

Examining the Four-Stage Writing Process and Students' Learning Outcomes in EFL Setting

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Abstract. This study examines the implementation of the four-stage writing process—prewriting, organizing, drafting, and revising—and its impact on students' learning outcomes in an EFL writing classroom at the senior high school level. Using qualitative methods, including classroom observation, student interviews, and document analysis, the study highlights the teacher's role in facilitating the writing process through clear instruction and both individual and whole-class feedback, guided by a process-based approach. Findings reveal that the writing strategies were effectively implemented by the teacher. After undergoing a series of structured writing stages, students demonstrated increased writing awareness, as reflected in the improved coherence, structure, and clarity of their writing. Additionally, students showed greater interest and motivation in engaging with writing tasks. However, the study also found that peer feedback—although a key component of process-based instruction—requires structured training, as it demands specific skills that many students have not yet fully developed. The study highlights the need for process-based teaching that provides focused guidance throughout each stage of writing.

Keywords: Process-based writing, Writing strategy, Peer feedback, Teacher scaffolding

1. INTRODUCTION

As a *lingua franca*, English is widely used across disciplines [1]. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language in the context of EFL classroom. The curriculum for English instruction at elementary through senior high school levels refers to the *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (KTSP) [2]. That's why English teaching needs to be properly prepared in its implementation, making the teacher's commitment a primary factor. In English education, four major skills are emphasized: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Writing becomes one of the most demanding skills for both students and educators.

As for the teacher, it was identified that teachers face challenges related to technique, time, linguistics, and student motivation in writing instruction [3]. Also, the previous study conducted in King Khalid University's female campus, it reveals that many educators use instructional methods that omit essential stages for guiding students through the writing process. As a result, students often lack originality in their written work, relying instead on memorized texts [4]-[6]. By treating writing strictly as a final product and overlooking the importance of the writing process, teachers unintentionally hinder the development of students' creative writing abilities [7]. From the students' point of view, Ratminingsih et al [8] identified several problems commonly faced by Indonesian students in writing: difficulty expressing ideas in a foreign language, limited vocabulary, lack of coherence in organizing ideas, and fear of making grammatical mistakes [9]-[12] further emphasized that poor writing skills can negatively impact students' academic achievement as a whole. For example, a study by Setyawan et al [13], on the implementation of the process-based approach indicated that both teachers and students need to collaborate across stages to ensure effective writing development. The process-based approach emphasizes writing as a process rather than focusing solely on the final product. It promotes ideation, drafting, and revising as the core of student-centered learning [6], [14].

To overcome these challenges, various approaches have been adopted by educators in Indonesia, one of which is the process-based approach [5]-[8]. The process-based approach in writing instruction emphasizes writing as a developmental and recursive activity, rather than a product-focused task. Albeshar highlights that this approach involves several stages—prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing—which work together to support students in constructing organized and meaningful texts [16]. These stages not only help students generate and refine their ideas but also reduce writing anxiety and foster greater confidence in their

writing ability. In this framework, the teacher plays a crucial role as a facilitator, offering guidance, structured feedback, and modeling strategies across all writing stages [17]. Furthermore, Aman and Kesevan suggest that combining the process-based approach with elements of the product-based approach can produce more independent, reflective writers while maintaining attention to the final outcome [18]. Thus, the process-based approach is not merely a teaching method but also a pedagogical philosophy that positions students as active participants in their writing development.

Various empirical studies have confirmed the positive impact of the process-based writing approach on EFL student outcomes. Rahman et al. demonstrated significant improvement in student writing scores following the application of this approach in academic writing classes [19]. Similarly, Qomariyah and Permana found that students showed enhanced creativity and clarity in paragraph development when guided through structured stages of writing [20]. Pradnyadewi and Kristiani reported that the implementation of this approach improved student motivation and coherence in writing tasks [21]. Other studies by Alodwan and Ibnian, as well as Arici and Kaldirim, further support the effectiveness of repetitive writing instruction in boosting learners' performance [21], [22].

Most of these investigations tend to concentrate on student outcomes alone, with minimal attention to the teacher's strategic role in guiding each stage of the process. These prior works have largely measured the improvement in student writing through quantitative or quasi-experimental methods, focusing on pre- and post-test results. However, limited research has explored how teachers implement and adapt the four-stage writing strategy in actual classroom contexts, especially in senior high school EFL settings. To address this gap, the present study aims to examine the implementation of the teacher's instructional strategies during each stage of the process-based writing approach and evaluate their impact on students' writing outcomes. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How are the four-stage writing strategies implemented by the teacher in an EFL classroom?
2. How is the improvement of students' writing performance reflected in their scores after applying this approach?

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study applied a qualitative descriptive design to examine the implementation of the four stages of writing in a natural EFL classroom setting. This design is appropriate for understanding how participants experience a phenomenon and how they respond to pedagogical interventions. Qualitative research enables researchers to interpret and analyze the meaning behind behaviors and classroom interactions [23]. As noted by Riwayatiningasih [24], such approaches are widely used in language education research to explore teaching and learning dynamics in authentic contexts. Nasir et al [25]. further highlight the strength of qualitative design in capturing classroom processes and instructional patterns that are not easily quantifiable.

Participant of the Research

The research was conducted at MA Al Manshur Al Islami Kediri. The participants of this study were seventeen twelfth-grade students from a private Islamic school in Kediri. The selection was primarily based on purposive sampling, with twelfth-grade students chosen for their developmental readiness to engage in advanced writing tasks. Additionally, convenience sampling was employed due to the researcher's role as the classroom teacher in the high school, which allowed ongoing and natural access to participants over six writing sessions [26]. Twelfth-grade students were deliberately selected over tenth- and eleventh-grade students for several developmental reasons. First, writing skills are particularly crucial at this level due to their relevance to university admissions, scholarship applications, and other text-based requirements, where structured written expression is essential. Second, strong writing proficiency supports career readiness, as students prepare to enter professional environments that demand effective written communication. Third, writing is an essential soft skill that fosters critical thinking, organization, and the ability to convey ideas clearly—skills that are highly valued by future employers. Fourth, effective writing enhances both academic and social communication, helping students articulate complex thoughts across various contexts. This combination of accessibility and pedagogical relevance made twelfth-grade students ideal participants for investigating the implementation of the four-stage process-based writing approach.

Data Source

Several instruments used in this study are: observation checklist adapted from Ratminingsih et al [27] which aligned with the four stages of writing (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing), interview guide for semi-structured student interviews, student writing samples and lesson plans (RPP) as supporting documents, scoring rubric for writing assessment, adapted from *Writing Academic English* by Oshima and Hogue [28].

Data Collection

Data were then collected through multiple instruments to ensure triangulation. First, classroom observations were conducted using a strategy-based checklist, which was adapted from Ratminingsih et al.[27]. The checklist included indicators of active engagement and was used by the researcher not only during the session but also after each session to evaluate the extent to which students participation aligned with the process being implemented. These observations helped identify instructional strengths as well as potential areas for improvement in each stage. Second, semi-structured interviews were held to investigate students' perceptions, challenges, and progress during the process-based writing lessons. These interviews were being recorded. These interviews are allowed for in-depth reflection on students' experiences, offering qualitative insights into how they perceived each writing stage, the strategies used, and the effectiveness of teacher support. The interviews were conducted individually and recorded with the participants' consent for transcription and analysis. Third, document analysis was performed using relevant materials such as lesson plans (RPP), students' pre-tests and final drafts, as well as teacher feedback on student writing. These documents served to triangulate findings from the observations and interviews, and helped to track the writing development of students across different stages.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study followed a qualitative case study approach as outlined by Yin (2018) [29], focusing on an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the four-stage writing process in an EFL classroom. The analysis was conducted through several systematic steps to ensure validity. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis allow themes and patterns to emerge naturally from the data, particularly in relation to students' writing development and the effectiveness of the teacher's implementation strategies[23].

First, all data collected from classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis were compiled and organized according to each stage of the four writing stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. This categorization facilitated focused analysis relevant to each phase of the writing process. Second, the researcher conducted multiple readings of the transcribed interviews and observation notes to gain familiarity with the data and to identify recurring themes, patterns, and notable variations related to teaching strategies, student engagement, and challenges faced during each stage. Third, coding was performed manually by assigning labels to meaningful segments of the data. Initial open coding focused on identifying instances of teacher strategies, student responses, difficulties, and successful outcomes within each writing stage. These codes were then grouped into categories corresponding to the stages of the writing process, as well as cross-cutting themes such as motivation, collaboration, and instructional support. Fourth, data triangulation was carried out by comparing findings across the different data sources (observation, interview, and document analysis) to verify consistency and strengthen the credibility of the results. For example, students' reported challenges during interviews were cross-checked with observational data and teacher feedback on their writing samples. Fifth, thematic analysis was applied to interpret the data within the context of existing literature on process-based writing instruction, enabling a comprehensive understanding of how the four-stage writing process was enacted in the classroom and perceived by students. Finally, the researcher engaged in reflective memo writing throughout the analysis to document insights, emerging questions, and possible explanations, which informed the development of findings and discussion sections.

3. FINDINGS

This study aims to explore the implementation of the four-stage writing process in an EFL classroom and to examine its impact on students' writing performance. The findings are organized into three major components: first, an analysis of how the teacher applied each stage of the writing process—prewriting, organizing, drafting, and revising; second, a comparison of students' writing performance before and after the implementation, as reflected in their writing scores; and lastly, an exploration of students' perceptions

and attitudes toward the process-based writing approach. These findings provide insight into both instructional practices and student learning outcomes within the framework of process-oriented writing.

The observations were conducted over six meetings. The first meeting was used for the pre-test session to assess the students' initial ability in writing a paragraph in English, with a focus on the content and organization phases. Then, from the second to the sixth meetings, the actual stages of writing were implemented. To optimize the implementation of this process, the researcher used a strategy checklist to ensure that the strategies were properly applied in each stage.

Strategies Implemented by the Teacher

Of the 30 strategies implemented across the four stages of the writing process (prewriting, organizing, drafting, and revising & editing), the prewriting stage showed four strategies being strongly implemented, two applied weakly, and one not displayed. In the organizing stage, three strategies were strongly applied, while the other three were weakly implemented. During the drafting stage, five strategies were strongly implemented and two were applied weakly. Lastly, in the revising and editing stage, seven strategies were strongly implemented, one was applied weakly, and one was not displayed.

Table 1. The writing stage strategies

Phase	Strategies	S	A	ND
Prewriting	1. Teacher gives the students freedom in choosing the topic that they are going to write	√		
	2. Teacher helps the student recall the relevant idea related to their topic	√		
	3. Teacher helps the students in their writing	√		
	4. Teacher provides sufficient time in the prewriting process	√		
	5. Teacher gives the students feedback for their list		√	
	6. Teacher invites the students to make discussion and getting feedback from the other students	√		
	7. Teacher revise and assess the students' writing			√
Organizing	1. Teacher helps students in composing their writing	√		
	2. Teacher helps students in organizing the data into a paragraph outline	√		
	3. Teacher provides sufficient time in the process		√	
	4. Teacher gives the students feedback for their outline	√		
	5. Teacher invites the students to make discussion and getting feedback from the other students		√	
	6. Teacher revise and assess the students' outline		√	
Drafting	1. Teacher asks the students to write their data into a rough draft.	√		
	2. Teacher helps the students to translate their draft.	√		
	3. Teacher gives the students sufficient time to write		√	
	4. Teacher encourages students to start writing gradually in Indonesia	√		
	5. Provide constructive feedback on their translated work		√	
	6. Teacher assists students who are having difficulties with how to start writing.	√		
	7. Teacher helps students understand their own composing process	√		
Revising and Editing	1. Teacher helps the students to build repertoires strategies for revising	√		
	2. Teacher places the central importance of the revision	√		
	3. Teacher gives the students chance to encourage feedback from the lecturer and their friend	√		
	4. Teacher provides individual conferences between teacher and students during the process of composition		√	
	5. Teacher asks the students to do self-revision and pair or group revision	√		
	6. Teacher revises the students' draft	√		
	7. Teacher checks the content, format, organization, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure of the student's text	√		
	8. Teacher checks the originality of students' writing	√		
	9. Teacher gives the students time to conduct the editing process			√

Explanation: A (Apparent); ND (Not Displayed)

Improvement in Students' Writing Scores

As part of the writing stages in this process-based approach, the researcher conducted two test sessions. Each student was assessed twice: first during the pre-test (before undergoing the writing process stages) and then on the final draft (after completing the entire process, including drafting, revising, and peer feedback). The assessment used a *Paragraph Writing Scoring Rubric* to assess students strategies with a total score of 100, consisting of five categories as outlined by Oshima and Hogue: format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, grammar and sentence structure. The full table is provided in Appendix A.

Table 2. Score increasing of students' writing skill

Subjek	Pre-test	Final	Score
score	draft score	Increasing	
1	69	83	14
2	82	87	5
3	71	94	23
4	78	91	13
5	62	78	16
6	84	87	3
7	48	71	23
8	80	90	10
9	69	73	4
10	71	78	7
11	71	79	8
12	72	77	5
13	75	85	10
14	81	80	-1
15	84	91	7
16	71	79	8
17	72	77	5

Students' Attitude Toward Four Stages Writing through the Process based Approach

The findings from the student interviews revealed several recurring patterns regarding their experiences with the process-based writing approach. The researcher interviewed seven students for further exploration.

Researcher	: “Menurut kamu, apakah ada perubahan dalam kualitas tulisan kamu setelah melalui empat proses menulis?” “Do you think there has been any improvement in the quality of your writing after going through the four writing processes?”
MIC – R1	: “Ada, jadinya model tulisannya... kalau kemarin kan kayak asal nulis... sekarang tuh kayak lebih ngerti... seharusnya bahasanya tuh kayak gini, yang ini dulu terus yang itu gitu terstruktur.” “Yes, the writing model has changed... before, I would just write randomly... now I understand more... like, the language should be like this, this part comes first, then that part. It's more structured.”
MIC – R2	: “Sebenarnya menarik, tapi karena first time jadinya susah... tapi jadi ngerti kalau nulis tuh harus runtut.” “Actually, it's interesting, but since it's my first time, it was difficult... but I've come to understand that writing has to be organized.”
MIC – R5	: “Aku merasa dengan bikin outline, paragraph jadi nyambung... meskipun drafting masih bingung.” “I feel that by making an outline, the paragraphs became connected... even though I'm still confused during drafting.”
MIC – 6:	“Efektif juga sih, karena kita udah bikin outline segala macemnya. Jadi tulisan itu nggak bakal keluar dari apa yang seharusnya.” “It's actually effective, because we already made an outline and all. So the writing won't stray from what it's supposed to be.”

Most respondents agreed that the drafting stage was the most challenging. The main difficulties included selecting appropriate vocabulary, expressing phrases in English, grammar issues, and developing ideas in the target language.

Researcher	: <i>“Tahap mana yang paling sulit?”</i> “Which stage was the most difficult?”
MIC – R2	: <i>“Yang paling sulit... pas aku mulai bikin paragraph bagian drafting itu karena sulit untuk mencari kata yang pas gitu.”</i> “The most difficult... was when I started writing the paragraph in the drafting stage, because it was hard to find the right words.”
MIC – R3	: <i>“Saat proses drafting... mikir ini udah benar atau belum ya penulisannya?”</i> “During the drafting process... I kept thinking, is this writing correct or not?”
MIC – R6	: <i>“Bikin paragraph sama nerjemahin ke bahasa Inggrisnya itu masih belum terbiasa dan menurut saya sangat sulit karena mungkin saya belum sebegitu ancar ya masalah grammar atau tenses.”</i> “Writing the paragraph and translating it into English — I’m still not used to it, and I think it’s very difficult because maybe I’m not that fluent yet when it comes to grammar or tenses.”
MIC – R4	: <i>“Bagian drafting, saya jadi bingung karena emang awalnya gak terlalu terbiasa menerjemahkan bahasa Indonesia ke Inggris, jadi setelah bikin outline terus ke paragraf, itu terasa sulit”</i> “The drafting part — I got confused because I’m not really used to translating from Indonesian to English, so after making the outline, moving on to the paragraph felt difficult.”

In the process-based approach, the teacher played a crucial role in guiding students through each stage of writing. Direct instruction and feedback from the teacher were perceived as highly beneficial in helping students develop and understand the structure of their writing.

Researcher	: <i>“Bagaimana peran guru selama proses writing ini, apakah sudah maksimal membantumu dalam tiap prosesnya?”</i> “What was the teacher’s role during this writing process? Did the teacher support you well in each stage?”
MIC – R2	: <i>“ya alhamdulillah guru sudah bantu memilih frasa yang benar... per tahapnya sudah diberi penjelasan dengan detail jadi bisa sudah dipahami.”</i> “Yes, alhamdulillah, the teacher helped choose the correct phrases... each stage was explained in detail, so it was understandable.”
MIC – R3	: <i>“Ustadzah sangat membantu... lihat satu per satu, tanya ada kesulitan gak?, dan saya sendiri kalau misal bingung, pasti langsung tanya ke ustazah kayak, ustazah bagaimana membahasakan kata-kata ini? Dan ustazah langsung menunjukkan.”</i> “The teacher was very helpful... she checked one by one, asked if we had any difficulties, and whenever I was confused, I would ask her things like, ‘Ustadzah, how do I phrase this?’ and she would immediately show me.”
MIC – R4	: <i>“Saya berusaha memahami setiap prosesnya dengan baik. Dalam tiap tahapan, terutama dalam proses membuat paragrafnya, saya selalu di arahkan oleh ustadzah.”</i> “I tried to understand each process well. In every stage, especially in writing the paragraph, the teacher always guided me.”

Meanwhile, the peer editing session made a limited contribution, as some students were still unfamiliar with providing constructive feedback on their peer-editing, due to their limited English proficiency.

- Researcher* : “apakah sesi peer-editing cukup membantu dalam hasil akhir tulisanmu?”
- MIC – R5* : “Did the peer-editing session help improve your final writing?”
: “Paragraph-nya dikoreksi. Tapi kami cuma lihat sekilas, gak terlalu banyak kasih respon...soalnya pada dasarnya kami juga butuh tools translate nih jadi kayak gak berani banyak koreksi punya teman.”
“The paragraph was corrected. But we only glanced at it briefly, didn’t really give much feedback... because basically, we also rely on translation tools, so we weren’t confident enough to correct our friends’ work.”
- MIC – R3* : “saat peer-editing y aitu Namanya? Nah, bagian sini saya gak terlalu banyak koreksi sih karena menurut saya kalau paragraphnya udah bisa mudah dibaca, ya itu baik aja.”
“During the peer-editing — is that what it's called? — well, I didn’t do much editing because I felt that if the paragraph was already easy to read, then it was good enough.”

A shift in students’ attitudes was also observed. Some initially felt overwhelmed, but as they went through the stages, they began to enjoy the writing process.

- Researcher* : “Bagaimana perasaanmu saat memulai tugas menulis dan saat prosesnya?”
“How did you feel when starting the writing task and during the process?”
- MIC – R1* : “Awalnya emang kayak males banget... tapi pas bikin terus dikumpulin, terus dapet feedback baik, terus aku mikir ya bagus juga sih... lama-lama enjoy karena hasil tulisan saya juga lebih dapat dimengerti.”
“At first, I really didn’t feel like doing it... but after writing and submitting it, then receiving good feedback, I thought, well, this is actually nice... over time I started to enjoy it because my writing became more understandable.”
- MIC – R6* : “awalnya saya ngerasa berat banget karena saya emang malas menulis apalagi dalam bahasa Inggris, apalagi memasuki semester akhir, tapi untungnya guru menuntun saya di tiap tahapannya. Dan saat akhir draftnya, saya rasa pengalaman ini sangat berguna loh, apalagi untuk kedepannya.”
“At first, I felt it was really tough because I don’t like writing, especially in English — and even more so since it’s the final semester. But fortunately, the teacher guided me through each stage. And by the end of the final draft, I felt this experience was really valuable, especially for the future.”

However, not all students felt confident about the quality of their writing.

- Researcher* : “Apakah kamu percaya diri dengan hasil tulisanmu jika dipublikasikan?”
“Do you feel confident about your writing if it were to be published?”
- MIC – R2* : “Enggak. Soalnya yang aku ceritakan itu... tentang ayahku... jadi aku gak percaya diri karena ceritanya belum lengkap (sehingga nanti bisa menghasilkan multitafsir) dan juga sepertinya kurang menarik deh. Tapi jika waktunya lebih lama lagi, mungkin bisa

lebih percaya.”

“No. Because what I wrote about... was my father... so I’m not confident since the story isn’t complete. And I think it’s not that interesting. But if I had more time, maybe I’d feel more confident.”

The students stated that they would likely reuse this strategy in other contexts, such as academic essay writing for scholarships, and even in professional settings.

- Researcher* : “Kamu merasa ada kemungkinan menggunakan tahap ini lagi untuk di masa depan?”
“Do you think there’s a possibility you’ll use this writing process again in the future?”
- MIC – R1* : “Bisa jadi ada. Misalnya ada tes beasiswa yang pake essai tulisan... jadi tau mau mulai darimana.”
“It’s possible. For example, if there’s a scholarship test that requires an essay... now I know where to start.”
- MIC – R6* : “Kalau emang dibutuhkan mungkin harus sih, tapi aku punya feeling sih bakal memakai strategi ini lagi karena emang karena terstruktur.”
“If it’s really needed, then I probably have to — but I have a feeling I’ll use this strategy again because it’s structured.”
- MIC – R7* : “Kemungkinan besar pakai ya karena emang saya merasa tulisan saya menjadi lebih baik. Saya juga baru-baru ini banyak membaca peluang menghasilkan uang ternyata banyak sekali yang berhubungan dengan menulis, mulai menulis cerpen, caption media sosial, bahkan mungkin ya yang lebih akademistik.”
“Very likely, yes, because I feel my writing has improved. Lately, I’ve also read that there are many opportunities to earn money through writing — like short stories, social media captions, or maybe even more academic ones.”

4. DISCUSSION

The Four-Stage Writing Process

Prewriting Stage

The first step in the writing process is known as prewriting, which aims to generate as many ideas as possible to serve as raw material for writing, where the writer is encouraged to collect ideas in the form of words, phrases, or sentences that emerge during the thinking process. These ideas are then evaluated and filtered for relevance, providing a strong foundation for developing a coherent paragraph [30], [31], [32]. Prewriting involves a variety of techniques that can be chosen according to students’ preferences and writing goals. Common strategies include freewriting, where students write non-stop for a set period; listing, which involves recording all ideas related to a topic; and clustering (or mind mapping), where ideas are visually connected to explore relationships between concepts[30], [31]. Mahnam and Nejadansari [31] emphasized that when students are allowed to choose their preferred strategies, they tend to be more motivated and engaged in the writing process. Similarly, Samsudin [33] noted that giving students autonomy to select their own topics fosters creativity in writing.

The implementation of the prewriting stage in this study demonstrates alignment with the theories surrounding process-based writing. As emphasized by Menina[30], prewriting serves as the foundation for generating and organizing ideas before composing a draft. In line with this, the observed classroom practices included brainstorming, listing, and teacher-guided idea development—all of which support students in gathering relevant content for their writing. Mahnam and Nejadansari [31] further stress that using various prewriting techniques such as freewriting, clustering, and listing allows students to select strategies that best suit their learning preferences and writing goals. The teacher’s flexibility in offering sample topics while also allowing students to select their own aligns with Samsudin’s [33] argument that student autonomy in topic selection fosters greater engagement and ownership of their work. Moreover, the teacher’s active role in monitoring and guiding students during idea generation reflects the facilitator model

described by Alharbi[32], who asserts that teachers should assist students in exploring ideas rather than prescribing content. These findings affirm that key elements of process-based writing—specifically in the prewriting phase—were effectively implemented in the classroom.

However, some observed practices diverged from the theoretical framework. Peer revision activities, which are a central component of collaborative writing development, were absent. The teacher did not incorporate pair or group work during the prewriting stages, citing time constraints. This contradicts recommendations from Menina [30] and Alharbi[32], who highlight the value of peer interaction in refining ideas and enhancing student reflection. Additionally, while the teacher provided written feedback, there was no structured assessment of student writing. The opportunity for students to read their drafts aloud was also limited to a few individuals and was not systematized across the sessions. This practice, though informal, is advocated by Mahnam and Nejadansari [31] as a useful tool for encouraging metacognitive awareness and writer confidence.

Organizing Stage

After the prewriting stage, the writing process moved on to the organizing stage, where students were guided to create an outline based on the ideas they had previously generated. Creating an outline is an essential step in writing because it helps writers structure their ideas and present them in a clear and logical order[28]. An outline typically begins with a topic sentence that includes the main idea and a controlling idea, followed by supporting sentences arranged to build coherence. This theoretical framework was reflected in classroom practice, where students constructed simple outlines as the structural foundation of their paragraphs.

The teacher played an active role by explicitly explaining the steps for developing a paragraph outline. This included composing a topic sentence, selecting relevant supporting details, and maintaining unity through a clear controlling idea. The teacher also walked around the classroom to monitor students' progress and provide individual feedback, aligning with Oshima and Hogue's view that organizing content before drafting improves clarity and coherence in writing[28]. Despite the structured support provided by the teacher, several theoretical components of the organizing stage were not fully realized. Specifically, group discussion and peer feedback were not implemented due to time constraints. As a result, students did not have the opportunity to share and revise their outlines collaboratively. According to Alharbi[32], peer interaction at this stage is important for developing critical thinking and improving content structure through shared input. Moreover, although the teacher offered revisions and verbal guidance, there was no structured assistance to help students improve their outlines based on the feedback. This indicates a partial application of scaffolding, in which feedback was present but not followed up with supported corrections or modeled improvements.

Drafting Stage

During the drafting phase, the focus shifted to composing initial drafts using a *freewriting* technique, where students were encouraged to concentrate on expressing ideas rather than grammatical accuracy. Freewriting is described as a method in which students sit down and write whatever comes to mind without worrying about grammar, spelling, or organization. As cited in Sa'adah[34], Logan defines freewriting as "just sitting down and writing whatever comes to your mind about a topic". Similarly, Hogue states that freewriting helps writers generate ideas by choosing a topic and writing freely, without concern for correctness or logical order[28].

Five strategies were strongly implemented and two were applied weakly in this phase. One of the strategies used by the teacher was allowing students to first compose their ideas in Indonesian to better interpret their thoughts, and then translate the draft into English. Translanguaging pedagogy encourages learners to use their full linguistic repertoires, including their first language, as cognitive tools to access content, organize ideas, and scaffold their understanding in the target language[35]. This stage required extended time; therefore, the drafting process was conducted over two sessions. The teacher was observed to be actively assisting students—not necessarily through one-on-one guidance at all times, but through general facilitation, prompting questions, and offering help when needed. The teacher also supported students in understanding their own composing processes through individual writing conferences, which helped them reflect on their strategies and writing decisions[36].

Revising Stage

Revising and editing, on the other hand, are processes of re-evaluating ideas and structures to examine meaning, mechanisms, relevance of information, coherence and integration, word choice, word order, as

well as lexical and grammatical accuracy. Editing is also crucial for introducing appropriate connectors to enhance textual integration, as stated by Oshima and Hogue[28]. In the revising phase, students focused on improving the content and structure of their drafts by identifying errors and clarifying vague parts. This stage helped students better understand their own writing and develop their writing skills. The main goal of revising is to clarify, rewrite in the proper structure, reorganize the piece, add text and remove irrelevant materials[37].

After previously receiving assistance in translating their writing from Indonesian to English, the teacher remained actively involved throughout the revising process. The teacher also guided students on what steps to take during this stage. In the revising and editing stage, seven strategies were strongly implemented, one was applied weakly, and one was not displayed. The strategies that were fully implemented included: helping students build a repertoire of revision strategies; emphasizing the central importance of the revising stage; providing opportunities for students to receive feedback from both the teacher and peers; encouraging students to engage in self, pair, and group revision; revising students' drafts; giving direct feedback; checking general writing aspects; and verifying the originality of students' writing. These implementations align with Brown's view[38], which states that students should be guided in determining what to do during the revising process and that revision should be the core of writing activities. In classroom practice, these strategies were consistently implemented by the teacher.

However, in peer feedback, it is showed that students struggled to provide meaningful feedback due to lack of training and limited English proficiency. This finding supports[39], who argued that peer feedback is often difficult to manage when students are not adequately trained in giving constructive criticism. It highlights the importance of training in providing effective peer feedback in the EFL context. The study found that adequate training in giving feedback can improve the quality of students' revisions and their engagement in the writing process. However, in the current implementation, such training has not been conducted, which may limit the effectiveness of peer feedback[40]. As study by Lo Sardo et al. [41] also revealed that the writing process involves cycles of planning and translating ideas. In this context, peer interaction can help students explore and elaborate on their ideas more effectively. However, the lack of such interaction in the current implementation may limit students' ability to reflect on and develop their ideas more deeply.

After receiving feedback from peers, the teacher resumed the role of reviser by giving students time to revise their texts again. This second revision would later serve as the final draft and be assessed. At this stage, students focused on correcting mechanical errors such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar. This phase is critical to ensuring textual clarity and accuracy. Students were expected to polish their drafts to eliminate errors. In practice, students received feedback not only on their final drafts but also throughout the entire writing process. This ongoing feedback helped them improve their writing and enhanced their ability to identify and correct errors. Nevertheless, the editing process revealed that some students continued to struggle with minor grammatical issues, particularly in subject–predicate agreement and article usage.

Students' Writing Score

Based on the data collected through the paragraph scoring rubric from each student's writing results, there was a significant increase in scores between the pre-test and the final draft among all participants, as shown in Table 2. The average accumulated score improvement between the pre-test and the final draft was 9.76 points, derived from several aspects including format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, grammar, and sentence structure.

The analysis of students' writing scores provides quantitative support for the effectiveness of the process-based writing approach, which integrates prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Most students demonstrated a notable improvement in their writing ability after participating in the complete sequence of writing stages. For example, Subject 7's score improved substantially from 48 in the pre-test to 71 in the final draft, reflecting increased coherence, organization, and control over sentence structure. This result is consistent with previous findings by Alodwan and Ibnian[22], who observed significant improvement in students' overall writing performance after applying a structured, process-oriented method. Likewise, Rahman et al. [19] demonstrated that students exposed to the writing process cycle showed clear gains in grammar, content development, and text organization. These improvements stem largely from the iterative nature of the approach, where students receive ongoing feedback and actively revise their work, promoting metacognitive awareness and a deeper engagement with their writing.

However, it is important to note that not all students experienced improvement. For instance, Subject 14 showed a minor decline in writing score, from 81 to 80. While the decline is not substantial, it shows that certain students may face obstacles unrelated to structure, such as difficulties with grammatical accuracy and low writing self-confidence. As previously discussed by Nurjanah[42] and Alhaisoni[43],

common challenges for EFL learners include subject–verb agreement, tense consistency, and article usage—errors often rooted in limited linguistic competence or interlanguage interference. Moreover, Albeshir [16] emphasized the need for individualized scaffolding, especially during the drafting and revising stages, to address such learner-specific needs effectively.

Students' Attitudes toward Four Stages Writing through the Process-based Approach

The analysis of student interviews revealed positive attitudes and meaningful learning experiences toward the process-based writing approach. Most students acknowledged that their writing quality improved significantly after going through structured stages—particularly listing, outlining, drafting, and revising. This aligns with findings from Alodwan and Ibnian [22] and Arici and Kaldirim[21], who reported that process-based instruction enhances students' writing coherence and structural control. Students in this study expressed that the structure of their paragraphs became more logical and better connected, reflecting deeper understanding of paragraph organization.

Despite facing initial difficulties, especially during the drafting phase, students noted gradual improvement. The drafting stage emerged as the most challenging due to issues such as limited vocabulary, difficulties expressing ideas in English, and uncertainty about grammar accuracy—particularly in subject–verb agreement and tense use. These challenges are consistent with previous findings by Nurjanah[42], who found that EFL learners frequently struggle with grammatical control during free composition tasks. Yusuf and Lestari [44] similarly noted that Indonesian EFL students often face article misuse and structural ambiguity when drafting. Importantly, students recognized the teacher's role as essential in facilitating their learning. They appreciated the step-by-step guidance, corrective feedback, and individual support provided during each writing stage. This reflects the model of scaffolding described in process-oriented writing theories[16], which emphasize teacher mediation in building student autonomy. As observed by Albeshir [10],[22] when teachers guide students through brainstorming, structuring, and refining, learners become more confident and independent in their writing.

However, the study also identified some limitations in peer feedback implementation. Although peer editing was introduced, students admitted that their limited English proficiency hindered their ability to provide meaningful responses to their peers' drafts. This finding supports Iswandari and Jiang[40], who argued that effective peer feedback requires proper training; without it, students may feel hesitant or unqualified to critique each other's work constructively. The absence of strong peer interaction may have also reduced opportunities for collaborative reflection and idea development, as emphasized by Lo Sardo et al.[41], who found that peer collaboration enhances the depth and fluency of idea exploration in writing. Many students admitted to feeling reluctant or anxious about writing assignments at first, but as they progressed, they eventually began to feel satisfied and enjoy the process. This change is consistent with research by Setyawan et al.[27], who discovered that students tend to become more confident and have more positive views when writing is viewed as a controlled and step-by-step process.

Finally, many students expressed intentions to apply the process-based writing strategy in future contexts, including scholarship essays and professional communication. This forward-looking perspective highlights the transferability of process-based writing skills beyond the classroom, aligning with the goals of 21st-century literacy as emphasized in recent pedagogical frameworks[21], [40].

5. CONCLUSION

This study explores how the teacher implemented the four-stage process-based writing strategy in an EFL classroom and how it affected students' writing scores. The findings demonstrate that teacher-guided instruction through prewriting, organizing, drafting, and revising significantly contributed to improved student writing performance. Most students benefited from clear, step-by-step guidance and consistent feedback, resulting in better paragraph structure, idea development, and grammar use. These results are consistent with previous studies that have shown the process-based approach improves student coherence, accuracy, and overall writing ability[21], [22]. However, students with lower confidence or weaker language skills showed limited improvement, highlighting the need for differentiated instruction [42], [44]. This suggests that while the process-based approach is generally effective, teacher flexibility and personalization are crucial—especially for students who need support with mechanics and language expression. The integration of focused grammar support, peer review training, and confidence-building strategies can enhance the inclusivity and effectiveness of writing instruction[16], [19]. This study reinforces the central role of teachers as facilitators who scaffold student writing development across stages[16]. By documenting the real-time implementation of the process approach in a senior high school

EFL context, this research adds practical insight to the existing literature, which has primarily focused on student outcomes without detailing teacher strategy [19], [22]. It also underscores the importance of combining structured instruction with adaptive feedback to support diverse learner needs. Future studies are encouraged to explore the long-term impact of teacher-led writing strategies across different levels of language proficiency, as well as the development of peer feedback training modules to build collaboration skills in EFL writing classrooms[40], [41].

Appendix A

Category	Criteria	Max Score	Actual Score
Format	There is a title.	1	
	The title is centered.	1	
	The first line is indented.	1	
	There are margins on both sides.	1	
	The paragraph is double-spaced.	1	
	Total	5	
Punctuation and Mechanics	There is a period after every sentence.	1	
	Capital letters are used correctly.	1	
	The spelling is correct.	1	
	Commas are used correctly.	2	
	Total	5	
Content	The paragraph fits the assignment.	5	
	The paragraph is interesting to read.	5	
	The paragraph shows that the writer used care and thought.	10	
	Total	20	
Organization	Begins with a topic sentence (with a topic and controlling idea).	10	
	Includes specific and factual supporting sentences, including at least one example.	20	
	Ends with an appropriate concluding sentence.	5	
	Total	35	
Grammar & Sentence Structure	Estimate a grammar and sentence structure score.	35	
Grand Total		100	

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