namely; pre-writing, while-writing and post-writing. The aforementioned three broad stages encompass other specific stages like brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

Before the examination of the stages of the writing process activity, it is very important to provide some information concerning objectives, competencies, required pre-requisites, pedagogical theories, pedagogical strategies, evaluation and material. Concerning objectives, students are expected to write coherent paragraphs about healthy life style. As for the targeted competencies, they include transversal and disciplinary competencies. Transversal competencies refer to effective oral and written communication in the English language, reasoning, creativity, team work, acquisition of writing skills and effective use of information resources. In disciplinary competencies, students learn about the three components of a paragraph, in addition to some effective ways for keeping a healthy life style. Concerning the required pre-requisites, they concern the level of intermediate learners who have supposedly acquired the basics of the English language. As far as pedagogical theories are concerned, the process writing activity adheres to the following theories: cognitive constructivism, social

constructivism and behaviorism. As far as the pedagogical strategy is concerned, it has already been mentioned that the digital resource is based on a process based approach to writing. Concerning evaluation, students' assessment is based on their participation, engagement, collaboration as well as their final products. As for material, the implementation of this writing activity requires a lap top, a data show and a board.

4.1 Pre-Writing

The pre-writing activity is based on the projection of a video about healthy life style. This video is the compilation of three You Tube videos on Moviemaker software since each one of them is specific to one component of healthy life style. It is very important to mention that the compilation excludes some parts of the three videos which are not essential for the understanding of the topic. Another reason for the compilation of the three videos is the manipulation of the running time in order to adjust it to the different steps of the writing activity. After the compilation and the editing of the three videos, the total running time of the new version is six minutes and 34 seconds knowing that the first video about physical exercise lasts three minutes and 23 seconds, the second video about balanced diet lasts three minutes and 10 seconds and the third video about good sleeping habits lasts four minutes and 27 seconds. Two audio recordings of the author's voice are inserted in the beginning and at the end of the video. The first audio recording says: keeping healthy and the second one asks the following question: what about you, what do you do to keep healthy? Concerning the content of the first video entitled benefits of exercise (VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012), it discusses the topic of exercising in relation to physical, mental and social health. The video defines these three components and provides examples for each one of them. Then, the testimonial of a person who discusses the benefits of exercising follows. This testimonial is excluded in the new version of the video as it only repeats more or less the same ideas which are discussed in the beginning of the video. The last part of the video, which is devoted to a written summary of the content of the video, is also excluded since the aim of the pre-writing stage is to introduce students to real life contexts in order to be able to brainstorm the topic of exercising and provide summaries themselves. As for the second video entitled what is a balanced diet (Tettesgr, 2013), it informs about the different food groups by giving examples. It also makes some recommendations and suggestions concerning balanced diet. The only part which is excluded from this video is the one which informs about the types of eating patterns. The reason for this exclusion is that students are not supposed to be introduced to specific and detailed information. Instead, the aim is to inform them about the different food groups and how they constitute a balanced diet. As far as the third video (Melbourne Medisleep, 2013) is concerned, it is about the topic of quality sleep and it is entitled do you know how to sleep better? The video explains that sleep is linked to physical and mental health and suggests five tips which guarantee quality sleep. Then, it refers to some examples of health problems that may result from lack of sleep. Finally, the main ideas of the video are recapitulated. This restatement of ideas is again excluded in the new version since students are the ones who are supposed to recapitulate the ideas of the video either orally or in their written paragraphs.

The first activity of the pre-writing stage is totally based on the projection of the aforementioned video. When students are introduced to the video, they are involved in a whole class discussion in which the teacher draws their attention to the three components of healthy life style: exercising, balanced diet and quality sleep. Then, the teacher starts a brainstorming activity in which the main ideas of each component are recapitulated. Besides, the teacher stimulates students' enthusiasm to identify with these components through questions about their own ways of keeping healthy. For this reason, the teacher can refer to the audio recording of the author's voice at the end of

the video which says: what about you, what do you do to keep healthy? At this stage, the teacher is a facilitator and a motivator as he/ she facilitates the understanding of the video through brainstorming. Besides, he/she triggers students' motivation in order to identify with the content of the video.

4.2 While-writing

While getting students' feedback concerning their own ways of keeping healthy, the teacher creates groups of students according to their own ways of keeping healthy: exercising, balanced diet or quality sleep. In case there aren't enough students for one topic and there are more than the required number of students for another topic, the teacher can resort to his/her skills of negotiation and persuasion in order to create equilibrium in the different groups. Once the groups are formed, students are asked to discuss the topic of their choice and write one sentence which introduces the main idea of their topic. The teacher insists that every group is required to write one single sentence which introduces the main idea of the topic they are in charge of. Obviously, students write the first sentence of their paragraphs which is the topic sentence without necessarily being introduced to a new terminology (topic sentence) which might disturb or interrupt their active involvement. Then, students read their sentences aloud and receive immediate feedback from the teacher in an implicit manner since they are not yet involved in editing. Then, students are introduced to another activity which is related to three drag and drop exercises. These exercises are based on the content of the video since each one of them reinforces one part of it; the first exercise is about exercising, the second one is about balanced diet and the third one is about quality sleep. Then, each group of students is assigned a drag and drop exercise according to the topic they are working on. Every drag and drop exercise consists of six expressions and six pictures which illustrate these expressions. Students are required to double click each expression and drag and drop it on its appropriate picture. When students drag and drop an expression on its appropriate picture, both the picture and the expression disappear in an animated way. When students' answer is wrong, the disappearance movement does not occur and students are allowed to make as many attempts as possible. As it is illustrated in figure 1, the first drag and drop exercise which is about exercising includes six expressions and six pictures about this theme. Concerning the answers, they refer to the expressions and the pictures on figure 1 vertically and they are as follows: exercise reduces stress matches the third picture (Saagara.com, 2014), feeling of worth and self-esteem matches the fourth picture (VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012), exercise boosts brain power corresponds to the fifth picture (JWelches, 2014), exercise reduces illness refers to the first picture (Landro, 2010), exercise improves mood matches the second picture (Healthymind786.blogspot.com, 2012) and social health refers to the sixth picture (VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012). It is very important to note that the fourth picture about feeling of worth and self-esteem and the sixth one about social health are both taken from the video about exercising. This is done on purpose in order to reinforce the content of the video in students' minds and at the same time help students in finding the right answer.

Exercise 1: Double click on each expression, then drag it onto its appropriate picture.
 (When your choice is correct, both the picture and the expression disappear)

Expressions on the right:

- Exercise reduces stress
- Feeling of worth & self-esteem
- Exercise boosts brain power
- Exercise reduces illness
- Exercise improves mood
- Social health

Figure 1 The first exercise about exercising

(Healthymind786.blogspot.com, 2012; JWelches, 2014; Saagara.com, 2014; Landro, 2010; VEA Australia – New Zealand, 2012)

The second exercise reinforces the second part of the video about balanced diet and it also includes six expressions and six pictures about this theme. The answers which follow a vertical order of pictures and expressions on figure 2 are as follows: unsaturated fat refers to the fourth picture (No Excuses Health, 2013), cereals matches the third picture (The Agriculture Research Service, 2001), low nutrients refer to the sixth picture (Flickr - Photo Sharing, 2005), calcium corresponds to the fifth picture (Oregonstate.edu, 2016), omega 3 refers to the second picture (huiledekrill.fr, 2015) and vitamins and minerals refer to the first picture (huiledekrill.fr, 2015).

Exercise 2: Double Click on each expression, then drag it onto its appropriate picture.
 (When your choice is correct, both the picture and the expression disappear)

Expressions below the images:

- Unsaturated fat
- cereals
- Low-nutrient
- calcium
- Omega 3
- Vitamins & Minerals minerals

Figure 2 The second exercise about balanced diet

(Flickr - Photo Sharing, 2005; Greb, 2001; huiledekrill.fr, 2015, No Excuses Health, 2013; Oregonstate.edu, 2016)

The third exercise reinforces the third part of the video about quality sleep and it also includes six expressions and six pictures about the theme. The answers which also follow a vertical order of pictures and expressions in figure 3 are as follows: Tech-free zone refers to the first picture (Han, 2013), wake and sleep schedule corresponds to the fourth picture (Andrew Schriber, 2015), bedtime ritual refers to fifth picture (Melbourne Medisleep, 2013), insomnia matches the sixth picture (Maharg, 2015), stop watching your clock refers to the second picture (Melbourne Medisleep, 2013) and optimal sleep environment corresponds to the third picture (stormthisdrizzle, 2015). Concerning bedtime ritual and stop watching your clock pictures, they are also taken from the third part of the video for the same reason which is stated in the first exercise.

Exercise 3: Double click on each expression, then drag it onto its appropriate picture.
 (When your choice is correct, both the picture and the expression disappear)

		
		
-Tech- free zone	-Bedtime ritual	-Stop watching your clock
-Wake & sleep schedule	-Insomnia	-Optimal sleep environment

Figure 3 The third exercise about quality sleep

(Andrew Schriber, 2015; Han, 2013; Maharg, 2015; Melbourne Medisleep, 2013; stormthisdrizzle, 2015)

As it has already been said, the second activity is based on the three drag and drop exercises. These exercises are aimed to strengthen students' involvement in the topic they are working on. At the same time, students are provided with appropriate contextual language in order to be able to write their paragraphs. When groups of students finish their exercises, they are asked to write supporting details for their topic sentence according to the content of their assigned exercises. The teacher informs students of the possibility of adding other ideas of their own. While students are writing their supporting sentences, the teacher reminds them of some linking words in case they have dealt with them before or provides them with examples of linking words according to their needs. At this stage, the teacher is a monitor who guides students and who also provides assistance when needed. When students finish writing their supporting ideas, they are again involved in a brief discussion which directs them towards the expression of their opinions, reflections, pieces of advice or suggestions

concerning their assigned theme. Subsequently, each group of students is required to write one final sentence which expresses that without explicit reference to a concluding sentence.

4.3 Post-writing

Once students finish the writing of their paragraphs, they are required to exchange them for editing. When the editing phase is over, a student from each group volunteers to be the speaker in order to read the paragraph aloud in front of his/her peers. This publishing stage is an opportunity for all students to enlarge the scope of the topic of healthy life style again and recall the ideas of the projected video. It is at the end of the writing activity that the teacher can provide a language summary about the different components of a paragraph. It is not necessary for the teacher to spend a long period of time explaining the summary to students who are expected to understand it very easily as it confirms their former practices. It is very important to refer to the fact that the writing process activity does not necessarily end in one particular session as it can initiate a research work for more information about healthy life style. In this respect, the teacher can ask students to do research on this topic. Students may even be encouraged to seek the help of teachers of other subjects like physical education and biology. By doing so, English teaching is not only confined to the EFL classroom, but it can also be connected to other specialties. Moreover, this process writing activity can initiate a future writing lesson on how to write an article since all the paragraphs of the body are ready and that students will only be introduced to the writing of an introduction and a conclusion.

This part of the article answers this paper's research questions. It explains that new technology strengthens the implementation of the process writing activity through appropriate contextual tools and appealing illustrative devices. Besides, the added value of technology is not only related to writing instruction, but also to the roles of both teachers and students. Teachers become facilitators and monitors who guide students in the use of digital material. As for students, they are motivated and encouraged to become responsible for their own learning which is the writing of their paragraphs.

5. Discussion

The different stages of the writing activity are discussed and the focus is mainly on the use of technology and its added value in the teaching of writing and also in the new roles it assigns for both teachers and students.

5.1 Interpretation of key findings

Piaget's (1955, 1972) theory of cognitive constructivism which focuses on the construction of knowledge can be referred to since the process writing activity of the present article stimulates the construction of knowledge by learners through real life contexts which are presented in the video. Consequently, learners are actively involved in the process of learning especially that "a technologically enriched environment is potentially consistent with the underlying assertions of constructivism in that the learner can be an active participant in the construction of knowledge" (Tan & Subramaniam, 2006, p.100). Concerning collaboration and interaction between students, the writing activity creates the appropriate environment for Vygotsky's (1962, 1978) social context of learning. According to him, "the learning process involves interaction with other individuals where culture and society will influence the learning" (As cited in Tan & Subramaniam, 2006, p. 99). This is true since the process writing activity requires students' interaction and collaboration in order to write a coherent paragraph. Concerning the design of drag and drop exercises, they are based on the principles of behaviorism which are stimulus-response, associative learning and reinforcement. The drag and drop

exercises focus upon the behavior of the learner which is either reinforced or changed. When students drag and drop an expression on its appropriate image, both the image and the expression disappear in an amusing way. The disappearance movement is a reward which reinforces students' correct choices. In case students miss the appropriate image, the disappearance movement does not occur. The absence of that reward is referred to by Woollard (2010) as extinction which is the rejection of undesired behavior by the suppression of the expected response. That is to say, when the disappearance movement does not occur in the drag and drop exercises, learners understand that their responses are rejected. On the contrary, when the disappearance movement occurs, the conditioning is sustained between stimulus and response. As it is affirmed by Woollard (2010), "behavioral modification" refers to the change in learners' behaviors when an appropriate behavior is reinforced and an inappropriate one is ignored.

In general, the use of technology in this writing activity stimulates students' motivation and involvement as they are introduced to real life contexts. Thanks to technology, students are also given the opportunity to interact with knowledge through images which are appealing illustrative devices. Besides, groups of students interact and cooperate with each other since the drag and drop exercises are assigned as a group work activity. As far as teachers' and students' roles are concerned, the use of technology in this writing activity facilitates the task for the teacher who simply guides students throughout the different stages of the writing process. As a result, students are held responsible for the construction of their own knowledge which is the writing of coherent paragraphs. It is very important to note that students are involved in the writing of the three components of a paragraph in a very smooth way and especially in an implicit manner in order to keep away from instructions and explicit teaching which usually cause boredom to students and which are not always in favor of knowledge construction. The writing activity of the present paper, therefore, reconciliates pedagogy to technology as it relies on new technology for the implementation of the process based approach to writing.

6. Conclusion

This article introduces a process writing activity which makes use of new technology. The integration of new technology in this writing activity is described as effective because of the new opportunities it offers for the implementation of the process based approach to writing. Thanks to technology, students are introduced to real life contexts which increase their motivation as well as their engagement in the writing activity.

The literature review of this paper refers to the importance as well as to the difficulty of the writing skill. Then, it introduces the process based approach to writing as an example which guides and assists learners in different writing stages. The use of technology in writing instruction is another criterion which strengthens the implementation of the writing process. As for the methodological part, it introduces a case study of a writing process activity which makes use of new technology. It has been found that the use of new technology in the process writing activity enhances its different stages through the active involvement of students and efficient guidance of the teacher.

6.1 Recommendations

The examination of this paper's case study results in some recommendations. It is very important to note that technology is not confined to particular learning skills as it can be used not only for writing, but also for the teaching of other skills and topics. Technology offers a multitude of services and devices which do not only facilitate, but reinforce the learning process. Examples of these services are web 2.0 educational tools like animations and comic strips, audio editing tools,

bookmarking and online collaboration, blogging, games, quizzes, language learning tools, mind mapping, online storage, photo editing tools, presentation tools, video editing tools, social networking tools, publishing tools, etc.

Concerning the last stage of the process writing activity which is publishing, the case study of the present paper suggests reading the paragraphs aloud to classmates and producing final versions of the writing pieces. Gura (2011) affirms that “for today’s digital natives, publishing their work in this pre-Gutenberg manner is more than just ironic – it is disappointing” (p.7). This is true since technology offers a multitude of services for the development of this final stage in order “to equate publishing with real-world products” (Ibid, p.7). For instance, technology gives the possibility for students to share their products on blogs, forums, wiki spaces, social networking web sites, etc. Since students are involved in the writing of different paragraphs, which are supposed to be the body of a future article about healthy life style, the whole class can be involved in a class publishing project on one of the aforementioned online services.

6.2 Limitations

Undoubtedly, the use of technology in teaching in general and in this writing activity in particular does not only acquire technical skills, but pedagogical ones as well. That is to say, teachers must be in possession of adequate ICT skills which enable the use of new technologies, in addition to the basic principles for the pedagogical use of new technology. Therefore, the need for teacher ICT training which focuses on both the acquisition of ICT skills and the pedagogical use of new technology is required (Lamtara, 2014).

About the Author:

Sana LAMTARA is a teacher trainer in the English Department in the Regional Center of Education and Training in Casablanca (Centre Régional des Métiers de l'Education et de la Formation, CRMEF). She taught the English language for about 11 years in different public high schools in Morocco. She is a Ph. D candidate in the department of communication at Hassan II University, Ben M'sik Faculty Casablanca. She has a Master degree in Moroccan American Studies from Hassan II University, Ben M'sik Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences.

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