

## TEACHING WRITING FOR MALAYSIAN HIGHER RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CERTIFICATE AS A PROCESS BASED

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**Abstract.** Teaching approach adopted by an Insya' teacher affects on students' motivation and their writing skills as well. Based on cognitive process approach proposed by Flower & Hayes (1981), this article is going to explore the teaching and learning writing at Malaysian Higher Religious Certificate programme as a process in the classroom. The main question is how do an Insya' teacher practices writing pedagogy and the implication on the students' motivation and their writing skills. Using qualitative single case study method, data sources were collected from classroom observations backup by video recordings, teacher interviews, focus group interviews and documents analysis. Findings revealed that the participant implemented the process-writing approach in most of the teaching and learning writing activities. Finally, the writing process approach had positive implications on student motivation and writing skill development.

**Keywords:** writing skills; writing subject; process approach; case study; motivation.

**Introduction.** Higher Religious Certificate programme (HRC) is offered to Form Six students who are interested to further their study in any public universities in Malaysia and especially in the Al-Azhar al-Syarif University, Egypt studying the Arabic language or other Islamic Studies fields. One of the subjects introduced in the HRC curriculum is Insya' (composition). It is a subject that is directly connected with the writing ability in the Arabic language. However, students' mastery level, whether in primary schools, secondary schools, and higher learning institution, is still and always becomes the subject of argument. Based on the cognitive process theory of writing, Flower and Hayes describe that "writers are constantly planning (pre-writing) and revising (re-writing) as they compose (write)" (p. 367), and "people do not march through these processes in a simple 1, 2, 3 order" (1981, p. 375). That is, writer's knowledge and writing abilities have to be combined to produce an essay by considering message or meaning intended to be delivered (Fisher, 2012). The highest level in hierarchy of writing is composition; through arranging words to become sentences, creating paragraph and then constructing a complete essay in the form of either guided or free essay (Al Khuliy, 1986). Therefore, students' weaknesses in composition, particularly, allude to their learning and academic achievements adversely.

**Research problem** Nowadays, the applied approach in teaching has been changing from the traditional and discrete-and-grammar-based approach of spelling accuracy, grammar, syntax, and mechanical, towards holistic and more meaningful approach that emphasize on writing as a recursive cognitive process (Kamahema Schools, 2007). Thus, appropriate amount of attention should be given towards teachers' teaching methods and techniques because the outcomes of learning depended on teachers' tactfulness in determining the content of the lesson as well as competency in applying the suitable teaching methods (Normazidah Mahmood, 2012). This study was conducted to explore and gain deeper insight of Insya's teachers' teaching practices and its implications toward students' motivation and writing ability according to writing cognitive process approach model (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Cognitive writing process approach covers three main levels i.e. planning, drafting, and revising. In the previous cognitive-based process approach, Hayes & Flower (1980), task environment was external to learners' writing process, but in a later decade, Hayes (1996) proposed more internal aspects of writing processes which assume three basic cognitive processes: (a) text interpretation, (b) reflection, and (c) text production. In other words, the contents of long-term memory, distinguishing among task schemas, topic knowledge, audience knowledge, linguistic knowledge, and genre knowledge. Typically, school composition is, "a balanced account of the three major factors that influence writing: (a) aims of writing including purpose and audience, (b) level of cognitive processing involved in writing, and (c) the content (topic) of writing" (Purves, 1992, p.11). The 'multilogue' among teacher and students should happen during enrichment activities such as discussion, model, peer collaboration and dialogue about text article. In short, process approach assumes that writing behaviour is naturally recursive or repetitive where the writer can repeat whichever levels in the writing process until they are satisfied with the writing produced. The nature of writing instructions can be divided into four important modes: expository, descriptive, narrative, and argumentative or persuasive (Connors, 1981; Crowley, 1998). Although writing skills contribute significantly in the academic achievement of Arabic language, studies related to the Arabic language instructional processes are quite rare in the Malaysian setting. Most previous studies gave more attention on students' product of the writing rather than the process aspects, especially, the analysis of error in writing (Che Radiah Mezah, 1995; 2007; Norhayati Awang@Sulong, 1998). These previous studies emphasized on how students learn and not how teachers instruct their students.

In this study, the researcher adopted cognitive-based tasks of teaching as an important unit of study but in depth in nature, that is, the emphasis on the definition of writing in terms of problem-solving (McCutchen, Teske, & Bankston, 2008). For instance, skilled writers often “problematize” a writing task that is to develop elaborate goals, particularly content and rhetorical goals, which require sophisticated problem-solving (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). This study was holistic in nature and deep as it involved observation of teaching practice and learning process of an Insyah subject in the natural context using case study method. During the interview sessions and classroom observations researcher concentrated on the strategy of writing process rather than the product of students’ writing. Insyah’s learning and teaching strategies applied by teacher need to meet students’ way of thinking as well as writing an essay in order to overcome students’ weaknesses and increasing their academic.

Two big guiding questions that this research work asked was:

1. What responding practices do certain teachers use during their writing instructional practices?
2. What aspects of writing do they attend to during the teaching of writing skills?

**Overview of literature review.** Writing process can be viewed in three different perspectives; whether it is linear or cognitive or social (Marohaini Yusoff, 1996). Linear model was introduced by Rohman and Wlecke (1964) referred to three levels of writing process, which is, pre-writing, writing, and re-writing. Some cognitive-based researchers such as Emig (1971), Mischell (1974), Stallard (1974), Birnbaum (1982), and Flower & Hayes (1981) viewed essay writing as a process happening in the mind and writer’s thoughts during writing an essay. However, Bizzell (1982) argued writing purely from cognitive based process approach but instead viewed writing process from social perspective where cultural surrounding affect writer as the an individual of a society. Since, the limitation of cognitive perspective is only looking at the view of processes happening in the mind as the main assumption, Bizzell’s (1982) notion is important but not stressed in this study. In writing research, top-down versus bottom-up processes are the hallmark to the cognitive-based writing processes both in terms of learning and instruction processes (Galbraith & Torrance, 1999). Writing curriculum involves learning outcomes to develop students’ textual, cognitive, and discourse abilities (Santos, 1992; Silva & Brice, 2004). Linguistic and rhetorical theories offer the tools to investigate text and language forms, conceptual models from psychology field provide tools to investigate how students act or think, and sociocultural or critical theories provide tools to investigate how cultural environment influences the writing process (Cumming, 1998, 2001; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Hyland, 2003; Matsuda, 2003; Raimes, 1991, 1998; Silva, 1990). Common to these perspectives is the aim to improve students’ ability in terms of the production of (a) accurate texts, (b) effective compositions and also (c) meaningful social usefulness of the text produced. Nowadays, studies related to writing teaching practice based on process approach has becoming more popular among researchers in the Malaysian context. For instance, study conducted on Malay language writing attitude (Marohaini Yusoff, 1996; Narayanan, 1991; and Roselena A. Karim, 1997) and English language (Munisamy, 1998). However, little work has been carried out, in the Malaysian context, to study administered the Arabic language writing practices based on process-based approach especially viewed in terms of internal structure and sub-processes involved during writing processes. The importance of researching writing teachers has been pronounced clearly by (Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2008, p.200). Other matters are conspicuous by their relative absence, such as (a) the relatively few descriptions of L2 writing development and instruction in settlement or business contexts; (b) of teachers’ usual practices for classroom interaction in L2 writing courses; or (c) of the many psychological dimensions of composing in a second language. Secondary school writers especially in the L2 context has received little attention by L2 researchers (See for instance, Harklau, 2000, 2001; Reynolds, 2001; Wald, 1987). However, in the Arabic language context this has improved quite significantly, several research findings showed that most students are still weak in writing either in primary school level, secondary school level or in Higher Education Institutes. For instance, research finding found that students’ ability in sentence construction is very weak (Rosni Samah, 2012) and the same goes with the ability of combining sentences among secondary school students (Zainol Abidin Ahmad, 2003). Most students are unable to write sentences well and perfectly, from the aspect of language structure and meaning, as the result the message intended to be delivered to audience is unclear. It was also found that many students did not master writing ability as compared to listening, speaking and reading ability (Wan Norazwani Wan Jaafar, 2011). All this point to the notion that learners rather than teachers’ pedagogical knowledge were given the focus. It is worthy to note that most of the research works focus on either sentential rather than meaningful and purposeful discursal levels in many cases.

Many studies conducted in the field of Arabic language; for instance, focused on the aspect of error analysis among students. One of the identified weaknesses in regard with students’ essay sample was related to grammatical aspects, orthography, utilization of vocabulary, sentence structure (Che Radiah Mezah, 1995), spelling (Aziyun Othman, 2012), and usage of discourse markers in essay (Mohd Islah Mohd Yusof, 2011). For example, Che Radiah Mezah (1999) managed to recognize as many as 3,639 language errors through essay sample from two groups of students which comprised of four main aspects; grammatical errors, orthography, lexical, and sentence structure. Thus, this findings point to the notion that the mastery of writing skills are still lacking among Malaysian L2 Arabic language learners. There are many contributing factors identified in the mastery of writing skills in some large-scale assessments. Most importantly, weaknesses in writing among students are always linked to teacher’s attitude. For example, teacher’s attitude to focus towards finishing the syllabus as a preparation for students to sit for examination (exam oriented) (Abu Bakar Nordin, 1986; Azman Wan Chik, 1994; Sakila Dollah, 2001). As a result, students’ writing ability is abandoned due to the lack of exercises in improving students’ skills (Marohaini Yusoff, 1997) because teachers concentrate on the

activities of preparing students toward the public examination. Therefore, students are constantly worried, anxious, and stressed with the burden of examination. Likewise, the attitude of most of teachers that emphasizing on the writing result or product rather than writing process resulting in the lack of emphasis of teaching skills and strategies (Sakila Dollah, 2001). Other study conducted encompassed of writing strategies that can be applied in teaching and learning in order to strengthen students' writing through writing model and preparing the examples of good essays to individual students, group, or class (Peterson & Portier, 2012). Relatively, students can be trained as a critical reader through the activity of revising the essay's draft (Narayanan, 1991) in classroom and are given more autonomy. In the context of second language, Munisamy (1998) thought that students should be given the chance to plan their writing in their first language rather than the target language so that they can produce a quality writing, more contents, and an implication positive text. However, Rahimi Md. Saad (2003) associated the importance of reading habit with writing ability because a reading individual will commonly possess higher level of literacy. Thus, Che Radiah Mezah (1995) suggested that the teaching strategy of writing skills at secondary school level need to emphasize on the aspect of encouraging students to think. They need to think deep to compose and arrange words, sentence phrases, and paragraphs in the form of writing. To enable us to gather and analyse the data for this study, a qualitative design data collection and analysis was deemed appropriate because it will reveal in-depth teacher practices in writing classrooms.

**Methodology.** A qualitative design was applied in this study, which was, local case study (Yin, 2009) or a single instrumental case study (Stake, 1995). Based on some criteria and characteristics studied to give general view about a phenomenon, a Government-Aided Religious School (GARS) in Banting district has been chosen as the location for this study (Silverman, 2000). The case in this study referred to the teaching and learning practice of Insyah' based on process-writing approaches. A qualitative research method was used to enable researcher to observe and analyse deeply the teaching process of Insyah' as well as learning events that occurred in the real classroom setting. A teacher as the unit of analysis for this study is deemed sufficient to preview the common practices of writing instructions in L2 Arabic language writing classes. The candidate of this study was a teacher of Insyah' subject of HRC was chosen through purposive sampling (Yin, 2009) and fulfilled the following criteria; 1) had experience of teaching form six students for more than five years 2) had experience marking the public examination papers and 3) was ready to take part in this study voluntarily. The first criteria are important because experienced teacher may show the habitual instructional practices common to all writing teachers in that chosen school, the experience in marking national-level, an examiner for high-stake examination demonstrates that this teacher is important not only because of her experience but also because how this experience may influence the way she instructs her writing classes, and ethically in any qualitative research participants are not forced to be involved in any research study. Two groups of form six HRC, namely 6 Karomah (6K) and 6 Siddiq (6S), also took part in helping to emphasize the overall understanding of this study. In addition, as many as twenty male students and female students from various academic achievements were chosen for the focus group interview. Each of the ten came from the two classes, which were, 6K and 6S. The main methods applied in the data gathering by the researchers were classroom observations, interviews and documents analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1988; and Spradley, 1980) as well as audio-visual materials (Creswell, 2012) as a supporting evidence. In this study, the researcher played the role of the non-participant in order to maintain the *naturalistic* atmosphere of the classroom and lessen the distractions towards teaching and learning (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The long period of data collection took as long as 8 months in 2013 and was perceived as fulfilling the data saturation level. The determination period of a study depended on whether the data had become saturated or also known as data saturation process 'point of saturation' whereby the gathered data started to become repetitive or the information given during the observation and interview become similar (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). All the gathered data in the form of field notes, interview transcripts, audio and video were filtered, and then compacted in the form of themes through coding process, and afterwards being reported through the descriptive discussion, frequency, table, or diagrams (Creswell, 2007). Data analysis was conducted during and after the data collection process to ensure the findings of this study are comprehensive, deep, and rich in information (Merriam, 1988). The data was analyzed manually in order to come up with themes followed by the usage of ATLAS.ti7 software. The software was used because of its ability to upload voice files, video, as well as text (Friese, 2012). Therefore, the accumulated audio visual data can be re-written, re-coded, re-categorized and thereafter triangulated with other documents.

**Findings and discussion.** As mentioned earlier, two main questions that guide this study are: (a) What responding practices do certain teachers use during their writing instructional practices? and (b) What aspects of writing do they attend to during the teaching of writing skills? The findings of this study showed that there are two main themes that emerged in showing the practice of participants of this study in the teaching of Insyah' HRC. The first theme is related to the teaching practice of Insyah' and the second theme is the implication of process approach towards students' motivation and their writing skills.

**Teaching practice of Insyah'. The Planning Stage of Writing Production.** The study participant (SP) is known as Ustazah Izzah (nickname) started the Insyah' teaching session by proposing writing topics for text interpretation. The sequences of the instructional techniques can be classified as teacher writes a proposed topic to students, students copy the topic in the note books, teacher discusses quality criteria of writing format. The problem-solving tasks (McCutchen, Teske, & Bankston, 2008) viewed from this sequence is rather 'solving examination questions' rather than creating higher-thinking-order activities. For instance, first, Ustazah Izzah was seen writing a few main contents on the whiteboard. At the same time, students wrote what was written on the board in their note books.

Afterwards, Ustazah Izzah tried to stimulate students' thinking about the contents by asking variety of related questions. The purpose of this oral question and answer question at this stage was to understand the meaning of each of the main contents in the writing and identify the format and criteria that need to be observed in order to come up with the quality writing draft according to the needed standard.

The example of writing planning observed in from the extract of one of the classroom observations during the discussion of the topic "The Role of Zakat in Society" is as below;

Example 1:

Ustazah : (teacher wrote on the board) (P8: OBS 2)

Ustazah : (Repeat once again).....

Ustazah : : ... (Teacher read the title to students)

Ustazah : ....

(Teacher repeated the instruction and task again in Malay language)

Ustazah : - :

6K.docx)

The focus on the grammatical accuracy and fluency is prevalent in her techniques (Valdes, 1999, 2001, 2004). In the example above, Ustazah Izzah stated the topic of her choice, which is about the 'role of zakat' co-related to the religious theme which may relate to students' prior knowledge. Thereafter, the teacher wrote the important main ideas prepared beforehand on the whiteboard located in front of the class. The activities continued by dividing the class into a few small groups and students were asked to discuss the writing task collaboratively. Then, the teacher gave explanation about the task to each group, whereby, each group was asked to elaborate one of the main ideas in one paragraph. The amount of words fixed were fifty words. Four small groups were asked to elaborate different main ideas. Finally, they were asked to write the writing draft on a piece of mahjong paper prepared by the teacher. Meanwhile, the result of the writing draft will be presented in the next learning session. Although grammatical prevalence is stressed some elements of higher-order thinking such as supportive learning in terms of the content of the compositions occur during collaborative group works.

OBS 2 Ustazah : : (P8:

Ustazah :

Ustazah : ... .

Student : Improve the standards of living

Ustazah : means

Student : Guarantee

6K.docx)

In the next episode, teacher discussed each *anasir* or main ideas through question and answer techniques. She proposed many questions to students about the meaning of certain vocabularies or phrases that were related to the topic. Again, the focus given towards elaborating each main ideas into fifty words for each paragraph. Lastly, the result of the writing draft for each groups were combined according to sequences, which were, one paragraph for the introduction, two paragraphs for the contents and one paragraph for the conclusion, creating a total of two-hundred words essay.

Ustazah Izzah emphasized on the importance of understanding the topic of the task given especially on the topic knowledge, audience knowledge, linguistic knowledge, and genre knowledge (Hayes, 1996). According to the interview, the teacher explained again of her practice in the teaching of *Insya'* for the writing planning activities.

Ustazah: Firstly, start with the format, in writing a letter we should have the name of the sender, address, and  
P20: 130731\_TBG 2.doc

Ustazah: As usual, I will give students the points to be elaborated, then, ask them to discuss the points of the topic. Only then, they work on the contents.

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The topic of the writing is usually chosen by the teachers themselves according to her reference of the syllabus of *Insya'*. Usually, students were not given the chance to decide their choice of essay topic except for the fifth classroom observations. Viewed from this perspective, we can assume that the teacher is experienced enough to scaffold her students' writing fluency and accuracy based on the models given before students are able to be independent in topic searching. Other than that, the choice of essay topic also considered the aspect of suitability towards the yearly calendar as well as activities that took place at school other than referring to the themes fixed in the Syllabus.

Ustazah: Sometimes, we want to bring in certain topics, but they are not suitable. Coincidentally, there was a week of Maulid Rasul, then, I asked them to do a report on the Maulid Rasul. Then, there was a week where they have to go on a visit, so, I asked them to make a letter to go to that visit.

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From the observation, Ustazah Izzah also could not avoid from giving the focus towards the public examination (Sakila Dollah, 2001). Wan Sabri Wan Yusoff (2006) also revealed the same phenomena whereby Islamic Studies teachers also emphasized on the examination focus and academic achievement. We can assume through the teacher's behaviour in analyzing the past years' public examination topic questions and detailed discussion on the writing marking scheme according to HRC's examination in the classroom during the tenth until fourteenth observation

Ustazah: I did the analysis according to the real questions.

P20: 130731\_TBG 2.doc

Other than that, Ustazah Izzah also guided ways to create a quality essay by exposing to the students the strategies of good essay writing like creating a complete sentence technique from the chosen phrase (OBS 6 & 7) and the application usage of discourse markers in writing (OBS 8 & 10). Furthermore, she also discussed in detail with students about marking scheme for the sentence construction (OBS 6 & 7) as well as the marking scheme for essay (OBS 9, 10 & 11) that is used in the marking of the real HRC's examination. The teacher's instructional practice demonstrates to be against the assumption that most teachers only discuss the main ideas of a topic and then, asked students to write a complete essay (Awang Sariyan, 2004). In other words, in the observed class, (a) text interpretation, (b) reflection, and (c) text production occur but to the level of scaffolding students first then asking them to do problem-solving activities independently (Frodesen & Starna, 1999; Harklau, 1994, 2001).

**The Revising Stage of Writing Production.** The sequences of explicit instructional practices of the typical writing classes by experienced teacher is seen as non-linear but dynamic by integrating the processes of both text interpretations and text reflection during writings of drafts (Cumming, 1992; Riazi, Lessard-Clouston & Cumming, 1996; Shi, 1998; Yeh, 1998). The second phase involved the important yet challenging task, where students had to translate the ideas in the form of sentences, points, sketches, and illustrations that had been brainstormed during the planning process into the form of sentences, paragraphs, and henceforth preparing the writing draft.

Students discussed in their group, which contained of five to eight people, the elaboration of the main ideas in one paragraph within a certain limit of time. They were encouraged to refer to the bilingual dictionary in order to find the suitable vocabularies and their translation. Meanwhile, Ustazah Izzah moved about the classroom to monitor and facilitate students regarding the task. Some students did asked questions to their teacher whenever they were having problems or confusion in completing the task. Finally, they rewrote the writing draft, which had been written on a piece of log paper, onto the mahjong paper for the verbal presentation. Here again, the cognitive-base task demands are prevalent in the instructional practices of the teacher.

According to the interview data, the teacher explained that she will move from one group to another to monitor and help the students in need during the process of writing draft.

Ustazah: The students can ask question for the information that they missed during the round made.

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Ustazah Izzah also strengthen students' writing ability by recalling the criteria that they need to abide during the writing process according to the discussion of the public examination scheme explained beforehand.

Ustazah: With the given anasir, whatever you do, don't take other's anasir. There should be one anasir for each paragraph. Don't take other's anasir. There are four anasirs, enough for 200 words. Enough for an essay

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However, there is something needed to be observed. Ustazah Izzah exposed that most students wrote the writing draft in the interlanguage (Selinker, 1972) for instance Malay language (ML) and then was translated into

Arabic language (AL). Though so, some students did their draft in dual-language modes where the ML and AL were combined. Students' behaviour showed the language confusion that then gave negative implications toward their style and structure of AL indirectly. On the other hand, this strategy should be permitted when students had problems or when facing an impasse during writing (Munisamy, 1998). Considering occurrences of errors in developing writing ability is viewed as a norm rather than impeding students' composition abilities (Blanton, 2005).

Ustazah: They pronounced it in Malay language and they asked me to translate. They wrote it in Malay and they asked for the translation. Some of them had been translated while some had not.

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The composition of draft writing should consider the aspect of grammar, semantic, and the neatness of handwriting. However, in the context of writing in the second language (S2), the process of draft writing is harder and complex due to the extra steps needed to be applied by writer in order to interpret their mind code into the target language before the text finally made into draft on a piece of paper or computer screen (Stapleton, 2010).

**The Reflecting Stage of Writing Draft.** At this level, each group was asked to send a representative to present the writing draft in the form of writing and verbal forms. Usually, the first group prepared the introduction paragraph, followed by the second, third, and fourth group for the contents of the main ideas to be inspected by the teacher, while the last group prepared the conclusion of the paragraph. The writing draft written will be pasted on the whiteboard placed in front of the class. Afterwards, the group representative will read the draft made by his or her group loudly until the end. The teacher will help to correct any error in pronunciation.

Afterwards, Ustazah Izzah read back the writing draft. And then, the other groups were asked to assess their friends' writing draft that has been presented and look for any errors. Ample space was given towards assessing and evaluating peers so that they were trained to be a critical reader (Narayanan, 1991). Most of the students' responds touched on the aspect of spelling and usage of grammar or anything that was mechanical in nature. If there were no further responds received, teacher would start the checking activity according to sentence. Usually, she will lead the discussion in the form of question and answer and enquiry technique.

(P9: Ustazah :

BS 3

Ustazah : (Teacher pointed at the sentence on the board)

Student :

Ustazah :

Student :

(Students pointed at the sentence that has confusing uslub)

6K.docx)

The example above showed that teacher always gave opportunity for students to assess and get involved in the evaluation activity together. The next episode showed how students managed to identify several errors and gave suggestion on writing improvement. Usually, teacher would ask for the error justification. Finally, the teacher will give her responds by correcting the glaring errors verbally or in writing or both in a specific manner.

(Students from group 3 corrected the sentence) to

(Teacher asked why it is wrong)Teacher answered: – (according to plurals)

(Teacher read and corrected error verbally and in writing) as;

(Teacher discarded the word ) to

:

to

(Teacher discarded the word with the red marker pen and above it wrote )

(P9: OBS 3 6K.docx)

Ustazah Izzah addressed several aspects that need focus in the activity of revising the writing draft such as the number of vocabulary, spelling errors, the usage of vocabulary, singular and plural words, grammar, syntax, and language style. SP will give feedback verbally, then, corrected it in written form. At the same time, students were also given more autonomy to become a critical reader and assessor towards their writing draft. Such exposure enables students to elevate their writing skills positively and improve their upcoming writing tasks (Auerbach, 1992; Quintero, 2002). In the fifth class observation, teacher also include students in making assessment and decision before giving a score and grade towards their classmates' writing draft. Students were also trained to give score in the practice of sentence formation during the sixth and seventh observation. In addition, students were also exposed with marking scheme used in HRC's public examination. On the other hand, teacher was constantly sharing tips and guidance related to the criteria of a quality essay including the aspect of vocabulary, grammar, language style and discourse markers.

After the revision activity between the teacher and friends of every group writing draft, students were asked to rewrite the essay individually by combining the paragraphs of writing draft that were prepared collaboratively while following the suggested corrections proposed. They were asked to finish the task and submit the final draft of their writing to the teacher for the purpose of marking. Among the factor that encourage Ustazah Izzah to use her mother tongue language in her T&L was that, it was compulsory for every teacher to finish the fixed syllabus within the period of six months only. Generally, most teachers faced pressure from the school administration in order to achieve the examination excellence target.

Ustazah: It is fixed that we have to teach until the sixth month, have to finish the syllabus. The following month will be the trial, so, all subjects must be finished by the sixth month.

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The practice is against the regularity of Insyah subject which clearly stated that the intermediate language in the teaching of HRC should totally be Arabic language. However, from the interview, Ustazah Izzah gave her justification and reason of why she had to practice bilingual as the intermediate language in the teaching of Insyah.

Ustazah: We use Malay language just to help students to understand. When we give instruction, when we explain to them, they would be able to understand the Arabic language rather than just talking in Arabic only, they won't understand anything. However, it is better to speak in Arabic, whether most students understand or not, but it is not very satisfying for the teacher... feels like the students don't understand.

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The practice of revising the writing draft is aligned with Handawiy's (t.t) suggestion that emphasize on the importance of revision after writing draft has been completed. Writers need to review how far the content has covered and whether it is adequate. It is important to ensure that the spelling must be correct while basic grammatical errors should be avoided altogether. Teachers are also advised to facilitate students individually so that it will be more supportive rather than just revising and giving the marks only (Abdul 'Aleem, 2002). Generally, three aspects that teachers need to give their attention in the teaching of Insyah are; help students during the planning of writing task, facilitate students in preparing the writing draft, and encourage students' development in the writing process (Whitney, Blau, Bright, Cabe, Dewar, Levin, Macias, & Rogers, 2008). In instance, teacher can give compliments to students after they have finished their verbal presentation. Praise can also be shown by putting students' writing draft, that has been written on the mahjong paper, on the classroom wall whereby this situation can bring out the positive learning elements.

**Implications of teacher's practice towards students.** Understanding teachers knowledge in the writing instruction is important since it will give rise to more quality writing pieces to produce text in a coherent and meaningful manners (Belcher & Connor, 2001; Bell, 1997; Casanave & Schechter, 1997; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Leki, 1992; Zamel, 1995). The development of writing skills among students, especially as a writer, is determined directly or indirectly by their teachers whom act as the mediator between cultural and social context (Fisher, 2012). According to the interview with students, researcher concluded that process approach in the teaching of Insyah gave direct implication towards students' emotion and writing skills. The activity of preparing the writing draft collaboratively in group and revision between teacher-students stimulate a conducive atmosphere in the learning of Insyah. The activity of individual writing is perceived as boring as compared to working in group. The positive implications are illustrated through students' interview statement such as feeling happy, fun, motivated, quality, feeling better and spirited as below;

P4 6K: I feel happy after we did some mistakes, ustazah corrected us. We get to learn, get to add our vocabulary, terms

P16: 130523\_TBK 1 6K.txt

P7 6S: If we get high score, it will give us high motivation. I am good at writing and never lose my spirit.

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Teacher gave feedback, verbally or in written form, towards students' writing draft in the form of correcting the error. However, direct error correction in front of the class, whether made by teacher nor peers, if not handled correctly can cause the presenters' inability to accept the comment. In addition, some students felt shy and had low self-esteem due to the teacher's feedback made publicly and in front of the class. This aspect is important since formative feedback improves the way students succeed in the accuracy and fluency of their writing abilities (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Ferris, Pezone, Tade, & Tinti, 1997; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; Reid, 1994; Saito, 1994).

P1 6K: Sometimes, it's our sentence. Ustazah corrected us in front of everyone, some students felt shy, afraid that their sentences were wrong. Ustazah wrote and corrected it.

P16: 130523\_TBK 1 6K.txt

However, most students showed positive and open attitude when accepting teacher's feedback about their writing draft. Students were confident that teacher's feedback could contribute to the improvement of the quality of the essay and at the same time improve their examination achievement. This was due to the teacher's vast knowledge and experience in teaching and it was confirmed by students. The finding is aligned with Wan Norazwani Wan Jaafar (2011) study that demonstrated that there is a positive and significant relationship between students' interest and

motivation with their writing skills. The higher the interest and motivation, the higher their skills in writing. The same went with group discussion techniques in finishing writing tasks. It was also accepted well among students. Furthermore, discussion is perceived as the most appropriate method in preparing a conducive atmosphere in learning. Variety of abilities and differences between peers can be combined optimally in the process of coming up with writing draft. Students who are good in the aspect of grammar, syntax, rhetoric, and similar to that, their abilities can be combined in coming up with the best writing product rather than if it was written individually. Furthermore, one of the students illustrated that writing alone is less fun and boring.

P3 6K: Everyone has their own ideas. Maybe, one student is good at grammar, the other one is good at , and the other is good at . Good at everything. When we combine them all, it will improve the sentences.

P19: 131003\_004 TBK 2 6K.docx - 19:6

P2 6S: ...if we were to do it alone, we feel lazy, sleepy, no idea, no heart, we feel blank because writing itself is boring. Even if we are not interested in it, but when we do it together, then it will be fun. We have different ideas. Language styles, if we were to do it alone, no fun.

P18: 131003\_003 TBK 2 6S.docx - 18:112

There was a small group of students who thought that group discussion techniques only needed on certain students only. The implication of learning is perceived on students' behavior and inclinations in their learning strategies, be it learning alone or in group. This matter was supported by a student that thought group discussion was not needed by some individuals. The opinion was based on the hypothesis that the product of the task, which was done in group, caused the lack of sense of belonging

P5 6S: From my opinion, it depends on that particular person. Some people can learn through discussion, some learn through self-made errors. For example, when we had the classroom discussion, maybe we can learn from others' mistakes.

P18: 131003\_003 TBK 2 6S.docx - 18:31

The opinion probably came from group that has many group members, which was between six to eight students. The amount of members may cause students' interactions became limited and maybe there were students who only act as a listener. However, according to Fernandez (2012), group discussion or collaborative technique will only produce a quality and accurate text essay if all members act positively, ready to cooperate, and contribute ideas, ability as well as skills.

Revising the writing draft in classroom train students directly of new vocabulary, suitable terms, and criteria in building quality sentences. Furthermore, scores and grades given could enhance students' motivation to improve their own effort in the learning of Insyah'. On the other hand, learning experience led students from repeating the same mistakes.

P9 6S: I can improve my vocabulary in Insyah' writing as well as showing my committed behavior in transferring all information while giving out ideas while working on Insyah'

P18: 131003\_003 TBK 2 6S.docx - 18:2

P5 6S: Teacher's comments and suggestions are really needed by students in improving quality other than grading.

P18: 131003\_003 TBK 2 6S.docx

Generally, most students accepted all the advice and comments, given to them during the revision of writing draft, positively. The benefits were illustrated as enriching vocabulary, generating students' mind, and getting to experience beneficial learning experience that could be useful for the upcoming writing task.

P1 6K: Excited because we get the writing right. It isn't easy. After that, if teacher correct us, we feel embarrass. However, it is a part of learning process. There are ups and downs. I like it because I wasn't the only one to get new thinking.

P19: 131003\_004 TBK 2 6K.docx - 19:34

Other than that, teacher encouraged students in giving out their views and evaluation on their friends' of the other groups' writing draft. Peer evaluation is important in learning process and the experience could be a necessity before they conducted their own self-evaluation. For example, by giving out comments towards task draft before submitting it to the teacher, peers can suggest certain grade or score towards the task as well as discuss and suggest improvements on the task. However, students' ability in conducting self-evaluation is limited in certain situations only. In the following examples, students practiced self-evaluation by revising their writing draft that had been prepared before it was presented in front of the class. They managed to identify weaknesses, in their own writing, from the aspects of language style and tried to do correction and improvement. Some students only assessed the mechanical aspects such as total number of words and paragraphing

P10 6S: Sometimes when I work on my essay, when I read it back, it sounded a little all over the place as compared to other Arabic books.

P18: 131003\_003 TBK 2 6S.docx - 18:91

P3 6K: Maybe when we do our essay, we revise a bit. We know the *uslub*, so, we correct it.

P19: 131003\_004 TBK 2 6K.docx - 19:86

P3 6S: Like all the lining of the paragraphs look good. All seven of them. If its' like that, it's OK.

P18: 131003\_003 TBK 2 6S.docx - 18:94



Students were more confident in assessing their own writing draft or their friends', especially in the certain aspects such as the main ideas. For example, they were able to assess the presented main ideas with variety of contents and did not repeat the same content twice. Several small yet glaring mistakes were managed to be corrected so that their essay could be better and meaningful. One of the forms of encouragement towards improvement of writing skills was through training students as a writer as well as assessor where they were given more autonomies and similar involvement in grading and scoring process (Whitney et al., 2008).

Interview questions explained the abovementioned matter;

P2 6K: When it comes to tu Insyallah (by god's will) can be handled, but if, maybe not

P19: 131003\_004 TBK 2 6K.docx - 19:78

P1 6K: If it's wrong, we correct it so that it would be better.

P19: 131003\_004 TBK 2 6K.docx – 19:85

Generally, the combination of teacher's response with students' in the conference during evaluation process gave a significant implication toward the quality of the writing produced (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005). Teacher's constant facilitation during the writing process build up positive motivation in students to keep on writing according to the good and meaningful writing criteria. Other than that, teacher was advised to pay full attention towards rhetorical aspects so that students' desire could be delivered clearly and understood by the readers audience (Worden, 2009).

**Conclusion.** The advantages of process approach in the teaching of Insyah concentrated on three aspects, namely, teacher's role in helping students plan as well as readiness to write, elaborate the writing work, and encourage the development of students' skills in writing. A more productive approach in the teaching of Insyah should combine both approaches that oriented on process-product. In other word, process aspects in writing activity and strategy practice in the teaching of Arabic writing should be given attention, parallel with the writing result in the last stage to produce coherent and meaningful text production. Teachers should give focus to communication aspects through their efforts to teach writing process rhetorically and not just because they need to finish the syllabus and for the purpose of examination only. Students need to go through every activity in writing process recursively or repeatedly which are; writing planning, drafting, revising and rewriting until they eventually get to come up with a quality writing. Students need to be actively involved and given the autonomy to make their own decision in every activities during the writing process. They need to be exposed to the criteria and scheme of how their essay would be assessed and evaluated since the initial process itself. It is so that every individual students could recognize their own writing proficiency level, weaknesses and strengths and take the necessary steps to improve their skills and achievement in their writing in the future. Research finding gave a strong rationale for teachers to apply the process-product approach in essay writing as a strategy in the teaching of Insyah in classroom. Teachers need to be exposed with the deep understanding of process approach writing model and apply it in their T&L. As a result, students will enjoy writing with teacher's constant help and facilitation towards developing writing skills and improving their academic achievement all at the same time.

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