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The Impact of Teachers' Feedback on Students' Writing Competence: The Case of 3rd Year EFL Students at Tlemcen University.

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master in Didactics in English Language Education.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to

My parents who always encourage me

To my siblings who always support me

To the rest of my family who didn't let me give up

To my friends who always push me forward

To the teachers who help this work see the light.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Abstract

Writing is crucial for every English learner. The process of writing needs feedback in order to be improved. This research work is useful in the one hand for teachers in order to be aware of the effect of feedback on the writing competence of the third year university students of Tlemcen, and in the other hand for students to know the importance of feedback. This research explored whether feedback influences the students' writing skill and the possible ways to ameliorate students' writing competence through it. The data was collected through an interview with 5 EFL teachers and a questionnaire with 40 EFL learners. Concerning the case study, it was based on qualitative and quantitative data. Therefore, the results obtained revealed that feedback leverage learners writing competence as it qualified them to avoid mistakes and errors. Furthermore, some recommendations were proposed in order to enhance learners writing skill.

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Acronyms

LMD = Licence, Master, Doctorate

EFL = English Foreign Language

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General introduction

Writing is one of the four basic skills in English language learning. In fact it is a crucial tool to exchange ideas in social environment. The academic writing is very important and needs a proper teacher feedback to enhance students' competence in it.

Student in the 3ʳᵈ year learn to write essays for the first time in their lives and it is not very easy to learn that skill. Teachers are obliged to give an adequate feedback to put them in the right truck.

Consequently, this work tries to investigate the effect of teachers' feedback on students' writing competence at University level. As a result it explores whether or not teacher do give a correct feedback to student piece of writing.

Accordingly two research questions are formulated:

1- To which extent does the teachers' feedback help improve students' writing competence?
2- What kind of feedback is regarded suitable to receive by students?

On the other hand two hypotheses are put forward:

1- Teacher' feedback enables the students to self-regulate, to understand the tasks, to find the adequate process and to help in personal evaluation.
2- Students prefer descriptive written feedback during writing.

To conduct this research, a case study is used for this investigation dealing with 3ʳᵈ year LMD student in Tlemcen University. Within this work, there are two chapters: The first chapter includes the literature review of the topic. It is concerned with explanations concerning writing and feedback. The second chapter which is the practical part includes sample population, data collection and data analysis and recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical Overview

Theoretical Overview

I.1.Introduction:

Language is an essential system of communication. It helps people exchange ideas and express their feeling. Writing is a crucial skill in language learning to develop and master particularly where English is studied as foreign language as it is the case in Algeria.

The present chapter gives an outlook about the EFL learners' writing abilities, starting by providing a general definition of writing, after that the researcher shed the light on the activities which characterize the writing process, the approach in teaching this skill. In the other hand, the investigator defines teacher' feedback, its types and its importance.

I.2.Definition of writing:

Writing is important for every individual. There are a lot of reasons which makes it so crucial, as Chappell (2011) claims. First, it helps to show one's personality; in addition, it stimulates communication; likewise, it improves the thinking skill; moreover, it makes it easier for person to reflect on his/her thoughts and re-evaluation   them; what is more, is that it is possible to give and have feedback. (Chappell, 2011)

Writing witnessed a great change over thousand years. It was unknown when humans began to use the language and the way it expanded. According to Gelderen (2006) there is about 50,000 years gap between the time when men initiate employing language and when there are historical evidences for language in the form of writing (Gelderen, 2006). The English language started about 449 when Germanic tribes went to England and stayed there. There were Latin and French influences on English in about 1066. In 1150 a number of case endings simplify and become –e, the t in words such as Artur, changes to the, like Arthur. In 1500, the age of Renaissance, there was a shift in minor points like double –ll in Royall. It is

noticed that the system changes but the purpose of it stays the same which is communication.

A writer generally, writes with pen or pencil or if he has technology can utilize keyboard or worst if he cannot see or have not hands is able to use voice recognition in order to make it possible for his/her thought to be transcribed. According to English club an educational website for learners and teachers of English: **"Writing is the process of using symbols (letters of the alphabet, *punctuation and spaces) to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readabl*e form".** In other words, to write it is crucial to have knowledge on basic system of language which means, to grasp grammar, punctuation sentence structure, correct vocabulary and spelling. Moreover, the writer has to take in consideration the audience. It can be known or unknown, and cause the style of writing to change from informal to formal.

Writing in foreign language teaching goes through various methods. They vary from grammar translation method or traditional method which gives importance to the organization of type of words. Students learn by translating literature reading passages from target language to native language. Moreover, grammar is learnt deductively on the basis of grammar rules and examples that students grasped such as: verb cognition and learning the native language equivalent of vocabulary words. In the mid 19 century, another method rose which is the direct method or also labelled natural method because it teaches language in the same way the mother tongue is acquired i.e. the teacher in this method refrains from using the students' native language and the target language is directly used. Grammar rules are learned inductively by generalizing from examples. Before World War 2 there were virtually a lack of standardization of vocabulary and grammar. In that time the U.S developed the audio-lingual method which is defined as an oral based approach to drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns and vocabulary contextualization. Likewise, the use of dialogue as a chief means of presenting the language, emphasis on mimicry, memorization and pattern drills. The second word war manifested an urgent and felt need to communicate in foreign language, namely English. This urgent need resulted in the beginning of modern teaching era,

teaching communicative approach. It tends to tutor communication competence which includes: grammatical sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. (Canal and Swain's model) This approach is concerned with real life and communicative use of language.

There are two kinds of skills of a language; they are receptive and productive skills. Writing skill is a productive one. This skill is defined as **"the ability to create *life with words is essentially a gift. If you have it in the first place, you can develop it; if you don't have it, you might as well forget it."*** (Flannery O'Connor,1969) In this quote the writer is trying to explain the competence of writing that is so important but it is a gift from god if someone owns it he can use it but if he doesn't he may never be able to utilize it.

A student, a professor or a research, all need to write academically. Academic writing helps them to transmit ideas, make arguments, and engage in scholarly conversation. As Valdes said in an article in Thought Co **"*Academic writing is characterized by evidence-based arguments, precise word choice,* logical organization, and an impersonal tone."** (Valdes, 2019). In other words it is the opposite of informal, subjective writing.

1.3. The activities characterizing the Writing Process

The process of writing involves at least four distinct steps which are prewriting, planning drafting and editing to have the final draft.

I.3.1. Prewriting

Prewriting means anything is writen before the final paper. It is the first activity which the writer engages in as thinking, generating ideas, talking to others and brainstorming. According to Keskes prewriting means **"Generating *ideas, strategies, and information for a given written task."***(Keskes, 2008) Likewise, it takes into account brainstorming the ideas to write the text from different sources such as journal, books and magazines.

I. 3.2. Planning

Planning is taking what the author has brainstormed and organizes it often by creating an outline. According to Keskes Planning is "**_Reflecting on the material produced to develop a plan to achieve the aim of the paper_**" (ibid) In addition, it consider rhetorical objective, the style of the text and the information generated before writing.

I.3.3. Drafting

Drafting defines putting the ideas into sentences, paragraphs, essays, or articles. The writer focuses on connecting his/her ideas, and explaining and supporting them fully. In other words, putting thought into words. According to the same source mentioned before drafting means**" _Producing words on a computer or on paper that match (more or less) the initial plan for the_ work."** (ibid) Furthermore, it generally takes time to write a text.

I.3.4. Editing

In this step the writer checks for grammar, mechanic, spelling and other aspect of language in order to have a coherent and cohesive product. According to Keskes said editing denotes **"Focusing _on sentence-level concern such as punctuation, sentence length, and spelling agreement of subjects and predicates, and style._"** In other words, it occurs after revising. The purpose is to give a professional look to the text.

I.3.5.Final Draft

Final draft is when the writer starts minimizing embarrassing spelling mistakes and awkward grammar. As stated by Academic Help web site, final draft is **"A final draft is a piece of writing that will be handed in as your best work... "** Otherwise stated it is very important because it is the last chance to correct mistakes.

I.4.Approaches in Teaching Writing

There are three approaches in teaching writing which are product approach, process approach and genre approach.

I.4.1. Product Approach

It is a traditional approach in which students do not need to brainstorm idea and concentrate on time analyzing and practicing the text model being given to them. According to Zakime product approach is **"an approach to teaching writing that focus on students' final production."**(Zakime, 2018) In fact, this approach has some strengths and weaknesses which are as follow:

From it strength:

- It is suitable with large classes;
- It is beneficial when teaching beginners;
- It is simple to give grade since it focuses on the form of the text;
- Difficulties and errors are less due to that it focus on imitation;
- Students have already an idea about the way end result alike.

From it weaknesses:

- This approach doesn't give independency to student to write freely;
- It doesn't show the creativity of students since it relies on imitation;
- It doesn't give importance to student's linguistic and personal potential.

In short, it gives much more importance to the final paper. In addition, it focalizes on four stages:

I.4.1.1.Model Text

Model text means to read text given to the student as an example and analyzing the features of the genre as content, vocabulary, grammar and text organization. . For instance, if a student is learning how to write a story, the teacher concentrates on the techniques that let the story appear interesting.

I.4.1.2. Controlled Practice

Controlled practice denotes to give student drills as gap-fill activities, true or false, finding the mistakes in a text and so on. All tasks as key features required to write the text genre. . For example, if students are learning the way to write a formal letter, they may be asked to practice language used to make a formal request as "could you".

I.4.1.3. Organizing Ideas

During this step student are asked to think about what they are going to write, organize ideas and language to produce the product. Those who favor this approach think that organizing ideas is crucial than ideas themselves in addition to language control.

I.4.1.4. Final product

In the stage of final product the writer has to produce the text. Teachers are supposed to give the writer feedback in order to have an academic writing. . In other words, students have to use skills, structures and vocabulary in order to produce the product.

All in all, product approach is time -efficient compared to other approaches. The reason behind that is that this approach focuses on the end draft and does not take into consideration a lot the path that students take to reach their aim.

I.4.2. Process Approach

Process writing is called like that because it goes through the process of producing a text between the teacher and the students.

I.4.2.1.Pre-Writing

In this step, students are asked to find ideas and plan what they are going to write and it goes through these stages:

- Brainstorming ideas

Brainstorming according to the writing center in North Carolina at Chapel Hill University denotes that it **"helps the writer to choose the topic, develops an approach to the topic, or deepen… understand of topic's potential"** (the writing center) Simply put, it benefits from the thinking process by gathering brain's energies into a storm, that the author transforms it into written words or diagrams. In addition, it helps to start writing even if the writer doesn't have to much information to compose.

- Planning

The planning stage can happen in the mind of the writer or in a piece of paper. In order to do that there is a need to flow some steps:

1- Thinking about what to write.
2- Collecting a list of ideas while thinking.
3- Arranging the list in the right order (either chronologically or from most to least important)
4- Making the necessary changes.
5- Following the list while writing the draft.
6- Making the final changes (spelling, grammar and so on)

- Organizing

The manner of organizing a paragraph is as important as the content. For that there are three ways: chronological order, order of importance and special order.

➤ **Chronological order**

This way is also called time order. According to open Oregon web site

Chronological order is mostly used in expository writing, which is a form of writing that narrates, describes, informs, or explains a process. When using chronological order, arrange the events in the order that they actually happened, or will happen if you are giving instructions. This method requires you to use words such as first, second, then, after that,

later, and finally. These transition words guide you and your reader through the paper as you expand your thesis. (Open Oregon)

Otherwise stated it follows these purposes:

1- To demonstrate the history of event or topic.

2- To narrate a story or an experience.

3- To clarify the way to do or make a thing.

4- To interpret the stages in a process.

For instance, if the writer is writing about the history of the cold war, he should start with the definition of the concept and details about the timeline event up to this day. He may use some words as

   - First

   -Then

   - Next and much other.

➤ **Order of importance**

When writing a persuasive essay or paragraph, the author needs to start from most important point to the least. As stated by Open Oregon

Sometimes, it is necessary to begin with your most important supporting point, such as in an essay that contains a thesis that is highly debatable. When writing a persuasive essay, it is best to begin with the most important point because it immediately captivates your readers and compels them to continue reading. (ibid)

That is it follows some aims:

1- Persuading and convincing.

2- Organizing ideas by their important, benefit, or significance.

3- Representing a situation, problem or solution.

To illustrate, if the writer wants to support the idea that Islam is a peaceful religion, he should begin by the most convincing argument, then write the less crucial point in the essay or paragraph. He can use some words as

   - Most importantly

   - Almost as important and so on.

> ## Spacial Order

This way is used generally in a descriptive essay or paragraph. The writer has to describe objects as they arranged around him or in his mind.

As reported by the previous source "***The view must move in an orderly, logical progression, giving the reader clear directional signals to follow from place to place. The key to using this method is to choose a specific starting point and then guide the reader to follow your eye as it moves in an orderly trajectory from your starting point.***" *(ibid)*

It follows these objectives:

1- Help the reader see things as the author visualizes them.
2- Evoke a view using senses as sight, taste, smell and others.
3- Writing a descriptive essay or paragraph.

As a sample, in order to describe a character, the author needs to create picture to the reader, generally he uses topic sentence and this way of organizing which is special order.

The following are some words to include when using special order:

- Behind
-Between
-Across from
-Above and so on

I.4.3 Genre approach

A genre approach is to find a sample alike the text the writer is going to write about. In other words genre as stated by Swales texts that share the same features as target audience, organization of ideas and language choice belong mainly to genre approach. In addition, Cope and Kalantzis (1993) denotes: **"This wheel has three phases-modelling the target genre, where learners are expected to examples of the genre they have to produce; the construction of the text by learners and teachers, and finally the independent construction of texts by learners."** (Cope, Kalantzis, 1993) That is to say, there is three phases in genre writing process which are: modeling, deconstruction and language understanding.

I.4.3.1. Modeling

The pedagogue instructs learners to notice language features (as tenses and personal pronouns) of the example given. Also they should identify moves in the text as arguments, outcome and so on.

In the other hand, this phase has four steps:

- The teacher selects a certain kind of genre writing to make classroom activities. This kind needs to match student needs and perspectives.
- The tutor and learners explore the text by modeling and separating fragment of the text.
- Students are asked to identify and understand the function of the text, and the communicative purposes of it as persuading.
- The learners try to know the vocabulary usage, grammatical or structural patterns of procedure.

I.4.3.2.Joint construction

In this stage, the student tries to modify and manipulate the text given. In the other hand, the teacher plays the role of a guider. In fact, there are three steps to accomplish this stage:

- In this step, the learners try to revise and paraphrase the vocabulary, the grammar, and textual device by their own words.
- The students are asked to discuss and remember what they have written in order to have a better understanding about the genre type given.
- Before moving forward to stage three, the learners have to review the modeling stage and join construction because they are so important.

I.4.3.3. Independent construction of a text

As stated by Weber this stage aid students to raise awareness about the particular areas of difficulties as communicative purposes, structure element of the text, grammar, vocabulary and textual device.

I.5.Definition of Teacher' Feedback

Feedback is crucial in the educational domain. It raises learners' awareness toward their mistakes and sheds light on areas that improve competence then performance. According to News Media Research feedback **"needs to offer a** *chance for learners to judge their performance and evaluate it in relation to their* **changed work/learning strategies."** (News Media Research) that is to say that a challenge in feedback design is to make the conditions in order to give students opportunities to show their improvement.

Feedback content may vary. According to CIRT web site "*It can vary in* *focus, function, clarity, sp*ecific, and tone."** (CIRT) putting it differently feedback has to be clear and instruction should be suitable to make task understandable.

I.6.Types of Teacher's Feedback

There are four types of teacher's feedback which are Evaluative or descriptive feedback and the feedback during and after writing.

I. 6.1. Evaluative and descriptive feedback

Feedback is very important if it is well given. There are two ways of giving feedback either evaluative or descriptive. First, in evaluative one, and as The department of education and communities in Wales said the teacher gives feedback **"in the form of grades or brief comments, (e.g. "well done")"** in other words, it does not give detailed information about the writing. Secondly, descriptive one in which the same department said about it that it is a type of feedback which "*Provide* **students with detailed, specific information about improving their learning."** For instance, the teacher gives clear instructions about what to do and how to do to improve the writing of his/her learners.

I. 6.2. Feedback during and after writing

Feedback could be given during or after the writing process. In the first place, feedback during writing "*allows students to take feedback on board immediately and try to realize* **improvement during"** (ibid) the writing process. As a matter of fact, it is more effective and productive. In the other hand, feedback after writing **"is provided to students after"** writing (ibid). Usually, brilliant students can benefit from this kind of feedback but struggling student find it more difficult.

I.7.The Importance of Providing Feedback

Feedback is essential in writing. It helps students understand the tasks of the writing purpose. It should be given without any relation to socioeconomic state or race. Likewise, it can aid students to have self confidence, self-awareness and enthusiasm to writing. Moreover, According to Turnitin website there are 7 ways how feedback improves writing:

- Feedback helps students connect to their goals, in other words, it let them know how much they progress and when they should do more to reach them.
- Feedback is more important than the grade, put differently, grade only measure performance, and it doesn't let the student know the way to get better.
- Feedback helps learners ask the right questions, that is to say, sometimes students don't understand the comments, so, asking for clarification and advice help them get the point of the comments.
- It let learners know what is most important, otherwise stated, however, students must read all the feedback, they should concentrate on the most important points that let writing be more clear and better understood.
- Feedback helps in revision and practice, this means, it helps learners improve their skills.

- Feedback aids take control on writing. The writer has to find his /her voice as a writer.

- Feedback aids students understand the teacher. Instructor spends a lot of time to give comments, so, students have to give them importance in order to improve their skills in writing.

I.8. Conclusion

The current chapter is an attempt to give a clue about the enhancement of the EFL learners writing skill. The researcher started by defining writing. After that he sheds the light on the activities characterizing the writing process, then mentioned the approaches in teaching this skill. Furthermore, this work deals with an important part in this chapter which is defining teacher feedback, its types and its importance.

CHAPTER TWO

Case study, results and recommendation

2.1.Introduction

In this practical part of the research, the researcher will try to prove or reject the hypotheses formulated in the general introduction by designing an exploratory case study that explores the impact of teacher feedback on the student' writing competence on 3rd year EFL students in Tlemcen university.

This chapter is divided into two parts, the first part will be dealing with research objectives, then it will show the sample of the informants that the researcher took information from, likewise, it presents the research instruments used to collect data, and then it will analyze the data and discuss the findings results. The second one will be devoted to interpret the results of the research and also list some recommendations suggested by the researcher on enhancing the writing competence of the students.

2.2.Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to shed the light on the impact of teacher' feedback on the writing competence of the students, thus an exploratory case study was made using two research instruments to collect data to make a conclusive result. The first one is questionnaire, in which the researcher tries to investigate the relation between teacher' feedback and the writing competence of the students, the second one is semi-structured interview with five teachers in the department of English in which the researcher tries to know whether or not feedback plays a role in developing the writing competence of the students.

2.3.Informants' Profile

It is worth saying that each empirical study needs a selected population sampling on which to build the experiment. In this study, the researcher has chosen 40 EFL student among the total number of third year LMD students, the sample was of mixed level and gender, and their age ranged from 20 to 42 years old.

Otherwise, teachers involved in this study were 5 teacher of written

expression from English branch. The investigator has chosen to work with those teachers because of their experience they can provide a deep view about the subject which is enhancing the students writing ability coherently and cohesively.

2.3.1. Students' Profile

The questionnaire is delivered to the third year English students at the University of Tlemcen. The choice of this sample was for the reason that it is year when the students prepare themselves to start writing essays and essay are little bit harder than paragraphs.

2.3.2. Teachers' profile

The conducted research includes five teachers; two of them hold a magister degree while others have a doctorate degree in English language. All the five teachers have a face to face meeting conversation which demonstrates their experience in the range of six to twenty three years of teaching English.

2.4. Research Instruments

This exploratory case study was done using two research instruments, Questionnaire and semi-structured interview, thus the data collected will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The questionnaire will be more quantitatively oriented as it will try to analyze numbers and what they are saying concerning the issues that this research is dealing with, while the interview will be more qualitatively as the respondents are given the opportunity to express their ideas freely. The results will give a good foundation to approve or reject the hypotheses formulated.

2.4.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is administered to our sample and consists of three rubrics. Rubric one is about students' personal details, rubric two is about to which extent

does teachers' feedback helps improve students' writing competence, and rubric three gather information about which teacher' feedback do students prefer to have.

2.4.2.Interview

It is done with written expression teachers in the department of English at Tlemcen University. The interviewees were asked 13 questions related to teacher feedback in order to know when and how to provide it and the reaction of students toward it.

2.4.3. Analysis of students' questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of three rubrics. After the process of collecting data, the results have been analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively as the following:

Rubric one: students' profile

The purpose of this rubric is to present the gender and age of students who participated in this research and expresses different opinion.

Question1: Students' age

This question tries to look at different age group of the students in order to know if they are mature enough to be aware about the impact of teachers' feedback on their writing competence. The results obtained from this question show that the students age vary from 20 to 42.Thus, it can be observed that most of them are mature enough to know their needs in learning process. The following bar-graph illustrates the finding above:
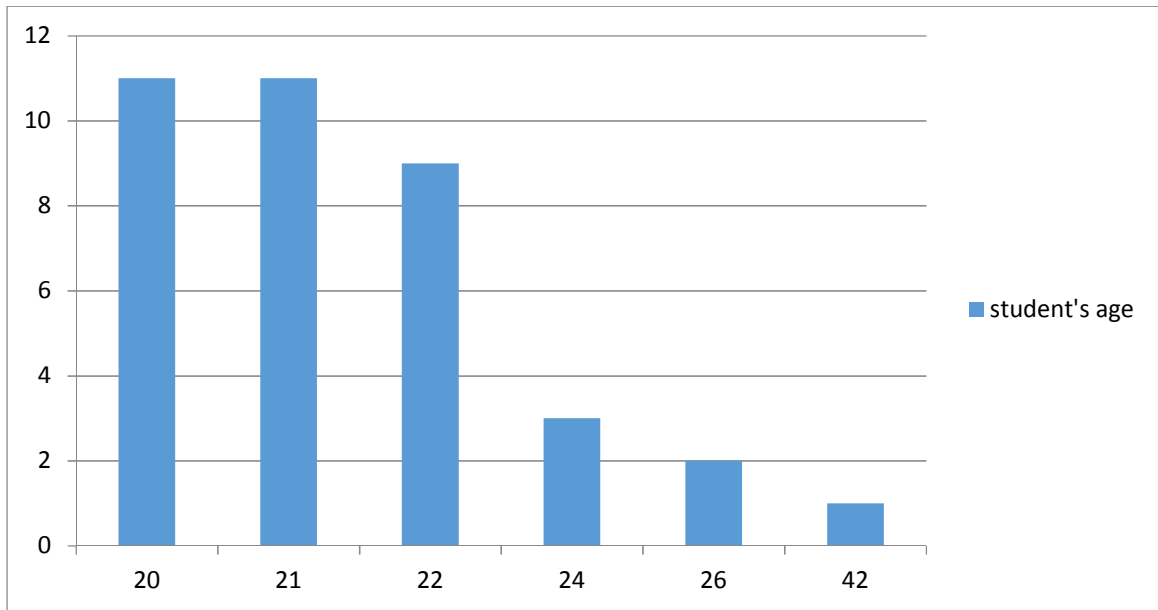
Chart 2.1: Students' age

Question 2: Student's gender:

The result of this question shows that among the 40 participants there are 80% female and 20% male. Thus, it can be observed that the number of female is greater than male and those females are more interested in studying English as foreign language.
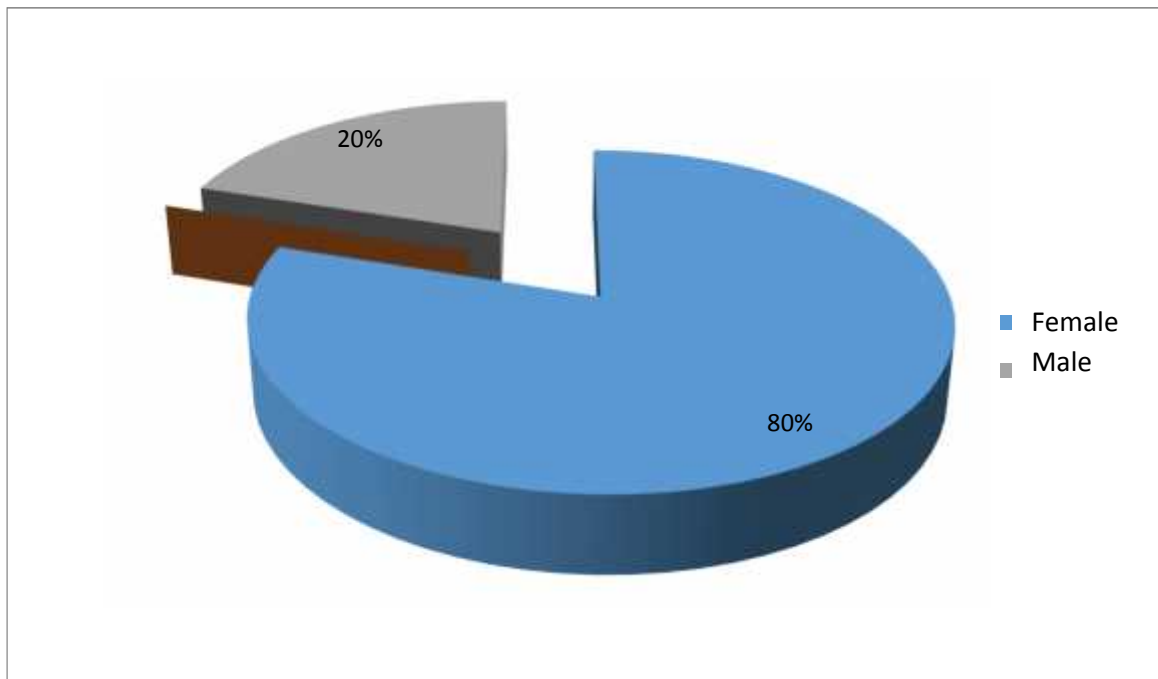
Chart 2.2: Students' gender

Rubric two: Students' writing competence and the utility of teachers' feedback to enhance it.

Question 3: In which way do you consider studying English as a foreign language?

This question aims to investigate how students evaluate English language. The results show that the half of students (50%) find English somehow difficult, 42% find it easy and only 8% find it very difficult.

The following bar-graph illustrates the findings above:
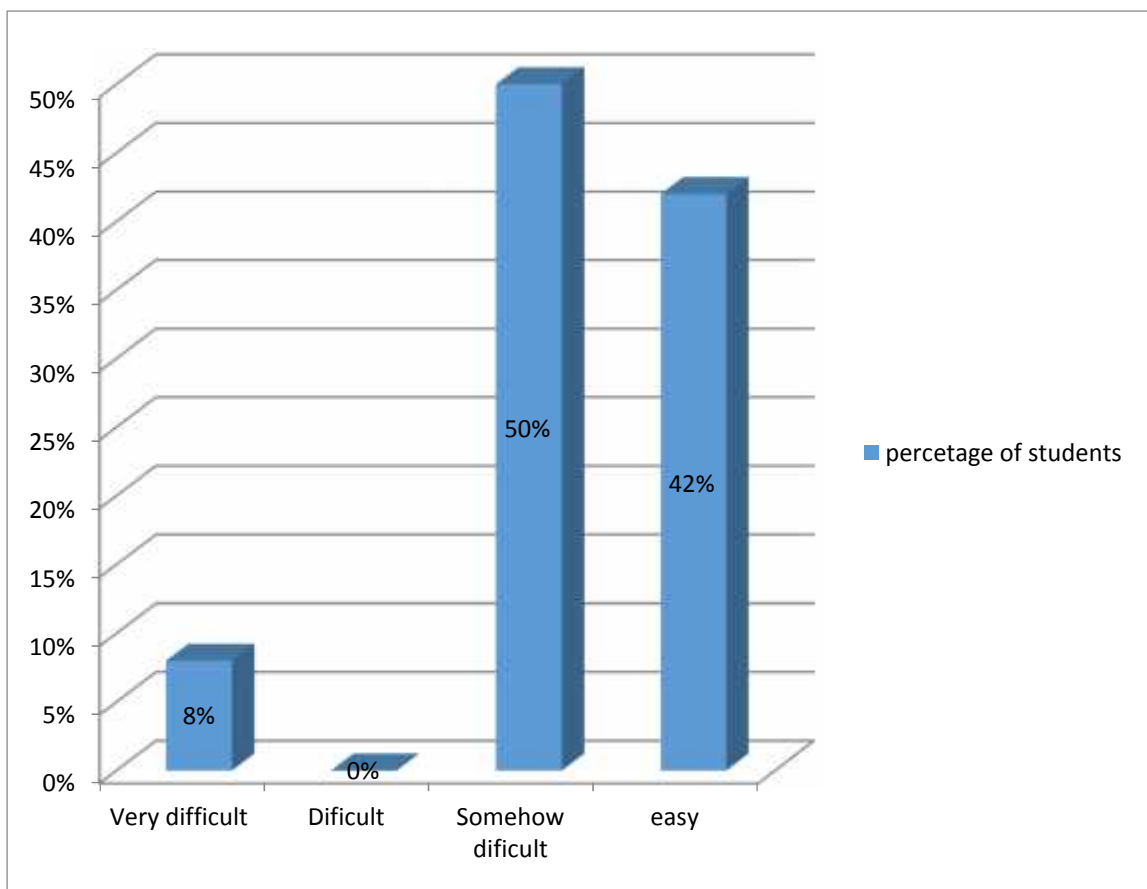
Chart 2. 3: The way student consider English language

Question 4: How do you assess your proficiency level in English writing?

This question tries to know how students assess their level of English; the results reveal that 52% of students have an average level in English language, and that 43% of them have a good level, and finally, only 2.5% consider themselves as getting a high level in English whereas the same percentage (2.5%) have a poor English level. This information can be organized in the following bar-graph:
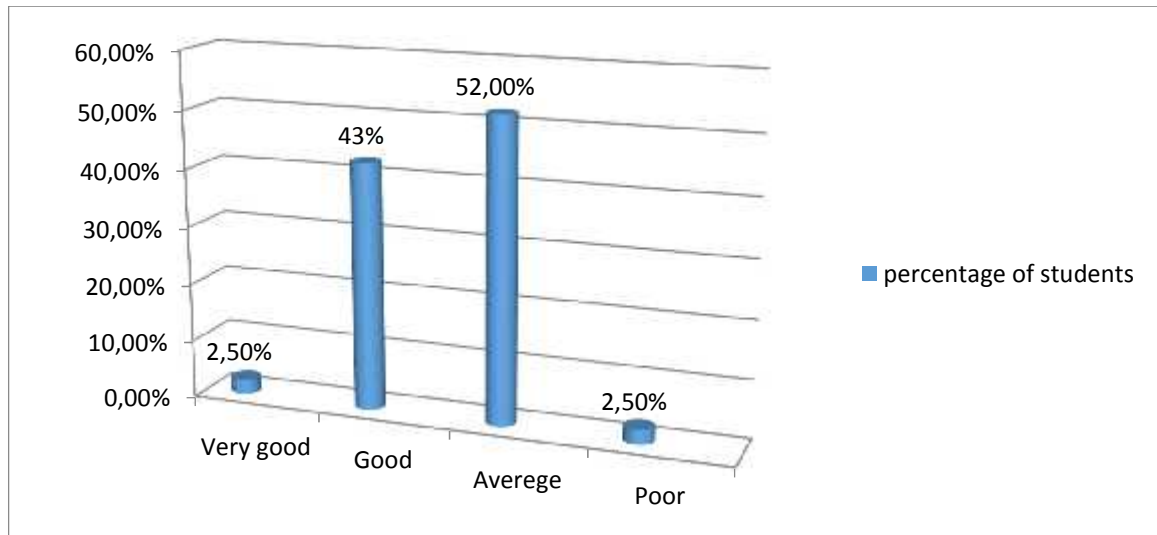
Chart 2.4: Students proficiency level in English language

Question 5: Do you think that developing the writing skill is necessary in EFL?

   This question aims to know if student think that improving the writing skill is essential in EFL. The result reveals that the majority of students confirm that it is important and only 12.5% think that it isn't necessary. The following pie-chart resumes what is said before :
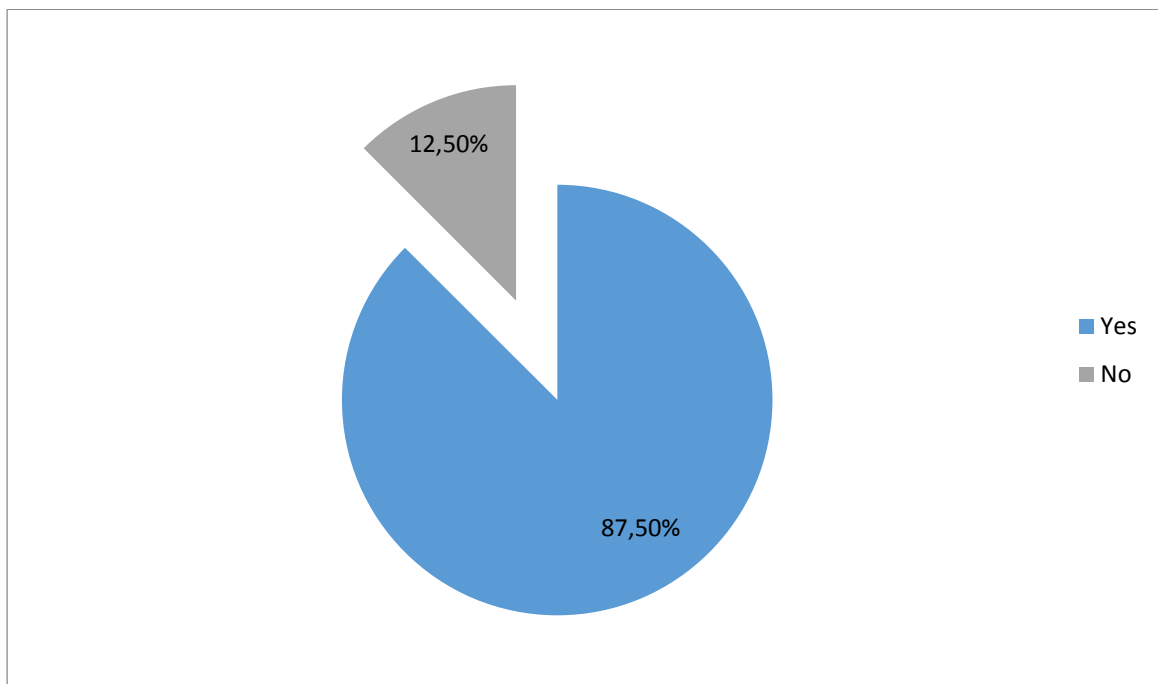
Chart 2.5: whether developing the writing skill in necessary or not

Question 6: Do the teachers use teachers' feedback in classroom?

This question investigates whether or not teachers use feedback in students' writing classes. The result shows that the majority agrees about this phenomenon and only 22.5% oppose this idea. The following pie-chart illustrates the findings above:

22,50%

77,50%

■ Yes
■ No
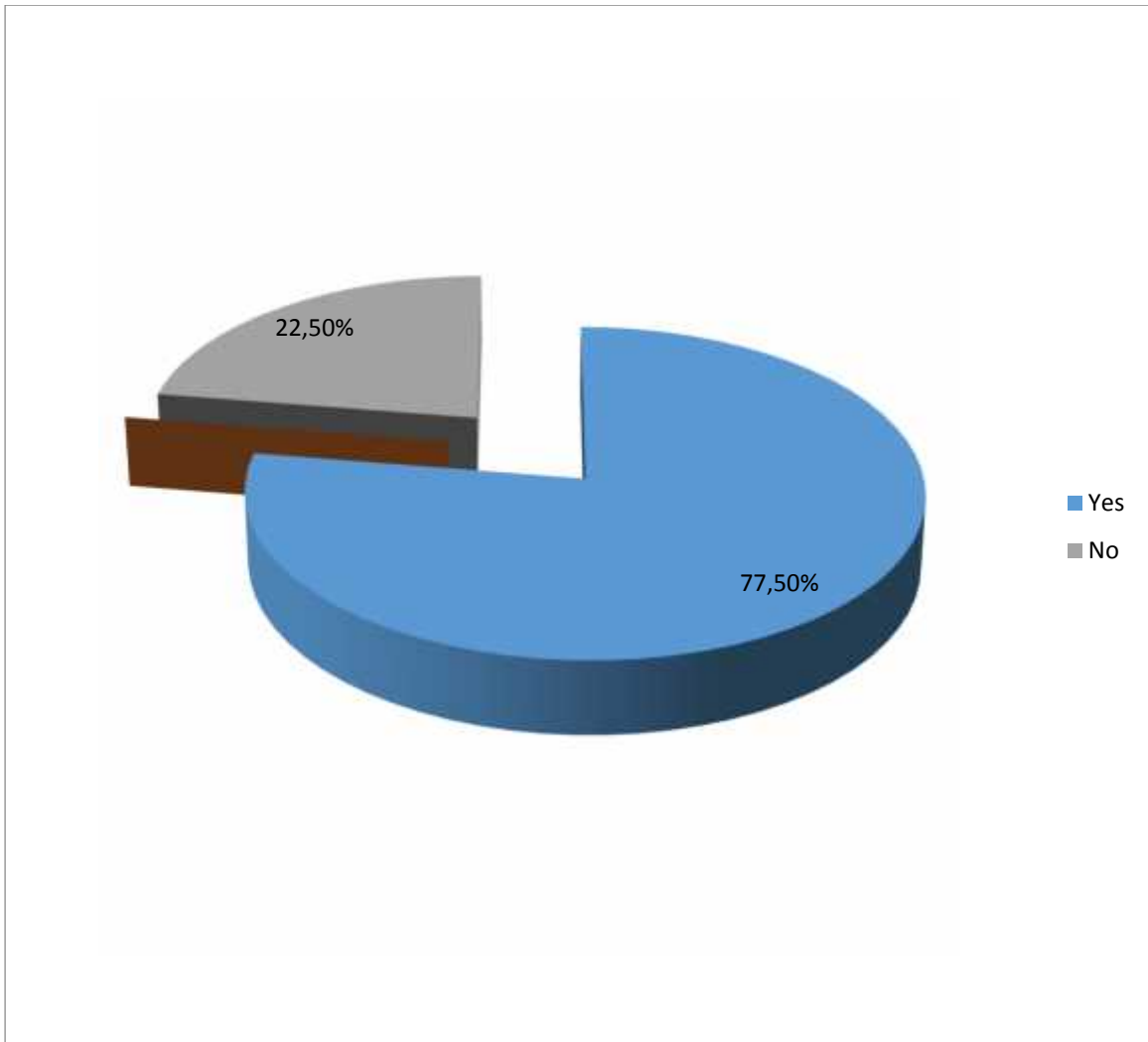
Chart 2.6: Whether teachers use feedback or not

Question 7: Do you think that teacher's feedback is beneficial to improve your writing?

This question tries to investigate if the teachers' feedback is useful to improve writing or not. The results show that the majority i.e 87.5% strongly believes in this opinion, on the contrary only 12.5% think it is not. The following pie-chart illustrates the result achieved:

12,50%

87,50%

Yes
No
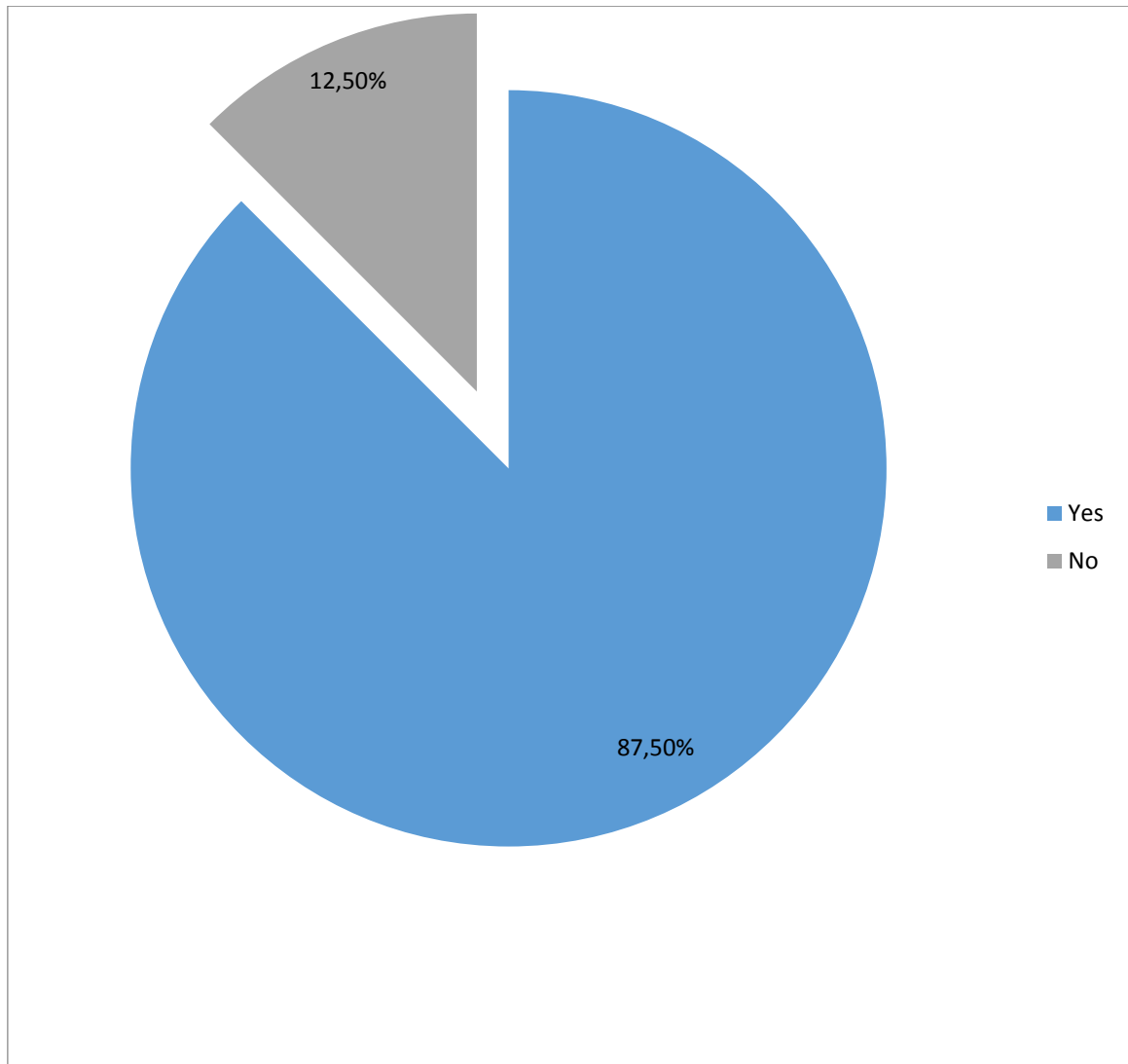
Chart 2.7: Whether teachers' feedback is beneficial or not

Question 8 : Do you take into consideration your teachers' comments and corrections?

This question is asked to know whether or not students take into consideration their feedback. Within the answers, most students about 45% always and usually give importance to teachers' comments, and about 5% do it sometimes and not very often. The following bar-chart presents the results achieved:
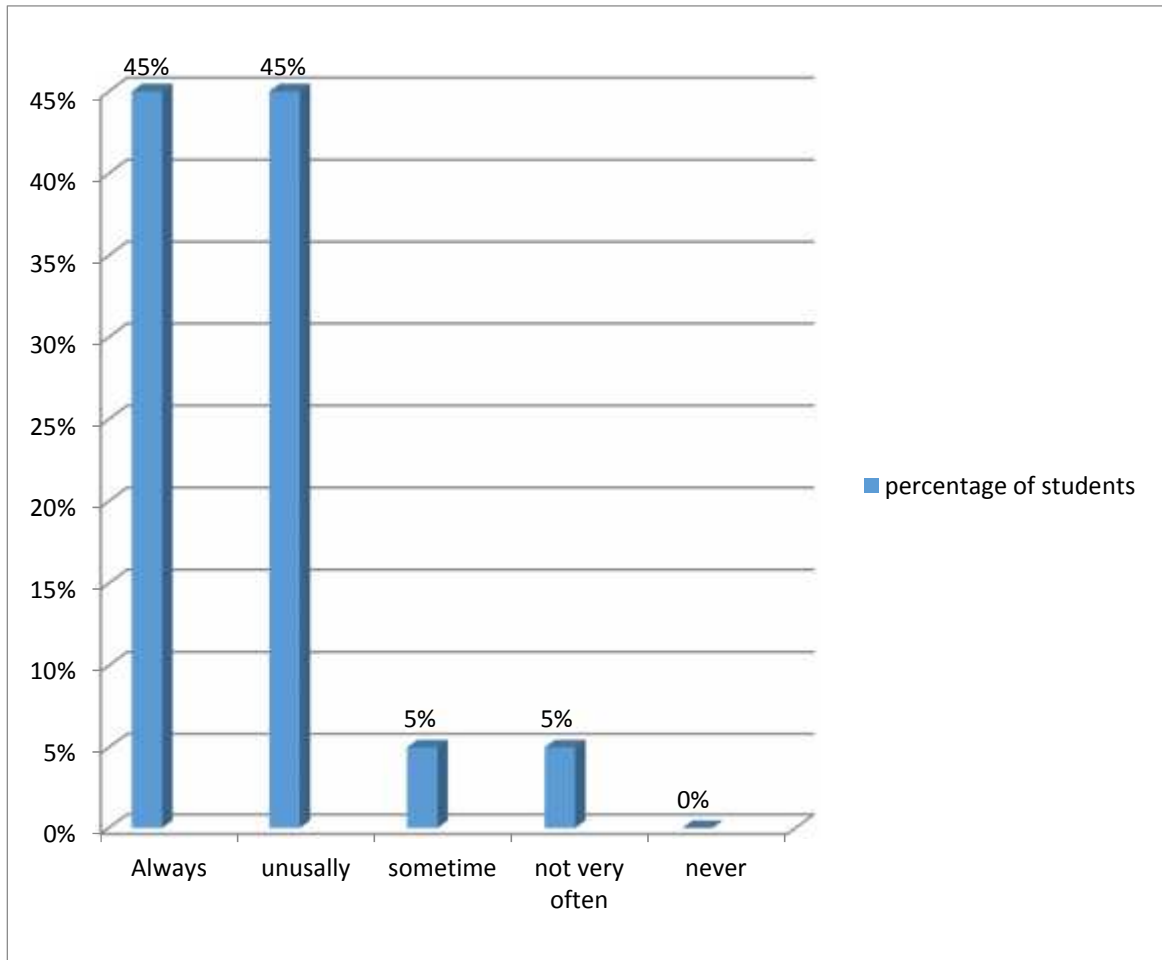
Chart 2.8 : Whether students take feedback instruction

Question 9: what do your teachers insist on when they correct your writing?

This question aims to shed the light on the elements of language that the teacher insists on when giving feedback on writing. 80% of students think that teachers focus on grammar, 52.5% said vocabulary, 27.5% on content or ideas, 35% organization of ideas, 42.5% mechanics or form, 27.5% insist on the style. The following bar-graph resumes what is said before:
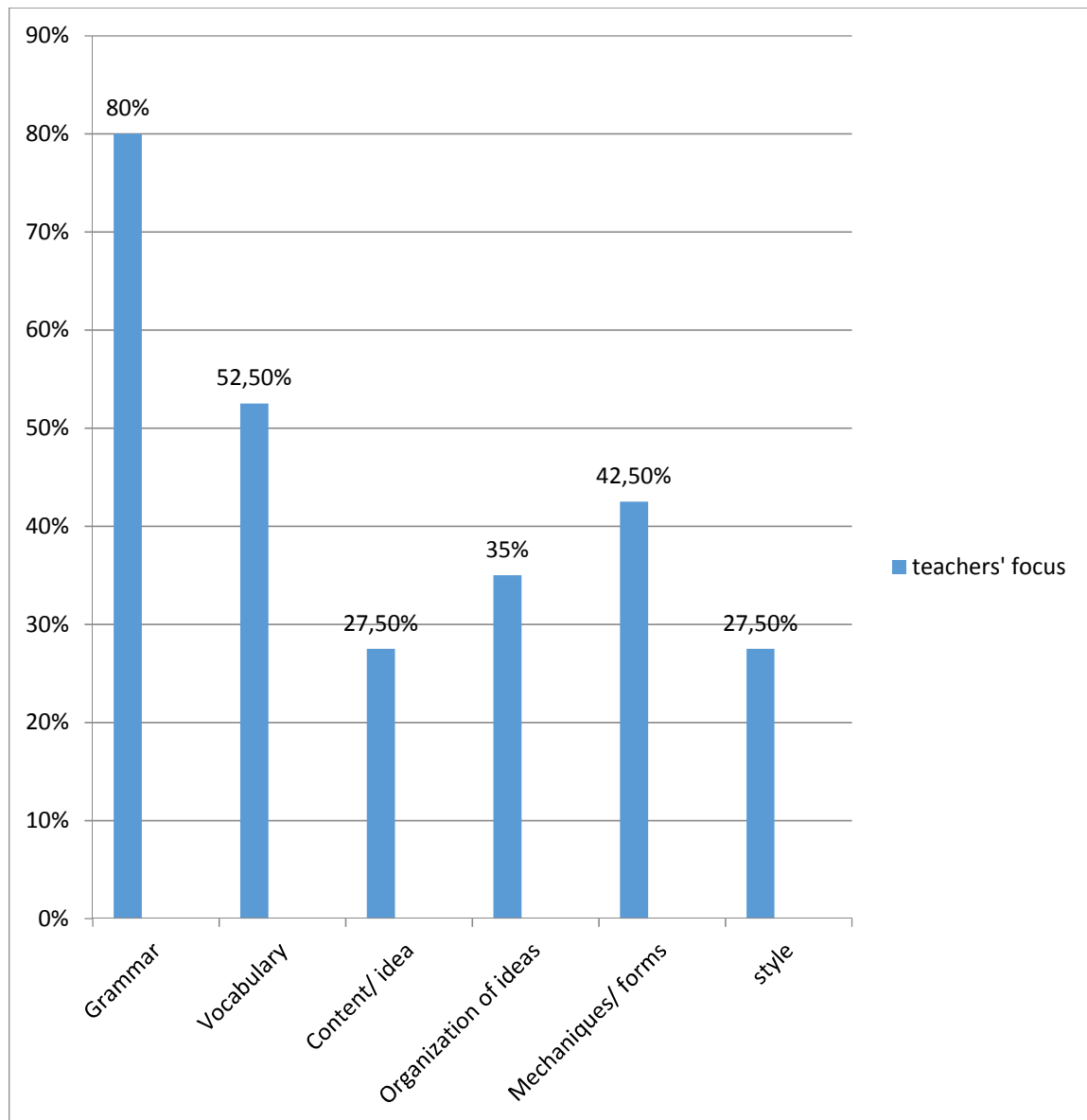
Chart 2.8 : What do the teachers insist on when correcting

Question 10: Do you keep making the same errors when being corrected by the teacher?

This question aims to know if the students keep making the same errors when being given teachers' feedback. Where 77% of the student respond that they do not repeat the same errors , only 23% agree that they do repeat the same errors. The following bar-chart illustrates the result achieved:
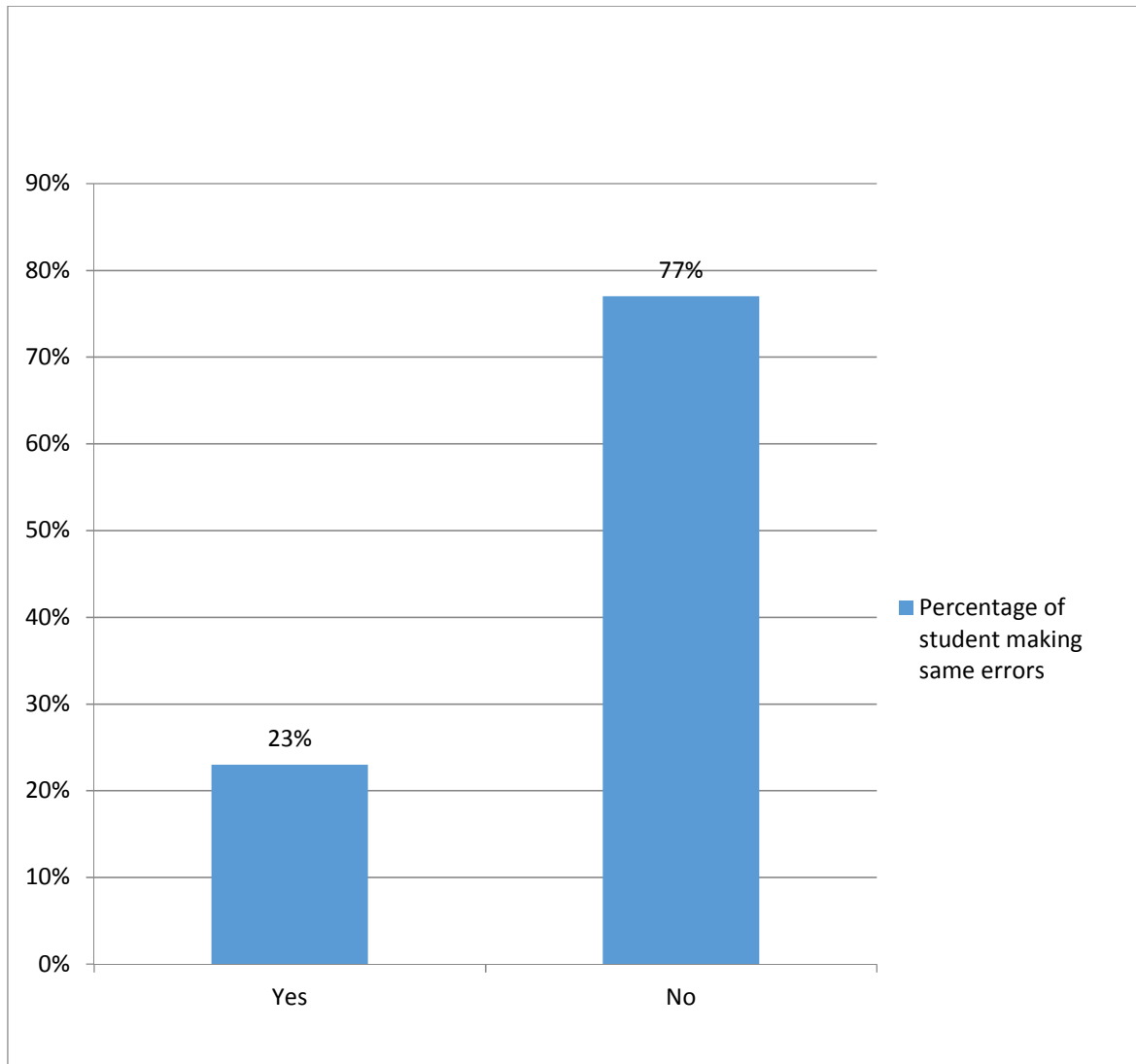
Chart 2.9 : Whether students keep making the same errors when correcting or not

Question11: Do students prefer detailed or general comment on their writings?

This question aims to know whether students like to receive detailed contents or general ones. The investigation shows that 23.5% of students like to receive general comment on their writings, and 77% said they prefer general comment. The following pie-chart resumes what is said before:

23,00%

■ General comment

■ Detailed Comment

77%
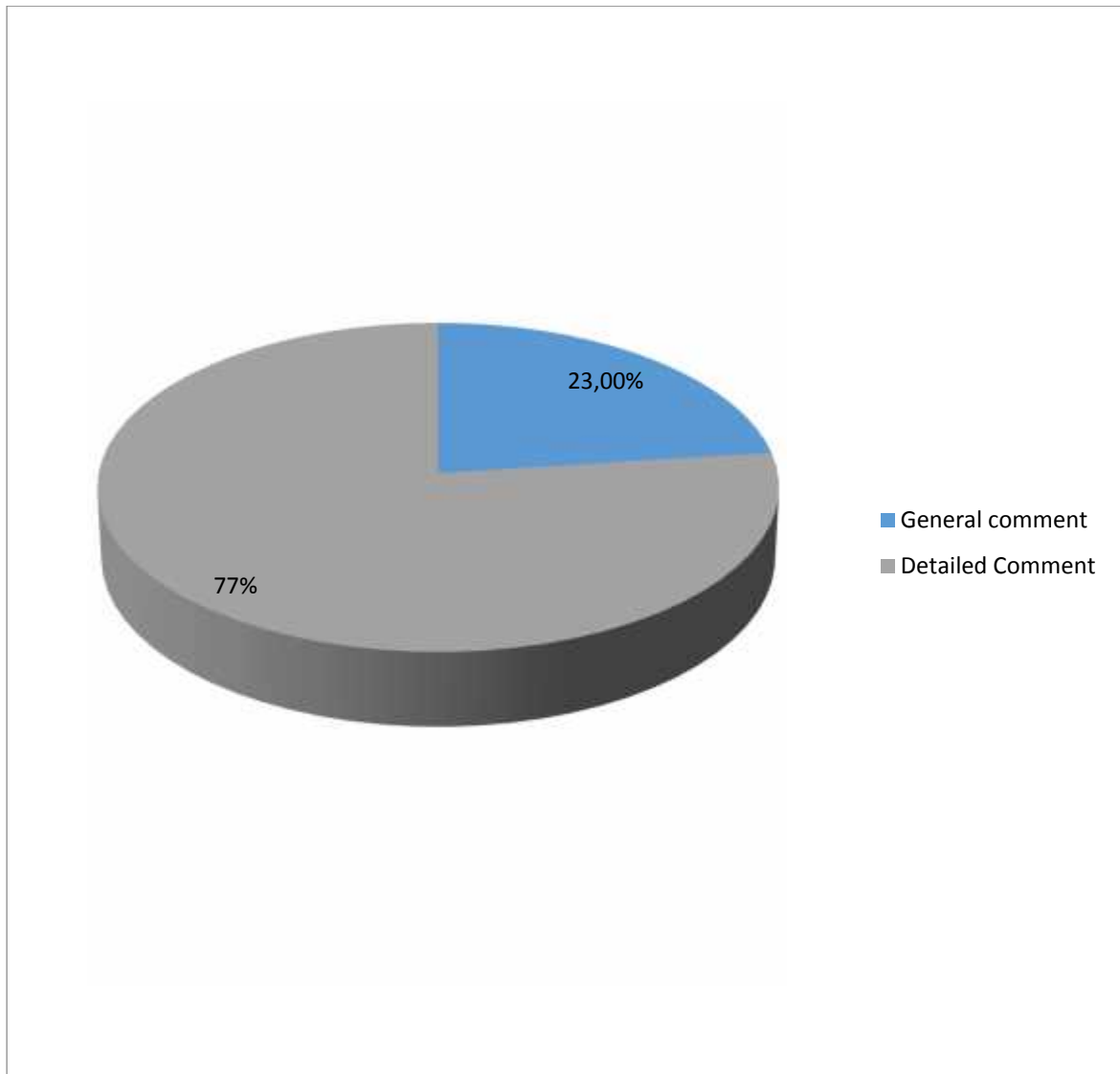
Chart 2.10 : Whether students prefer detailed or general comments

Question 12: Do you like to have teachers' feedback during or after writing?

This question tries to know the preference of students whether they like to receive feedback during or after writing. The investigation showed that 22.5% like to receive feedback during writing, and 77.5% prefer to have the feedback after writing. The information can be organized in the following ring-chart:
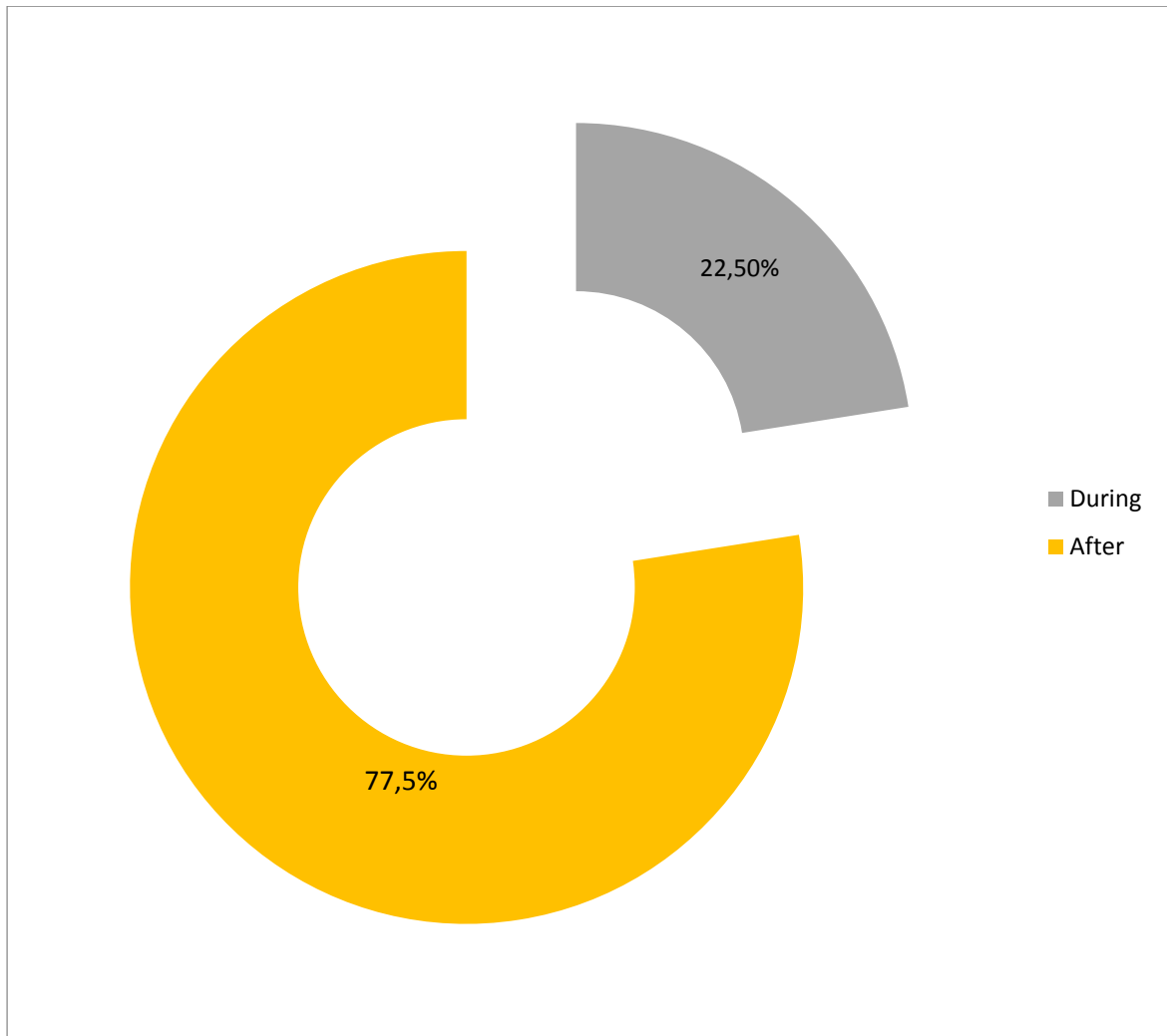
Chart 2.11: Whether students prefer having feedback during or after writing

Question 13: Does your teachers' feedback help you to find solutions to overcome your writing problems?

This question aims to know if teachers' feedback helps to find solutions to students writing problems. The majority of student approves that the teachers' feedback helps them improve their writings, but only 12.5 disagree with this idea. The following histogram illustrates this result:
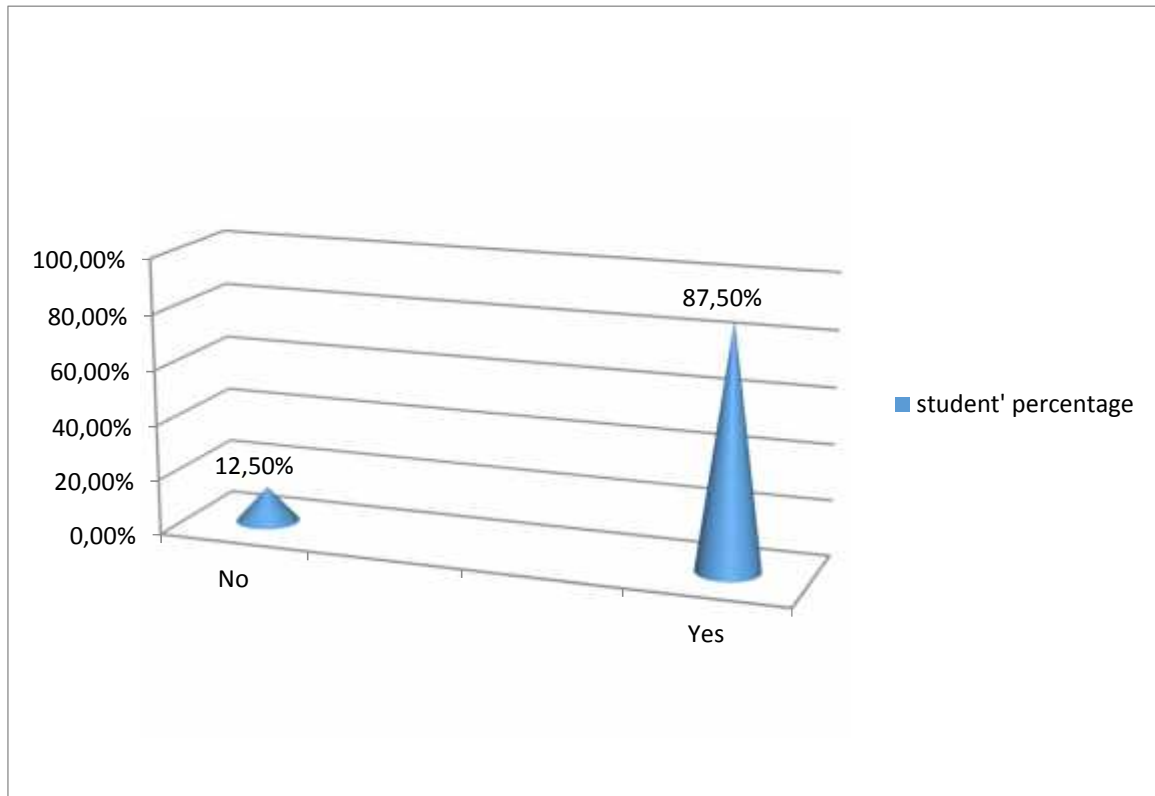
Chart 2.12 : Whether feedback helps overcome writing problems

2.4.4.Analyses of Interview

In order to attend the necessary result, 15 questions have been addressed to 5 EFL teachers to give their opinion about whether feedback is beneficial or not, as well as to have an idea about the techniques used to teach the writing skill in written expression module for third year EFL groups. Thus, teacher' interview consists of different types of questions, as it is explained in the following lines:

Question 1 : Teachers' degree

The reason behind this question is to know the degree of teacher at the University of Tlemcen. The following pie-chart show the resumes achieved:
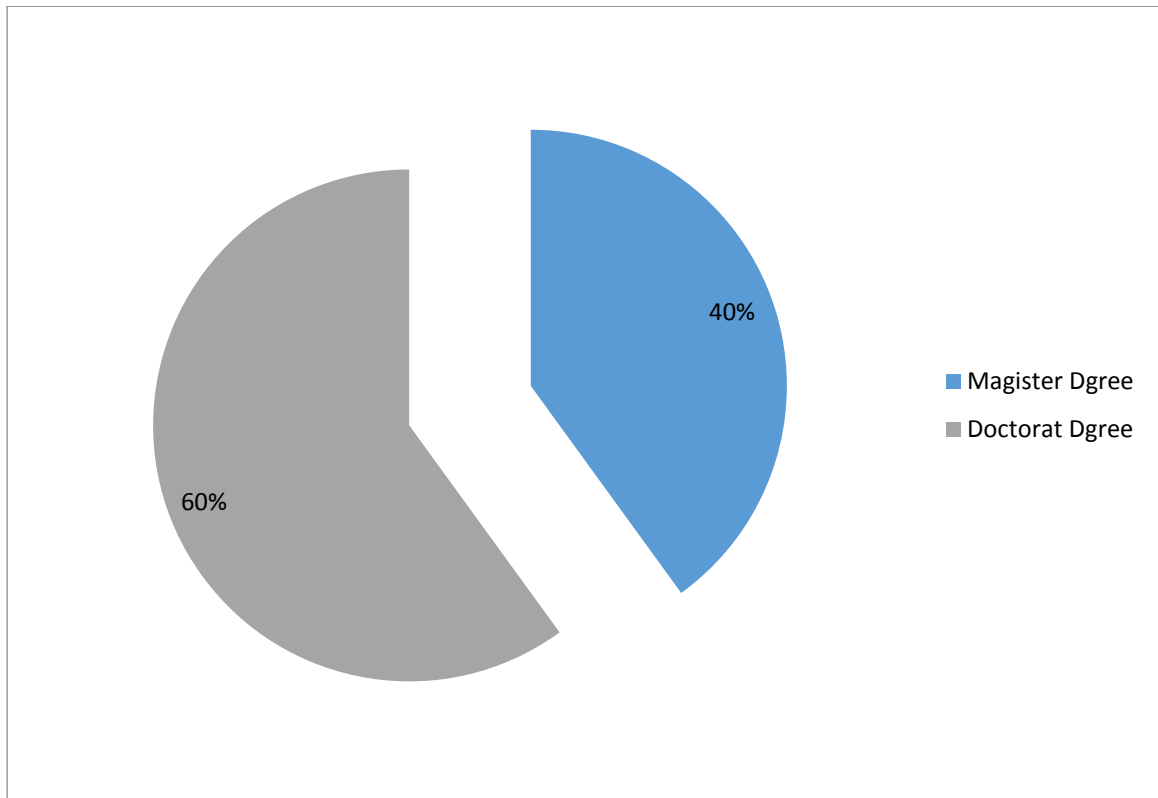
Chart 2.13 : Teacher' degree

Question 2: The number of years the teacher has been teaching in University:

Table 2.1: The number of years the teacher has been teaching at university

Number of teachers	Years of experience
1	23
2	11
1	6
1	12

Question 3 : The number of year's teachers have been teaching written expression :

35

Table 2.2: The number of years the teachers have been teaching written expression

Number of Teachers	Experience in written expression
1	6
1	11
1	15
1	5
1	12

Question 4 : The best method used to evaluate students' progress in writing:

The reason behind this question is to know which method is best used by teachers. The following pie-chart represents the results of this question:
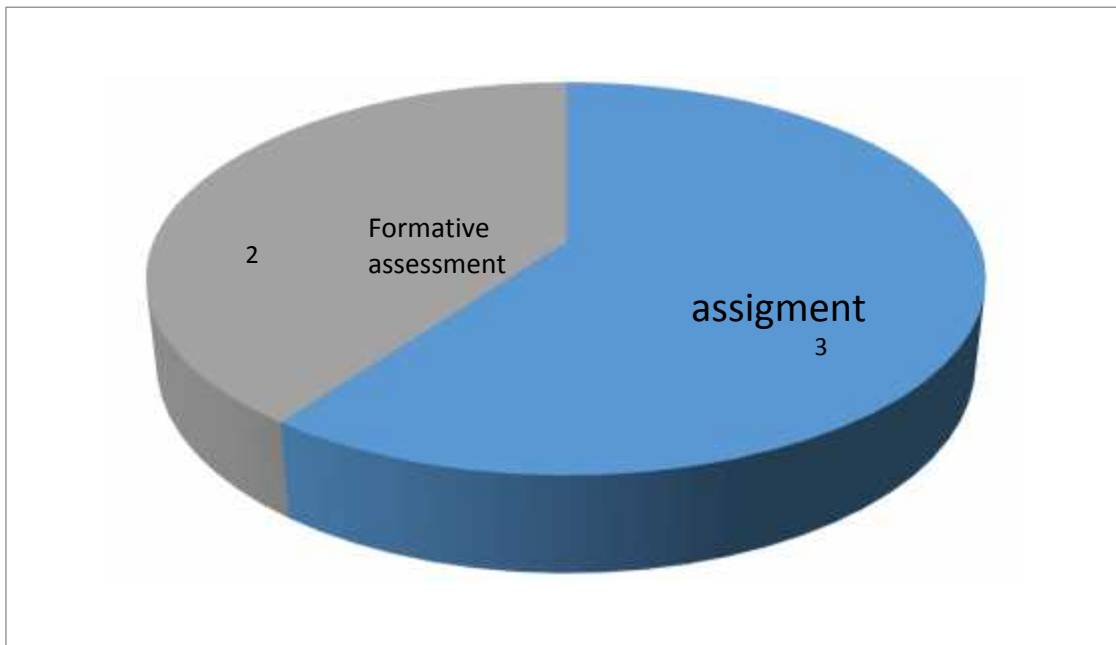
Chart 2.14: Teacher methods

Question 5: Do teachers know any other method:
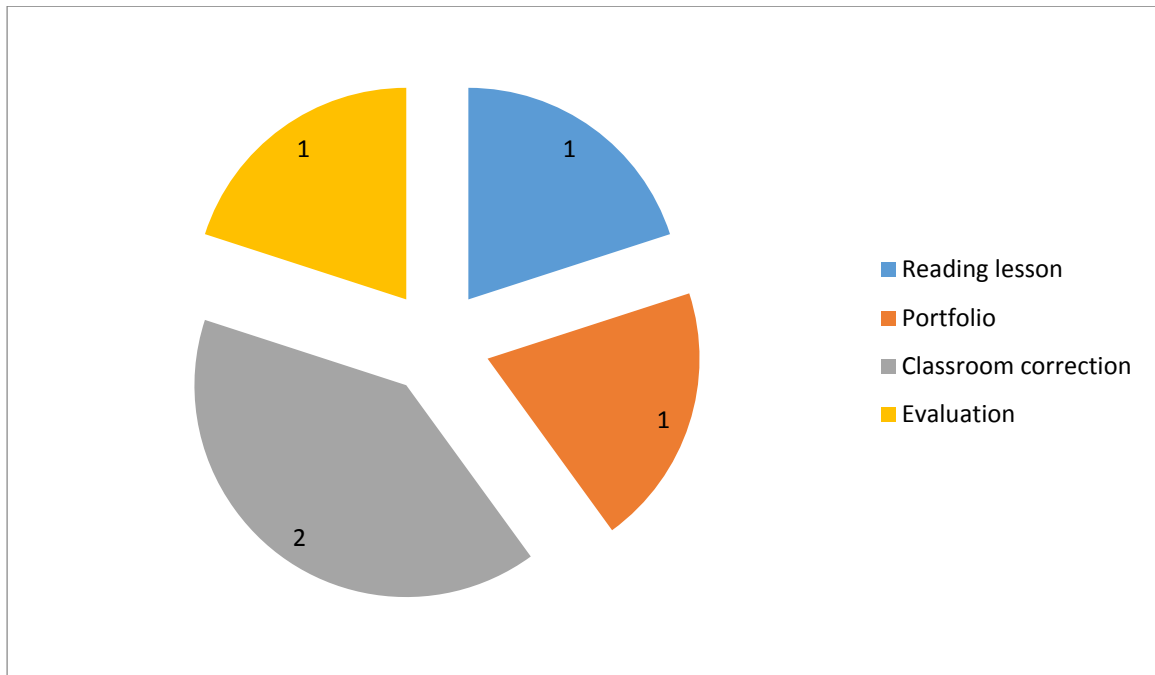
Chart 2.15: Other methods used by teachers

Question 6: The common mistakes made by students:

This question aims to recognize the common type of mistakes that students make. The results show that most teachers remark that students generally make: punctuation, grammar, spelling mistakes.

Question 7: The reason why teacher feedback is beneficial to students in writing:

The majority of teachers agree on the fact that feedback helps students better understand and be aware of their own mistakes.

Question 8: techniques used to provide teacher' feedback to student' writing:

The result obtained from this question reveal that teachers use some techniques in correcting students as underlining, circling, the use of abbreviation from error code chart and sometimes writing mistakes on black board and correcting them.

Question 9: the type of teacher feedback which is suitable for the teachers to use:

Concerning this question, various answers were provided by teachers: some said that descriptive, during writing feedback is beneficial because it helps students brainstorm the lesson and ideas, and correct their mistakes at the same time, while others think that descriptive feedback given after writing is suitable due to the fact that it gives more details and give a chance to correct the mistakes commonly in the black board.

Question 10: Do teachers think that descriptive teacher' feedback during writing is more effective than evaluative feedback after writing:

In this question the interviewer is trying to confirm or deny the hypotheses. The majority of teachers believe that descriptive feedback after writing is appropriate because it explains their weaknesses and gives more details about their mistakes.

Question 11: Do students perceive teacher feedback as positive for self-evaluation or not:

Teachers suppose that teacher feedback really does help students to improve their writing but if it is combined with reading because reading and practice make student better writers.

Question 12: Do students understand the task after providing teacher' feedback:

Teachers think that feedback helps students ameliorate their writing and do better work next time.

Question 13: whether teacher sees any improvement in writing during or at the end of the year when giving teacher feedback:

Educators consider that during the semester they observe middle improvement but at the end they see high development in writing.

2.5.Discussion of the Main Results

For the sake of testing the hypotheses which were formulated by the investigator at the beginning of this work which was designed for third year EFL learners, the researcher will try to interpret the results obtained from students' questionnaire and teachers' interview which supply with large amount of data and reactions.

In this exploratory case study two instruments of collecting data were used, student' questionnaire and teacher' interview to obtain data, to have a conclusion on the validity of the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the study. According to the data analysis, the researcher has noticed that the majority of the EFL students who took part in providing their views to fulfill the questionnaire proposed, showed their awareness about the importance of teachers' feedback to enhance writing skill. Likewise, the results attained from the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of students were females and they are more interested in learning English as foreign language than males.

The first hypothesis denotes that "*Teacher feedback enables the students to self-regulate, to understand the tasks, to find the adequate process and to help in personal evaluation",* the results obtained from the interview showed that teacher feedbacks really help to improve writing abilities of the students. Likewise, the questionnaire showed that students need feedback in order to develop their capacities in writing. Thus it can be said that the first hypothesis is valid.

Regarding to the collected data from teachers' interview, the investigator revealed that most of them have doctorate and Magister degree, and they all have a long experience in teaching English as foreign language, so they were aware about their students' writing abilities. The second hypothesis indicates that "*Students prefer descriptive written feedback during writing.*" The questionnaire with students clearly showed that students prefer to have detailed feedback after writing. Furthermore, the interview results that even teachers believe that students need teacher' feedback after writing which deny the research hypothesis.

2.6.Recommendations

In this research work, the investigator has used several instruments to collect data, and from the results obtained, the following recommendations can be suggested for EFL teachers:

- Teachers should try to provide positive feedback as much as they can;
- Teachers have to limit themselves to three or four major suggestions for improvement;
- Teachers need to give space for peer feedback as some researches show that it has a great impact on student writing;
- Conferring is a key when offering an action-oriented feedback;
- Teachers may use classroom correction on board to improve the student awareness on their mistakes.

2.7. Conclusion

As conclusion, in this chapter, the researcher attempts to provide some recommendations for EFL teachers that can be helpful in developing the Algerian EFL students' writing capacity. In short, all what have been dealt with in this chapter aims to get successful teaching and learning process to writing English cohesively and coherently.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

 The current study serves to attempt to investigate the effect of teacher feedback on 3rd year student writing competence at Tlemcen University. The objective was to obtain knowledge and insights concerning a practical and useful way to give a better feedback. This research was based on an exploratory case study using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments. The exploratory case study was based on two questions:

1- To which extent does the teachers' feedback help improve students' writing competence?
2- What kind of feedback is regarded suitable to receive by students?

Which lead to a formulation of the following hypotheses:

1- Teacher' feedback enables the students to self-regulate, to understand the tasks, to find the adequate process and to help in personal evaluation.
2- Students prefer descriptive written feedback during writing.

Thus, the case study was divided into two parts or two chapters, a theoretical part and a practical part. The first one tries to build the foundation on which the second one will be based on. It deals with definition of writing, its process, the approaches dealt with in the history of teaching writing, then, the concept of teacher' feedback, its types, and its importance.

The second chapter tried to investigate the impact of teacher feedback through an exploratory case study that uses a questionnaire and an interview to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire tried to investigate the effect of teacher' feedback on students writing competence. The interview consisted of a semi-structured interview with 5 teachers of writing expression.

The analysis of the findings from the data gathered resulted in the validation of the first hypothesis. It was that teacher' feedback helps students to self-regulate, to understand the task, to find the adequate process and to help in personal

evaluation. This hypothesis was validated and proved to be true through the practical results of the questionnaire and the interview.

The second hypothesis was that students prefer descriptive written feedback during writing. This hypothesis was disproved because the researcher thinks that it is the result of that students are familiar only with the teachers' feedback after writing.

Finally, this research work is just an attempt to theorize for an idea that hopefully would be translated into real action in the future. In the other hand, this work hopes that it would open other horizons and new ideas for more researches in this field.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICIX A

Student's Questionnaire

Dear students, this study aims at exploring the impact (effect) of teachers' feedback on the 3rd year students' writing competence at Tlemcen University. Your collaboration through this questionnaire will be of great value. Thank you so much in advance for your precious help and collaboration. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the given questions bellow.

(Teacher' feedback means the teacher comments)

Rubric one: students' profile.

1- How old are you? ....

2- Female. ☐   Male. ☐

Rubric two: Students' writing competence and the utility of teachers' feedback to enhance it.

3- Do you think that studying English as a foreign language is:

Very difficult. ☐

Difficult. ☐

Somehow difficult. ☐

Easy. ☐

4- How do you assess your proficiency level in English writing?

Very good. ☐

Good. ☐

Average. ☐

Poor. ☐

5- Do you think that developing the writing skill is necessary in EFL?

Yes. ☐   No. ☐

-If yes, why?………………………………………………………………………….………

………………………………………………………………………..……………………

…………………………………………………………….………………………………

…………………………………………………………….………………………………

6- Do the teachers use teachers' feedback in classroom?

Yes. ☐   No. ☐

-How?……………………………………….………………………………….…………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

7- Do you think that teacher's feedback is beneficial to improve your writing?

Yes. ☐ No. ☐

-Why? ……………………………………………………………………...………

……………………………………………………………………….………….…....

……………………………………………………………………….………

8- What do your teachers insist on when they correct your writings? (you can tick more than one answer) ☐

    Grammar.

    Vocabulary. ☐

    Content/ideas. ☐

    Organization of ideas. ☐

    Mechanics/form. ☐

    Style. ☐

    Others

    mention……………………………………………………………………

9- Do you keep making the same errors when being corrected by the teacher?

Yes. ☐ No. ☐

-If yes, could you say

why?………………………………………………..………...……………………………

……………. …………………………………………………………………………………

…………………… …………………………………………………………………..

Rubric three: Type of teachers' feedback

10- Do you prefer that the teachers give general comments on your writing as "well done" or detailed ones with information about the ways to improve?

General comment. ☐ Detailed comment. ☐

-Justify………………………………………………………………..…………

…………………………………………………………………………………..……

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

11- Do you like to have teachers' feedback during or after writing?

During writing. ☐ After writing. ☐

-Justify …………………………………………………………….................

……………………………………………………………………………….……

……………………………………………………………………………….……

………………………………………………………………………………….

12- Does your teachers' feedback help you to find solutions to overcome your writing problems?

Yes. ☐ No. ☐

-Give examples……………………………………………………….…..

………………………………………………………………………………………….

..……………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………..……

…………………………………………………………………………………..…

Thank you for your collaboration.

APPENDICIX B

Teachers' Interview

Dear teacher,

This present interview attempts to gather information about the impact of teachers' feedback on students' writing competence, the case of 3rd year EFL student at Tlemcen University. You are kindly invited to answer the following questions. Your contribution is kept anonymous and used only for research purpose. Thank you very much for taking the time to share your ideas and experiences. Your input is very important and greatly appreciated.

1- What is your degree?

2- How long have you been teaching English at the university level?

3- For how many years have you been teaching written expression?

4- What is according to you the best method that you use to evaluate Students' progress in writing?

5- Do you know any other methods?

6- What are the most common mistakes made by students and what do you do to make student aware about them?

7- Is teacher' feedback beneficial in writing?

8- How do you provide teacher' feedback to student' writing? (techniques)

9- Which type of teacher' feedback is suitable for you? When? and Why?

10- Do you think that descriptive teacher' feedback during writing is more effective than evaluative feedback after writing? Why?

11-Do students perceive teacher' feedback as positive for self evaluation? If so, why?

12-Do students understand the tasks after providing teacher' feedback?

13-Do you see any improvement during or in the end of the year in writing when giving teacher' feedback? How?

Thank you very much for your collaboration.

ا   .

تسعى هذه الدراسة جاهدة لاستكشاف تأثير ملاحظات المدرس على قدرة الطالب على الكتابة. تبنى الباحث
دراسة حالة عن طالب ليسانس في السنة الثالثة بجامعة تلمسان. تؤكد النتيجة التي تم الحصول عليها من هذا
العمل أن المدرس يقدم ملاحظات للطالب بالطريقة الصحيحة. تراقب هذه الورقة تأثير هذه الملاحظات
وتوضح أن الطالب يدرك أهميتها و يهتم بها ، ومع ذلك ، لا يرى جميعهم أنها مفيدة دون دور القراءة وتحسين
الكتابة لهم عن طريق الممارسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : مهارة الكتابة ، كفاءة الكتابة و الملاحظات.

Rèsumé

La présente étude fait son possible d'examiner l'effet des commentaires de l'enseignant sur la capacité de rédaction des élèves. Le chercheur a adopté une étude de cas sur es étudiants en troisième année du LMD à l'Université de Tlemcen. Les résultats obtenus à partir de ce travail confirment que l'enseignant donne une rétroaction à l'élève de la manière appropriée. Cet article observe l'impact de ces commentaires et montre que les étudiants sont conscients de son importance et y prêtent attention. Cependant, ils ne le voient pas tous comme bénéfique sans le rôle de la lecture et ne s'améliorent pas eux-mêmes en écrivant par la pratique.

Mots clés: talent en écriture, compétences en écriture et commentaires.

Summary

The present study strives to explore the effect of teacher' feedback on student writing ability. The researcher adopted a case study on 3rd year LMD student in Tlemcen University. The result procured from this work confirm that teacher do give feedback to their student in the correct way. This paper observe the impact of this feedback and show that student are aware of it importance and do give attention to it, however, not all of them see it beneficial without the role of reading and self-improve them writing by practice.

Key words: writing skill, writing competence and feedback.