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Effect of Teacher's Written Feedback on Students' Writing Performance: Case of EFL Second Year Students at Tlemcen University

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<u>Dedication</u>

To my beautiful mother 'Naima' and beloved father 'Abd El Rahman', the source of my success in my life.

To my beloved little brothers 'Abd El Wahed' and 'Oussama'.

<u>Acknowledgement</u>

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. ZEKRI Wafa. This research work would not have been done without her valuable guidance, motivation, and support. She will always be my model of success.

I would thank the university of Tlemcen for supplying a supportive learning environment. I am glad I have met a lot of people who inspired me whilst undertaking this research.

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I am also grateful to the members of jury for their constructive feedback on this dissertation.

May Allah bless them all.

Abstract

Teaching writing involves teachers to find appropriate methods and techniques in order to address their students' needs. This study aims to identify students' writing issues, looking at both what students do, and how teachers' feedback can improve their writing performance. To reach this end, an exploratory case study was conducted with second year Bachelor students at the department of English at the university of Tlemcen. The mixed-method approach has been implemented to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, using classroom observation, three teachers' interviews, and students' questionnaires. The findings showed that students have several issues in their writing such as lack of ideas and gramma. Teacher's feedback helped students improve their writing performance in several ways such as improving the content and style. Most students preferred to receive written feedback. This work recommends some methods and strategies for teachers of writing in order to enhance their learners' writing abilities.

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List of Acronyms

AFL : Assessment for Learning

AOL : Assessment of Learning

CR : Contrastive Rhetoric

CWE : Comprehension and Written Expression

ELT : English Language Teaching

ESL : English as a Second Language

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

L2 : Second Language

SCT : Sociocultural Theory

ZPD : Zone of Proximal Development

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General Introduction
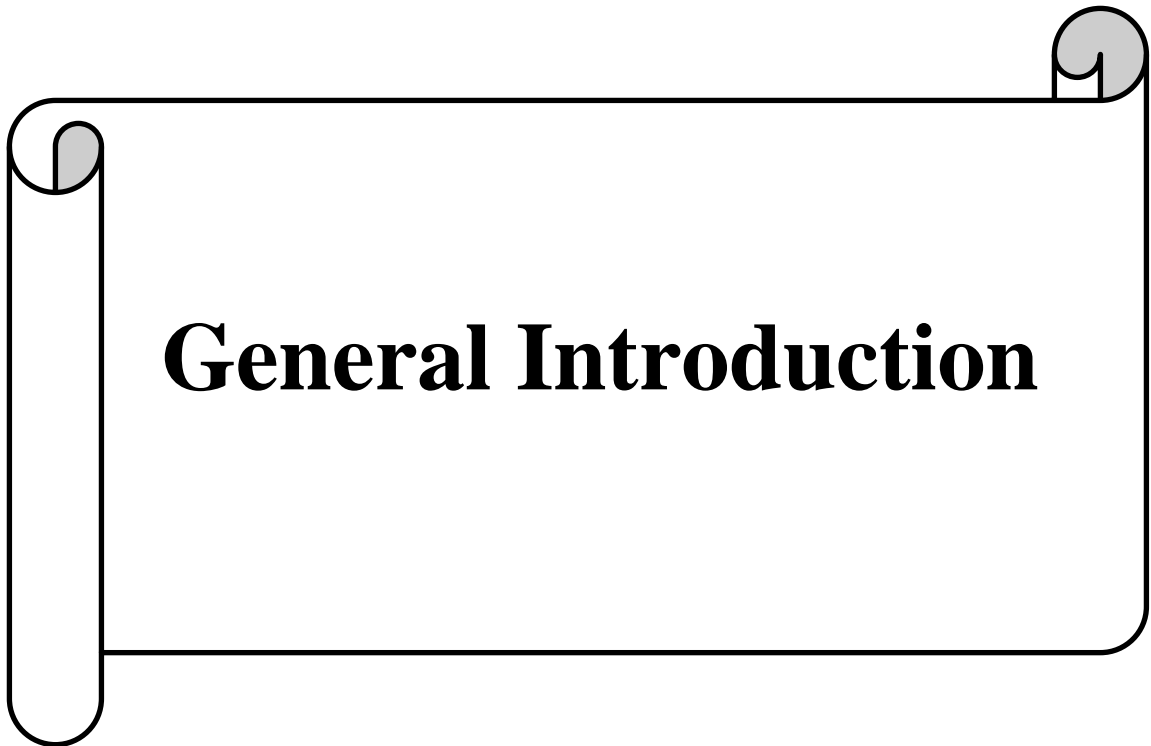
General Introduction

Teaching writing is one of the basic elements in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). When students produce any piece of writing, they have to focus on the form and the content of their work. Their ideas represent thoughts and emotions, which should be at the centre of their written work. Their thought should be properly written to be well received by the target audience 'readers' in a written discourse. As for the insructors, Ferris (2014) claims that responding to students' writing requires certain questions in mind such as what do I look for? How do I provide feedback in ways that are specific, and clear? How do I ensure that students effectively learn from the feedback I provide or facilitate? In this regard, providing written feedback on student written texts is the teacher's most crucial task.

At the university level, of second year Bachelor students learn essays writing in English for their first time, and this could be challenging. Due to their complex nature, many students encounter a variety of difficulties in different areas of writing. Teachers feel obliged to provide feedback that highlights these issues, and assist students to revise them.

The current study brings an understanding of second year Bachelor students' writing issues, and feedback impact on improving students' writing performance. This study looks for types of feedback used in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing classes, students's views on teachers' feedback, and students' preferences of feedback used in class.

The main objectives of this study are related to identifying students' writing issues: First, how feedback is employed differently to enable them improve their writing performance. Second, to find out how different types of feedback can improve their writing.

Accordingly, the researcher tends to answer the following research questions :

1. What are the main students' writing issues ?
2. How can teachers' feedback improve students's writing performance ?
3. What are the students' feedback preferences ?

General Introduction

The desire to reach objectives discussions and discuss the research questions, the researcher designed an exploratory case study to investigate a group of second year Bachelor students in Tlemcen university. This case study collected qualitative and quantitative data using three research instruments : classroom observation, teachers' interviews, and students' questionnaires. The data are analysed using descriptive analyses.

This work is composed of two chapters. The first chapter includes the literature review. It discusses the main theories of writing in second language (L2) and feedback. The second chapter involves methodology, data collection, and analyses of the main findings. It ends with some recommendations and limitations of the study.

Chapter One : Literature Review

CHAPTER ONE : Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

Within the framework of language learning , how people try to communicate in the global community has always been the main source of concern. It is worth mentioning that writing plays a vital role in this area and the ability to write is considered as a crucial skill.

This chapter begins with an overview of sociocultural theory. Then, it explains scaffolding in writing. Next, it defines writing. It also presents a review on L2 writing. It discusses writing approaches. The researcher sheds light on the differences between assessment for and assessment of learning, and deals with types of feedback and their influence on developing students' fluency and accuracy in L2 writing.

1.2. Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory (SCT) is derived from the earlier work of a Russian psychologist, Vygotsky (1978) , who hypothesised that the social environment helps people to enhance their cognitive abilities. This theory regards social interaction as the core of communication and learning process (Behroozizad, Nambiar and Zaini ,2014).

To further explain the theory, Vygotsky (1978) introduced the the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as the ability of a learner to go beyond their own abilities through communication with others in their environment. Many researchers have constructed their own understanding of ZPD, but Tzuriel (2000) provides a clear definition of ZPD to highlight differences between actual development and potential development. Actual development describes the high level of thinking and problem solving demonstrated by the students compared to potential development which is determined by their capacity for problem solving through the help of an adult or a peer (Tzuriel, 2000).

 SCT states that teaching and learning are collaborative processes that heavily depend on each individual participation (Eun, 2010 ; Steele, 2001). From its perspectives , there is no passive learning ; rather there is a significant interaction in classroom. Storch and Aldosari (2013) maintain that interaction offers the opportunity to learners to improve their language learning, communication is key, in this case the acts of giving and receiving feedback improve writing.

The main tool is ZPD. By using it , teachers will become aware about each student's needs to facilitate learning for them, and will be able to make them understand concepts that were beyond their comprehension (Eun, 2010). Levykh (2008) adds that the use of ZPD in the classroom can establish a creative environment for learners to enhance their vocabulary and grammar knowledge for expressing their ideas. It enables teachers to think of their delivered content and activities beforehand to guide students in their development. In this sense, this study explains regards the ZPD as a space of interaction that permits teachers and students to learn from one another, lying on feedback theory that is also based on a sociocultural perspective of learning from and with the other (teacher-student, and peer-to-peer feedback)

1.3. Scaffolding in Writing

Vygotskyan SCT and the notion of ZPD have contributed to the concept of scaffolding (Riazi and Rezaii, 2011). Donato (1994, p.40) defines scaffolding as a "situation where a knowledgeable participant can create supportive conditions in which the novice can participate, and extend their current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence". Scaffolding is considered as a teaching method that helps learners learn how to tackle tasks, and to achieve goals (Piamsai, 2020). Widiana and As-Sabiq (2021) claim that it shows how new learning is built on previous knowledge. Scaffolding can be provided by one peer, or peers working in group. Schwieter (2010) views scaffolding as a technique of problem-based learning. The aim of learning is problem-solving, as learners are instructed with a task, they are required to determine it, so far scaffolding is a way to assist one another complete that task.

Through scaffolding approach students develop an understanding of concepts related to their learning, and develop knowledge that helps them improve their writing (Yunusa, Hashimb, Pazilahc, Rusadzelid, Bolkane and Dineswari, 2019). Lhadon and Wangmo (2022) add that acquiring good writing determines the effective academic achievements. Therefore, scaffolding instructions are helpful in developing the writing skills for English as asecond language (ESL) learners.

Lhadon and Wangmo (2022) provide clear steps for scaffolding instruction while teaching students writing skills:

Step 1: Demonstration lesson : Through the demonstration lesson, the teacher shows students how to write good essays. The students know what they are supposed to write in each stage thinking aloud and brainstorming ideas.

Step 2: Connecting to prior knowledge : Teachers should connect what the students know what they need to make them feel comfortable with their writing. Students' ability to connect ideas may help in developing new skills.

Step 3: Familiarise students with writing: Teachers can provide an example of a written essay to assist them learn quickly about: introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

Step 4: Peer discussion and feedback : Teachers should support students to discuss their work and share their ideas since students learn best from their peers. Burger (2022) focuses on teacher and peer feedback as a way of scaffolding, because feedback in either ways would help students be aware of their writing needs.

1.4. Definition of Writing

Writing is an active, cognitive, and productive skill in language learning. Yule (2010, p.212) defines writing as ''the symbolic representation of language through the use of graphic signs''**.** Byrne (1991) maintains that writing is far from being symbols, these symbols need to be combined in a specific way to create words to form sentences. Grabe and Kaplane (1996) view writing from three angles, the active creator of the text (the writer), the written product (the text) and the receiver of the written production (the reader). However, writing is defined in a clear way by Li (2021) as the process of formation and transformation of meaning dynamically. The ability to write enables writers to produce meaningful sequences of information that reflect their ideas, thoughts or feelings and make them visible to the readers.

Writing generally is taught at schools from basics to complex learning. Although it is an important process, it is perceived among learners as a challenging task , both in the mother tongue and in a foreign language. Byrne (1991) identifies three factors that explain why writing can be a problem for many. The psychological problem lies in the lack of interaction and the lack of received feedback. The linguistic problem refers to writers' mental efforts to express their ideas in a grammatical sense. The third factor is the cognitive problem which indicates that writing is learned through instructions which enable the writer to consciously master the combination and organisation of their

thoughts. In sum, different challenges may appear through the process of writing which needs practice every now and then to be improved.

Writing is a crucial skill that can benefit every individual. Chappell (2011) argues that it is a reflection of one's personality and it helps to grow intellectually. It also makes the thoughts visible for the readers. As writers provide or receive feedback , they can evaluate, reformulate and reexplain the ideas in a flexible way. Accordingly, the thinking skill and communication as well will be developed.

1.5. History of Second Language Writing

In the 1950s, there was a great influence of the bahaviourist views on learning, as far as writing. The theory encouraged learning as a habit formation. The teaching approach that teachers used to assist students to learn the language was the audiolingual method. This approach has highly focused on developing students' speaking proficiency and neglected writing skills. An interest in teaching English as a second language (ESL) appeared in the 1960s. Teachers of writing in the United State observed significant differences in foreign language students' first and second language texts. Thus, ESL writing emerged as a sub-field of second language (L2) research (Fujieda 2006). Following a behaviourist approach, teaching of L2 writing focused on structure at the sentence level focusing on activities based on fill-in, substitution, transformation and completion drills (Javadi-Safa, 2018). It focused also on teaching grammar rules to improve or to assess how well students apply them.

After that, teachers of writing observed the need to move beyond the sentence level. The shift from a syntactic level (sentence) to paragraph writing as Kaplan (1966) suggested the Contrastive Rhetoric perspectives (CR). The CR emphasised on how cultural variations can influence an individual's writing in a second language. Therefore, the CR analysis influenced significantly further studies of second language writing. It indicated the nature of text written by L2 writers and highlighted the impact of the writers' cultural backgrounds on their grammatical and lexical features presented in their texts (Fujieda, 2006).

From the late 1970s to early 1980s, the writing paradigm of ESL shifted its focus on writing as a process rather than writing as a product. More precisely, with the emergence of the process approach, writing instructors focused on effective writing and tended towards individual development (Elbow, 1981). Accordingly, many writers noticed the development of their writing.

In the 1990s, L2 writing emerged as an interdisciplinary field and required from L2 writing researchers to recognise the social, cultural, and educational aspects that may have a critical impact on L2 writing investigations (Fujieda, 2006).

Nowadays, the topic of L2 writing in the area of research tackles different issues such as literacy development, technology and writing, writing assessment, curriculum and material design, literacy development, and writer's identities and emotions in writing.

1.6. Reading and Writing Skills

Reading is considered as a crucial skill for second language learning. Linse and Nunan (2005) define reading as a set of several skills and abilities. Students through reading can develop the ability to decode and to interpret information discussed in written texts. Reading as a receptive skill and writing as a productive skill are always in connection. Before producing any piece of writing, writer should keep notes of knowledge gained from reading.

Reading provides learners with information they can use to guide their own writing and thinking of what interests their readers (Meyer, Middlemiss, Theodorou, Brezinski, McDougall and Bartlett, 2002). Dewi, Muflihin and Fitriana (2018) show that learners can benefit from the activities that combine and support both reading and writing. As Hayes (1996) states that teaching students reading strategies in addition to how the text they are reading is constructed provides them with new strategies. Students will learn how to summarsie, monitor, visualise, and analyse. In this vein, Linuwih and Winardi (2020) show that reading contributes to the mastery of linguistic development (vocabulary knowledge, grammatical skills, and morphological knowledge) , and text structure (sentence and paragraph) (Linuwih and Winardi, 2020). When learners increase their vocabulary and master the language guides and structures, they become good writers (Johnson, 2008).

1.7. Writing Approaches

The history of teaching writing has witnessed change in several approaches, each approach has its own theoretical framework, i.e, each approach has a unique understanding of the notion, purpose, and use of writing.

1.7.1. The Product Approach

It is a traditional approach that originated from the traditions of rhetoric, and it is grounded on behaviorist principles that has been used in many writing classrooms since the 1970s.

However, as its name advocates, it focuses on the final product of writing. Learners are assessed on their texts, and they are regarded as language users (Nunan, 1991). This approach focuses on form and accuracy in writing instruction. Teachers put more focus on grammatical errors and text organisation rather than ideas development within the text (Ngubane, 2018). Learners should produce a grammatically well written text, with respect to spelling and punctuation to demonstrate accuracy in writing. Badger and White (2000) argue that the product approach does recognise which area in linguistic competence learners need to develop across a variety of texts. Furthermore , teachers, in addition to the product approach, need to take into account other writing approaches to ensure the development of their students' writing skills.

1.7.2. The Controlled Approach

The controlled approach is a fundamental approach for teaching literacy to children and adults. It views language learning as a set of habit formation. It is a form-focused approach. It enables students to care about specific features such as correct grammatical patterns, correct sentence structure, correct punctuation, and correct word order of the written language.

Students are usually given close-ended activities, within these activities, there is only one correct answer of each question in a given task. Thus, students work with the text that yields fixed results. Accordingly, they are not required to have a certain degree of creativity. The controlled compositions can be assessed immediately by the teachers and corrected quickly by the students themselves to help them reinforce grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Students develop the ability to express themselves effectively and properly in English (Juriah, 2015).

1.7.3. The Current-Traditional Approach

The current-traditional approach, or current-traditional rhetoric earned its name because of its extensive history in writing pedagogy . It focuses on instruction targeted toward the final written product over several steps. It highlights the importance of grammatical features of language, text organisation, sentences, and paragraphs.

Sowell (2020) maintains that in the current-traditional approach, teachers use model texts to influence students' writing texts. Students frequently receive writing assignments in specific discourse forms that are expository, descriptive, narrative, and argumentative and expected to carefully adhere specific rhetorical conventions, such as the five-paragraph essay with introduction, three body paragraphs, and conclusion (Sowell, 2020).

1.7.4. The Process Approach

The introduction of the process approach to the teaching of writing in the mid-seventies has been advocated as a result behind the weaknesses of the product approach and the current traditional approach (Kroll, 2001). As Zamel (1982) argues that writing is much more than learning certain grammatical rules or imitating rhetorical models. Hyland (2001) provides two basic explanations of the emergence of the process approach. The first is that researchers have begun to acknowledge the newly emerging subject of ESL writing, and the second is that teachers have begun to recognise the demands of English as a foreign language (EFL) as a field in its own right. Wardatul, Suyansah, Nur Anneliza and Iziana (2021) add that the process approach has taken place when most educators questioned themselves of reasons why some students did well, and others not.

The process approach is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory which has a significant impact on the field of education and which explains how the L2 is acquired or learned (Eliwarti and Maarof , 2014). Essentially, the process approach, as its name suggests, does not highlight the final result of the work, rather it focuses on the various stages that one follows to communicate their messages in a process that progresses as it develops in writing. It encourages students to do a lot of writing practice to achieve mastery of the linguistic skills. Wardatul , Suyansah, Nur Anneliza, and Iziana (2021) state that in the classroom students collaborate in small groups which often consist of five members; they brainstorm ideas and discuss the content of their piece of writing. Each working with the aim of supporting the others through peer correction and evaluation. Wardatul et al (2021) also claim that the teacher acts like a facilitator or a coach, responding to what the students have written instead of being cast merely in the role of

linguistic judge (White & Arndt, 1991). In addition, teachers guide students in the areas in which they need help, provide them with feedback, focus on what students do while writing, and may address students' weaknesses at the end of the writing session (Kadmiry, 2022)

   Kadmiry (2022) states that throughout the writing process, writers attempt to direct themselves by establishing goals, coming up with ideas, and creating an initial plan. The writing process ends with reviewing, writers consider the goals they had set during the planning stage, the subject and target audience, and their level of fluency and accuracy. Steele (2010; cited in Durga and Rao, 2018) provides precise and concise stages of the process approach, including: brainstorming, planning/structuring, mind mapping, writing the draft, peer feedback, editing, final draft, and evaluation and teachers' feedback.

· **Stage 1** : Students brainstorm and generate ideas through classroom discussion, reading or listening to tapes and records about a specific topic in order to be aware about what to do for their writing.

· **Stage 2** : Students develop their ideas into a note form and assess their quality and applicability.

· **Stage 3** : Students can either put their ideas into a mind-map or arrange them in a linear form. This stage enables them to appropriately organise their texts and develop interpersonal texts with a foundation of related concepts and explicit illustration.

· **Stage 4** : Students begin to write the first draft in the classroom individually, in pairs, or in groups.

· **Stage 5** : Students exchange their drafts so they can review one another's writing. In this way, they become aware of what the reader needs or expects.

· **Stage 6** : Students try to make changes on their own draft to improve based on what the other students provide as feedback.

· **Stage 7** : Teachers receive the final drafts in order to monitor their students' writing development.

· **Stage 8** : Teachers evaluate the final drafts and provide the necessary feedback on it. Again, students can share their work to read them to give other comments or suggestions.

   The process approach is considered as an innovation in academic writing that yields an improvement of writing instruction since it covers all the writing skills and

background knowledge of the learners in the classroom (Eliwartie and Maarof, 2014). In addition, this approach enables teachers to focus on the multiple elements of the writing process and gives more freedom for students to understand their language. Such an orientation could help students develop confidence and establish fluency and accuracy.

1.8. Assessment for Learning vs Assessment of Learning

Many pedagogics perceive teaching and learning as a complex process due to its several complicated components among them assessment. This term has been the main topic of discussion because many questions arise to construct it (Al-Awawdeh and Kalssom, 2022). According to Stefanakis (2002) the word assess comes from the Latin word 'assidere', which means to sit beside. In pedagogy, it means to sit beside the learner. Kelter (2018) uses the term assessment to mean the process of determining if learning goals and objectives have been met or not, and how the programme could be improved to achieve them. Brown (1990) states that assessment contains a series of measures of gathering and interpreting information about student level. Assessment includes different activities that teachers and students tackle such as homework, tests, essays, reports, and classroom discussion in order to modify teaching and learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998) ; and to select, control or motivate students, and to satisfy public expectations (Biggs, 2003).

Assessment for learning (AFL), constructive assessment or formative assessment, several academics have defined it using various conceptualisations. William (2011) defines it as the interactive assessment of students' progress that identifies learning requirements and allows teachers to modify their instructions accordingly. He outlines three steps AFL. Monitoring (is learning taking place?), diagnosis (what is not being learned?), and action (what to do about it?). According to Glazer (2014) AFL is defined as a task that allows students to receive feedback while instruction and learning are taking place. Examples of these tasks might include tests/worksheets or informal quizzes undertaken by students or their peers, with immediate feedback to check the students' progress (Guo & Yan, 2019). AFL influences student perception of the value of the assessment. Additionally, It can improve students' motivation and engagement (Faber, Luyten, and Visscher, 2016)

Assessment of learning (AOL) or summative assessment occurs at the end of any point in the learning programme (a lecture, a unit, a course of instruction, or a school

year) to measure the outcomes of an instructional programme (Perera-Diltz, 2009). It informs teachers about students' success or failure in their learning process based on a numerical scale (Mosquera, Macías, and Fernando, 2015). Taras (2005) describes AOL as a type of judgment that incorporates all available data as evidence of a certain point. According to Dolin, Black, Harlen, and Tiberghien (2018) evidence can be collected by administering tests or examinations, observations and records maintained from the period of teaching and learning. Teachers can also assess their students' through learning portfolios, online tasks, or a combination of both.

The crucial components of AOL is information (provided by the teacher) and internalisation (applied by learners) of appropriate feedback on performance, with a target towards the future progression of learning (Brown, 2004). Many researchers explained the difference between AFL and AOL to show how teachers can use them.

From the above definitions, the difference lies in the students' learning process. AFL takes place during the learning process multiple times. AOL is held after completing part of the programme. Gribs, Brigden and Hellenberg (2006) state that AFL is often informal, ongoing and is a two-way communication process between teacher and learners, and it is nonjudjmental in its nature (Kibble, 2017). While AOL is end-point assessment, more formal, and judgmental. They also add that AOL tends to be more numeric and quantitative whereas AFL is more descriptive and qualitative. Yambi (2018) clarifies that AFL targets student's learning improvement and advancement and AOL is aimed to assess student's accomplishments.

1.9.Types of Feedback

According to Shute (2008), feedback is information provided to the learners to modify their thinking and behaviour for the purpose of improving learning. It can be framed as a one-way transmission of knowledge led by teachers, or as a two-way process through the active involvement of students that is regarded as essential to its success (Winstone, 2022). Elsayed and Cakir (2023) state that feedback is an effective component of any instruction or a technique because it clearly shows the learner needs, where the learner is going, and what actions must be done to reach the desired destination

1.9.1. Asynchronous vs Synchronous Feedback

The shift to online learning has influenced assessment, and L2 writing assessment in particular. Feedback has moved from paper to e-feedback (Tatsanajamsuk & Saengboon , 2021). Electronic feedback (e-feedback) is a computer-facilitated feedback provided by either the teacher or peers and delivered electronically to the student (Ene and Upton, 2014). Accordingly, writers can receive various modes of feedback from others, which in turn influences their written products. Li (2021) advocates that the electronic feedback can be in two modes: asynchronous or synchronous.

Asynchronous feedback is given to students after they submit their assignments electronically using different techniques such as Google Docs, Microsoft Word, e-mails, voice comments, ans chats on WhatsApp (Al Damen, 2020). Ahmed, McGahan, Indurkhya, and Kaneko and Nakagawa (2021) clarify that in asynchronous feedback, the teacher assigns a task, the student accessed it, submit their response after completion, then the teacher provides a written feedback.

Waller and Papi (2017) maintain that asynchronous feedback helps students to investigate their time and effort for improving their writing abilities. When writers receive, interpret, reflect on, and search for details related to the received feedback, they can easily improve their critical thinking. In addition, they can gather additional information to evaluate the received feedback as evidence to decide whether to accept or reject the suggested feedback (Ahmed et al, 2021).

Synchronous feedback is an immediate feedback given when both students and teachers are online simultaneously (Tatsanajamsuk & Saengboon, 2021 ; Chong, 2019). Al Damen (2020) mentions that it can be provided through computer-mediated tools such as Skype, Google Hangouts, Zoom, Google Docs, and Grammarly. Using synchronous feedback in on-line writing sessions improves students' writing abilities because it delivers all information about the target language in context, encourages interaction with teachers, and gives students the chance to brainstorm ideas (Heift and Caws, 2000). Moreover, as pointed out by Van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2011), synchronous feedback proved to be effective in improving the EFL learners' grammatical accuracy and achieving higher scores in constructing arguments (Chong, 2019 ; Ahmed et al , 2021).

The discussion of asynchronous and synchronous feedback is a controversial topic. Some researchers believe that synchronous feedback is more effective than asynchronous feedback. Abrams (2003) asserts some students do not take asynchronous tasks as an

essential matter, for this reason synchronous feedback is an effective way to improve learning output. In addition, providing immediate feedback clarifies the learning situation and motivates students for a better improvement (Ahmed et al, 2021). Whereas other researchers such as Canals, Granena, Yilmaz, and Malicka (2020) claim that it is not always possible for teachers to provide immediate feedback in distance language learning due to their overloaded schedule. In this context, asynchronous feedback may be a better option. Students will have opportunities to recognise and correct their errors, and produce accurate texts in a new piece of writing (Shintani, Ellis, Suzuki, 2014).

1.9.2. Forms of Feedback : Written Feedback vs Oral Feedback

Written feedback is described as a unique written dialogue between learners and teachers (Feuerherm, 2012). It is defined as any error corrections, comments, questions, margin, and endnotes that are written on students' assignments (Elfiza, Reszki and Nopita, 2021). According to Sabat and Slamet (2019), written feedback is classified into direct written and indirect written feedback. The term direct written feedback is employed when a writing instructor makes an accurate modification to a student's text such as providing the correct grammatical form to the sentences. Indirect written feedback occurs when the instructor highlights a particular issue in the student's writing such as underlying the ungrammatical sentence.

Nicol (2010) proposes characteristics of a good written feedback :

1. Understandable : It should be written in a clear language that students can understand.

2. Selective : It should be commenting on more than three issues that the student can do something about.

3. Specific : It should provide specific examples in the student's submission where the feedback is mentioned.

4. Transferable : It should be focused on processes, skills and self-regulatory abilities.

5. Descriptive rather than evaluative : It should focus on learning goals rather than performance goals.

Oral feedback is another type of feedback which is delivered verbally (Wrantak,2019). Shieh, Reylnolds and Ha (2022) state that oral feedback can be defined from different perspectives. From the learner's point of view, oral feedback is the information that students receive in response to their performance. Oral feedback from teachers' perspectives is to give oral feedback with no interaction with students. The third

perspective on oral feedback stresses on the key role of interaction between teacher and students. The fourth perspective views oral feedback as a comprehensive process that incorporates all of the previously mentioned components (Shieh et al, 2022).

Oral feedback can be delivered in implicit or explicit forms. Implicit oral feedback indirectly informs language learners that their work is incorrect while explicit oral feedback clearly indicates the error through hints or suggestions (Zarei, Ahour and Seifoori, 2019). Lyster and Ranta (1997) identifies six major types of oral feedback : recasts, explicit correction, metalinguistic clues, elicitation, repetition, and clarification requests.

 • **Explicit correction:** to indicate that the student has made an error and needs to correct it.

• **Recasts:** to correct rephrasing of all or part of the student's incorrect elements.

• **Clarification requests:** to indicate that the student's utterance needs more clarification to be well understood.

• **Metalinguistic feedback:** to give comments about the errors with explicit explanation of forms without providing the correction.

 • **Elicitation:** to ask further questions to allow the student to reformulate and correct their errors.

• **Repetition:** Highlighting the student's errors with a rising intonation.

Oral feedback is believed to yield high learning outcomes and to improve students' writing tasks . Gul, Saleem, and Zahra (2023) find it crucial for teachers to provide students with oral feedback as best practice for recognising errors in order to avoid them in future writing. As Sobhani and Tayebipour (2015) indicate that oral feedback significantly reduces learners' grammatical errors. Therefore, they suggest that oral feedback should be given with the written one to be more effective.

1.10. Teacher Feedback vs Peer Feedback

Saeed and Al Qunayeer (2022) describe the teacher's feedback as way of telling students what to do. A teacher should have several questions in mind to provide effective feedback including : what are the instructional and behavioral goals ? How will I monitor students' progress toward success ? What topics will I cover ? (Payne and Swanson

,2021). Payne and Swanson (2021) claim that by answering these questions, students will understand the most important goals and objectives of the lesson.

When teachers provide feedback , they involve more in reviewing and reflecting on students' performance and have a fair idea about their progression which drives them to provide a better learning environment (Ahea, Ahea and Rahman, 2016). Teacher feedback can be applied in various contexts for several purposes. Sometimes, feedback focuses on how well students performed or understood in a given task. Other times, teachers need to provide students with feedback on how they can approach a task or a behaviour. Some students with low level need feedback for self-regulation (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Task feedback:

It is considered as the easiest type of feedback. It informs students about their level of performance and comprehension in relation to a behavior or academic task.

Process feedback:

It relates to students strategies used to check their work, identify errors, and make use of cues to facilitate learning. This type of feedback should be used during guided practice and it should be provided as soon as the task is completed.

Self-regulation feedback

This type of feedback supports students to guide and correct themselves, instead of depending on the teacher. Feedback on self-regulation consumes time since it needs a lot of repetitions for students to develop their abilities and academic achievement.

Teacher feedback occupies an absolute authority on writing and has been widely regarded as an effective tool in developing ESL and EFL students' writing proficiency (Cui, Schunn, and Gai, 2021 ; Chen, 2021). However, giving feedback to large size classes is challenging for teachers (Ho, Phung, Oanh, and Giao, 2020).

Peer feedback , peer response, peer review, peer revision, peer editing, or peer evaluation can be defined as a form of student collaboration. Students represent a source of information for each other to the extent in which the teacher becomes a monitor of that collaboration: offering suggestions and critics (Alqassab, Strijbos and Ufer, 2019 ; Donia, Mach, O'Neill and Brutus, 2022).

As the process approach has emerged as a crucial orientation to pedagogy in second language writing classrooms, peer feedback has become significant in writing instruction (Wakabayashi, 2013). According to Mulyati & Hadianto (2023), teachers can use peer feedback in writing under the setting of several such as generating ideas, pre-writing activities, or writing editing activities in small groups of four to five students. Putri and Putri (2023) state that when the teacher gives a paragraph writing task, before students submit their drafts, they are required to read each of their peers' drafts, and provide feedback to each other.

Employing peer feedback in L2 writing effectively develops students' writing performance. Providing and receiving feedback from peers, students find inspiration or input from their peers' work (Putri and Putri 2023). According to Garofalo and Mulligan (2011), peer feedback helps students to reduce stress, save time and gain grammatical and structural proficiency to improve the content of their writing, as well as understanding different perspectives on the writing process (Farrah, 2012).

Through peer feedback , students find the opportunity to have real readers for their writing and become confident writers (Buyse, 2011). Elboshi (2021) clarifies that when students know that the teacher is the one who will evaluate their writing, their content is meant to impress that teacher alone. However, if students write for their classmates the content and the style of their writing will differ accordingly.

1.11. Fluency and Accuracy in Feedback

In the broad sense, fluency is the synonym of language proficiency (Chambers, 1997). Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) define it as the ability to produce language immediately without a pause or a delay. Brand and Brand (2006) add that fluency means to accomplish tasks automatically, quickly, without any fear of making mistakes.

According to Michel (2017), fluency includes three dimensions. First dimension is speed, such as the number of words per minute. Second one is breakdown, such as the number and length of pauses. Last one is repair, for example repetitions and self-corrections. In writing , fluency is related to the number of words or structural units a writer is able to include in their writing within a particular period of time (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim, 1998). In this vein, fluency is related to the coherence and cohesion of ideas, assisted by grammatical patterns that enable a reader to move clearly

and quickly throughout the text (Lannin, 2007). According to Abdellatif (2013), writing fluency measures are two types: Products-based measures depend on the method of production of written texts. Process-based measures depend on the online observation of the writing process. Casanave (2004) indicates that focusing on writing fluency encourages students to explore their writing and write without any pressure.
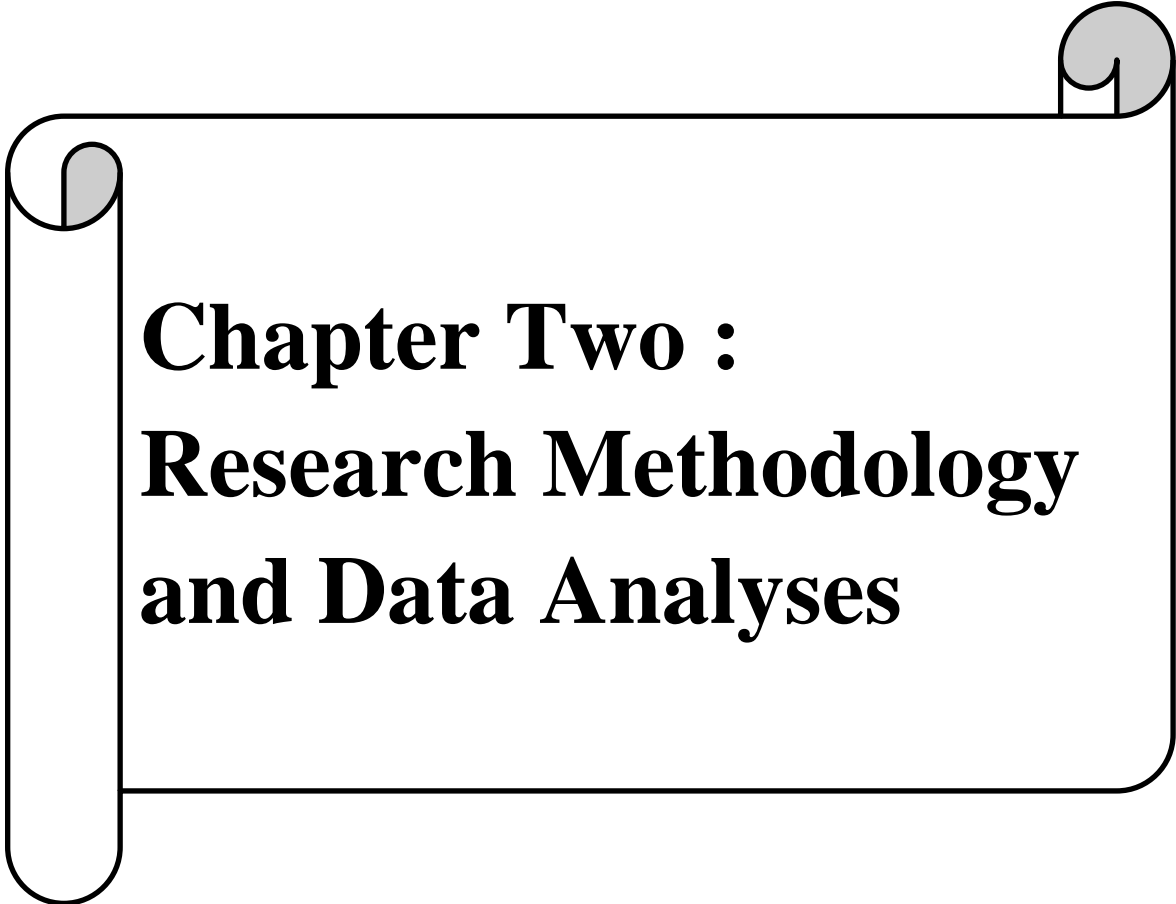
Gelderen and Oostdam (2005) point out that written texts can be considered as an indirect indicator of writing fluency because linguistic fluency makes it easier for writers not only to jot down their ideas but also to review them before they are transcribed. Most of the time , readers read without realising how quickly the text is written, how frequently it was edited, or how difficult it was to produced (Gelderen and Oostdam ,2005).

Accuracy is regarded as the degree of following specific language usage rules (Wolfe-Quintero et al, 1998). Skehan (1996, p.46) defines accuracy as "how well the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language, and a characteristic concerning "a learner's capacity to handle whatever level of inter-language complexity s/he has currently attained". Vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation are the three key components of accuracy (Gower, Phillips & Walter, 2005). Mengke (2016) assumes that a language user will lack accuracy and fall into errors if he/she does not take into account those three elements.

Accuracy in writing ensures writers' intended meaning and maintains a clear understanding of communication (LarsenFreeman 2003). Solfiyatuzzahro, Santihastuti, and Erfan (2019) claim that the emphasis on accuracy is justified in the production of structurally correct sentences. Therefore, it is measured in terms of errors per unit or linguistic production, such as errors per sentence, errors per 100 words, or errors per T-unit (Kuiken, Veder and Gilabert, 2010). Celce-Murcia (1991), for instance, notes that the high rate of grammatical errors in academic writing (an average of 7.2 errors per 100 words) definitely makes their writings unacceptable.

1.12. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to set a background related to the setting of this research. It begun with an introduction of the sociocultural theory explaining scaffolding in writing. It defined writing, then provided an overview of L2 writing history. After that, it discussed the approaches in teaching writing. Also, it tackled assessment and feedback that are considered as important aspects of discussion in the following chapter.It highlighted the difference between teacher's feedback and peer feedback. It ended with a discussion on fluency and accuracy in feedback**.**

Chapter Two : Research Methodology and Data Analyses

Chapter Two : Research Methodology and Data Analyses

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the practical part of the research. The researcher will try to reach research objectives and discuss researh questions through conducting an exploratory case study that explains the influence of teacher's feedback on improving second year students' writing skills at the department of English at Tlemcen university.

This chapter highlights research objectives, informants profile and intruments used to collect data. In order to clarify the study, the researcher analyses data quantitavely and qualitatively. She also interprets the findings by using figures and discusses the main results. The last section provides a list of recommendations and limitations of the study.

2.2. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are :

1. To identify students' writing issues.
2. To identify how feedback is employed differently to enable students improve their writing performance.
3. To find out how different types of feedback can improve students' writing.

2.3.Students' Profile

This study invited thirty one students of second year Bachelor level at Tlemcen university to answer the research questionnaire distributed in the classroom.

This sample was selected due to three main reasons: First, students at this level are assissted with essays writing course. Second, there are at least more than two teachers of writing at this level. Third, the writing course tends to be challenging for students. For these reasons the research aimed to discuss writing issues to offer potential suggestions that can help both teachers and learners develop their writing performance.

2.4.Teachers' Profile

Three teachers of comprehension and written expression (CWE) have been invited for an interview. Two teachers had online meeting conversation and one had face to face interview. Those teachers were selected to bring an understanding about their students difficulties in writing and how their feedback helps their students to develop that skill.

2.5. Research Instruments

This study was done using three research instruments, classroom observation, student's questionnaire and semi-structured interview with teachers. Thus, data will be analysed quantitatively and qualitatively to answer and discuss the main research questions. The results will provide a strong basis for the discussion of research questions.

2.5.1.Classroom Observation

Observation is the conscious noticing, detailed examination and systematic description of the events, behaviors, and artifacts (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 79 ; Cowie ,2009). Baker (2006) views observation as a complex research method because it requires a number of roles and strategies during data collection. Observation can be done in any environment such as the classroom (Cowie , 2009). Classroom observation is conducted when learning takes place, it aims to look at different aspects related to teaching and learning, including learning strategies, interaction between the teacher and students, classroom management, and group work activities.

Observation comes into two forms, participant observation or non-participant observation. According to kumar (2022), in participant observation, the observer participates as a member with the group being observed, studied, and interpreted in every activity. In non-participant observation the observer collects data at distance without any participation (Kumar, 2022)

In this study, the researcher has conducted observation as a non-participant observer in a writing class. The aim with that role was to collect rich and deeper knowledge in terms of students' difficulties in writing their essays, and interact with different types of writing.

2.5.2.Interview

The interview is the fundamental basis in any qualitative research (Edwards and Holland ,2013). Monday (2020) defines interviews as a systematic way of collecting data from individuals through conversations. Richards (2009) maintains that interviews offer different perspectives to understand people's experiences and views.

There are three types of interviews. The first type is a structured interview or a standardised interview. Informants are asked the same questions in the same order (Corbetta , 2003). It is significantly quantitative in its approach since it is structured around a series of direct questions that require yes or no answers (Monday ,2020). The second type is semi-structured interview ; it is used to collect qualitative data based on open-ended questions. The interviewer can change the order of the questions or add others depending on the direction of the interview(Monday , 2020). The third type is unstructured interviews which are also called in-depth interviews. Its direction is largely determined by respondents. rather than the researcher's topic. Researchers maintain deep

knowledge from their experiences, views, or feelings (Richard 2009). Gubrium & Holstein (2002) note that this type of interviewing offers a greater flexibility and freedom for both interviewers and interviewees. This study used semi-structured interviews with three teachers of the CWE course. The interview was concerned with the teacher's experiences and perceptions of teaching writing, their students difficulties in learning that skill and a discussion to understand if their feedback helps to avoid that issue.

2.5.3. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions used to collect quantitative and/or qualitative data related to informants' experiences and perspectives about a particular topic (Bhandari, 2023). The researcher chose questionnaire to answer and discuss her research questions.

A questionnaire can cover any topic and reach a large number of audience. It seeks confidentiality and privacy of informants. Accordingly they can be more honest to share their perspectives and help the researcher to obtain accurate results (Debois, 2022).

The researcher used questionnaires with a group of second year students. It consists of 15 questions in four sections including close-ended, multiple choice, and open-ended questions. The first section of the questionnaire represents the students' background information (age and gender). The second section looks at their acknowledgement of their personal writing issues. The third section is concerned with students' perceptions of their writing performance. The last section gathers information about students' feedback preferences. The questionnaire was analysed through descriptive analyses. Data are presented through graphs, and texts.

2.6.Data Analyses

The data is analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, using descriptive analyses on classroom observation, teachers' interviews, and students' questionnaires.

2.6.1.Classroom Observation Analysis

First session: 3/10/2022.

The researcher sought one of the teachers' approval to observe her writing class for my research purposes. The number of students was thirty. At the beginning of the session, the students showed their introduction that the teacher asked them to write as homework. The teacher asked each one to read their own introductions. When a student started reading, the teacher asked them to repeat the sentence in which there was a

mistake. The teacher made remarks and asked students to find the mistake. When students could not figure it out, the teacher wrote the mistake on the whiteboard and explained the grammatical rule under which the sentence can be written. The researcher observed that students simultaneously corrected their pieces of writing when the teacher provided feedback to a specific student. Most of them had issues with grammar and vocabulary. The teacher ended up re-explaining how to write an appropriate introduction with a great focus on grammatical structure.

After that, the class began explaining 'essay structure'. The teacher wrote on the whiteboard the main elements of the essay and their sub-elements (see Appendix I). Then, the teacher distributed a handout that consisted of six questions related to the structure of the essay. She asked students to work in groups (six groups, each group consisted of 5 students, one group had 6 students). The aim of this group work was to enable their interaction on the elements explained through responding to the questions. The researcher observed that interaction occurred and indeed increased students' motivation towards the topic discussed. The teacher checked on each group asking if they needed assistance. Two groups needed teacher's help. The teacher selected each group to answer one question. Before she agreed with a group's answer, she asked other groups for their opinions. All of the six groups had good answers due to group feedback and the teacher's strategy in explaining and providing feedback.

Secondsession: 14/11/2022

On the second observation, the teacher organised peer-feedback activity. She asked her students to work in pairs. The class had 16 students, each peer checked the other piece of writing to give feedback. The task lasted 30 min. There was a good interaction between peers. The teacher guided and checked if they engaged in the task. The researcher interacted with that task to have an idea about different issues in their writing. She checked all the 16 peers, and asked them if they spotted their peers' mistakes. She noted down that there was an issue with grammar, style, lack of ideas (their essays needed more details in body paragraph and conclusion), and communication of ideas (particularly the thesis statement which did not fit the body and needed to change). However, Some students told me that they were not certain they understood the feedback. Accordingly, they were using their phones and dictionaries to check what they were doing.

Later on, the teacher made an 'individual conferencing' feedback and asked students to check their work and try to correct according to their peer feedback. At the same time,

she gave feedback to particular students. The researcher checked that she highlighted the mistakes and corrected them through explanation of details. She observed that she provided both written feedback and oral feedback. She also noticed that students understood their issues. She checked again with the students that the teacher had corrected him. They told her that the teacher's feedback was really helpful to understand their mistakes.

Third session: 5/12/2022

The researcher did another observation where the teacher had selected 10 students to have a discussion of the feedback received from her. Only seven students came, and only five students brought their drafts with feedback on it. The discussion lasted for 45 min. The teacher started talking about the structure of an essay. She asked the students if they had the elements of the essay. Two students said: "Yes", the three others maintained that they knew what the elements were, but did not know what to include, and that they lacked ideas. The teacher explained in detail the body and the conclusion. The seven said that it was clear and really understood how to structure the essay.

The teacher moved to discuss her written feedback to the students, asking whether each student had understood through feedback. The first student had a few grammar mistakes, she stated that she had a clear idea about her main issue and what to do next in her future writing. The second student had a mistake in the 'thesis statement', he understood that it should not come in the form of a question, he ended his words thanking the teacher for giving him feedback. The third student did not know how to express his ideas. He added that feedback made him understand his style and how to structure his essay. The fourth student had only an issue with introduction, she stated that she did not have enough ideas to carry on. The fifth student stated that she thought she did well in her writing, but feedback enabled her to observe that her writing lacks a good structure of ideas.

Classroom observation in particular has given the researcher a scope on how students perceived teachers' written feedback. As all agree that they had a clear image of their writing needs due to the teacher's comments.

Fourth session : 19/12/2022

On the last observation, the teacher provided students with an activity about how to give feedback to their peers. The rationale behind the task was to make students know

about the elements that the teacher focused on when she corrected their work. The teacher distributed three handouts (See Appendix II). The first one was concerned with how to give feedback to peers. Second one was a feedback checklist related to 'structure' and 'organisation' of the essay. The last one was also a feedback checklist related to the 'content'.

The teacher spent 20 minutes explaining the first handout to her students. The teacher moved to the first activity. She distributed the second paper (focus on structure and organisation). Then she asked them to read and check if their peers had all those elements in their essays. The role of the teacher in the task was monitoring. She checked perpetually to see if they needed help. All students were interested and motivated. The researcher checked each peer to see if they did well. She noted down that most students did not have many issues in their writing as it was before. Most of them included all the elements in the list. However, that task lasted for 15 minutes and it had clarified that some students still have problems in organizing their ideas.

For the second activity, the teacher distributed the third handout that focused on the content. She asked the students to do the same as the first activity. The researcher waited for the students to correct their peers for 10 minutes. Then, she checked them again. She noted down that some students did well. She asked them about how they succeeded in doing that. They told herthat they had followed the teacher's instructions and feedback; in addition to the help of their peers. This task showed that some students had a lack of ideas.

To sum up, in all observations, the researcher noticed that students had problems in grammar, lack of ideas, and organising ideas. In addition, through their teacher's strategies in providing different types of feedback, especially the written one, they could understand their weaknesses well, and develop a way to avoid their mistakes.

2.6.2.Students' Questionnaire Analyses

Q1. How old are you ?
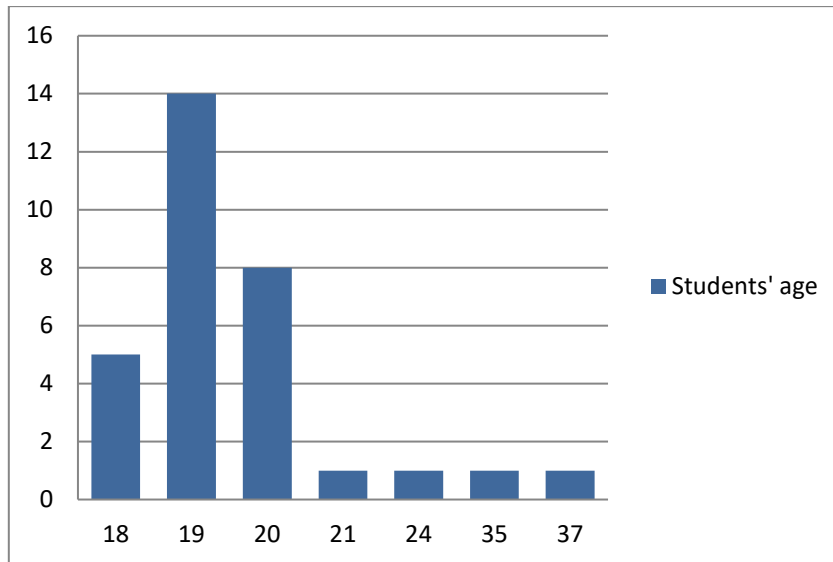
Figure 2.1 : Students' Age.

The result in the figure above indicates that students' age was between 18 – 37 years.

Q2. What is you gender ?

The aim of this question is to provide an insight about the number of females and males who participated in this research.
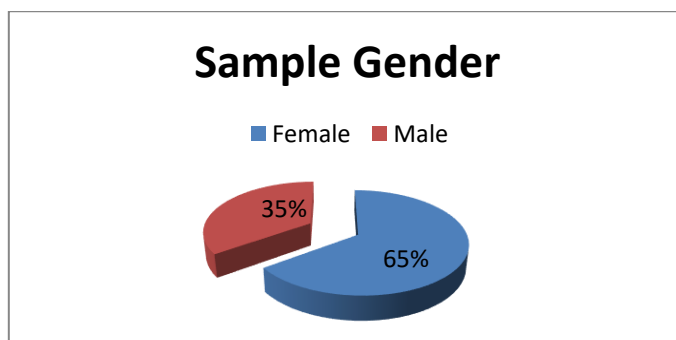
Figure 2.2 : Students' Gender.

This figure represents the sample gender. The findings of the study show that most of the respondents are female students and they are most likely engaged in the learning process.

Q3. Is writing a difficult task ?

This question investigates if students consider writing a difficult task.
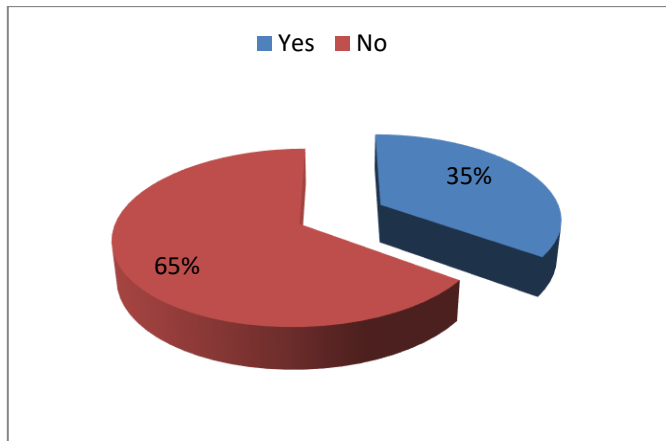
Figure 2.3 : : Writing Difficulty Perception.

The result shows that most students do not consider writing as a difficult task.

Q4. Do you think that writing is a necessary skill to be developed ?

This question aims to know if students consider writing a necessary skill to be devolped.

All of the students (100%) agreed that writing is a necessary skill to be developed.

Q5. Do you face issues in writing ?

This question aims to find if students have difficulties when they are asked to write.
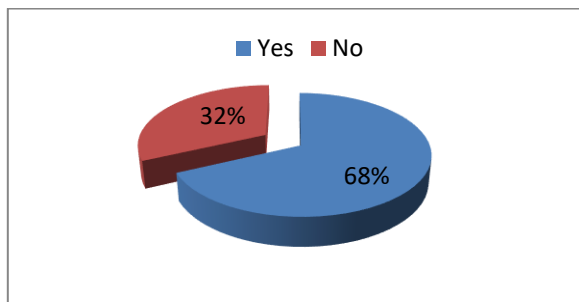
Figure 2.4 : Students' Writing Issues Awareness.

The result reveals that the majority of students have issues in writing.

Q6. Does your teacher provide you with feedback ?

This question aims to investigates whether or not teachers provide feedback to students' writing classes.

All the students (100%) ensured that the teacher provided them with feedback.

Q7. **Do you think that teacher's feedback is beneficial to improve your writing ?**

This question aims to investigate if the teachers' feedback is useful to improve writing or not.

All the students (100%) considered teacher's feedback beneficial to improve their writing.

Students explained that teacher's feedback supported them in the following points:

- It helped in knowing, noticing what/where are their mistakes.
- It helped to avoid and correct mistakes.
- It showed what is needed to be taken into consideration.
- It helped to know how to organise and structure ideas.
- It showed the steps of how to write a good essay.
- It helped to express ideas appropriately.

Q8. Do you benefit from the written feedback given to you in writing ?

This question aims to find out if students benefit from the written feedback given to them in writing.

All of the students (100%) maintained that written feedback did benefit them.

Q9. **Do you think that teacher's oral feedback is more helpful than written feedback ?**

This question aims to find out if students have a positive view towards oral feedback rather than written feedback.
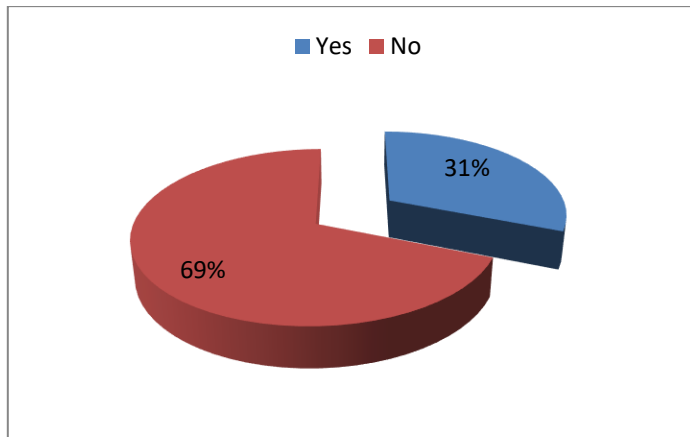
Figure 2.5 : Written vs Oral Feedback Attitudes.

The result shows that the majority of students do not consider oral feedback more helpful than written feedback.

Q10. How do you consider studying writing ?

This question sees how students perceive studying writing.
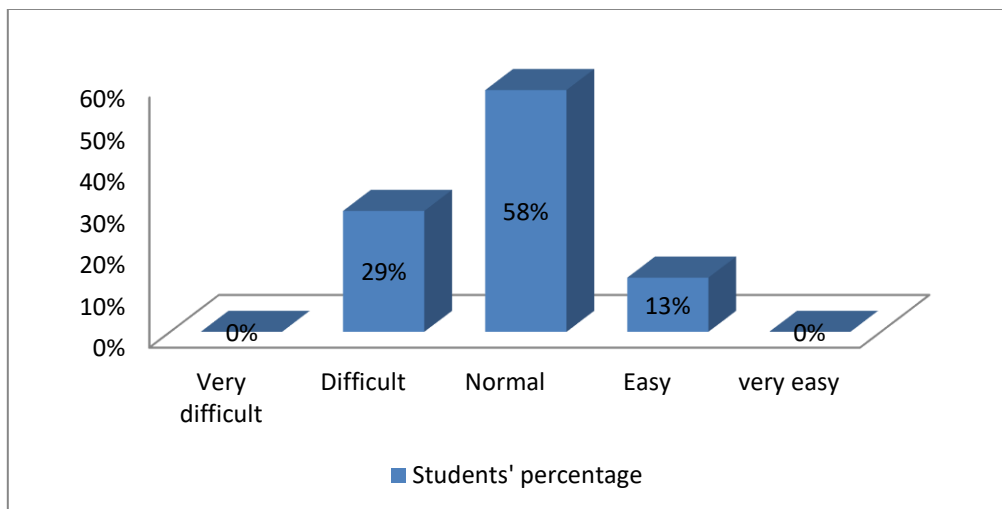
Figure 2.6 : The Way Students Consider Studying Writing.

The result shows that more than half of students (58%) find studying writing 'normal', 29% find it 'difficult' and only 13% find it 'easy'.

Q11. **How is your level in English writing ?**

This question investigates how students assess their level in English writing.
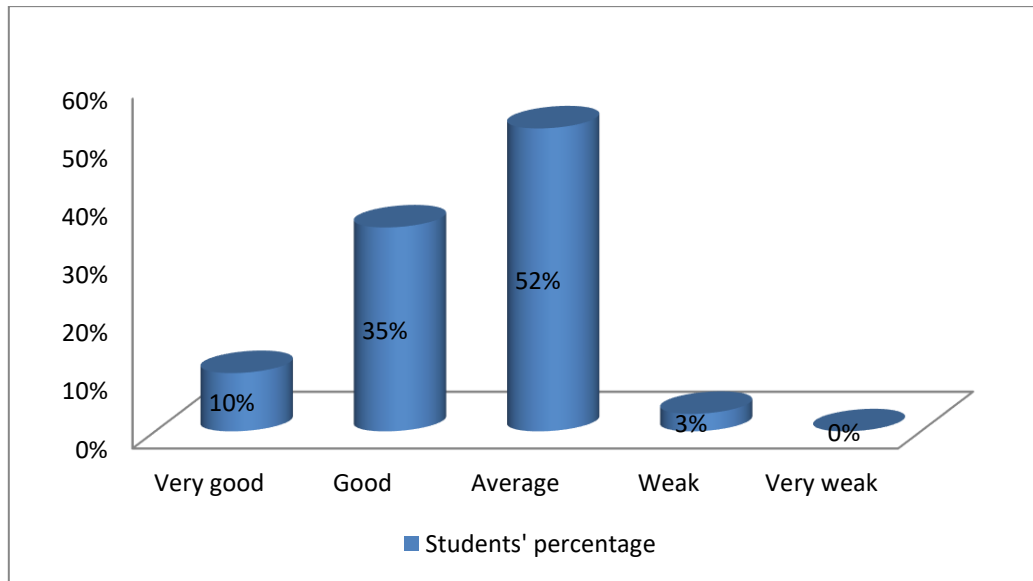
Figure 2.7 : **Students' Proficiency Level in English Writing.**

The result reveals that 52% of students have an 'average' level in English writing, 35% of them have a 'good level', 10% consider themselves as getting a 'high level' in English writing , whereas 3% consider themselves 'weak'.

Q12. **What are the problems that you face in writing ?**

This question looks at the different issues that students face in writing.
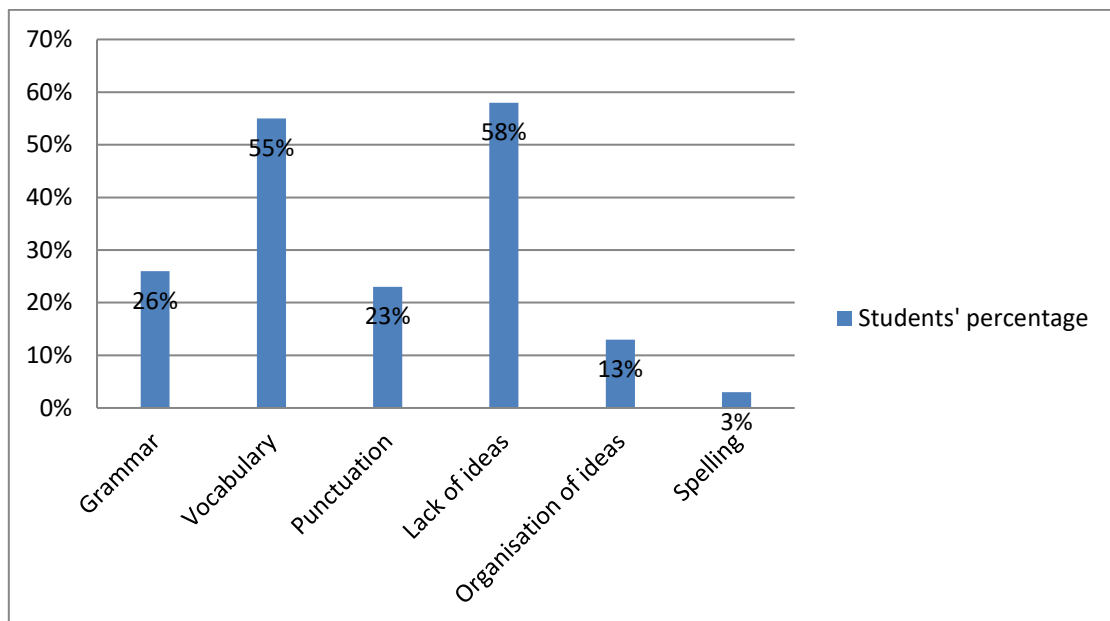
Figure 2.8 : Students' Writing Issues .

The results indicate that 58% of the students have problems in 'the lack of ideas', 55% with 'vocabulary', 26% have 'grammar issues', 23% face problems with 'punctuation', 13% add that they find difficulties in 'organising their ideas', and only 3% add that they have 'spelling problems'.

Q13. **What do you need to do to handle these problems ?**

This question looks at students' needs to handle their problems in writing in order to improve that skill.
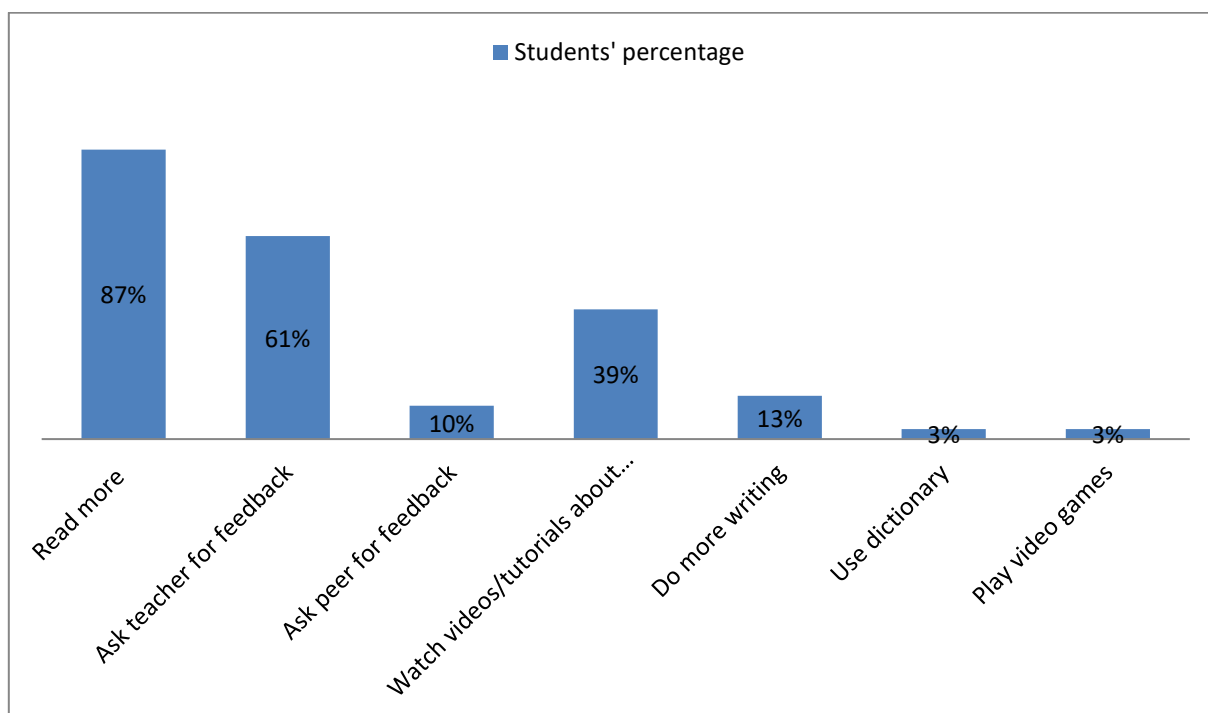
Figure 2.9 : Students' Needs to Handle their Problems in Writing.

From the above results, the majority of students (87%) have claimed that they need to 'read more', 61% have said that they need 'teacher's feedback', 39% have mentioned that they need to 'watch videos/tutorials about how to write', 13% have added that they need to 'do more writing', 10 % have indicated that they need their 'peer-feedback', only 3% add that they 'use dictionary' and the other 3% have add that they 'play video games' to improve their writing.

For open-ended questions, the item responses are presented in the following section:

Q14. What type of feedback do you prefer to receive from the teacher (written or oral) ?

This question investigates what type of feedback students prefer to receive from their teacher.
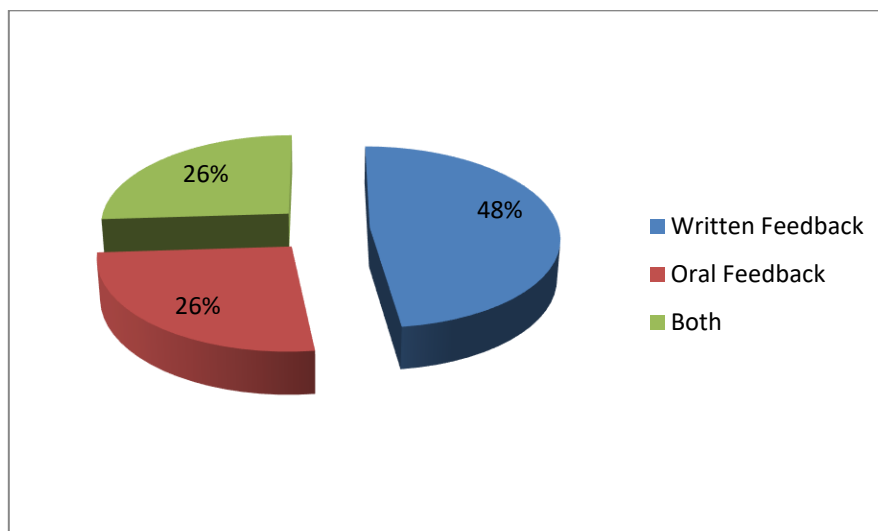
Figure 2.10 : Students' Feedback Preferences.

The results show that almost half of students (48%) prefer to receive 'written feedback' whereas 26% prefer 'oral feedback' and the same percentage (26%) prefer to receive both 'the oral feedback and written feedback'.

Students who prefer written feedback argued that oral feedback can be easily forgotten and neglected since they sometimes do not concentrate on it. They added that written feedback is more helpful and can be easily understood . In addition, they said that it helped to understand their mistakes and avoid them later. They also claimed that they can remember it, and can go back to it whenever they want to check again what are their main problems; especially for those who mentionned that they have bad memory.

Students who chose oral feedback, they explained that oral feedback increased their motivation, provided more details, and explained their needs . They added that it can be easily and quickely understood. They also stated that they can ask teacher whatever they want if they do not understand something. Furthermore, oral feedback helped them to improve their writing in addition to speaking.

As for students that chose both oral feedback and written feedback clarified that what the teacher writes needs to be spoken and explained so they can understand better. For them both oral feedback and written feedback are necessary to develop their writing because they have more difficulties with that skill.

Q15. How does your teacher's feedback help you to improve your writing ?

This question ensures how teacher's feedback helps students to improve their writing.

Students had mentioned that teacher's feedback helped them in improving their writing in several ways. It helped 'to correct their mistakes', so they can be 'aware about them to avoid them for their next writing tasks'. They added that teacher's feedback gave them 'a clear idea about how to organise and structure their ideas' , ' how to use appropriately the words', 'how to improve their style' , and how ' to write in an academic way'. Some students said that their 'vocabulary had increased' due to their teacher's feedback.

2.6.3. Teachers' Interviews Analyses

The following section is devoted to analyse teachers' interviews.

Q1. How long have you been teaching English at university ?

Number of teachers	Years of teaching
1	12
1	14
1	8

Table 2.1: Teachers' Experience at Higher Education

Q2. How many years have you been teaching written expression ?

Number of teachers	Years of teaching writing
1	**10**
1	**10**
1	**2**

Table 2.2: Writing Teachers' Experience.

Q3. Can you talk briefly about your experience in teaching writing writing ?

Teacher 1 said : ''I have taught this skill for many years. I taught all levels, L1, L2 and L3. I find the lectures interesting and do my best to enhance my students' writing''.

Teacher 2 said : '' It is a great experience , it is very interesting to teach a skill that is difficult but with enough preparation things become easier''.

Teacher 3 said : ''I have been teaching CWE for 2 years and it has been a great experience to teach a necessary skill that every student needs in their academic journey''.

Q4. How do you consider teaching writing to second year students ?

Teacher 1 said : ''Enjoyable and interesting for students move forward from writing short paragraphs to whole structured essays following the appropriate methodology''.

Teacher 2 said : ''Teaching writing to them is very interesting and it fits their needs because all students are supposed to write essays in their exams, summary or presentation. The module helps them wih the other modules.''

Teacher 3 said : ''Teaching writing as a necessary skill to be learned by 2nd year students is very easy and interesting. Students will learn how to write more precisely and academically''.

Q5. What are the most common issues that students encounter in writing ?

Teacher 1 said : '' Lack of vocabulary due to lack of reading, grammar mistakes, spelling problems, bad structured sentences, coherence and many other issues''.

Teacher 2 said : '' The major problem is vocabulary. Sometimes they do not know how to use the word in an appropriate way for example instead of using in addition thet use however and grammar mistakes with the organisation of ideas''.

Teacher 3 said : '' Most of the time students find difficulties in developing their ideas, and I mean how to move from general ideas to specific one. In addition to grammar and vocabulary''.

Q6. What do you think are the reasons behind student's poor writing performance ?

Teacher 1 said : ''Less readings, reluctance to write and practise at home, and less feedback from teachers''.

Teacher 2 said : ''The first reason is the lack of reading and motivation to write''.

Teacher 3 said : ''They do not read so as a results they will have a problem especially in the lack of vocabulary''.

Q7. How do you think teacher feedback can be significant in teaching the writing course ?

Teacher 1 said : ''It is significant as it helps learners know their weaknesses and mistakes''.

Teacher 2 said : ''From feedback learners would learn their mistakes to improve themselves and try to minimize them. Accordingly their future writing will improved automatically. As for the teacher, she/he can design an extra courses to help students in their writing''.

Teacher 3 said : ''Students have to take into account the remarks of their teachers to improve themselves''.

Q8. What type of feedback do you use in your class ? And what is your rationale for that ?

Teacher 1 said : ''First, peer work in which students can correct each other. Second, teacher's feedback in class. So that students learn from their mistakes''.

Teacher 2 said : ''I focus on the teacher's written feedback. Within it there is the direct feedback (red pen and show what are the mistakes) and indirect one (underlying or circling the mistake and let the std guessess what is it)''.

Teacher 3 said : ''Teacher's feedback is used the most. To give remarks and correct students especially their grammar mistakes and punctuation''.

Q9. What do you focus on in your feedback (form vs content) ?

Teacher 1 said : ''Both are focused on''.

Teacher 2 said : ''Both of them. At first I focus on the content then the form''.

Teacher 3 said : ''I focus on both of them''.

Q10. When is the best time to provide students with feedback on thier writing ?

Teacher 1 said : ''Each session. Mainly after writing tasks''.

Teacher 2 said : ''At the final stage of the lecture . After doing some reading , analysis of some essays (introduction , body, conclusion) in term of the structure then provide students with activities ask them to write then I give the feedback''.

Teacher 3 said : ''Obviously after correcting their papers or a given task''.

Q11. How do you think written feedback can improve your students' writing performance ?

Teacher 1 said : ''They read my comments and see their troubles''.

Teacher 2 said : ''They learn from their mistakes and avoid them everytime they are asked to write''.

Teacher 3 said : ''They take the remarks into consideration and learn from their mistakes to avoid and do not repeat them later''.

Q12. After you provide the feedback, is there any change in your students' writing ?

Teacher 1 said : ''Yes, students correct their mistakes and avoid them''.

Teacher 2 said : ''Sure, there is a great improvement after providing them with several feedabck''.

Teacher 3 said : ''Yes of course, they learn a lot from the feedback , from their mistakes and most of the time they avoid them''.

Q13. Do you suggest any further procedures that can help students improve their writing performace ?

Teacher 1 said : ''Reading extensively, more practise at home''.

Teacher 2 said : ''The first procedure is to establish the writing centre in Algeria. We have many students, and it is difficult to improve each one writing. I suggest to have a room with chairs and tables, a room where the students can meet the teacher of writing and communicate he/ his piece of writing. Another procedure is the peer feedback''.

Teacher 3 said : ''I always ask my students to read and write as much as possible to develop this important skill''.

2.7. Discussion of the Main Results

The data analysed above aimed to discuss these questions:

1. What are the main students' writing issues ?

2. How can teacher's feedback improve students' writing performance ?
3. What are the students' feedback preferences ?

Research Question 1 : What are the main students' writing issues ?

The analysis of students' questionnaires reveals that most students face issues in writing. The results shared from questionnaire, teachers' interviews and classroom observation revealed that students have a lack of vocabulary, and lack of ideas. Students have difficulties in developing, organising and structuring their ideas appropriately. Results from interviews showed that the main reason of students' lack of ideas and vocabulary is the lack of reading . Other issues are observed in grammar, punctuation, style and spelling due to the lack of writing practice.

Research Question 2 : How can teacher's feedback improve students' writing performance ?

The result from classroom observation revealed that teacher's feedback provided a clear understanding of students' issues in writing. The questionnaire explained that understanding relied on giving more details about what to do and what to avoid. Students understood how to structure their essays and not to write the thesis statement in a form of question. Teacher's feedback helped in improving grammar and orginisation of ideas. Regarding teachers' interviews, teachers had asserted that their feedback enabled their students to know their weaknesses and avoid their mistakes. All teachers tend to focus on both form and content when giving feedback. They focused on grammar and circling mistakes. In this vein, teachers' focus lies on stylistic and structure feedback to improve students' performane on fluency rather accuracy. This type of feedback focus (structure and grammar is theoretically supported with an understanding of writing as a product approach (see 1.11).

In classrooms that teachers use product approach, feedback is form-based, however, in this specific group, feedback is process-based, as the teacher focused on both content and form highlighting the importance of idea development, rather than grammar. Students' writing performance has developed both fluency and accuracy.

Research Question 3 : What are the students' feedback preferences ?

Classroom observation was done in a class that followed the process approach. The teacher used two types of feedback, teacher's feedback and peer feedback. However, there was a great focus from students on teacher's feedback. Concerning teachers' interviews, all the teachers focus a lot on teacher's feedback rather than any other type mainly to follow their students' needs. In addition, the results from the questionnaire had

clarified that the majority of students preferred to receive written feedback than oral feedback .

2.8. Recommendations

In the light of the obtained results, I suggest the following recommendations:

1. Teachers should know the type of feedback relevant to their students' needs and provide it as much as they can.

2. Teachers should encourage students to read through establishing book report activities in order to expand their vocabulary, and to articulate their ideas appropraitely.

3. Teachers should try to follow the process approach since it gives a space for peer-feedback, as some researchers insist on its significance on student writing.

4. Teachers can think of establishing a Writing Centre to assist students in their writing assignments.

5. The researcher recommends further research that brings an understanding of different ways or strategies to help EFL learners develop their writing abilities.

2.9. Limitations

The researcher had a limited time to observe other teachers' classrooms, as interviews were not sufficient to make conclusions on how types of feedback can influence students' writing performance in terms of fluency or accuracy. Teachers had large classes with doubled working hours which influenced teachers' participation in the study. The researcher could not collect questionnaires in one day, as often students make absences, the researcher had to access students several times to be able to end the process of data collection

2.10. Conclusion

The second chapter included data analyses. The first part described informants' profiles and research instruments used for data collection. The second part gave an overview of data analyses quantitatively and qualitatively. The third part focused on the discussion of the main findings. Finally, the researcher provided some recommendations for EFL teachers that can help them improve their students' writing abilities. In addition, the researcher mentioned the limitations of this study.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Writing is an integral part in the process of teaching and learning. Most universities design their exams relying on writing. Accordingly, learners need to master it to reach their academic success. In addition, this skill requires effective approaches and strategies from teachers to teach it and to provide effective feedback to help their students to improve their writing abilities.

This dissertation aimed to explore the influence of teacher's written feedback on improving second year students' writing skills at the department of English at Tlemcen university. It was divided into two chapters. The first one dealt with theoretical background. It presented sociocultural theory and scaffolding. It defined writing and gave a brief history of second language writing and the different approaches to teaching writing skills. It tackled types of assessment and explained what is related to feedback. The second chapter highlighted research methods used for data collection and data analyses with the discussion of the main results. It has also provided some recommendations that can help teachers consider their students' needs.

This research is an exploratory case study. The collection of data was based on three main sources using a set of three research methods which are classroom observation, teachers' interviews, and students' questionnaires. After the triangulation and analysis data, the results showed that second year students encountered many issues in their writing such as grammar, punctuation, lack of ideas and organization of ideas. In addition, the results had proved that teacher's feedback did help in improving students' writing performance through highlighting the weaknesses and providing the necessary instruction of good writing. The results also showed that the majority of students preferred to receive written feedback rather than any other type.

This research seems to bring an understanding of how the teachers' written feedback contributes to enhance students writing abilities. The argument is attached to the belief that understanding the notion of feedback and learners weaknesses in writing would provide teachers with necessary information to ensure the effectiveness of their feedback.

It is ethical to mention that this research had limitations because many aspects were neglected due to the nature of the topic tackled. Indeed, writing and feedback are difficult concepts to define and the researcher did not cover all their aspects. The research conducted a case study; therefore, generalisation of the findings is impossible. The sample population is too small. In fact, a sample of thirty-one students and three teachers does not provide any generalisation of the findings.

General Conclusion

This research would open further considerations on how to make students improve their writing abilities and how to help them create the identity of active, creative and productive writers. Writing is still a challenging task for both teachers and learners. Thus, what is the impact of writing on learners and teachers during their academic journey, what writing instructions are more suitable for university students, and what are the other types of feedback that would be helpful to highlight students weaknesses and other issues that need to be investigated.

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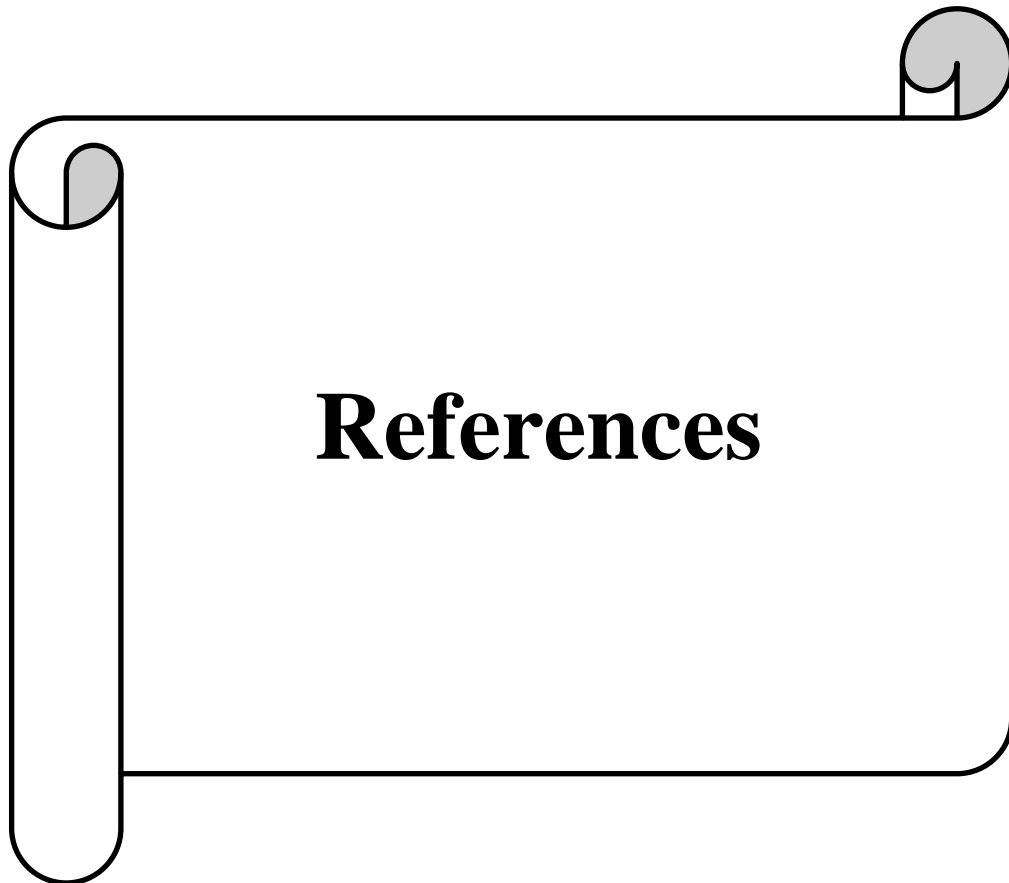
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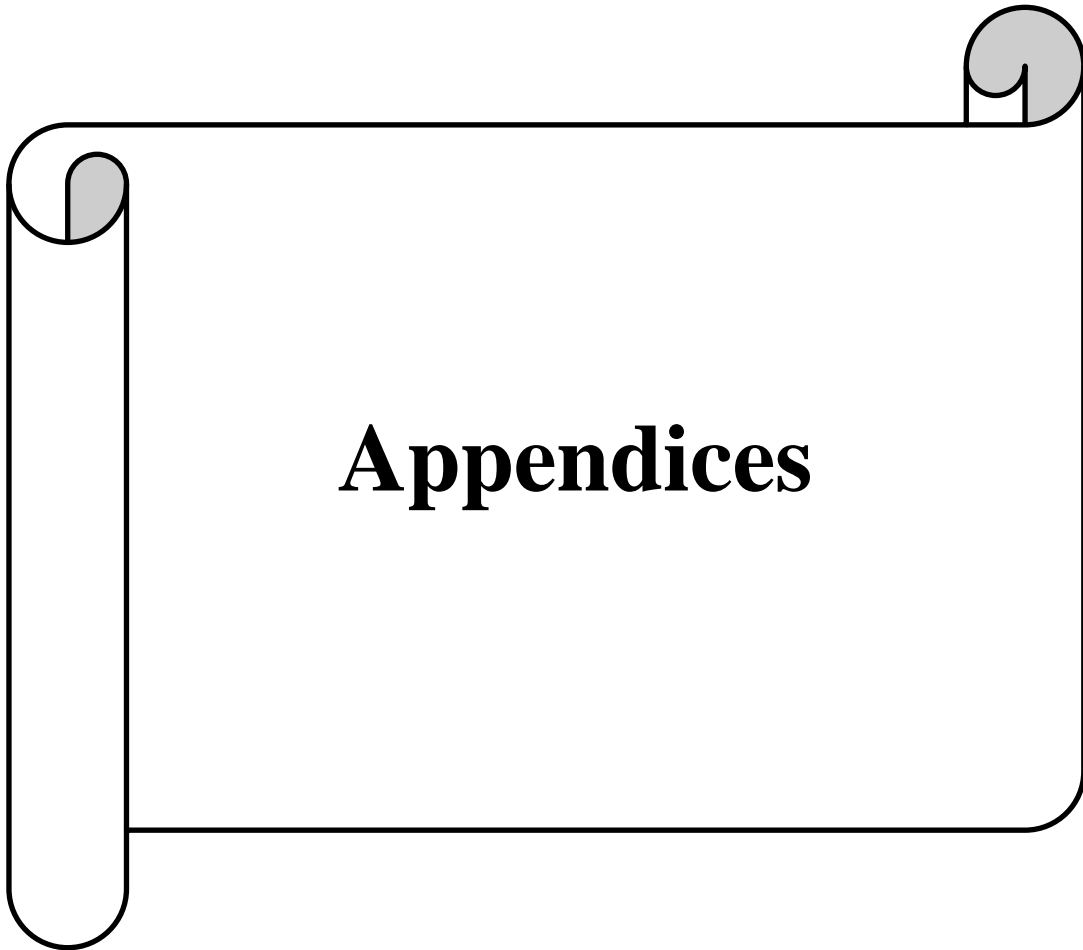
Appendices

Appendices

Appendix I

This appendix is related to my first observation :
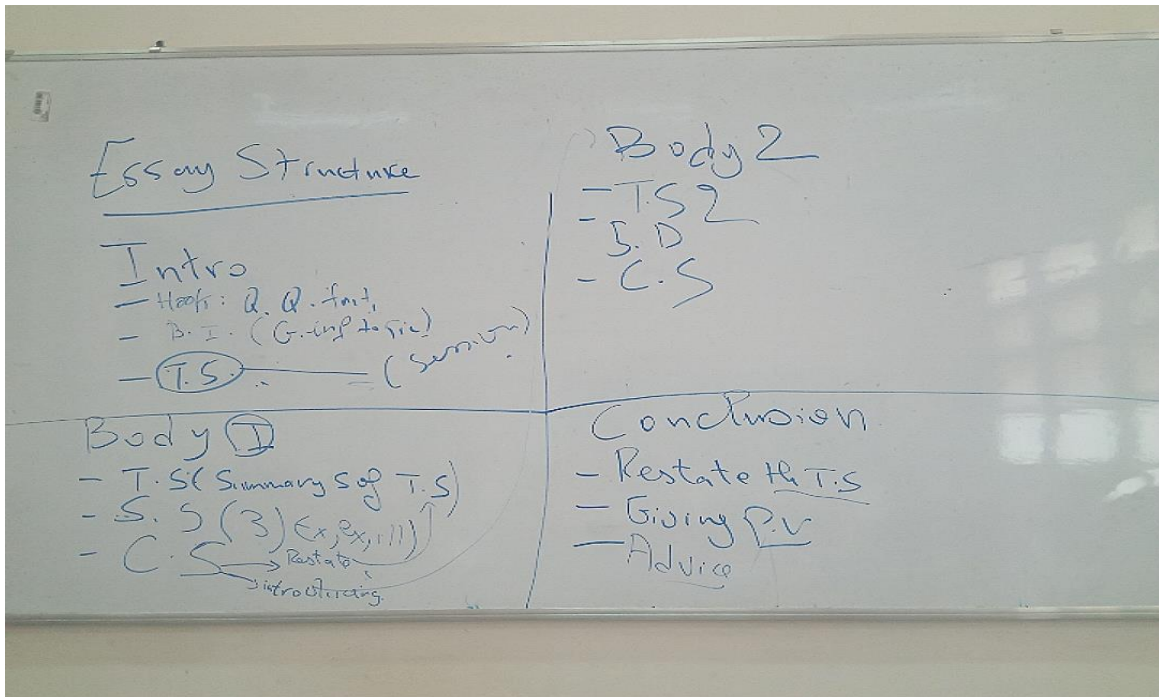
Appendix II

This appendix is related to related to my fourth observation.

Examples of how to give peer feedback: *clarify, value, raise concerns*, and *suggest* (Ladder of Feedback, 2003)

1. Ask your peer for **clarification**, this can help them think of their writing:
   Example; what do you mean by this idea?; Why did you talk about your friend?

2. Commend on your peer's writing strength or **value**
   Example; I like how you have structured this paragraph, by giving enough evidence and exemplification; I like that you have mentioned this idea "............" and talked about it in details using this 'adjective'

3. **Raise** your peer **concern** about a particular idea
   Example; "did your friend/ topic sentence concern education crisis, or crisis in general?

4. Offer **suggestions**
   Example; "Maybe you could talk about the opposition argument, here"

5. Provide **alternative** words to your peer:
   Example; to get can be substituted with to receive

6. Ask your peer about **connection** of ideas in their writing:
   Example; How can this idea provide meaning to the next one?

7. Ask your peer to **summarise** its idea to simplify its meaning:
   Example; Can you summarise your idea, it reads less communicative?

Feedback Checklist: The Do's

Focus on Structure and organisation:
Did the writer provide an attractive introductory sentence?
Did the writer use information that put the reader through the main theme of the essay?
Did the writer include a strong thesis statement?
Did the writer make a clear transition to the body paragraph?
Did the topic sentence(s) relate to the thesis statement?
Did the body paragraph support the thesis statement?
Did the writer include an extra idea which does not support the main point?
Did the writer use indentation?
Did the writer use paragraphing correctly?

Focus on Content:
Did the writer make the topic of the essay explicit?
Did the writer write a specific thesis statement?
Did the writer present the main aspects with sufficient explanation?
Did the writer provide sufficient illustration to the aspect discussed?
Did the writer provide clear connected ideas?
Did the writer provide the main aspects with evidence?
Did the writer present ideas logically and chronologically?
Did the writer use cohesive devices to link- and-mark transition of ideas?
Did the conclusion include the same points mentioned in the introduction?
Did the conclusion restate aspects of the thesis statement?

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Appendix III

Students' essays and their teacher's written feedback.

Plastic is widely used every where these days from thousholds to supermarket people are using it endlessly just for there comfort because it costs lesser than paper and cloths that's why the scientist tryed. To focthed on recycling Due to it's importance

They are studying varideus ways to recycle garbage into fuel. Due to the fact that the aming of plastic clearng gases such as dioxins, funans and ablise the Co2 in the air. However, as new suggest that undewater plastic could killing of the orgnisms which create a semgnifeant part of oxygen to survie, plastic also contribue to global warming. (of cource) when it come down there are 3 main factues that are considered most responsible are the goverment and indurdeuals, produces. So none of scientit argued about a solution which is the recycling instead of throw it eery where.

Avoid "just!" "so" "very"

There vs Their (check)

Costs less than (Revise for.)

Cloths

That is why = for this reason.

Introduction has no "punduction"

Not clear – Thesis. S

× Capitalize initials.

× Spelling mistakes (organisms, create)

× As new ? who suggested ?

× could +infinitive

ph 2 is not clear & why solution without mentioning the issue ?

× Conclusion: no restate of Thesis S.

The earth today is suffering from the increase of earth temperature so how did this increase create and how we can stop it?

The increase of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere has created pollution and increased the airtemperature, so Scientists were obliged to urge people to recycle plastic and stop hunting planet by polluting to help reducing the increase of earth temperature.

To conclude, greenhouse gasses are increasing more and more, but we can stop it by applying the solutions of scientists!

Thesis. S isn't a Question

Rewrite it.

Thesis. s will help you write

Topic. sentence & Conclusion

Too long sentences (Lack of punctotin)

Not detailed Body (Thesis. S influences Body)

needs improvement

Climate changes is the problem of the contry. Scientists worried about this radent increase of temperature. There are a lot of reasons behind that which are people activities, gazes ...

Concerning this big problem of climate changes, there are a lot of reasons such as human made like burning fossil fuels and destroying rainforests which are the source of oxygen for the earth. All this adds a huge quantities of greenhouse gases to those naturally present in the atmosphere, increasing the greenhouse gaze effect and global warming. But not all there is also the overfishing which is human made and it's means the reduce of the protein source which caused a lack of diversity within the ocean. Scientists are worried about our mysterious future because of this huge increase of tempreture and ask public to help our planet by stoping this wast, and deforestatio and oil drilling, and starting to reduce

(S + V) Scientists worry

look for another word for "overfishing" ect is french.

Avoid long sentences.

Conclusion isn't rewording your thesis S. It drifts to solutions

Re-highlight the problem + then add solution

Nice, organised
(Keep going)!

· be careful on consistency in sentences writing.

X What do you mean by Defining moment?

X This happens ...? not a complete sentence

X where is the Thesis S?
X The Body presents reasons, but that wasn't mentioned in the Thesis S?

X Rework the structure of the essay;

X Style: the helpful of humanity isn't a good word choice

X its vs it's (check it)

Climate change is the defining issue of our time and we are at a defining moment. Climate change refers to the change in the environmental condition of the earth, this happens the increase of the green house gases.

The greenhouse effect is a process that occurs when gases in earth's atmosphere trap the Sun's heat. This process makes earth much warmer than it would be without an atmosphere. The green house effect is one of the things that makes earth a comfortable place to live. However, due to rapid industrialization and rising pollutions the emission of green house gases has increased multifold this in turn, causes more radiation to be trapped in the earth's atmosphere, and as a consequence

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Appendix IV

Students' Questionnaire :

Dear students, this study explores the effect of teachers' feedback on a group of second year students' writing performance, at Tlemcen University. Your collaboration in this questionnaire will be extremly valuable. Thank you so much for your assistance and cooperation.

Section 01 : Background information :

1- How old are you ? …………………….

2- What is you gender ? Female ☐   Male ☐

Section 2 looks at students' acknowledgement of their personal writing issues :

3- Is writing a difficult task ?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

4- Do you think that writing is a necessary skill to be developed ?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

5- Do you face issues in writing ?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

6- Does your teacher provide you with feedback ?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

7- Do you think that teacher's feedback is beneficial to improve your writing ?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, how ?

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………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

8- Do you benefit from the written feedback given to you in writing ?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

9- Do you think that teacher's oral feedback is more helpful than written feedback ?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

Section 3 looks at students'perceptions of their writing performance :

10- How do you consider studying writing ?
    Very difficult ☐

Difficult ☐
Normal ☐
easy ☐
very easy ☐

11- How is your level in English writing ?
Very good ☐
Good ☐
Average ☐
weak ☐
Very weak ☐

12- What are the problems that you face in writing ? (You can tick more than one answer)
Grammar ☐
Vocabulary ☐
punctuation ☐
Lack of ideas ☐
Others (mention them) :
…………………………………………………………………………………………

13- What do you need to do to handle these problems ? (You can tick more than one answer)
Read more ☐
Ask teacher for feedback ☐
Ask your peer for feedback ☐
Watch videos/tutorials about how to write ☐
Others (mention them) :
…………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 4 looks at students' feedback preferences :

14- What type of feedback do you prefer to receive from the teacher (written or oral) ?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

14-1 Explain why ?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
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15- How does your teacher's feedback help you to improve your writing ?

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Appendix V

Teachers' interview :

> This interview attempts to gather information about the effect of teachers' feedback on developing students writing performance. This study is concerned with second year Bachelor students at Tlemcen University. You are kindly invited to answer some questions. Thank you so much for your time to share your experiences and ideas

1- How long have you been teaching English at university ?
2- How many years have you been teaching written expression ?
3- Can you talk briefly about your experience in teaching writing writing ?
4- How do you consider teaching writing to second year students ?
5- What are the most common issues that students encounter in writing ?
6- What do you think are the reasons behind student's poor writing performance ?
7- How do you think teacher feedback can be significant in teaching the writing course ?
8- What type of feedback do you use in your class ? And What is your rationale for that ?
9- What do you focus on in your feedback (form vs content) ?
10- When is the best time to provide students with feedback on thier writing ?
11- How do you think written feedback can improve your students' writing performance ?
12- After you provide the feedback, is there any change in your students' writing ?
13- Do you suggest any further procedures that can help students improve their writing performace ?