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The Role of Self-monitoring and Self-correction Strategies in Improving Written Language and Promoting Learners Autonomy. The Case of Second Year Students in Sétif University

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Abstract

Assisting the students in improving the quality of their written productions requires enhancing their writing strategies and empowering them to become autonomous writers. This quasi-experimental study investigated the effects of the use of self-monitoring (SM) and self-correction (SC) on improving the writing quality and on developing more responsible revising habits. Ninety second year students of English at the department of English at Mohamed Lamine Debbaghine Sétif2 University were selected using a proportional stratified sampling procedure to be assigned to a control and an experimental group. Quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used to answer the research questions guiding this study. Quantitative data consisted of pre-test and post-test scores and close-ended questions of a questionnaire while the qualitative data consisted of paragraph corpus, marginal annotations corpus, and open-ended questions of a questionnaire and an interview. The findings revealed an improvement in the students' paragraph scores and a reduction of their paragraph errors. The analysis of marginal annotations indicated that self-monitoring engaged the participants in reflective and responsible revision. The quantitative data of the questionnaire did not yield any significant differences between both groups' perceptions about the effectiveness of the writing instruction to which they have been exposed while the qualitative data revealed some gains for the experimental group in terms of diagnosing one's weaknesses and using reflection. The major recommendation of this study is that teachers have to opt for developing the strategies that help students improve their writing abilities and foster more responsibility in paragraph revision.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to

all my family and my friends for their support and understanding

Acknowledgement

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List of Abbreviations

CF: Corrective feedback

EA: Error analysis

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign language

GPA: Grade point average

L1: First language

LCE: Learner-centred environment

MA: Marginal annotations

MLA: Metalinguistic awareness

RQ: Research question

SC: Self-correction

SL: Second language

SM: Self-monitoring

TCE: Teacher-centred environment

TE: Textual / Typographical enhancement

TL: Target language

WCF: Written corrective feedback

Chapter One: General Introduction

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1.1 Background of the Study

Writing has been widely recognised as a central component when defining language proficiency. It is distinguished as a modality that allows meaning construction defying time and place constraints (Crossley & McNamara, 2010). Furthermore, writing provides students with opportunities to develop thinking abilities like idea organising, synthesising, analysing and criticising. As such, in learning and practising writing, students use language to both construct meaning and reflect on it (Rao, 2007). Considering this recognised importance of writing, language pedagogies have strived to suggest the most effective techniques and strategies to teach it. Writing strategies, corrective feedback, and process-based instruction are examples of pedagogical suggestions believed to assist students in improving their writing skills and the overall quality of their written texts (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Oxford, 2011).

Revision is a step student-writers take with the purpose of improving the quality of their writings. It involves making the necessary modifications so that the developing text would fulfil the goals set at the planning phase. Revision involves as well the evaluation of the produced text rendering it impossible to separate revision from both planning and evaluation (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). Student-writers engaged in text revision are reconsidering the value of their production and are also learning "about the craft of writing" (MacArthur, 2007, p.216). It ensues from this that any student-writer motivated in improving his text quality should bear in mind that in addition to being important, text revision is by no means a discrete or simple step. Corrective feedback is probably one of the most widely used practices that aim at developing the students' expertise in writing. It is intrinsically related to the revision of texts (Goldstein, 2006). By providing feedback,

teachers expect to guide students through both the revision of their produced texts and the internalisation of the undeveloped language form (Hyland, 2003).

Nevertheless, revision as a response to teacher-initiated corrective feedback is believed to cause dependence instead of fixing the students problems (Lee, 2005). Alternatively, it may solve instantly the problem of the erroneous construction, but it does not guarantee acquisition of a language form or to solve permanently the problem of error occurrence. Learner autonomy is a concept that appeared not only in language learning contexts but extends to all fields of study to guarantee lifelong learning and optimal management of the learning process both under the guidance of the teacher and without it. When narrowed to the writing instruction contexts, autonomy can be enhanced at the different steps of paragraph writing starting from planning and ending with evaluation (Reinders, 2010).

Self-monitoring and self-correction are intertwined strategies that are involved in text revision and that engage learners in autonomous text revision (Oxford, 1990). Self-monitoring as conceptualised by Oxford (1990) involves the noticing and correction of errors, and "self-corrections are over manifestations of the monitoring processes" according to Kormos (2006, p.123). Given that self-monitoring and self-correction can both tremendously impact text quality improvement and that they stress the proactive role played by the learner, the investigation of these strategies can yield insightful findings about the way they benefit student writers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The present study addresses the problem of the poor writing quality due to the poor writing abilities and to the students' reliance on the teacher to manage their learning process of writing and more particularly of revising their produced texts. Evidence from

both literature on the area of research and from exploratory tools used in the same settings of this study supported the claim about the existence of the problem.

According to Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2007), students refrain from trying to improve their writing quality because they attribute optimal performance in writing to talent while they should attribute it to enhanced metacognitive strategies. Such strategies, including reflection and self-monitoring, are pivotal in assisting students to have more control over the factors contributing in successful writing. Furthermore, in spite of the acknowledged importance of teacher's corrective feedback (CF), many researchers on revision of writing show some reservation regarding this issue (Ferris, 2011; Casanave, 2004; Lee, 2005). Writing instruction needs to clear ambiguities about the objectives of CF. Improving the developing texts through the teacher's guidance does not guarantee learning. Casanave (2004, p. 66) cautions in this respect, "it is possible, in other words, for students to improve individual pieces of writing, with feedback and revision, without increasing their proficiency at all, if by L2 proficiency we mean systematic changes in students' interlanguage".

One exploratory tool, which confirmed the aforementioned theoretical claims, consisted in a questionnaire administered to students in the same settings of this study. It was conducted prior to the treatment period with 83 second year students. Taken as a whole, this questionnaire revealed that students held a number of perceptions preventing them from improving their written products and from adopting autonomous behaviours. For one thing, the students showed a preference of teacher-led writing classrooms because they viewed the teacher as "more knowledgeable and trustworthy" than the other options. They also thought that it was the responsibility of the teacher to spot their weaknesses, to find errors, identify their nature, correct them and improve their texts. This understanding of the students' and teachers' role in revising the produced texts contradicts the principles

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of learner autonomy and prevents students from improving their writing abilities. Moreover, the students expressed their surprise of the amount of errors they have in their produced texts when they received feedback from the teacher. Such a response indicated clearly that they lacked a clear understanding of criteria constituting good writing quality and that they could perceive the quality of their writing only through the response of the teacher (see Appendices A and B).

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview with three teachers of written expression in the same department revealed dissatisfaction with the quality of texts produced by second year students and with the poor writing abilities of a high proportion of students (sees Appendices C and D).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the extent to which self-monitoring and self-correction strategies can be useful to students in order to improve both the quality of their written productions and their writing abilities. It is also intended to achieve an understanding about the possible effect that such training can have on promoting autonomous behaviours among student-writers by enhancing reflection and the sense of responsibility while writing.

In the present study, the quality of paragraph writing is believed to improve if students learn how to draft and revise effectively their paragraphs not if the teacher refines the developing text for the student. It is crucial then to make a distinction between improved paragraph quality due to the teacher's response and the one due to student's revision. When students reflect on the weaknesses that affect the quality of the paragraphs and identify their recurrent patterns, it could be possible for them to play a more active role in correcting their errors. Whereas self-monitoring is the strategy through which reflection is intended to occur, self-correction is the behaviour that sets the stage for student-writers

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to shoulder more responsibilities in reducing error occurrence in their paragraphs. The writing quality can be improved as a result to error reduction in both higher order aspects like idea organisation coherence, and adequacy of support, and lower-order aspects like grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics.

Considering that the construct of autonomy is mainly viewed as a process and not as an outcome, this study by no means claims producing autonomous writers. The treatment, however, is hoped to start some autonomous learning behaviours. Because reflection and responsibility are at the heart of autonomy, it is intended to enhance the sense of responsibility among students and to train them to reflect on the decisions involved in writing. Responsible and reflective behaviours can include the following: spotting one's weaknesses using error logs, identifying one's learning needs and setting goals based on one's weaknesses, reflecting through marginal annotations on the different choices that can be made while writing, and taking more responsibility over the evaluation and the revision of the produced work. These behaviours are believed to have the potential to reduce overreliance on the teacher to manage, alone, the entire teaching process. Learners can be more responsible if they are acquainted with the different steps involved in the learning process, the essential strategies that help manage that process, and the criteria of good writing quality.

The objective of this study is, then, to equip students with the necessary strategies that help them reflect on the process and the quality of their writing. It also aims at training them on the use of self-initiated feedback behaviours to be able to correct erroneous linguistic and ideational constructions. Moreover, the quality of the students' written productions is hoped to be improved since self-monitoring aids students to make reflective decisions and errors are reduced as a result of self-correction.

1.4 Research Questions and Methodology Overview

The present study is guided by the following research questions.

RQ1: Does training on self-monitoring (SM) and self-correction (SC) lead to improved quality of paragraph writing?

RQ2: Does training on SM and SC lead to reducing the number of errors in students' paragraphs?

RQ3: Does self-monitoring through marginal annotations guide the students to act as more reflective and responsible writers?

RQ4: What are the students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the training?

To answer the above research questions, a quasi-experimental design was opted for. This design was intended to allow for the manipulation of the variables around which the study revolved. The research methods included both quantitative research methods and qualitative ones. The potential improvement in the quality of paragraph writing was investigated through a comparison between pre-test post-test scores. Because scores cannot represent in a progressive manner the development of the writing quality between the pre-test and the post-test, a paragraph corpus was analysed to examine the errors made by students at different intermediate phases of the treatment period across a number of writing aspects.

The investigation of autonomous writing habits was carried out through the analysis of marginal annotations. By considering the articulated concerns and the relevant modifications in the produced paragraphs, it was intended to study the extent to which the participants of the experimental group acted in a reflective and responsible way. In the three abovementioned research methods, the evaluation of the treatment impact was made by the teacher/ researcher to study the impact of the treatment through the scores of the paragraphs, the reduction of the errors and the revision behaviours. It was necessary to add

thus a fourth research method investigating the impact of the treatment from the perspective of the students. A questionnaire was conducted with both the control group and the experimental one, and interview was conducted only with the experimental group for the aforementioned purpose.

This study was conducted in the department of English at Mohamed Lamine Debbaghine Sétif2 University during the academic year 2014-2015. It involved 90 second year students: 45 students assigned to the control group and an equal number assigned to the experimental one. This sample was taken from a population of 380 students by means of a proportional stratified sampling procedure.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Taking responsibility over the improvement of one's writing is a need of paramount importance. Therefore, any study conducted within this context can contribute both to the theoretical field in question and to the practical implementation of writing pedagogy. The present study aimed to contribute to solving problems related to writing quality, addressing the gaps in research pertaining to the field of autonomy in the context of building writing skills, and handling methodological concerns raised by the academic community interested in the topic of this study.

Theoretically speaking, this study adds an alternative to research bearing on optimal writing instruction as it can aid learners to improve their written products. Framed in the field of writing instruction, this study provides an example of how strategy development through training on self-monitoring can be combined with feedback to improve both the students' writing quality and writing abilities. By assisting them to understand the components of successful writing, students can have more control over the factors impacting the writing quality.

One further value of this study is that it tries to correct misconceptions about good teaching techniques considering that the implementation of a learner-centered approach does not imply letting students act as the only agent in learning nor does it dispense the teacher from his/ her responsibilities. Given that the problem of learner dependence in building writing skills, and more particularly in revising their products, affects both teachers and learners, it is crucial to offer possible ways to assist both parts of the issue. Although it is widely accepted, at least theoretically speaking, that both students and teachers should be active agents in the writing classroom, no clear-cut limits are marked between the roles of each of them. This study provides some alternative choices about how the writing teacher can draw upon his/ her expertise in both teaching strategies and in writing pedagogy to promote autonomy. This can be through scaffolding that does not generate or perpetuate the dependence on his interference. Students, on the other hand, can understand the necessity to promote autonomy not only in revision but also in the choice of learning strategies and materials.

A further value of this study is its contribution to the methodologies used in the study of the topic under investigation. In order for any research to investigate the efficacy of particular writing strategies, methodological choices require more than the manipulation of the variables involving a variety of feedback types. This study provides deeper insights into the way referring to the theoretical understanding of writing development autonomy can be very helpful in determining the variables influencing the students' shift from dependent to independent learning. Additionally, this study can serve as an additional reference to studies related to autonomy, methodologically speaking. For interventionist studies, a concrete operational definition is crucial for the validity of research methods and the reliability of the research outcomes. This study adds to the possible ways the construct of learner autonomy can be enhanced and measured among student writers. A longitudinal

approach in the examination of error reduction in students' writings and the articulation of concerns through marginal annotations is also intended to enrich the possible options for studying reflection and revision while writing.

1.6 Organisation of the Thesis

This introduction has provided a concise description of the problem guiding this study and the background in which it is framed. The remainder of the thesis consists of five chapters; each of them is dealing with one key component of the study.

In chapter two, the major theoretical premises underpinning responsible learning of writing and revision skills are reviewed. In addition to the description of the theoretical framework, the second chapter tackles the key empirical studies that helped in a better understanding of relevant issues like corrective feedback, development of metacognitive skills and learner-centered approach.

Chapter three discusses the methodology selected to conduct this study. It describes the sample and explains thoroughly the sampling procedure. It also covers the main steps followed in the implementation of the treatment and the rationale behind it.

Data collection and analysis techniques are explained in chapter four. Details are given regarding the procedures, research methods, and instruments whereby data was collected and analyzed.

Chapter five reports the major findings that could answer each of the research questions. Numerical data in the form of the participants' scores and answers to close questions were presented to provide quantitative evidence. Qualitative evidence was presented through the analysis and discussion of the corpus of students' paragraph, the corpus of marginal annotations, and the answers of the participants to open-ended questions.

Chapter six is the concluding chapter. It comprises a succinct synthesis of the research findings and a discussion on how the research questions were answered in the light of the

obtained results. A number of theoretical and practical implications were sketched in this section followed by a few suggestions for further investigation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

To seek relevant information that help in understanding the general context of this study, previous research related to the areas of writing quality, strategy instruction and learners autonomy are overviewed in this chapter. The first section is devoted to gain a satisfactory understanding of the way self-monitoring and self-correction fit in their broader contexts of metacognition and corrective feedback respectively. In the second section, we attempted to identify the main features that characterise good writing based on the insights gained from research in this topic. Additionally, the main types of errors that can affect the writing quality were investigated. The final section includes a review of some theoretical and empirical insights of the academic community on the construct of learner autonomy and how it could be implemented with student writers.

2.1 Self-Monitoring and Self-Correction Strategies

Although self-monitoring and self-correction are tightly related to the same process of text revision, in research, they tend to occur in different overarching contexts. Self-monitoring is a metacognitive strategy dealt with mostly by researchers in cognition. Self-correction, on the other hand, is one of the feedback types. The study of each of the strategies in its context and overarching component allows clarifying a number of ambiguities regarding their nature and function.

2.1.1 Self-monitoring as a metacognitive strategy

The study of the writing skill is mostly related to the study of textual, discourse, and linguistic components; nevertheless, these elements can be viewed as only the tip of the iceberg. The study of writing transcends these performance elements to other mental processes. Accordingly, it is contended that optimal achievement in writing can only occur

through the coordination of linguistic, cognitive, and metacognitive processes (Boscolo & Hidi 2007). The following part deals specifically with the cognitive and some of the metacognitive processes involved in text composition. By understanding the cognitive and metacognitive dimension of writing, it could be possible to discuss the implementation of self-monitoring strategy in writing.

2.1.1.1 The cognitive processes involved in writing

One of the most compelling models of cognition in writing that aim to explain how cognitive resources function during the writing processes is Kellogg's model (1996). Based on Baddeley's (1986) model, Kellogg considers the working memory as the basic and critical component in the cognitive system. The working memory, which is responsible of storing temporarily information and processing it while cognitive activities are taking place, comprises three main components: the central executive, the phonological loop, and the visual-spatial sketchpad. The central executive role is mainly related to attention and management functions. It helps in selecting, dividing, and switching attentional resources. It also contributes to the coordination of the functions of the peripheral systems. The phonological loop stores and processes temporarily the verbal and acoustic data. Details pertaining to articulation and phonology like omission in articulation or similarity in phonological features are phenomena that the phonological loop can explain. The visual-spatial sketchpad, however, stores visual-spatial information.

During the different steps of writing performance, the components of the cognitive system function together to transform ideas into a written text. The conceptual preparation of the message is the first step of the writing process. At this stage, the message is planned, and the propositional content is conceived. Hence, a topical knowledge is necessary to delve from, whether the composition task is self-assigned or assigned by the teacher. Being the first major step in the writing process does not mean that planning occurs only once

and at the beginning before the other steps. Because writing has a cyclical and recursive nature, planning may occur repeatedly during text production. The goals and the plans set at the beginning of the process can be altered and thought over at subsequent stages of text composition (Schoonen, Sterllings, Stevenson, & Van Gelderen, 2009).
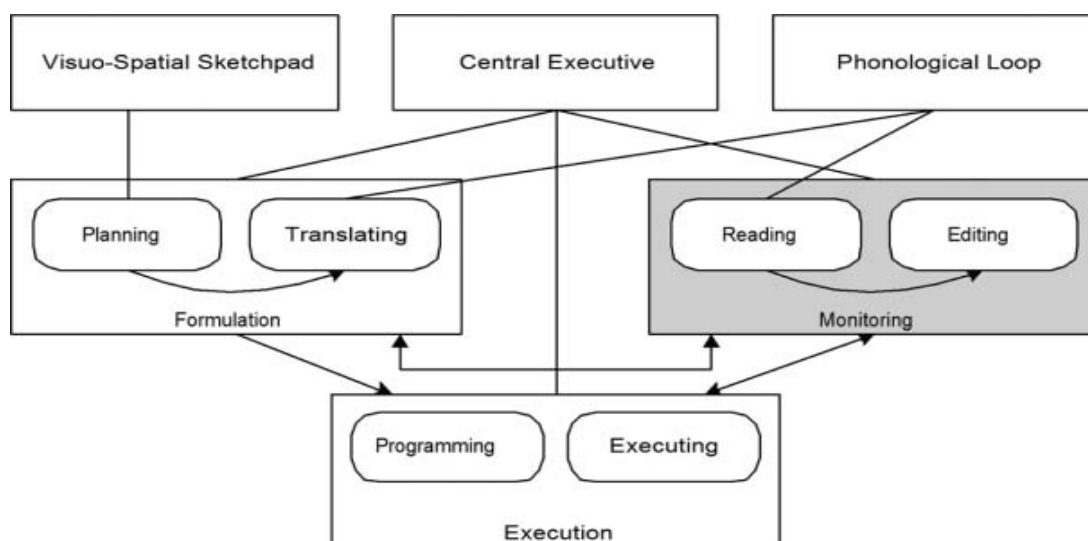
Figure 2.1: A representation of Kellogg's model of working memory in writing (Kellogg, 1996).

The three steps of the writing process, planning, sentence formulating, and reviewing, are believed to rely heavily on the central executive (Kellogg, 2008). Nevertheless, this latter is not the only component of the working memory that is activated during text production. When planning, writers try to generate the content of their text, and organize it in the form of a plan or diagram. They also visualize images that will later on have corresponding forms in the mental lexicon. Because during the phase of planning the writers are engaged in the organization of plans and in the visualization of images, the visual-spatial sketchpad is believed to be the cognitive component that is involved most during planning and conceptual preparation (Olive, 2004). More particularly, Kellogg (1996) specified that planning conceptual content needs the visual working memory when it is image-based.

The formulation of the text is the step during which the prepared thoughts are translated into sentences. Schoonen et al. (2009) explain that when attempting to frame grammatically correct sentences, the writer's decisions are influenced by morphosyntactic restrictions imposed by the propositional content as well as by the restrictions pertaining to the selected style, register, and rhetorical pattern. The message formulation involves two types of encoding: the grammatical encoding and the orthographical one. The encoding of clauses and sentences occurs once the propositional content is ready and the necessary vocabulary is selected. Considerations of conformity to rules of grammar, cohesion, coherence and pragmatics are involved when selecting words for formulation.

The orthographical encoding helps turn all the abstract propositions into physical spelled words. At this level, writers need to select among a range of choices in which only one would be correct. Text formulation requires much resource from the phonological loop. Reading and editing the drafts of the written assignment require as well cognitive activities from the phonological pool (Schoonen et al., 2009).

2.1.1.2 *The metacognitive dimension of writing*

Dissatisfied with the absence of a clear definition of the writing process in the literature, Hacker, Keener and Kircher (2009) stated that research on writing is relying on an implied and imprecise definition; they thus proposed a conceptualisation of the skill to fill in the gap. Hacker et al.'s attempt to formulate a definition capturing the characterising components of writing is articulated as follows: "writing is the production of thought for oneself or others under the direction of one's goal-directed metacognitive monitoring and control, and the translation of that thought into an external symbolic representation" (p. 155). The first key meaning in this definition is the agreed upon view of writing as a production of thoughts. The second component of the suggested definition summarises the controversial issue of whether writing is a cognitive process done by the writer for himself

or a social artefact aiming at fulfilling some social roles. The most relevant component in this definition to the study at hand is the one related to metacognition. The last characterising component of writing is the translation into symbolic representations, a medium whereby the intended audience could receive and interpret the message.

Accordingly, considering the metacognitive dimension as one of the defining components of the writing skill is a strong indicator about the significance ascribed to this component. Hacker et al. (2009) are not the only researchers accentuating the role of metacognition; other researchers in writing and cognition share this view. Kellogg (1996) asserts that metacognition, present mostly in monitoring and evaluation, is essential for writers in their endeavours of both writing and thinking. A number of other researchers echo the same contention and acknowledge that the writing process is guided by the metacognitive control (Hayes, 1996; Schoonen et al., 2009)

2.1.1.3 Components of metacognition

The body of research on metacognition is substantively present in many disciplines for the crucial role it plays in empowering the learners and enhancing their performance. Discussing metacognition in learning entails dealing with two fundamental facets: knowledge about the cognitive activities involved in learning and knowledge about self-regulatory processes that help control cognitive activities. Knowledge about cognition includes three categories of knowledge, declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and conditional knowledge. Each of the three components is interrelated with the other. If used in a well-coordinated way, better performance in learning tasks is expected. The implementation of metacognition could then be narrowed to the context of writing as the model is identical in both contexts (Harris, Santangelo, & Graham, 2010).

Declarative knowledge

This area, including knowledge, skills and strategies, refers to what learners should know to be able to accomplish effectively a task. In the case of writing, the scope of what a writer should know includes from one part the topic of the composition, the purpose of writing, the profile of the intended audience, genre and tone awareness. From the other part, knowing the major steps of writing, planning, drafting, and revising, is a pivotal requirement of proficient writing. Besides having the knowledge of what to write, one needs to be aware of his strengths, weaknesses, and preferences.

Procedural knowledge

Once the writer understands the multifaceted nature of composition, the necessary linguistic structures, the rhetorical situation, the high order processes in writing as well as the affective facet, the writer needs to know how successfully he can apply that knowledge, skills, and strategies; and how to select the action that fits each goal. In writing contexts, the procedural knowledge may include determining the strategies that can be incorporated into the planning, drafting, and reviewing endeavours. When prewriting, possible strategies that can be used are engaging in outlining, considering the use of transitions between ideas to ensure coherence, and selecting from the full range of linguistic possibilities that fit the genre of their composition.

Conditional knowledge

If the declarative knowledge is conceptualized as being the "know what" and the procedural knowledge as the "know how", the conditional knowledge is the "know when, where, and why" to apply the previous types of knowledge. For writers, the application of the conditional knowledge helps them understand how they can benefit from time conditions, understand the reasons for which they are engaging in any writing activity, as

well as understand the environmental situation representing a setting for the composition activity (Harris et al., 2010).

2.1.1.4 Self-monitoring in writing

Research in the two previous decades has started to show interest in the variables and the components involved in skilful writing (Alamargot, Caporossi, Chesnet, & Ros, 2011; Harris et al., 2010; Hawe & Dixon, 2014). This invested interest led to a general agreement that experienced writers possess skills allowing them to monitor their tasks. Hence, a growing research investigated a number of metacognitive strategies to pinpoint the variables of success in writing. Being one of the core metacognitive strategies, self-monitoring gained its share of interest, and received varied insights whether in the general context of learning or in the specific context of learning the writing skill.

Self-monitoring in learning refers to "the systematic observation and documentation of thoughts, feeling, and actions regarding goal attainment" (Schmitz, Klug, & Schmidt, 2011, p. 254). Zimmerman (2002) defined it as "one's cognitive tracking of personal functioning" (p. 68). It can be inferred from these two definitions that attention guided by the objective of checking personal functioning is at the core of the construct. Self-monitoring involves, then, controlling one's performance by referring to the pursued goals (Cleary & Zimmerman, 2004). The importance of self-monitoring in learning lies in that it is a central component of self-regulation. For learning to occur, it is imperative that cognitive, motivational, and metacognitive elements operate together, and central to the notion of metacognition is the process of self-monitoring. Additionally, it is well established that self-monitoring is one of the self-regulatory skills necessary for academic success (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011).

In the field of writing, the following definition for self-monitoring was provided by Cho, Cho, and Hacker (2010, p. 101),

SM involves evaluating information about what is currently being written or what has been written and noting some compatibility or incompatibility with a mental representation of what the written text should be. The greater the incompatibility, the more likely the writer will engage in revision.

From this definition, it can be understood that the strategy of self-monitoring can only be identified by relating it to other strategies, namely planning and evaluation. In their elaboration about how monitoring operates in writing, Hacker et al. (2009) stress the interaction between the processes of generating meaning, generating sentences, and recursive reviewing of the developing text. During composition, skilled writers continuously show goal-directed behaviours. They often attempt to match their drafts with the mental representation of the intended final product. Therefore, writing starts with thoughts and meanings that the writer wants to achieve. Writers' goals determine the meaning pursued along the composition of the text. These goals have a hierarchical structure: higher-level goals and lower-level ones. According to Hacker et al. (2009), higher-level goals bear on the general meaning of the text, and lower-level goals pertain to the manipulation of grammar, vocabulary, or cohesive devises that assist the writer in achieving the higher-level goals. Besides the structural nature of goals, they have a dynamic nature instead of a static one. While writing, the writer experiences changing thoughts, which in turn cause the goals to be geared to different directions. The way this changing process affects monitoring is explained by Hacker et al. (2009, p. 159) as follows, "the writer's goals set the stage for production of meaning and for the character and quality of the monitoring and control of that production".

In addition to planning and goal setting, SM involves as well the writer's evaluative knowledge. This idea is put into simple terms by Gardner (2000, p. 50-51): "an important aspect of the monitoring process for learners is simply knowing how they are doing in their

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learning. …A series of self-assessments will contribute to monitoring progress towards specific learning objectives". Therefore, assessment is a key strategy occurring when students self-monitor. According to the same author, not only does self-assessment help learners in monitoring their language proficiency, but it also helps them reflect on the effectiveness of the strategies methods and materials used in the learning process. Through the resulting outcomes of self-assessment, learners reconsider goals, and learning strategies. It is thus possible to regard self-monitoring in learning, as it can be narrowed as well to writing, as a recursive reflective process recurring throughout the process of writing and not limited at a specific stage.

In order for self-monitoring to be effective it has to rely on self-assessment strategies. However, the problem that can be raised here is the reliability of the students' assessment to their own works or learning process. As a matter of fact, students may have wrong evaluations about their own performance because of which "their inaccurate monitoring may hinder them from setting realistic goals and from using appropriate writing strategies" Cho et al. (2010, p.103). Clear criteria against which self-assessment should occur have then to be clarified to learners so that they could be more aware about what makes the distinction between good writing and bad writing a straightforward one (Hawe & Dixon, 2014, p.68). By doing this, students develop their evaluative skills, which in turn contribute to optimal operating of self-monitoring process.

2.1.1.5 Self-monitoring through marginal annotations

The existing research on the uses of monitoring in both descriptive and interventionist studies has been motivated by the potential positive outcomes expected from the use of the strategy in question. To implement the training in SM, researchers relied on annotations as a technique. Although more than one study opted for the same

technique, few variations were noticed in terms of the strategy use and its targeted composition aspects.

Cresswell (2000) explains that the translation of the writer's thoughts into lexico-grammatical entities is often impeded by deficiencies in his/her linguistic resources. This block occurring during the development of the text may cause the writer to either relinquish the initially intended meaning or provide a simplified version of it. In contexts where the teacher is the only initiator of feedback, responding to the produced text consists in providing responses that may not match the concerns students had while writing; hence, teachers end up providing ineffective feedback. To respond to this problematic situation, annotations were suggested as a tool that allows writers to record, on the spot, their queries. Furthermore, the process of text production provides opportunities to learners to test hypotheses. Writers draw upon their passive repertoire to translate their thoughts into language, but when uncertain, their hypotheses need to be either confirmed or rejected. With annotations, students can have contextualised tools to share their hypothesis testing with their teachers and can interact in the purpose of developing language acquisition.

Annotations consist in reporting content or accuracy-related concerns arising while writing. Articulating one's concerns can be in the form of questions, doubts, or comments such as

I'm not sure if I have to start a new paragraph here or not.

Is 'however' the right linking word here?

Annotations could thus be an alternative solution responding to the problem of insufficient interaction in the teacher's feedback. It creates a dialogical interaction between the writer and his teacher and makes up for the lack of opportunities to have face-to-face discussions (Charles, 1990). It also allows the writer to be critical and analytical throughout the process of text production (Xiang, 2004).

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Through the annotations, the teacher thus can provide feedback based on the raised problems, the needs and the intentions of the student writer (Cresswell, 2000, p. 240). It is worth to stress here that although teachers still play the role of feedback provider in environments where marginal annotations are used, yet the feedback is initiated by the learner and is directed to the learners' individual needs. For this reason, it is claimed that self-monitoring through marginal annotations gives opportunities to have more control over the process of writing revision (Cresswell, 2000). Furthermore, self-initiation is regarded as a feature characterising self-monitoring and differentiating it from some feedback types that can lead to dependence. In this regard, Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2007) point that efforts initiated by writers to get help from more expert sources can be grouped among *help-seeking* strategies. They further explain that self-initiation, along with selective focus and limited duration, is a feature distinguishing between the undesirable social dependence and its desirable counterpart *adaptive help-seeking* strategies.

To the best of our knowledge, most interventionist studies relied on applying self-monitoring through marginal annotations by assigning paper-based tasks to achieve the studies goals (Cresswell, 2000; Tsai & Chiu-Feng, 2012; Xiang, 2004). However, Cho et al. (2010) approached the training of this technique in a different manner. They used computers as a medium for their empirical research to get learners self-evaluate the drafts. To increase the reliability of the results, uploads were done under pseudonyms, the self-evaluation was compared to peer-evaluation, and the rating was based on identical dimensions determining the writing quality. Following such an approach was justified by the interconnection existing between self-monitoring and self-evaluation. In this technique, teachers' responses were not provided to students' drafts. The importance of the study conducted by Cho et al. (2010) is that it offers a wider array of possibilities to use self-monitoring strategy and to encourage reflection during text writing.

2.1.1.6 Potential advantages of self-monitoring strategy

The existing research on self-monitoring has been motivated by varying objectives ranging from improving writing in general, or a specific aspect in writing, to enhancing autonomy (Cho et al., 2010; Cresswell, 2000; Menarguez et al., 2012; Xiang, 2004)

Cresswell's purpose from the study he conducted was twofold: investigating the impact of self-monitoring on gearing the students' attention to global issues and examining the possibility to extend the students' written language. Cresswell's interest stemmed from the fact that he noticed that more attention was paid by student writers to grammar and spelling at the detriment of content related aspects. According to Cresswell, audience awareness, focus on a central idea, conformity to a given pattern, and logical organisation of content are examples of aspects that should be given more importance by students. In Cresswell's study, it was found that self-monitoring helps students in their revision of global aspects. Another gain claimed by the researcher was the possibility for writers to practice writing in a more responsible way.

In his study, Xiang (2004) aimed at examining the effects of self-monitoring without specifying the aspect on which the expected outcomes will bear. The concern of the researcher was about guaranteeing the effectiveness of the strategy by planning training on its use. For this purpose, he engaged the student writers in discussions to evaluate some examples of their first annotated texts. The criteria of evaluation were clarity and expressiveness. Examples of successful annotations were provided to maximise the benefits of the training. The study resulted in significant gains in the organisation of the experimental group texts. Improved scores were reported as well among high achievers in the experimental group while for the low and average-achievers, no improvement was reported. Furthermore, the participants showed positive opinions about the strategy and

found that it could improve not only their writing, but their benefitting from the teachers' feedback as well.

Cho et al.'s (2010) study tried to investigate whether the writing quality can be improved through a number of self-regulation strategies, namely self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and reciprocal peer evaluation. The motive behind including self and peer evaluation to the study variables is the researchers' belief that self-monitoring can be defined as "a self-assessment skill in which writers perceive their writing from the perspective of the readers" (Cho et al., 2010, p. 102). This empirical study found that students who learnt how to use effectively the self-monitoring strategy have manifested an improvement in their writing quality. More specifically, the strategy is claimed to result in gains in the following elements: overall quality, length, and persuasion elements.

The exploratory study conducted by Menarguez, Nicholas, & Larios, (2012) was aimed particularly at eliciting students' beliefs about self-monitoring and to examine closely their annotations. The perceptions of students who used the strategy were positive, for it provided assistance in a number of points. For one thing, the strategy use guided their attention to the aspects causing difficulty while writing. The students claimed also to feel more confident in writing and to be more willing to take risks, particularly when it comes to selecting some grammatical structures. They appreciated as well the fact that the teacher could clearly understand their intentions through the annotations. Menarguez et al., (2012) concluded that self-monitoring through annotations benefits both learners and teachers. It equips learners with the ability to evaluate critically their writings, and it gives teachers a chance to know the gaps in the students' knowledge that require deeper attention.

To recapitulate, the practice of self-monitoring strategy has proven its effectiveness on a number of levels. It improves writing quality in general and organisation in particular. It contributes to the conversion of passive repertoires into productive ones through

hypothesis testing. The teacher's feedback is found to be more advantageous when it comes as a response to the students' annotations. Self-monitoring is also claimed to have the potential to get learners engage in writing in a more critical and evaluative manner. Additionally, according to the teacher's remarks or the students' attitudes, through self-monitoring a sense of responsibility is fostered as the strategy provides a context whereby students nurture more autonomous behaviours.

2.1.2. Self-correction as a type of feedback

Self-correction is commonly discussed as part of research on response to students' errors. It is one of the three options available in the writing classroom to respond to students' writing in terms of the response source. Whether the process of error treatment is performed by the teacher, the peers, or the student-writer himself, this process is a complex one involving a number of steps. Understanding self-correction requires shedding light on those steps, the way self-correction can be developed, and how self-correction differs from other error correction types.

2.1.2.1 Understanding the processes of error correction

The steps involved in error correction are identical regardless to the initiator of the correction. An error needs to be detected first, then identified and corrected. What distinguishes self-correction from teacher or peer correction is the extent to which one of the three parts is acting proactively. Understanding the process of error correction requires thus breaking it up into its sub-processes. In their review of the literature that explains the revision sub-processes and operations, Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) relied on previous relevant research to list a number of suggestions. One suggested procedure is composed of three sub-processes: error detection, error identification, and modification of the erroneous part. Another procedure includes identifying the error, making decisions about the modifications, and finally selecting the strategies through which the modifications will be

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carried out. In a further division of the revision processes, only two broad operations are involved: reading and editing. The set of processes outlined in the following part is inspired from the three aforementioned divisions.

Error detection

Although it may seem that error correction has to follow the logical order where detection is the initial step, a controversy may arise on this issue (Hayes, 2004). To detect a problem, a reader has to rely on clues indicating a dissonance between the produced language element and the norms of language (Kozlova, 2010). A question that was raised in this respect is whether succeeding in noticing the cues and detecting the problem requires a prior ability to fix it. Alternatively, the other possibility is that a student can detect a problem but not necessarily correct it (Hayes, 2004). Hayes calls the first possibility "correction-first position", and the second "detection-first position". One example he provides on correction-first position is the case of a reviewer noticing that the way he is spelling a word does not conform to the mental image he has about it. The reviewer then retrieves the correct order of words; and if he judges it is the appropriate form, he replaces the misspelled word with the correct one. Hayes finds this hypothesis very interesting, yet he favours the detection-first possibility. To cast doubt on the strength of the correction-first hypothesis, he countered with an example related to spelling. It is very common for a reviewer to be uncertain about a spelling of a word and write the word in a given pattern. In spite of sensing the existence of the error, the reviewer is incapable of retrieving the correct form. It is then more plausible on pedagogical environments to expect learners to detect the error then to be able to correct it.

Another insight provided by Hayes (2004) regarding error detection is the role instruction can play in developing this ability. For reviewers to be able to detect errors, they need to be equipped with some judgemental skills. Hayes explains, "by judgemental

skills I mean the skills involved in attending to, recognising, and evaluating complex patterns in test". Different techniques varying in effectiveness have been suggested to develop the sensitivity to writing problems, and to foster the judgemental skills. One technique is to benefit repeatedly from commentaries received from a more expert reader. Another technique is to be exposed to models of good writing and to try identifying the features responsible of either the good or poor quality of the text. Further, getting students to acquire sets of criteria through tests is an additional technique. Hayes argues that this last technique has proven to be more effective than the previous ones. Therefore, learners need to be actively engaged in both understanding and applying criteria of evaluating texts in order to be more sensitive to problems in their texts and thus to fix them.

With respect to the teacher's practices at this level of error correction, Kozlova (2010) remarks, "the extent to which the student is helped should be determined by the teacher: when students have more knowledge, less help needs to be provided". In addition to the student's knowledge, the other parameter that could be involved here is the degree of responsibility the teacher desires his students to shoulder. To involve students in more autonomous problem solving in writing, Kozlova (2010) advises teachers to provide "the minimum feedback" necessary for the students.

Error identification and decision to correct

Revising is often regarded as a problem solving process in which problem detection corresponds to spotting errors and problem solving corresponds to correcting them (Kozlova, 2010). Identifying errors can be a transitional step between detecting a problem and correcting it. Like the previous sub-process, this one occurs in the mind of the reviewer, and it is not translated yet into concrete modifications. According to Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1985), once the reviewer discovers a dissonance between his developing text and the mental representation of the planned one, he specifies the type of error and thinks

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about the possible ways to correct the dissonance. Linguistic knowledge is necessary at this step because drawing upon the system of rules is a condition to the use of the monitor (Bitchener & Ferris 2012; Krashen, 1982). Correction strategies are equally important for the reviewer to be able to diagnose the error, specify its nature, and figure out the way it could be corrected. In some types of teacher's feedback, namely the metalinguistic corrective feedback, the teacher provides codes on the margin of the text to clarify the nature of the error (Ellis, 2009). In instruction environments where self-regulation is encouraged, self-initiation is favoured in all writing activities (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2007) including the identification of error nature.

Modification of the erroneous part

In this step, the reviewer engages in an operation (or series of operations) of modification. The level at which the modification occurs ranges from word or punctuation mark to whole sentences. A distinction is made here between surface revision and deep revision. A subject verb agreement, a spelling detail, or a capitalisation of a letter are illustrative examples of surface revisions. If, nonetheless, the revision bears on the general meaning of the text and involves modifications in phrase, clause, or sentence level, it is considered a deep one (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). Selecting the level of the revision is one of the decisions made at this stage of error treatment. A further decision made while revising (physically, not only mentally) pertains to the type of modification required to solve the problem. Therefore, the type of operation involved in error correction also varies according to the strategy selected to solve the problem. A reviewer can be involved in modifications like additions, omissions, or substitutions, to name a few.

2.1.2.2 Developing self-correction

When considering error correction from the perspective of its source, self-correction emerges as a type of response provided by the student writer himself (Bitchener & Ferris,

2012). The logical process it goes through is the same indicated in the previous section, but it differs in that the different steps are initiated by the writer himself and not by an external agent. Self-correction, nonetheless, does not occur in one form. It can be triggered and trained in different forms.

According to Bitchener and Ferris (2012), a number of tools can be employed to get students more involved in self-correction. One tool is the teacher's response. The teacher can trigger self-correction through the commentaries or the practices he uses if they are oriented to get learners shoulder responsibilities and not perpetuate dependence. Strategy training can be another effective tool. Truman (2008) argues "self-correction may not come naturally to all learners, so some form of training may be needed" (p. 269). Expecting learners to engage in self-correction without any training is unrealistic in writing classrooms, for it constitutes a challenge to many of them (Carter, 2005, p.466). It is worth to note here that when planning any training for this aim, learners' differences should be taken into account. The third tool is knowledge. Ferris and Hedgcock (2013, p. 294) argue "as students progress in their acquisition of English syntax, morphology, and lexis, as well as their formal learning of more complex discourse conventions, they can be given more responsibility for correcting their own errors". Learners, therefore, need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge for self-correction. In addition to knowledge of writing conventions, knowledge of language, grammar and usage represent fundamental pillars for developing self-correction skills. Learners appeal to the formally learnt rules to redress any dissonance between the text under construction and the intended one. The skill of using resources can also be included under the umbrella of general knowledge (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

2.1.2.3 Self-correction as an alternative to other sources of feedback

The rising interest in self-correction is fuelled by the desire to compensate the drawbacks of the feedback provided by teachers or peers. By and large, researches examining writers taking charge of revising their works are essentially motivated by the goal of coping with the potential shortcomings in the teacher's feedback or peer's one (Hawe & Dixon, 2014).

Drawbacks in teacher's response

Amongst the different possible providers of feedback, the teacher is considered the most important one. This reflects a common assumption that teachers are well prepared, through training, to provide a response to whatever problematic situation. It is also assumed that teachers are acquainted with the techniques of error correction, and do possess the linguistic knowledge to draw upon when they are handling any type of error (Leki et al., 2008). However, getting response exclusively from teachers may not be the ideal panacea to students' errors, and this is due to a number of reasons.

Teacher's availability

Given that a perfect understanding of the student writer's intention can occur only if this latter is negotiated between the writer and the referee, it is essential that both the feedback provider and the feedback recipient meet and discuss any possible clarifications that can be helpful. One-on-one writing conferences are one of the major possibilities that guarantee the immediate negotiation of the text meaning and form (Grabe & Kaplan, 2014). However, this entails that the teacher has to be available for longer periods of time, which is not always practical (Ferris, 2003). Few researchers would question the effectiveness of the teachers' feedback in spite of the disagreement about how it should be given. But when seen from a practical angle, the availability of the teacher should not be taken for granted.

Deficiency in some teachers' expertise

Effective feedback requires both knowledge of language rules and conventions of writing without which errors may not be detected let alone corrected. Ferris (2011, p. 61) remarks that previous studies and her personal observation of the situation led her to conclude that "error treatment for l2 writers in real-world classrooms ranges from excessive to ineffective to inexistent" corrective feedback. She explains this status quo as follows, "the various teacher preparation paths surely account for much of the disparity across writing classes". Hence, the teacher's ability to handle the revision and correction of students' developing texts can be questioned. In response to this situation, teachers' preparation becomes imperative and it bears on a number of aspects. One aspect is the knowledge of principles of teaching writing and how writing in the target language differs from that in the first language. Another aspect is knowledge of the language and particularly grammar in the writing instruction. An equally important ability that writing instructors have to be trained on is the practices of feedback provision. The training should take into consideration the varied array of feedback types and the diversity of learners. According to Ferris, writing instructors have either knowledge or training on one or some of these aspects but not in all of them.

Hyland and Anan (2006) echo this viewpoint and explain that the problem of language knowledge is hampering not only teachers having English as a native language, but also non-native English speaking teachers. The need for language expertise is justified by the dependence of error identification on language awareness. The higher the level of linguistic awareness teachers has, the more professionally competent the teachers are.

Overreliance on summative feedback

Feedback is generally given for purposes of students' assessment; this latter falls into two categories as regards its objective. Formative assessment is undertaken to weigh the

students' strengths and diagnose their weaknesses. It is generally followed by a remedial work targeting the spotted weaknesses. Summative assessment, on the other hand, assesses the learning accomplishments and compares them to the pre-planned goals. It occurs at the end of the programs and it is translated into grades (Hyland, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Bearing this in mind, formative feedback plays a greater role in enhancing revision skills than summative feedback. It is obvious that students lack motivation if the primary reason for which they receive feedback is only to explain the mark they obtain. Students would show more motivation had the feedback been given to trigger revision and remedial actions (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Yet it is fair to say that formative feedback can be considered a luxury for students given the fact it is time consuming and arduous (Burke & Pieterick, 2010).

Feedback given on final drafts

Central to the process orientation of writing instruction is the concept that writing practices should not be based on single draft production, instead a number of drafts should precede the production of a final refined draft (Andrade & Evans, 2013). Process pedagogy in writing has proven to be favored by teachers for the merits it has on improving students' writing skills, yet on practical grounds, a large majority of teachers adopt product-oriented practices. They justify this incongruity by the lack of time at their disposal since they are expected to cover a given syllabus including a number of topics and writing types. When students receive feedback on their terminal drafts, they are not likely to bring any modifications to them, for they lack the incentive to do it (Lee, 2005).

Perpetuating learner's dependence on teachers

Hawe and Dixon (2014) clearly caution "It is no longer sufficient or fitting for teachers to be the primary source of feedback as this runs the danger of developing dependence on external sources for information about progress and learning" (p. 66).

Obviously, the researchers, in this context, are stressing the detrimental effect that overreliance on teacher's feedback can have on the student's self-evaluative skills. They hence imply that students' chances to enhance self-assessment skills are weak if the teacher takes in charge this task for them.

In a study investigating students' perceptions about the teachers' feedback, Lee (2005) reported that there is no mismatch between the students' expectations and the teachers' feedback practices. He found that the majority of students prefer that teachers provide comprehensive feedback, bearing on different aspects rather than a particular one, and provide direct corrections. This preference unquestionably represents a problematic situation. Lee does not put the blame on the students because he views their attitude as a byproduct of the previous instruction they had. Students receiving comprehensive feedback are deprived of any opportunity to assess their own work or their peers', instead all they can do is respond to the feedback by rewriting the work with the indicated corrections (Lee, 2008). To respond to such a situation, Lee (2005) urges teachers to reconsider both their attitudes and their practices as regards feedback provision in order to reduce the students' overreliance on teachers' error treatment. According to the same researcher, one practical step helping in rearranging the teaching priorities is articulated as follows:

> More important, it is crucial for teachers to spell out the aim of error feedback explicitly at the beginning of the writing class (i.e., to help students become more independent in editing their own work and correcting errors) and to articulate the issue of student responsibility in error correction. (Lee, 2005, p. 11)

Teachers' limited ability to interpret the students meaning

Bitchener and Ferris (2012) point out that teachers may face situations where they fail to identify the problem in the student's piece of writing or may fail to understand the meaning intended by the writer. They attributed this situation to the complexity or

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idiosyncrasy of the errors. Lee (2008) traced back the misinterpretation of the student's meanings to the attitude teachers hold while correcting. They tend to "wear the hat of an evaluator judging student papers more or less in vacuum" (Lee, 2008, p. 71). For Raimes (2002), this misinterpretation of the students' intended meaning is a strong reason for teachers not to correct and for students to carry "the burden of rewriting and editing" (p. 280).

Difficulty for students to understand the feedback

Teachers opt for different patterns as regards responding to students writing. By doing so, they are aiming at creating a sort of interaction with students reading their commentaries. Nevertheless, the communication may fail simply because student writers may not understand what their teacher wants to convey. Sugita (2006) stresses that clarity is a fundamental feature required in the teachers' response so that students are not faced with obscure or vague commentaries. Hence, in order for feedback to be effective and to generate substantive revision from writers, it has to be clear from any ambiguity. Sources of ambiguity can reside in the unclear error code or the illegible handwriting of the commentary provider (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2013). Another source of ambiguity is the phrasing and grammatical structure of the commentary. Questions and statements, for instance, when used as commentaries are confusing to students, for they show little clues on how the revision is to be undertaken (Sugita, 2006).

As regards the reasons behind the failure to interpret the commentaries, Lee (2008) explains that the teachers' comments can lead to confusion, rather than it can guide the learner, when it is provided in a decontextualized manner. A contextualized approach to giving written corrective feedback would take into account the student's institutional requirements. Furthermore, it would rid the teacher of the stance of the evaluator preoccupied mostly by giving judgments to the students' productions.

Drawbacks of peer response

Peer feedback has been ascribed many merits, among which autonomy is the most important. Not only does it provide a sense of audience, but it also paves the way to a gradual autonomy from the teacher (Rollinson, 2005). Students are, nonetheless, ambivalent as regards this source of feedback due to a number of reasons.

Peers not totally trusted

Pawlak (2014) points that the effectiveness of peer feedback may be inhibited by the students' feedback preferences. Students accept easily responses from the teacher and show a readiness to incorporate the modification resulting from the comment. This acceptance is due to the image of the teacher to the student: he is the most knowledgeable in the class, his remarks can be trusted, but most importantly he does not represent any risk to his self-esteem. Problems related to self-esteem may arise if the comment given by a classmate is thoughtless or over-critical. Pawlak adds, "The most damaging to the value of peer-correction, though, might be a negative affective response it may evoke since, when it is conducted in an insensitive and thoughtless manner, it might lead to discouragement and humiliation" (2014, p.152).

Drawbacks of automated / electronic feedback

Spell-checkers and grammar checkers are electronic tools students may rely on to revise their works. Total dependence on these tools can be problematic, especially for non-native language users. For one thing, when an error is signalled, spell-checkers offer a number of possible corrections that only one of which fits the context. Student writers need to carefully study the possibilities and select the most appropriate to the targeted meaning. If the choice is made in haste or heedlessly, the result will be another error that the computer fails to flag. Automatic acceptance can mislead learners when using grammar checker as well. Because grammar checkers may not be programmed to handle L2

learners' errors, they do not mark all errors, or may give an array of confusing choices (Bitchener& Ferris, 2012). Additionally, Stapleton and Radia (2010) claim that technological tools can be advantageous only in reducing some spelling and grammar errors thus allowing the reviewer to focus on global aspects of writing. This claim stresses the inability of technological tools to handle areas of content like paragraph organisation, and the strength of argument (in argumentative writing). However, when used thoughtfully and carefully, electronic tools can prove to be very effective. As put by Bitchener and Ferris (2012, p. 159) "writers need to utilise them in conjunction with − not instead of − their own self-editing skills".

To sum up, each of the feedback alternatives has its merits and limitations. Writing instruction should make thoughtful choices amongst these alternatives to reach the set goals. Optimum instruction is meant to help the learner reach long-term objectives of improving the writing abilities while short-term instruction may be advantageous only in improving the learner's final product. It is then reasonable to target the development of learner self-regulation so that instruction can lead to improve writing abilities and performance.

2.2 Predictors and Problems of the Writing Quality

Distinguishing between good writing and poor one has been a concern articulated by researchers in writing instruction. It demands recognising not only the features that enhance the writing quality, but also the infelicities that may affect it.

2.2.1 Predictors of the writing quality

The importance of studying the features determining good writing quality is recognised by pedagogical researchers due to the benefits that could be brought. Such an understanding of those criteria can help in having more control over the development of good writers by identifying the different types of knowledge required for development.

2.2.1.1 *The importance of delimiting the writing quality*

During the last three decades, a number of researchers have shown a special interest to study the features that determine the quality of students' texts (Crossley & McNamara, 2012; Jarvis, Grant, Bikowski, & Ferris, 2003; McNamara, Crossley, & McCarthy, 2010). Jarvis et al. (2003) consider the study of predictive variables of the writing quality an important one. They justify it as follows, "if a sufficiently predictive relationship can be found between the linguistic features of a text and its quality rating, then this will undoubtedly result in important applications and improved efficiency in writing pedagogy, assessment, and research" (p. 378). Hence, the motives behind identifying the features determining the writing quality are varied given the variety of the perspectives from which the issue is tackled. Both the teachers and the students can benefit from knowing these quality predictors.

For one thing, knowing what makes a good piece of writing can be of great help for teachers. Unified criteria of text evaluation assist teachers in attaining more reliability in marking students' works and achieving consistency in scoring (Weigle, 2002). Therefore, in order for instructors or researchers of writing to be able to assess the performance of students in written production, they need first to determine the criteria of good quality writing. When assessing students' performance, reliability proves to be one of the primordial issues that concern writing raters (Weigle, 2002). Reliability is defined by Weigle as

> consistency of measurement across different characteristics or facets of a testing situation, such as different prompts and different raters. A test is said to be reliable if individuals receive the same score from one prompt or rater to the next, and if a group of examinees is rank-ordered in the same way on different occasions, different versions of a test, or by different raters. (p.49)

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Given that optimal assessment is hampered by the absence of clear traditions regulating the process (Haan & Esch, 2008), more efforts have to be made by raters to consistently appeal to the same scoring criteria in order to achieve high levels of reliability.

Additionally, teachers who are aware of the criteria of good quality writing can provide better guidance to students as regards the standards of proficient writing. Research on writing quality predictors can inform teachers regarding the classroom practices that clarify for students what can improve the quality of their writing. When designing writing courses, teachers need to prioritise the aspects that constitute the overall quality of the compositions. A number of practices can be geared towards this objective. For instance, response provision to students' writing should have among its objectives drawing the learners' attention to the linguistic and discourse features that the students need to master (Haan & Esch, 2008).

Cho et al. (2010) state that many students in both first language learning contexts and foreign language contexts are unable to write well. This fact leads to stress the "need to better understand writing proficiency" (McNamara et al., 2010, p.58) and to trigger interest in this area of study among researchers of written composition.

A further advantage derived from determining good writing quality is equipping students with self-evaluative skills. Gearhart (2011), in an account about the importance of portfolios as a learner-centred pedagogical tool, contends that writing quality criteria, in the form of rubrics, may provide significant assistance to learners. The criteria can serve as a learning resource and engage learners in reflective processes. She articulated this point as follows:

when portfolios are designed as learner-centred opportunities, rubrics communicate what is expected of quality writing and serve as resources for students as they reflect

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on their work in progress…. Thus it is desirable to specify the characteristics of writing quality at each level in objective terms whenever possible. (p. 321)

Hawe and Dixon (2014), agree with Gearhart's contention, and stress the need to clear writing quality criteria. According to these researchers, students can gain and enhance self-evaluative skills if a set of criteria against which they can perform their self-evaluation is identified. The same researchers strike a note of caution when they say " it is no longer sufficient or fitting for teachers to be the primary source of feedback as this runs the danger of developing dependence on external sources for information about progress and learning" (Hawe & Dixon, 2014, p. 66). The solution that responds to such a potentially perpetuating problem is to develop the students' evaluative expertise. The same authors provide an illustrative example from New Zealand where a number of pedagogical tools are proposed by the ministry of education to assist learners in knowing what successful writing is. Rubrics, success criteria, and exemplars of good quality texts are a few of those tools that can prove very helpful in guiding students to capture the nature of successful writing. These tools are thus thought to enable students to give judgements to the provided text exemplars (Hawe & Dixon, 2014).

To recapitulate, the identification of the predictive features of writing quality is a necessary step that precedes any improvement in the efficacy of, not only writing instruction and assessment, but also writing research. The teachers' assessment of their students' texts is more reliable if they refer to clear and well-defined criteria. They also can provide optimal guidance to students to assist them in proficient writing. With regard to students, knowledge of features determining good quality writing can develop self-evaluative skills among student writers.

2.2.1.2 *Form-related and content-related predictors of writing quality*

Though important, identifying the features that characterise good writing is not an easy task. Elbow (1998) admits "whenever I see an abstract description of what makes good writing, I always think of actual cases of good writing that violate it" (p. 372). Hinkle (2003) explains the source of this situation when he says, "research has not established with certainty what specific syntactic and lexical features, when taken together, can create an impression of simplistic or reasonably sophisticated text in written L2 discourse" (p. 275). Recent research (Jarvis et al., 2003; Polio & Shea 2014) has tried, through corpus analysis, to set some relevant criteria of sophisticated and highly rated texts. A number of categorisations were adopted to classify those features in well-defined criteria. Jarvis et al. for example, targeted three categories of features: lexical, grammatical and discourse features, and they studied how they impact the quality of writing. Crossley and Mc Namara (2010) studied particularly the relationship between cohesion and linguistic sophistication, and the writing proficiency. Llach (2007), on the other hand, investigated the way lexical errors can be predictors of writing quality. Starting from the insights gained through these relevant studies, we adopted an eclectic categorisation to cover the disparate elements encompassed in the term of writing quality in the forthcoming part.

Form-related predictors of writing quality

Form accuracy is a multi-layered concept encompassing grammar, vocabulary, and spelling correctness. Setting clear-cut boundaries between each area of accuracy and the other is not straightforward as overlaps occur between morphological accuracy, for instance, and spelling one or between lexical accuracy and syntactic one. The different areas of accuracy are, thus, in continuous interplay with each other, with the intended meaning, and the overall quality of the text.

Vocabulary knowledge

Vocabulary is the building blocks of language. Llach (2007) stresses that "a large varied, accurate, and sophisticated lexical contribution to a text assures a better result in the writing and it is the best indicator of overall composition quality" (p. 3). She describes the relation between writing quality and vocabulary as a correlational one. Therefore, lexical errors are equated with poor vocabulary knowledge and thus they can serve as predictors of poor writing quality and low proficiency in general. In a study conducted by Grant and Ginther (2000), 90 essays scoring differently were selected to investigate how the occurrence of specific linguistic features can have any correlation with the scores obtained in the test of written English. The findings demonstrated the existence of a correlation between highly rated compositions and the linguistic maturity. Among the linguistic factors associated to linguistic maturity appears lexical variety.

Furthermore, lexical errors may affect the communicative value of the text since they interfere with effective interpretation of the message. Hence, for a text to be rated as a good one, and for the communicative purpose to be considered achieved, the text has to be free of lexical errors threatening effective communication. One example illustrating the role of lexical knowledge is the decisive impact that rich and varied vocabulary can have on text coherence and cohesion. If a student writer is not equipped with words' synonyms, antonyms, and hyponyms, to mention a few, the produced text may lack clarity and quality (Llach, 2007).

Grammar knowledge

A number of terms are referred to when identifying the main components of the grammar knowledge. Syntactic sophistication, for example, is a term encompassing a number of features. Syntactic complexity and sentence length are examples of aspects related to syntactic features (Crossley & McNamara, 2012; Grant & Ginther, 2000). In

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studies aiming at examining the correlation between sentence length, syntactic sophistication and overall composition quality, it has been found that student writers tend to write longer sentences as they develop their writing abilities (Casanave, 1994; Hann & Esch, 2005). As regards the methods used for measuring syntactic sophistication, Haan and Esch (2005) explain that reliable measures corresponding to the teachers' holistic assessment of compositions include mean length per unit, mean length of clause, number of clauses in T-Unit, and number of dependent clauses in the same T-Unit. According to Hann and Esch, the use of these measures allowed concluding that mature writers tend to write longer sentences than their low-proficiency counterparts. Instances where low-proficiency writers use long sentences are mainly explained by the occurrence of comma splice errors rather than by the ability to produce T-Units of more than one clause.

Hinkle (2003) links improved language production to the sophisticated syntactic constructions, and poor writing quality to writings where conversational language constructions are prevalent. He conducted a study targeting the analysis of both syntactic and lexical constructions in compositions written by native English users and non-native English users. The researcher examined the syntactic repertoires of both groups of students to verify whether the type of language is conform to standards of good quality academic writing or whether it is closer to conversational language. The analysis of the findings focussed specifically on the use of *be*-copula, predicative adjectives, constructions including existential *there*, and *it*-cleft. Starting from the idea that *be*-copula construction along with *there* constructions and predicative adjectives are of little syntactic sophistication, while *it-cleft* are signs of syntactic complexity, the writer drew a number of conclusions. Non-native English users produce texts including excessively conversational and spoken syntactic constructions, which reduces their chances to score well and achieve academic goals.

Sentences length and sophisticated syntactic constructions are only examples of syntactic features contributing to writing quality. Other features include also the use of greater number of subordinations, sentence structure overlap, and the number of words occurring before the main verb (Crossley & McNamara, 2014; Grant & Ginther, 2000; McNamara et al., 2010).

Knowledge of mechanics

Mechanical accuracy involves the mastery of elements including spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation. A study conducted by Bestgen and Granger (2011) examining the role of spelling accuracy in predicting the writing quality concluded that spelling accuracy do contribute to the overall writing quality. Put in other words, the researchers found that starting from the spelling errors made by students, the learners' proficiency can be predicted. According to Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001), the elaboration of content requires, in addition to vocabulary and syntax rules, knowledge of orthographic rules and punctuation use.

In spite of being grouped within the category of surface features (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001), punctuation and capitalisation can play a decisive role in the comprehensibility of a produced text. Terminal punctuation, along with initial capitalisation, for example, enhances the text's clarity in terms of sentence types and the completeness of the idea (Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009). Internal punctuation, on the other hand, clarifies the link between the different phrase-level and clause-level components of the same sentence. Accordingly, punctuation, capitalisation, and other mechanics features contribute to the development of the writing quality.

Content and organisation predictors of writing quality

Casanave (2004, p. 66) summarises good writing in terms of content as follows, it is "how effectively writers address a topic, provide a coherent and well-organized

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discussion". She admits, however, the difficulty to identify the features related to content compared to those related to form,

> criteria for good writing, particularly those that relate to thinking skills, such as coherence, flow, logic, clarity, and maturity, cannot themselves be easily characterized in ways that would satisfy the evaluator or researcher who wishes to count and quantify unambiguously what good writing is. (p. 66)

Compared to linguistic accuracy, reserved focus has been put on clarity of writing content. One possible reason is the difficulty to interpret the intended meaning of the texts. Teachers find it difficult to respond to the content at the risk of altering the original meaning intended by the student writer (Raimes, 1999). Another reason is that criteria like clarity, organization, adequacy of support, and emphasis are somewhat elusive aspects. They are often introduced under the overarching heading of style. In spite of the little attention paid to content related characteristics, cohesion and coherence are aspects that benefitted from researchers' interest.

Cohesion and coherence

It has been widely accepted that the communicative value of a text can be guaranteed through coherence and cohesion. The comprehension of the text is made easier through the use of cohesive cues and logical connectors (Crossley & Mc Namara, 2012). Explicit cues act as signposts that signal to the reader the existence of a relationship between ideas and help understand the nature of connection between the ideas of the composition. Cues can include overlaps, connectives, causality devices.

In a study conducted by Crossley, Dempsey, and McNamara (2011), a corpus analysis was conducted to investigate how a number of features including mainly cohesive devices could determine the paragraph type. The analysis relied on both human raters and the computational tool Coh-Metrix. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded

that cohesive devices along with other linguistic features help in determining the rhetorical function of paragraphs. It could be then asserted that cohesion does not only ensure clarity in the type of relationship existing between a sentence and another, but it also provides organisational clues and affords the possibility to distinguish the position of the paragraph in its essay. Seen from the perspective of instruction, such findings stress the fact that students have to be taught about the role of cohesive devices and other linguistic features in defining the rhetorical function of paragraphs, and in highlighting the paragraph differences.

Studies investigating the way cohesion and coherence lead to improved writing quality provided evidence that these constructs are important components of good writing (Crossley et al., 2011; Crossley & McNamara, 2012). These studies are, however, faced with the challenges that both the constructs of coherence and cohesion pose due to the vague boundaries separating them (Crossley & McNamara, 2010). While cohesion can be easily identified by the use of lexico-grammatical ties, called also cohesive devices, coherence occurs at a much broader rhetorical level (Kolln, 1999, p.93-94). In spite of this distinction, these terms are sometimes used interchangeably. Seeing that cohesion cues relate, and contribute, to the improvement of coherence, it is believed necessary to identify all the other textual features impacting on the evaluation of coherence (Crossley & McNamara, 2010). The identification of such features can assist in a better understanding of how coherence predicts the writing quality.

2.2.2 Problems affecting the writing quality

Equally important to the understanding of what makes good writing is the identification of what affects this quality. Infelicities across different aspects of writing come in different types and differ in gravity and in contexts. In the forthcoming section an explanation is given about the different types of errors, their sources, and the main

theoretical and empirical insights provided by error analysis regarding the most common errors made in written texts.

2.2.2.1 *The impact of errors on the overall text quality*

A consistent understanding of the effect error occurrence has on the quality of any piece of writing requires investigating the way researchers view writing development and whether error absence is a variable determining the overall writing quality.

Many elements need to be taken into consideration when evaluating a text (Jarvis et al., 2003; Llach, 2007; Polio, 1997; Polio & Shea, 2014). The absence, or reduced number of errors, is not an overt feature that appears among the constituents of the successful writing profile (Crossley & McNamara, 2012; McNamara et al., 2010), but it is implied that a proficient use of any of the features means an accurate manipulation of the writing requirements (Polio, 1997).

In a study conducted by Llach (2007) investigating the role of lexical errors in determining the quality of writing, she remarks that learners should be encouraged to take risks and use unfamiliar words, hence favoring creativity over accuracy. However, she adds that "learners have to practice with lexis with the aim of remedying their lexical errors and enhancing the quality of their writing"(p 15). The role that instruction can play in enhancing the writing quality is pivotal; hence, "teaching some word formation rules, collocational patterns or pragmatic distribution of lexical items may [also] contribute to reducing the number of lexical errors in compositions and, thus, to enhancing the quality of a student's writing"(p. 15). Llach (2007) statements presume that the reduction of errors, through instruction and students' risk-taking attitude, is likely to improve the quality of writing.

In a study examining the link between syntactic proficiency and the writing quality, Crossley and McNamara (2014) identified a number of patterns reflecting syntactic

complexity such as long noun phrases, particularly before verb phrases, and more varied syntactic patterns in sentences, to mention a few. Additionally, they point out that raters who assessed the quality of the studied texts based their assessment on five features; language use is one of them. A link is established between error occurrence and writing quality in that well rated writing implies "no errors that interfere with comprehension, few morphological errors, no major errors in word or structure, the use of more complex sentences, and excellent sentence variety"(p. 69).

2.2.2.2 *Sources of errors*

Studies on error analysis (EA) have the potential to guide the teacher's in their endeavour to provide the best teaching strategies and in evaluating the outcomes of their instruction (Corder, 1981). Moreover, it is an opportunity for learners to engage in more autonomous problem solving behaviours. However, the benefit from error analysis is maximised if errors could be traced back to their causes. Dissonances in students' writings can be explained by a number of factors ranging from cognitive factors to gaps in linguistic knowledge.

Schoonen et al. (2009) draw attention to the distinction between knowledge and accessibility to knowledge. They claim that not only does optimal achievement in writing require knowledge, but it needs as well the easy retrieval of the targeted elements. For first language users, accessibility to knowledge does not represent any difficulty while for second language users it can be very challenging. In order for knowledge to be readily available, the working memory should have the capacity to handle a number of processes simultaneously. The formulation of ideas, the retrieval of lexical items and the mapping of grammatical constructions are examples of those principal processes. The researchers explain the way devoting attention to one aspect can be to detriment of another aspect as follows:

The L2 writer may be so much involved in these kind of "lower-order" problems of word finding and grammatical structures that they may require too much conscious attention, leaving little or no working memory capacity free to attend to higher-level or strategic aspects of writing, such as organizing the text properly or trying to convince the reader of the validity of a certain view. (2003, p.171)

If this statement explains particularly the occurrence of substance and discourse errors, it also implies that cognitive factors, geared by the writers' priorities, cause the writers to perform poorly at different aspects of their writing. Myles (2002) supports this idea and contends that the complex nature of the writing skill and the cognitive load it causes to happen compel writers to relinquish at some aspects. The difficulty to handle a number of aspects simultaneously is coped with by selecting the aspects on which they have developed an automatic mastery and neglecting the other aspects.

In addition to the cognitive factors, error occurrence can be explained by the incomplete development of the target language rule system. In his account about interlanguage, Corder (1981) explains that the learner's language is in constant development and is continuously bearing revisions and modifications. However, before it reaches the levels where it resembles most the target language, the learner's language seems to be based on a personal competence. Systematic errors are the evidence that a personal grammar is directly responsible of the occurrence of what seems to the learner as grammatical and to a native speaker as deviant. Beside the systematic nature of errors due to immature interlanguage, regularity and consistence are other features characterising this type of errors. If an erroneous construction is made by a learner, it recurs whenever the same syntactic rule is referred to, reflecting the immature version of the learner's target language.

However, in other cases the learner may appeal to the language or languages he masters to draw some rules based on the similarities existing between the already mastered language and the target language. *Interference* and *transfer* are terms employed to refer to the influence that a mother tongue, or another previously learnt language, has on the decision making regarding features ranging from phonological ones to pragmatic ones (Corder, 1981; Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Negative transfer is found responsible for errors, for it occurs when a rule of the first language is applied erroneously on a form of the target language.

Another cause for error occurrence is related to the physical and psychological state of the language user. Memory lapses, fatigue, and strong emotions are factors that may cause a language user to make slips of the tongue (or pen). Erroneous uses of language in such cases are considered mistakes and not errors because they are of a rather unsystematic nature. They do not reflect incomplete knowledge, and once they are made, they can be easily corrected if they are indicated (Corder, 1981).

To sum up, errors can be caused by a still-developing interlanguage exposing language users to influences of the first language as they can be the result of referring to an underlying immature knowledge. They also may result from a management of the cognitive abilities that prioritises only what is fully mastered over what is not mastered. Finally, mistakes are common when the language user is stressed or physically tired.

2.2.2.3 *Types of errors*

Different categorisations have been made to highlight the distinctive features of errors. The criteria of classification vary to include interference in the general meaning of the text, susceptibility to correction, context dependence, and cause of error.

Overt versus covert errors

Overt errors can be considered as such by any proficient language user, even if they are isolated from the context of their occurrence because they clearly break a language rule. By contrast, covert errors can be detected only by reference to the context in which it occurred. If taken in isolation, covert errors would not represent any ill formation (Thewissen, 2015).

Interlingual versus intralingual errors

Interlingual errors, also called transfer errors, are those errors resulting from applying rules of the mother tongue to the use of target language. In their endeavour to produce language, learners make comparisons between the set of rules governing their first language and the set of rules of the target language. They eventually may be influenced by their first language and make errors. Intralingual errors, by contrast, are due to hypotheses made without any reference to the mother tongue. They rather reflect how far the interlanguage of the learner from the target language is. In the learning, or acquisition, process of any language, learners develop their interlanguage and move from one developmental state to another targeting the full mastery of the language. Intralanguage errors happen when the rules of the target language are not completely learnt (Saville-Troike, 2012).

Global versus local errors

The degree of interference with meaning has led to differentiate between errors that impede the understanding of the text, global errors, and the errors that do not affect the meaning, local errors (Ferris, 2002).

Rule-governed versus non rule-governed errors

Van Beuningen (2011) was inspired by Ferris' (1999) categorisation of treatable versus untreatable errors when she provided this classification based on the likelihood of

the error to be self-corrected. Van Beuningen (2011) used the distinction of rule-governed versus non rule-governed errors to contrast errors that can be effectively treated if the learner consults language resources and those which cannot. Language resources such as punctuation handbook, grammar books and dictionaries can offer great help for students in case of doubt as they include sets of easily manageable rules. A punctuation problem, for instance, can be regarded as a rule-governed error while an irrelevant idea or an idea in disconformity with the pattern of organisation is a non rule-governed error.

2.2.2.4 *The role of metalinguistic awareness in error treatment*

Kormos (2012) in her account about the role of individual differences on writing performance, pointed to the relation that could exist between metalinguistic awareness (MLA) and the ability to notice gaps in the knowledge. She asserted, "learners with high levels of metalinguistic awareness might notice their errors more easily and might consciously devote more attention to monitoring linguistic accuracy" (p.396). The merits of MLA may extend to generating "more active and successful problem-solving behaviours when faced with these gaps" (Kormos, 2012, p. 396).

Pawlak and Aronin (2014, p.176) defined MLA as "the ability to focus on linguistic form and to switch focus between form and meaning". Accordingly, language learners who are said to be metalinguistically aware are "able to categorise words into parts of speech, switch focus between form, function, and meaning, and explain why a word has a particular function". The concept of metalanguage was first devised by Swain (1998), who introduced it, in addition to noticing and hypothesis testing, as one of the three types of output. It occurs when learners use one of the linguistic modalities to reflect on their actual use of language. Swain held that the supportive role of metalanguage to learning is better perceived in situations where a communicative goal is pursued through language production. Metalinguistic awareness, however, was referred to also as *metatalk,* and

verbalisation for its association with oral production. As the process of metalinguistic output occurs similarly in written modality, Swain (2005) coined the term of *languaging*, an overarching term encompassing both speaking and writing.

In a study about languaging, Ishikawa (2015) got her participants to write their reflections in the form of notes, that she called *metanotes*, while performing a translation task. The metanotes were a translation of the participants' thoughts about grammar, vocabulary, mechanics or other elements in their task accomplishment. An example of a grammar-focussed note is "should I use past or past perfect tense?"; and " my vocabulary is too limited" is a vocabulary-focussed note (Ishikawa, 2015). Although the focus of Ishikawa's study was the investigation of the way metanotes are influenced by the participant's proficiency and by task outcomes, it provided insights into the way reflection can be performed through use of notes.

In the same vein, Myhill and Newman (2016) conducted a study examining the use of metatalk in writing. The researchers reported that the approach "sets out to make visible to learners the linguistic choices they can make in writing and encourages learners to see themselves as writers with access to a repertoire of choices, and to consider their potential readers" (2016, p.10). In addition to the reported positive impact of metalinguistic discussions on learners, the study stresses, as well, the primordial role played by teachers in the initiation and management of the discussions.

Francis (1999) maintained that "writing, at all level-from control over surface features and mechanics to the ability to construct global coherence- would seem to depend on the development of metalinguistic awareness" (p. 305). Grammatical awareness, metasemantic awareness, and awareness at the discourse level are examples of levels at which languaging has to occur. However, the complex nature of writing involves the student writer in a number of cognitive processes, yet for optimal achievements in writing,

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it is indispensable to avoid overloading the working memory by focussing attention on multiple aspects. According to Suzuki, (2012, p. 3) "written languaging not only plays an important role as an external storage mechanism but, when compared to oral languaging, it also relieves more the demands on working memory". Suzuki (2012) provides empirical evidence when he reported the facilitative role of languaging on improved accuracy. More particularly, he traced back the successful error correction following revision to what he referred to as "lexis-based and grammar-based written languaging" (p.19).

2.2.2.5 Common error types affecting the writing quality

Researchers appealed to error analysis, and even contrastive analysis, as tools to study corpora both quantitatively and qualitatively (Hemshua & Schmitt, 2006; Hinkel, 2011, Hinson & Park 2009; Llach, 2011). The studies' findings helped in identifying major patterns of errors that can be found in the writings of FL or SL learners. In the forthcoming section, taxonomies of errors in each writing aspect are presented; then, empirical evidence from different FL and SL contexts is reviewed to examine the challenges that face student writers and threaten to weaken the quality of their writing.

Errors in global features

Into this category fall all the properties related to the content and substance of the written text. To enumerate these properties, Hinkel (2011, p. 527) mentions "discourse organisation and information structuring, topic appropriateness, development and continuity, types and arrangement of evidence, as well as text cohesion, coherence, clarity, and style". Interestingly, errors of this category are believed to stem mostly from limitations of the linguistic knowledge, which compels the student writers to focus on accuracy to the detriment of meaning (Weigle, 2002). Owing to the absence of a comprehensive taxonomy of global errors, we opted for a taxonomy based on a synthesis of insights gained from empirical studies and theoretical underpinnings.

Coherence problems

Coherence problems were best defined by Wikborg (1985), in a nutshell, as the failure of the attentive reader to follow the thread of the argument. As it is implied by the definition, coherence involves meeting the expectations of the reader (Kolln, 1999). Due to this interaction with the reader, any failure to help the reader understand the communicative purpose of the text, the flow and organisation of ideas, and the relationship between the elements of the text falls into the category of coherence breaks (Kuo, 1995).

One problem related to the general meaning of a text is the lack of a unified topic. Wikborg (1985) calls it "unspecified topic". A number of sentences can be sequenced to form a text, yet their propositional content may not relate to the same topic. Thus, a problem of text unity can be diagnosed if the sequence of sentences (supporting details) does not support a governing sentence (topic sentence). Unity is also problematic when all the sentences have the same degree of generality, or if it is not clear what the function of the text is and how the text fits into the broader context (Brandon & Brandon, 2012; Kirszner & Mandell, 2012; Wikborg, 1985).

A further problem categorised with coherence breaks is text organisation. Because text organisation is relevant to knowledge about writing genres, the limited knowledge in this area my lead to infelicities in information organisation. Coherence is thus violated in cases where the progression and structuring of information is erroneous (Kuo, 1995). Problems of paragraph structuring and organisation can be ascribed to "L2 writer's developmental constraints and inexperience rather than transfer of L1 rhetorical paradigms" (Hinkel, 2011, p. 527).

Although problems in global properties of the text go beyond the scope of coherence, they remain tightly related to this notion. Clarity, style, and continuity are examples of such aspects, and any problem in coherence leads to a problem in clarity and style.

Cohesion problems

While coherence problems occur at the level of the "broad rhetorical aspects" (Kolln, 1999, p. 93), cohesion problems have to do with "sentence-level ties" (Kolln, 1999, p.94). Identifying any overuse, omission, or misuse of the cohesive ties can help in gauging the effectiveness of writing in terms of cohesion. The following are the main syntactic and lexical devices determining the strength of cohesion: reference, conjunction, lexical cohesion, ellipses, and substitution.

Errors in references happen when the writer fails to use personal pronouns, demonstratives, or comparative signals for the purpose of referring to information indicated elsewhere. Conjunction errors are those instances of conjunctions erroneously employed. Lexical cohesion problems occur if words are not successfully reiterated with the corresponding synonyms or superordinate words. Ellipses errors refer to infelicities of omitting particular components in a sentence because they are implied by the context. Substitution problems are those in which the writer fails to replace a word with another linguistic item (Kolln, 1999).

Studies based on error analysis or contrastive analysis abound. They contribute to the understanding of the way global features of the text can be problematic. In an account based on contrastive analysis, Hinkel (2011) listed a number of errors occurring at the discourse level. One of the listed problems is the failure to support the text argument with substantive details neglecting, hence, interaction with the intended audience. Another global problem pertains to achieving semantic connection. A further problem is that ties between ideas are not adequately strong to convey meaning clearly.

According to a study relying on observation and corpus analysis and conducted in Algerian contexts (Melouk & Zouaoui, 2014), Algerian students have problems in organising the ideational content of their paragraphs. They struggle with achieving unity of

content as they include ideas that do not support the main topic. They displayed as well problems in selecting the appropriate organisational patterns for the topic they are writing about. Additionally, coherence limitations were demonstrated in the way students listed ideas without connecting them to ensure a smooth flow. The authors remarked that the neglect of brainstorming strategies is behind the poor ideational content of the written productions.

Grammatical Errors

This category of errors occurs when the student writer lacks the basic grammatical knowledge necessary for writing or when he fails to use the acquired knowledge. Grammatical errors can occur at a variety of levels resulting in a distinction of word-level, phrase-level, clause level, and sentence level errors (Bartley & Benitez-Castro, 2013; Sultan, 2015).

Clause-level and sentence-level errors include, but are not limited to the following errors, incorrect order of words such as adverbials, misuse of relative clauses, sentence combination, subject-verb agreement, misplaced modifying clauses, and fragments. Illustrative examples are excerpted from error-analysis studies conducted in different FL and SL contexts (Chan, 2010; Hinson & Park, 2009; Sultan, 2015)

Grades for best colleges and universities. (fragment)

A long traffic jam is always seen in the cities which is one of the source of sound pollution. (misplaced modifying clause)

When someone say hello to me, … (subject-verb agreement)

Although we can't have our own life there, but now we are happy (misuse of conjunction in sentence combination)

Phrase-level errors are errors occurring at the level of noun phrases, verb phrases, or prepositional phrases. Examples of the errors that this category encompasses are misplaced

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modifying phrases, errors of articles and determiners, and misuse of prepositions. By way of illustration, the following instances selected from different studies are provided (Hinson & Park, 2009; Sultan, 2015).

His hobby is listening music. (preposition omission)

You had to bought (verb phrase error)

An healthy environment (incorrect article in noun phrase)

We breath the air which polluted (incorrect use of passive structure/ verb phrase)

Grammatical errors occurring at word level may include number (plurality/ singularity), and word form (morphological inflections and derivations). Below are excerpted instances illustrating the listed examples (Chan, 2010).

It's so interest (confusion in word class)

He was very happy to hear the new (plurality)

Error-analysis studies conducted in different contexts provided valuable findings about the types of grammatical errors made by EFL or ESL students in their written productions. Sawalmeh (2013) conducted a study investigating errors in written works performed by Arabic-speaking students. He concluded that the most frequent errors occur in the following areas: verb tense, article, sentence fragment, word order, preposition, and subject-verb agreement. Melouk and Zouaoui (2014), who examined the frequent errors in Algerian students' productions, found that subject-verb agreement and incorrect sentence structure are the most frequent errors made by the sample they examined. They ascribed this problem to the incapability of the students to benefit from grammar courses and to the influence of the previously learnt languages, mother tongue and French.

Lexical Errors

According to Hemshua and Schmitt (2006, p.3), lexical errors can hinder the conveying of meaning when writing. Accordingly, the failure of articulating the intended

meaning of a text affects the overall quality of the text. Lexical errors can occur due to mother tongue interference or to confusion resulting from learning the target language. The distinction between interlingual errors and intralingual errors has provided a frame within which a taxonomy of lexical errors is devised by Llach (2011). In this section, to illustrate the errors, and to adapt them to the scope of the current study, English is selected as the target language, and Arabic as the mother tongue. Another theoretical underpinning for classifying lexical errors is the distinction between errors related to form and errors related to meaning. Hence, borrowing, coinage, misselection, calque, and collocational inaccuracies are errors that can be characterised by their source of influence and/or their relation to form or meaning as it is clarified in the following explanation.

Borrowing happens when the learner uses a word of L1 in the text he intends to write in the target language. In other words, this type of error is characterised by the use of a L1 word that does not exist in TL, paying no effort to adapt it either orthographically or morphologically to the target language. This type of error can be exemplified as follows.

Children prefer to play and miss classes in <u>medressa</u>. (school)

Coinage is another type of lexical errors. It differs from borrowing in that the learner may bring some changes to the employed L1 word to adapt it to the target language. The adaptation may be made in view of matching the orthographical or the morphological properties of the target language, and it results in a lexical item that sounds like a target language word. This error type requires, therefore, some basic knowledge of the morphology and orthography rules of the target language. To illustrate, the following instance can be considered.

Children were happy to leave their <u>mederssas</u>. (Schools)

Mederssa in the example above appears in plural form. Its affixation to the final *"s"* is done in view of adapting the Arabic word *mederssa* to the English morphological rules of plural formation.

The third type of lexical errors is *calque* or "literal translation". It consists in inserting a literal translation of a L1 lexical item into the target language. Put in other words, the produced word exists in the target language, but it bears the semantic properties of the mother tongue. The following sentence may exemplify this type of lexical errors.

Every weekend, we play ballfoot.

Though the words *ball* and *foot* are English, the order in which they are arranged is L1-oriented.

Misselection is another lexical error that is interchangeably used with "malapropism". In such a case, the learner selects an erroneous lexical item from the target language to mean another one. The wrong choice is caused by a similarity in phonetic or orthographic properties. The example below illustrates the case.

The well was dip.

Because the word *dip* bears some phonetic similarities with *deep*, the target word, confusion arises and causes a misslection error.

Similarly, *semantic confusion*, another lexical error, denotes a wrong choice of lexical items. However, the cause of similarity in this case is not the form (phonetic and orthographic) of the word but it is its semantic properties such exemplified below.

The rule is many easy.

In the example, the semantic relatedness of *many* and *very* caused confusion.

Misspelling errors are lexical items with orthographic inaccuracies. When the target word *gigantic* is spelled *jaigantic*, it is a sign that the language user has failed to adhere to one of the orthographic conventions of the target language.

Although Llach's taxonomy includes only the previous error types, collocational errors are other deviant uses of language that also fall into the category of lexical errors (Nesselhauf, 2003). Collocational errors occur if two words are associated differently from the way they occur in L2 usage such as in the following sentence.

They <u>did</u> the decision to have a party.

Guided by error taxonomies, a number of studies have been conducted to diagnose the major lexical errors made by EFL or ESL learners in given contexts (Al-Shormani & Al-Sohbani, 2012; Hemshua & Schmitt, 2006; Picot, 2017). The study of Al-Shormani and Al-Shohbani (2012) examined 1388 errors made by Yemeni students in 30 essays. The researchers concluded that the most frequent error in the corpus was the omission of letters whereas the least prevailing type of error was the misselection of prefixes. The researchers attributed the lexical problems to the use of the mother tongue rules in TL output by learners. Additionally, learners lack an adequate semantic knowledge of TL; this increased the risks of using inaccurate lexical items.

Hemshua and Schmitt (2006) analysed the errors in a corpus of 20 argumentative compositions produced by 20 Thai students. They found that lexical errors involved mostly the meaning rather than the form. The most prevailing error was *near synonyms* while *preposition partners* were classified second. By *preposition partners*, the researchers meant collocations involving the combination of prepositions with nouns, verbs, or adjectives. According to the same researchers, the errors were due to the intrinsic difficulty of the target language lexical rules. The L1 influence, thus, was not seen responsible of the examined lexical errors.

Spelling punctuation and capitalisation errors

This category of errors, also denoted by *mechanics*, is believed to be a surface-level one due to its little interference with the communicative effectiveness of a text (Allal,

Chanquoy, & Largy, 2004). Spelling errors, for instance, are not considered severe errors if they do not entail confusion with another lexical item. Spelling errors are due to the particular nature of the English spelling convention. Llach (2011, p. 49) points, "mastering spelling conventions in English involves learning a great deal of irregularities, and quite a number of isolated examples". Bestgen and Granger (2011) adopted a categorisation of spelling errors that involves not only the type of inaccuracy (omission, addition, substitution and transposition), but also the element carrying the error like the apostrophe, the word, or the letter. They added as well the incorrect doubling of letters or incorrect splitting of words as another type of errors.

Below are sentences taken from the error analysis study of Bestgen and Granger (2011); they exemplify some of the previously mentioned error types.

Completly (spelling: omission of letter)

Business man (spelling: splitting of a word)

Examples of common punctuation errors include omission of punctuation marks after introductory elements, misuse of comma around non-restrictive elements, omission of comma in compound sentences, absence of comma in series of items, unnecessary comma, and unnecessary full-stop (Darus & Ching, 2009; Lunsford & Lunsford, 2008). The commonest capitalisation errors types can be summarised in the use of unnecessary capitalisation and the lack of required capitalisation (Hinkel, 2011). Below are examples of punctuation errors excerpted from different error-analysis studies (Darus & Ching, 2009).

He works early in the morning, (misuse of comma)

My mom occupation is a House Wife. (capitalisation)

The taxonomy of errors at different levels (content, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics) provided in this section is by no means comprehensive. It attempts, however, to cover some of the possible errors that can affect the quality of paragraph writing.

Research in error analysis continues to provide insightful findings into the main categories of errors that threaten the writing quality, which can assist pedagogical researchers and instructors in suggesting solutions to the writing problems.

2.3 Autonomy in Learning Writing

Crucial to the understanding of how autonomy can be applied in the writing classroom is the theoretical premise underpinning the concept. Equally important is the distribution of roles between teachers and students in both teacher-led instruction and learner-centred instruction.

2.3.1 Theoretical premises of autonomy

The notion of autonomy is by no means invented within the field of education or limited to it as it first germinated in political and social contexts. Individuals and states, alike, were thought to have the right to be self-ruled and have the freedom of choice. During the 1980's the construct started to be used in education. The notion preserved the core principle of making choices and started to be applied in learning decisions (Reinders 2010).

Besides being related to political and social fields, autonomy is often associated to the theory of constructivism. The Constructivist theory, contrary to other theories, places the premium on the way knowledge is constructed, reorganised and shared rather than on internalising knowledge itself. When applied to language learning, constructivist approaches get the learner build upon his own experiences and knowledge to manage the learning task at hand. The interaction between previous knowledge and the newly acquired information, experience, and ideas is what helps construct knowledge. Knowledge can thus be regarded as a "complex network of working hypotheses" rather than "a set of universal truths" as Little (2009, p. 52) put it. Through instruction, learners refine, modify, replace, or totally reject those working hypotheses. In previous non-constructivist

environment the role of school was to help learners expand their set of universal truths. The evaluation of the teaching outcomes would occur through the learners' recitation of the acquired knowledge. Constructivist models favour the learning processes based on the exploration and interpretation of the constructed knowledge. From this ensues that the learner's role is not limited to the memorisation of knowledge supplied by the teacher, instead the learner plays a key role in the management of his learning.

2.3.2 Defining autonomy

Autonomous learning is a term often used to refer to the ability to take charge of one's learning (Holec, 1981, cited in Thanasoulas, 2000). Other attempts to define the concept replaced the term 'charge' by 'control' or 'responsibility'; the three terms are ascribed the same idea of more freedom of decision-making in learner-directed learning than in teacher-centred instruction. In more concrete terms, taking charge of one's learning involves identifying the needs and goals of learning, choosing the appropriate strategies necessary for learning to optimally occur, monitoring the process and evaluating the outcomes of learning (Cotterall 2000). In his account about the capacity of autonomous learning, Benson (2013) chooses the term *control* over *responsibility* and *charge*. He further expands the investigation of the construct by identifying three levels of control: the control of learning management, the control of cognitive processes, and the control of learning content.

Other terms like *self-regulated learning*, *self-directed learning*, and *learner-centred* learning are frequently used in research related to autonomy. Each of the terms bears different connotations and reveals the perspective from which learning is tackled. In self-regulated learning, components like metacognition, and motivation are vital to learning, and it is to be contrasted to other-regulated learning (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). Self-directedness, on the other hand, is to be contrasted to teacher-centred approach, and both

involve a focus on the source of development. Self-directed learning occurs when any development of skills or knowledge is initiated by the student (Gibbons, 2003). As regards learner-centred learning, the focus is on the active role played by the learner to construct knowledge. This concept clearly appeared in response to the traditional methods in which knowledge is passively imparted by the teacher (Weimer, 2002). Though different in the perspective, the three terms, *self-regulated learning*, *self-directed learning*, and *learner-centred learning,* together with *autonomy* imply students taking more responsibility in their learning.

Understanding the notion of autonomy requires pinpointing not only what the notion refers to, but also what autonomy does not refer to. *Self-access*, *independence*, *self-study*, *self-instruction*, and *out-of-class learning* are terms denoting ways of instruction that may not necessarily enhance the capacity of autonomy (Little 2002). They therefore caused the term of autonomy "to suffer something of a crisis of identity" (Benson, 2013).

As regards self-access for example, Benson explains that the word originally referred to a mechanism whereby self-directed learning was implemented and not to the whole approach. Self-access centres afforded opportunities to individuals to access materials for second language self-directed learning. He clarifies the difference between self-access and autonomy as follows:

> One of the important lessons of the spread of self-access over the past three decades, however, is that there is no necessary relationship between self-instruction and the development of autonomy and that, under certain conditions, self-instructional modes of learning may even inhibit autonomy. (Benson, 2013 p. 12)

The use of the concept of '*independence'* is also avoided by Benson because it poses a different problem when used interchangeably with autonomy. This concept can be used as an antonym to both *dependence* and *interdependence*. While dependence does really

denote an opposite meaning to *autonomy*, *interdependence* does not. As a matter of fact, it has a meaning implied in autonomous learning, namely the endeavour of both teachers and learners to jointly achieve shared goals.

Besides understanding the terminology having either convergent or divergent connotations to autonomy, it is convenient to examine the meanings the term implies. In spite of the abundant accounts provided about the nature of autonomy, a number of insights have been suggested to clear the ambiguities surrounding the term. Thanasoulas (2000), for example, highlights an important point about autonomy when he observes that this construct cannot be a product but a process. Attempts to foster autonomy are only steps towards it (autonomy). One cannot pretend to achieve the goal of producing autonomous learners; rather, it is preferable to focus on the different steps that prepare learners for assuming greater responsibility.

In the same vein, Reinders (2010) asserts that implementing learner's autonomy is hindered by the difficulty to delimit the meaning of the construct at hand. 'Proactivity' is a key term associated to autonomy; it suggests that learners in self-directed learning take more active roles than in teacher-centred instruction. Nevertheless, operationalizing and measuring the construct of' 'proactivity' is not an easy task, especially when, theoretically speaking, no consensus has been reached about how to concretely foster it. As a result, teachers struggle with finding out effective techniques for the implementation of the different principles implied by autonomy.

2.3.3 Measuring the construct of autonomy

The last two decades have witnessed a vested interest in fostering language autonomy. Measuring autonomy was hence a necessity for interventionist and descriptive studies alike. However, measuring such a construct has proved to be highly challenging due to some theoretical and practical considerations. To account for the testability of the

construct of autonomy, Benson (2010) has synthesized the main challenges confronted by any researcher desiring to design a measurement scale for autonomy achievements.

One major challenge faced when studying autonomy is the complexity of the construct. The notion of autonomy is an entity that cannot be broken down to one or two observable behaviours. Nor is it possible to limit it to one aspect or another. Benson suggests that control is the most important component of autonomy. He further specifies that control over one's learning does not necessarily discard the influence of external influences that teachers or institutions can have. Moreover, learning involves a myriad of aspects including, but not limited to, planning, managing attention, and selecting activities. Benson cautions, however, that " it would be unreasonable, of course, to suggest that learners need to control every conceivable aspect of their learning in order to count as autonomous learners" (2010, p. 82). Even with such an approach in dealing with the complexity and the vagueness of both the components and aspects of the construct of autonomy, Benson (2010) stresses that it is too ambitious to pretend that the determination of fundamental components and aspects can result in a workable measurement scale.

Furthermore, the fact that this construct is seen as a potential capacity poses a problem of identifying the behaviours that demonstrate autonomous learning. If a learner asks an instructor, for example, to guide him in a particular learning task, it is unclear whether the decision he made demonstrates a potential capacity to search for information using some social strategies or whether this decision is a sign of dependence on the teacher. This example shows that the observation of behaviours may not suffice, in a reliable way, to investigate the underlying intentions of the learner.

Autonomy is also perceived as a developmental process; it can be demonstrated in specific stages of learning and disappear in subsequent others, as it may be noticed in particular disciplines and not in others. According to Benson, this is a further problem

hindering the measurement of autonomy. To this problem, it can be added that learners may "simulate autonomous behaviour" to please the instructor who openly reveals his objective of teaching (Benson, 2010, p.84). In cases where the learners know also they are being subjected to a test on autonomous learning, they may display behaviours that are not guided by inner capacities. Accordingly, learners who display autonomous behaviours may not necessarily have the capacity of autonomy.

An illustrative example from research in the area of language learner autonomy can exemplify the way the previously mentioned challenges were addressed to measure learner autonomy. In a post-study analysis, Czura (2014) explained how she adapted her research design to the multi-dimensionality of the construct. To measure the outcomes of a quasi-experiment, this researcher opted for seven subscales, each of which measuring one aspect of the construct. The subscales include the ability to set goals, the ability to implement learning strategies, the ability to select learning resources, engagement in collaborative and outside learning, the perception of the teachers' role in the learning / teaching process, and engagement in self-evaluation and self-assessment.

The researcher has also opted for a triangulation by combining a questionnaire to regular classroom observation and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire was designed to yield numerical data that can classify the participants in a scale ranging from very low level of autonomy to very high level of autonomy. The obtained results revealed overstated views on the aspects of autonomy, which showed to a large extent the respondents' tendency to meet the expectations of the researcher. The results of the observation and the semi-structured interview provided more insightful information as to the non-observable behaviours. Though other overstated views were gleaned from these two research tools, the respondents have given a more accurate and honest image of their

situation than through the questionnaire. This finding reinforces Benson's (2010) theoretical claims about learners simulating autonomy when feeling they are tested on it.

Accordingly, Czura's (2014) study provides evidence that testing autonomy requires not only to be aware of the minute details regarding the construct under study, but also the ability to make the optimal decision among the wide arrays of methodological choices. It also illustrates how researchers in the area of autonomy need to have visions about both the benefits and the challenges of any learning achievement.

2.3.4 Arguments in favour of developing learner autonomy

One question deserving consideration is whether learner autonomy is a pressing concern for learners or an unnecessary issue. A number of merits have been attributed to autonomy by a number of researchers. For one reason, approaches based on self-directed learning can yield better outcomes than other teacher-directed approaches. This can be explained by the role that motivation can play when learners' endeavours are geared towards the goals learners have set instead of the goals imposed by the teacher. Little (2009, p. 148) states, "autonomous behaviour is by definition motivated behaviour, whereas alienation induced by controlled behaviour undermines motivation". According to Little (2006), problems related to motivation in learning are handled if intrinsic motivation guides the process of learning. It is also believed that autonomous learners are more successful in terms of using learning resources outside the classroom than other learners in teacher-centred environments.

The importance of autonomy lies also in that it helps in producing learners who are willing for a lifelong learning and ready to set objectives to cope with the changing circumstances (Benson, 2000). Traditional instruction aims particularly at producing individuals with a specific profile of skills predetermined by the teacher and meant to meet some learning objectives set as well by the teacher. Individuals with such an instruction are

more prone to face unstable circumstances requiring other skills than what they have been equipped with.

The academic aspect is not the only reason for autonomy to be a necessity. Learning to take responsibility results in desirable academic achievements, but also helps individuals realise "their full human potential" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006 p.177)". Endowed with such a potential, individuals can spot the challenges facing them in socio-political domains and can, as well, overcome them employing the right intellectual and cognitive tools. Kumaravadivelu (2006 p.177) explains that this empowerment occurs thanks to autonomy with its narrow meaning and broad one. He explains the way the different types of autonomy can be beneficial as follows:

> While the narrow view of learner autonomy treats learning to learn a language as an end in itself, the broad view treats learning to learn language as a means to an end, the end being learning to liberate. In other words, the former stands for academic autonomy and the latter, for liberatory autonomy. If *academic* autonomy enables learners to be effective learners, *liberatory* autonomy empowers them to be critical thinkers.

Palfreyman and Smith (2003) support this idea and view autonomy as a human right, especially that in the recent decades there is a universal movement towards empowering and emancipating individuals.

2.3.5 The role of the teacher in autonomy-driven classrooms

Benson (2013) remarks that among the misconceptions about autonomy is that the concept is often regarded to imply "learning without a teacher or learning outside the classroom" (p.1). He further clarifies that the student-teacher collaboration in setting and pursuing goals is at the core of autonomy. From this it can be inferred that the teacher is not excluded in a learner-directed environment; rather, he plays a key role in developing

the capacity to orchestrate one's learning. Kumaravadivelu (2006) agrees with this claim and views that the ambitious goals of autonomy can be reached only if learners' efforts are coupled with the teachers'.

In his account on the contribution of European Language Portfolio, a pedagogical approach, to the promotion of autonomous learning, Little (2009) summarises the role of the teacher in few points. The teacher has to assist the learners in their identification of their individual and collective learning goals. He/she has to engage them in the search and choice of learning activities that help them meet the set goals. An additional role consists in initiating and supporting opportunities for discussion, analysis, and evaluation. Keeping a written record including different learning projects, products, or acquired vocabulary should be encouraged as it helps in regularly reflecting on one's goals and outcomes. To maximise gains, the target language use is maintained in the classroom. Both the teacher and the learners have to communicate and interact using the target language. This account on the role assigned to teachers is underpinned by the three basic principles of autonomy: learner involvement, learner reflection, and appropriate target language use.

Scaffolding is one of the duties assigned to teachers in autonomy-driven environments. Bitchener and Ferris (2012, p. 18) explain how scaffolding is believed to operate,

> L2 learners can achieve higher levels of linguistic knowledge when they receive appropriate scaffolding (i.e., the process of support that involves a shift from collaborative inter-mental activity to autonomous intra-mental activity). Thus, it is claimed that learners, with the assistance of *other regulation* (e.g., provided by teachers and more advanced learners) can eventually be *self-regulated* (i.e., able to use the L2 autonomously).

It is then safe to conclude that the process of autonomy is by no means synonymous to learning without a teacher. Conversely, the teacher's presence is a necessary element for the transition from a learner relying on his teacher or more expert peer to a self-reliant and autonomous language learner.

2.3.6 Phases towards the development of learner's autonomy

In an attempt to delimit more concrete steps for the implementation of autonomy, a number of phases have been identified. Each of the phases is a key component of the learning process, and the process recurs in a cyclical pattern starting from identifying the needs to assessing the outcomes. The cycle starts over again when previous learning experiences pave the way to new needs.

Identifying the needs of learning is the starting point for learners in self-directed learning. According to Reinders (2010), placement tests and teachers' feedback are tools used in teacher-centred instruction to know the students' needs. These tools do not allow learners to determine their needs. For more involvement, students need to understand both their strengths and weaknesses to identify their learning needs. Reinders encourages involving students during the first weeks of each course through the use of needs analyses. In subsequent weeks, the identified needs are regularly referred to so that to check that the assigned tasks meet them. For this purpose, the needs could be gathered through questionnaires or checklists. Table 2.1 shows the way identifying needs, along with the other steps, occurs in teacher-directed environments and how it is in learner-directed environments.

Table 2.1

Learning Stages in Teacher-Directed and Learner-Directed Environments (Reinders, 2010)

Learning stages	Teacher-directed	Learner-directed
Identifying needs	Placement tests, teacher feedback	Learner experiences, difficulties in using language.
Setting goals	Determined by the course.	Contextually determined, relatively flexible.
Planning learning	Determined by the teacher, somewhat flexible.	Contextually determined. Very flexible.
Selecting resources	Provided by teacher.	Self-selection by learners.
Selecting learning strategies	Teacher models and instructions.	Self-selection by learners.
Practice	Exercises and activities provided by teacher.	Implementation (language use) and experimentation.
Monitoring progress	Regular classroom feedback and comments on assignments and tasks.	Self monitoring, peer feedback.
Assessment and revision	Tests, curriculum changes.	Self-assessment, reflection.

The next phase is the setting of learning goals. This step differs from the previous one in that it requires students to have a clear idea about the outcomes they aim to yield. In teacher-centred environments (TCE), students have little to say on this point as the course itself determines the goals. More flexibility is guaranteed in learner-centred environments (LCE) given the opportunities provided by the context of learning. Thus, a typical characteristic of autonomous learning is the collaborative setting of goals involving both teachers and learners. In this regard, Cotterall (2004, p.5) recommends "to encourage learners to identify goals which are of personal significance to them". She further remarks, "experience suggests that learners who are able to set personal goals for themselves are more likely to invest in course activities, and commit themselves to acquiring the skills they need" (2004, p.5).

In the phase of planning, collaboration is equally desirable when making decisions regarding the type of exercises to choose or the resources to prepare. The teacher's

guidance is unquestionably indispensible at this phase. The importance of this step lies in empowering learners and helping them have a clear idea about the content to target, the sequencing of activities related to that content, and the way learners are supposed to interact when accomplishing the activities. To stress the importance of planning content and selecting resources, Reinders (2010, p. 180) adds, "part of the development towards autonomy involves having the awareness and ability to locate the right resources for their learning needs."

Once the content and resources are selected, self-directed learners need to reflect on how to utilise those resources using appropriate learning strategies. A repertoire of cognitive and metacognitive strategies can be developed and applied.

In the practice phase, learners take more responsibility over the implementation of language use. This does not imply the exclusion of the teacher's guidance and feedback. On the contrary, a more balanced role of the teacher at this phase is to be supportive and to encourage freedom. To illustrate how such a role can be fulfilled, Reinders (2010, p. 48) suggests: "this support can be in the form of carefully-structured tasks that require students to practice the language on their own terms, but then to input their experiences back into the task itself".

To measure learners' progress, teacher-directed instruction relies heavily on teacher's feedback provided as a response to a test or assignment. The alternative tools suggested, if more autonomy is targeted when monitoring one's progress, include diaries, portfolios and checklists of satisfaction rates. Such tools encourage students to refer to the initially identified needs in order to reflect on their progress and to check whether learning is directed towards the targeted goals. Although monitoring is proposed here as a phase in the learning process, it is also believed to be an on-going task frequently occurring at any of the previously explained phases. The importance of reflection in autonomous learning is

basically explained by the fact that such a process, if done regularly, enables learners to relate their previously set goals to what they are currently accomplishing and to future revisions of their plans. Cotterall (2004) explains the importance of reflection by the fact that getting learners to reflect over their learning achievements elicits insights which will be translated into decisions and actions.

The last phase in the model suggested by Reinders (2010) is the assessment of one's outcomes. This phase differs from the previous one in that it occurs less often. Self-assessment worksheets are examples of tools aiming at complementing teacher's assessment. Test scores provided by teachers are crucial for students to gauge their achievements, yet if reinforced with the use of portfolios, for example, learners will be better prepared to assess themselves more confidently outside classroom environment.

The aforementioned phases are believed to be an iterative learning cycle where reflection is a central element. Reinders (2010, p. 183) remarks, "the final reflection changes the learning process from a one-shot sequence, to a cycle of learning where previous experiences are the building blocks for future learning"

Figure 2.2, below, illustrates in a schematic representation how steps of autonomous learning occur in a cyclical fashion. Identification of learning needs may happen as a result of assessment of learning. At the same time, it precedes a step of setting goals. Given that reflection is a component that accompanies all the learning steps, it is placed at the centre of the cycle. In addition to being a central element in autonomous learning, reflection interferes in making choices and in triggering new cycles of learning processes (Reinders, 2010; Cotterall, 2000).
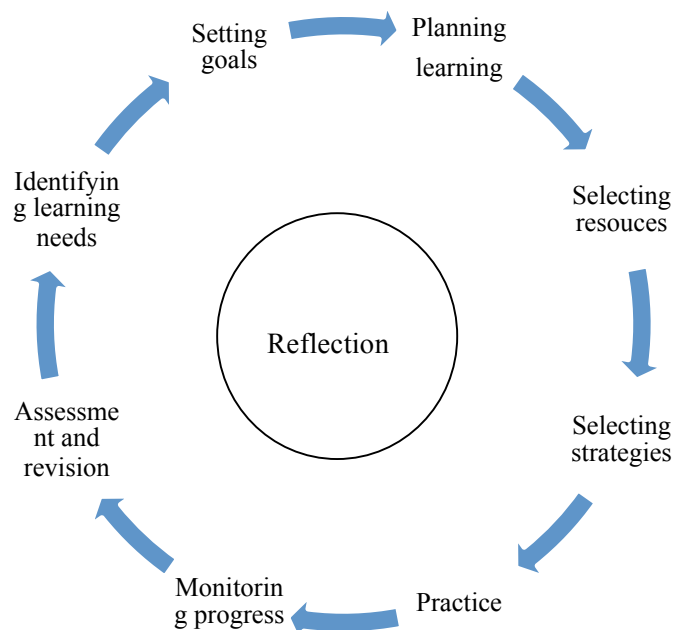
Figure 2.2. Cyclical nature of the autonomous learning process.
(Reinders, 2010)

2.3.7 Developing autonomous writers

Understanding the phases and the components of developing autonomous learning is an essential step before addressing the process of developing autonomous writers. The writing process, as it is the case with learning, requires setting goals, determining content, strategies and materials for learning, as well as monitoring the progress and assessing the achievements The bulk of research on developing autonomous writers deals particularly with instruction targeting either one strategy or a cluster of strategies that are closely related to the aforementioned phases of autonomy.

Goal setting and planning, along with other strategies preceding the drafting step, are believed to be a choice frequently made by skilled writers. They are regarded as processes of higher order providing help to students when composing good quality writings (Harris, Santangelo, & Graham, 2010). By contrast, struggling writers proceed directly into composing without any pre-task preparation. Planning is considered advantageous for it guarantees a number of gains. A plan is "an external memory" (Harris, Graham & Mason, 2006, p.298) that prevents the loss of the generated ideas. Through planning, rhetorical

problems can be solved. It helps the writer check whether his produced text is appropriate to the intended audience and to the goal of writing (Almargot & Chanquoy, 2001)

Harris et al. (2006) conducted a study having as a central objective examining the effectiveness of planning on general performance of narrative writing. The research falls within the area of self-regulated strategy development. By the term 'planning', the researchers refer to the action of generating the content of writing, organizing the generated ideas into a plan, and continuously upgrading the initial plan to better adjust it to the goals of writing. In order to scaffold the learning process during the implementation of the writing steps, teachers participating in Harris et al. (2006) study supported learners in their use of the strategies, reminded them about the steps of planning, and prompted them to use a self-assessment chart. The study findings found that self-regulatory strategy instruction had positive effects on the participants' performance.

Taking the responsibility of monitoring one's writing is another component in developing autonomous writers. Cresswell (2000) suggested the technique of marginal annotations to reduce the student's dependence on the teacher's feedback. The technique consisted in having the students self-monitor their writing by articulating their uncertainties and doubts concerning their writings on the margin of the writing sheets. The researcher found that self-monitoring through marginal annotations is an effective way to create "context in which students were able to work not only according to their various needs and preferences, but also responsibility" (Cresswell, 2000, p.243). Self-monitoring, therefore, provides learners with a chance to consider their needs regarding both language and content organisation and to take the responsibility over the initiation of feedback that will later on be responded to by the teacher. The promotion of the sense of responsibility is clear in that the participants in the study expressed their will to carry on using the technique. As it has been explained in Section 2.3.5, the teacher is not absent in such

instructions where autonomy is a purpose. In Cresswell's study, the researcher led the training on the strategy use, raised awareness about the importance of being able to make decisions regarding the content of their writings, and responded to the learner's concerns. This confirms the contention that autonomous learning is not an eradication of the teacher's role in the classroom; instead, his role is altered from the unique source of authority to a provider of support through scaffolding.

Training students on revision guided by self-regulatory principles is another effective step towards developing more autonomous behaviours in student writers. The process of revising a text involves three other sub-processes: a problem has to be identified first, then, a decision is made about how to handle it, and finally the necessary modification is implemented. The revision process cannot be operated without the process of reading. The reading that accompanies writing occurs with the intention of finding any incompatibilities between the intended meaning and the produced text. It differs hence from the reading that aims exclusively at grasping meaning (Almargot & Chanquoy, 2001). Although the sub-processes of revision and the element of reading are essential pillars for the understanding of revision, a further aspect come into play, namely, the initiator of revision. Literature abounds with studies on feedback and its sources: self, peer, and teacher, and how each of them can benefit student writers (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2003; Ferris, 2003). Research on revision, and thus feedback, initiated by the learner is gaining momentum. They are extensively motivated by the objective of enhancing metacognitive strategy use and/or promoting autonomy. Ferris (2002, p.328) justifies such an urgent need when she states,

> My students will not succeed outside of the sheltered world of the ESL class unless
> they can learn to reduce their errors. Because I will not be there to help my students,
> it is important they learn to edit their own work.

To reach this objective, Ferris (2002) devised a process for teaching students to edit their errors. As it is neither necessary nor desirable to correct every single error, the researcher restricted the editing approach to only frequent, global and stigmatising errors. By 'stigmatising', the researcher denotes errors 'that would cause a negative evaluation from native speakers' (Ferris, 2002, p. 329); by 'global', she means the errors affecting the comprehensibility of the produced text. The first stage in the editing process is focussing on form. According to the researcher, one of the reasons that cause students to neglect grammar in their writing is the overreliance on their teachers to do the job for them. As a solution to this problem, Ferris suggests getting students read short productions including errors and discuss together how meaning is impeded by these errors. The motive behind this practice is to raise awareness rather than directly train them to self-correct. The following stage revolves around identifying major patterns of errors in one's production.

Most students find editing a tedious and frustrating task for they bear in their minds the misconception that editing means correcting all the errors. According to Ferris (2002), by going through the step of recognising the major patterns of errors, learners learn how to distinguish between different categories of errors to sort out only the errors that are frequent, interfering with meaning, and stigmatising. In the last stage, students are gradually engaged in the correction of their errors recorded in a log kept for this purpose. According to the researcher, this process has proven to be effective, and its effectiveness can be optimised if the student is assigned tasks that target his individual problems.

Ferris' process of self-editing is an example of what teachers can do to reduce the dependence of their learners on their feedback. The role of the teacher as seen by this researcher corroborates the claims of other researchers of learners' autonomy (Benson, 2013; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Little, 2009). In writing classes, as in other skills' classes, the teacher is not excluded if the student is trained to develop self-regulatory strategies.

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Rather, he is responsible of sensitising the learners about the significance of each step in the instruction. He initiates the practice of strategy and gradually involves the learner in shouldering the task. He also encourages reflection over important points in the process though group discussions or individual logs.

Reflecting on one's progress and outcomes of learning is one essential component of autonomous learning. In writing, self-assessment is a crucial component closely related to feedback. Andrade and Valtchetva (2009) define self-assessment as "a process of formative assessment during which students reflect on the quality of their work, judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly (p. 13)". According to this definition, students rely on criteria to reflect on the progress of their writing abilities. Stressing the importance of those criteria, Lam (2013) states, "when used with clear assessment criteria, it (self-assessment) can promote personalized writing strategies and higher-order thinking skills (for example logic) that could navigate students towards their future learning of writing" (p. 447). Convinced that writing instruction should build upon the learners varied outcomes, MacArthur (2007) enumerates some characteristics that distinguish skilled writers from struggling ones. Among others, knowledge about the standards of proficient writing is a feature present in skilled writers and absent in struggling ones. For instance, skilled writers are aware that what makes a piece of writing good is a number of general criteria including a good thesis, accuracy, and a structured paragraph. They also know the specific criteria applying on different types or genres of writings; a focussed organization of ideas in an argumentative essay is definitely different from another type's one.

Intervention studies conducted on the role of self-assessment in increasing autonomy (Andrade, & Boulay, 2003; Lam, 2013) resulted in gains in both language proficiency and in developing strategic abilities. Training students on the use of self-assessment checklists

is believed to help teachers when guiding students to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses. It also helps them in finding out where students had succeeded or failed in their learning process. In a study conducted by Lam (2013) on the impact that self, peer, or tutor assessment can have on impeding or promoting text revision, the researcher concluded that each type has its own impact on draft revision. While peer and teacher response are found to assist learners in identifying the gaps in their writing knowledge through comparison between their current level and the level of the more expert writers, self-assessment enforces in students the strategies of reflection, redrafting and critiquing. With these metacognitive strategies, students become more responsible and engage in writing activities in a more proactive way. Lam (2013) remarks, nonetheless, that in order to make self-assessment one of the students' writing habits, it needs some training as it may be challenging for students before it is systematically practised.

Developing autonomous behaviours in writers is an ambitious and challenging task. Research on this area of study has been marked by the strong connection autonomy has with metacognitive strategies and teacher's scaffolding.

2.3.8 Tools to enhance student writers' autonomy

In the previous section, the components of autonomous learning of writing are closely linked to the agreed upon components of autonomous learning. Some researchers interested in the same area (components of autonomous learning) suggested a number of strategies and learning practices that can assist student writers to be more autonomous (Ferris, 2002; Izumi, 2002). Textual enhancement and error log, to mention a few, are examples of techniques used to raise the students' responsibility in particularly the writing skill.

2.3.8.1 Textual/ typographical enhancement (TE)

One major role that learner-centred instruction should play is fostering autonomous learning habits among learners. Locating mismatches between the learner's still-developing interlanguage and the target language is one of those advantageous habits (Vickers & Ene, 2006). In writing courses, this could be possible through comparison between the produced text and a reformulation provided as a response by a more expert writer. According to Vickers and Ene,

> Having learners compare their texts to native speaker reformulations seems to allow learners to be autonomous in their ability to find their own output errors. However, the text reformulation requires assistance from a native speaker, which may not be available or practical in all language learning contexts. (2006, p.110)

The more practical alternative to this situation is to engage learners in comparison endeavour without an external help. Noticing can be triggered if learners are exposed to textually/ typographically enhanced texts devised to target particular substance or linguistic features. It is believed that noticing is a facilitating factor of language acquisition.

Noticing is widely recognised as one of the driving forces of language acquisition, for it is the very mechanism whereby input is converted into intake (Schmidt 1995, 2001). Only part of the input to which learners are exposed to is internalised and can be used by the learners. What is internalised is then considered intake; therefore, in order for input to transform into intake, noticing has to interfere. Learners attend to the different elements contained in input, and they engage in comparisons between their intended message and the one formulated by a more proficient target language user. For example, if learners are exposed to reading passages including relative clauses, they can internalise the rules of relative clause construction if they manage to notice them in the passage including a variety of other clauses (Izumi, 2002). The processed input, therefore, can embody helpful

clues that guide the learner to develop rules about grammar, vocabulary, discourse, and pragmatics to mention a few. The same mechanism of input conversion is responsible of the evolution of the interlanguage systems from non-targetlike interlanguage to more targetlike interlanguage.

Enhancing texts has been thought of as an efficient technique to increase the noticing of target elements. The typographical modifications employed in enhancing the salience of the target features in the reading material include, among others, bolding, underlining, circling and colour highlighting (Sharwood Smith 1991, 1993).

To test the effectiveness of textual/ typographical enhancement (TE) a number of empirical studies have been conducted. The inconclusive results allowed distinguishing three groups of studies: the group succeeding to report positive effects, the group yielding partial gains, and the group that found no benefits from the technique.

The group of studies that has reported gains from the use of the technique includes among others, Shook (1994) and Jourdenais, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, and Doughty (1995). Jourdanais et al.'s (1995) study aimed at investigating the effects of a number of typographical cues, namely bolding, shadowing, and underlining parts on the detection of the imperfect structures and preterit. The subjects of this study were ten adult Spanish learners. The analysis of the think aloud protocols and the output-based (production) task revealed an increase in the noticing abilities of the target linguistic features.

The group that obtained results indicating partial effectiveness include Izumi (2002), and Lee (2007). Izumi (2002) investigated the effects of TE on promoting the noticing and learning of English relativization. Among the attention drawing cues used in this research were bolding, shadowing, and varying font and font size. To assess the facilitative role of the technique, the researcher adopted both an input-based approach and output-based one; that is to say, he used tasks involving both language reception (reading) and language

production (writing). The researcher concluded from the performance of the study subjects that TE led to improvements in noticing while no gains were recorded regarding learning. Lee (2007) worked on a larger sample, 259 Korean learners, to examine the effects of bold font on learning passive voice and on meaning comprehension. After the analysis of a correction task meant to assess intake and a free recall task to assess comprehension, he came to the conclusion that TE has a positive effect on the first construct while a negative one on the second.

Among the last group of studies showing no effects of the technique is the study of Leow (2001). The targeted linguistic feature in this study was the Spanish imperatives. The researcher administered a multiple-choice recognition task along with an online think aloud protocol to his 38 subjects. The analysis of the employed measurement instruments showed no gains in acquisition, noticing, or comprehension. Likewise, Leow, Egi, Nuevo and Tsai (2003) investigated the effects of underlining on the acquisition of present perfect subjunctive. The recognition task performed by the 72 participants along with the think aloud protocol showed no significant results in increasing comprehension, noticing, or learning

The bulk of studies conducted on TE have primarily targeted the acquisition of given linguistic features; however, the potential gain of promoting autonomy can also be further investigated as research has reached inconclusive results regarding the potential benefits.

2.3.8.2 Error log

This technique has been elaborated on by Ferris (2002, 2011) as one of the key steps towards enhancing self-editing skills among student writers. Error analysis benefits enormously teachers in their classroom practices, yet the learner also can develop some efficient learning habits if he/she is more aware about his/her areas of weaknesses (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2013). Ferris (2002) specifies that only "frequent, global, and stigmatising"

(p. 330) errors have to be targeted instead of targeting all the errors. The choice and the remediation could also be regulated by students' needs. One example provided by Ferris is related to tense use. If a learner is struggling with the quandary of using the present perfect or the past, learning should be focussed on this particular aspect rather than on the use of tenses in general.

Writers of varying levels of proficiency can benefit from keeping error logs. Writers of low proficiency level can be guided by the teacher instead of initiating themselves the identification of the recurrent error pattern. They accordingly attend to the indicated patterns to gain more awareness about error correction. More experienced writers, on the other hand, can receive the help of the teacher, but they are more independent in terms of error identification (Ortmeier-Hooper, 2013).

2.3.8.3 Portfolios

Portfolios are collections of written productions selected by student-writers to record their progress over a period of time. The primary purpose from assigning them is to promote formative assessment. They are different from single writing samples in that they are written in less stressful conditions. In addition to the selected final drafts, portfolios may also compile earlier drafts, reflective comments, and responses obtained from the teacher or peers (Hyland, 2003).

The strength of portfolios as pedagogical tools enhancing autonomy lies in the opportunities they offer to reflect on one's performance. The delayed evaluation of the produced work assists learners in the revision of the works to check whether they meet the established criteria. Selection is a feature characterising portfolios and involving learners in a process of comparing performances and noticing changes and improvement, if any. As the student-writer is required to include in the portfolio a reflective essay describing his progress as a writer, he sharpens his abilities of self-evaluation and self-assessment.

Additionally, the student-writer explains to the readers the reasons behind selecting the works included in the portfolio and how that content captures the strengths of the student-writer (Hyland, 2003; Weigle, 2002).

Based on the findings conducted on the pedagogical merits of portfolios, Lam and Lee (2009) concluded that portfolios promote choice among students. Because choice is at the heart of autonomous learning (Cotterall, 2000), autonomy can be enhanced when a student-writer is given opportunities to make some choices regarding his best performance or preferred feedback. While selection, a major component in portfolio keeping, increases the sense of ownership, delayed evaluation assists in identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Conclusion

This review of literature has presented a synthesis of the main theories and studies contributing to the understanding of the facilitative role of some reflection and revision strategies in improving the overall quality of writing. Important insights into this topic were gained from reviewing both analytically and critically both researchers' and pedagogical practitioners' contributions. By encouraging reflection over the process of writing and specifically the revision of writing, writing instruction has the potential not only to improve the quality of produced texts, but also to foster autonomous habits. The theoretical and empirical insights gained from the literature review are taken into consideration in the design of the research methodology. The next chapter includes an account of the research questions guiding this study, the research design framing it, and the instruments utilised to answer the questions. The research questions are, accordingly, answered in the light of the obtained results.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Design

Chapter three: Methodology and Research Design

Introduction

In the chapter of the literature review, we have presented an overview of the theoretical concepts bearing on the topics of error treatment, and the role of some metacognitive strategies in improving writing quality and enhancing learner autonomy. This chapter will shed light on the contribution of the present study in the same area of research. More specifically, detailed accounts will be provided regarding the research methodology used in the current study, the participants, the sampling method, and the procedure of the experiment.

3.1 Research Design

The current study aims to investigate the extent to which training on the use of self-monitoring and self-correction strategies can have an impact on improving both the writing quality of the produced paragraphs and the writing abilities of the students. Additionally, it seeks to investigate whether the same training can help students develop some autonomous behaviours related to revising paragraphs. Specifically, this study aims at answering the following research questions:

RQ1: Does training on self-monitoring (SM) and self-correction (SC) lead to improved quality of paragraph writing?

RQ2: Does the training on SM and SC lead to reducing the number of errors in students' paragraphs?

RQ3: Does self-monitoring through marginal annotations guide the students to act as more reflective and responsible writers?

RQ4: What are the students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the training?

To fulfil the intent of answering the aforementioned research questions, we chose to conduct a quasi-experimental design as it is thought to suit the objective of the present study for a number of reasons. The research questions raised in this study are eliciting information about the effectiveness of a number of variables. The manipulation of variables is achieved through the training on the use of some metacognitive strategies and self-initiated feedback. The impact of the variables' control is investigated on the following aspects: the improvement of the writing ability reflected through scores, the reduction of errors in students' writings, and fostering reflective and autonomous behaviours in the different steps of writing.

The study also sought to investigate possible changes in the participants' beliefs regarding their abilities to improve their writing skills and act as more autonomous writers as a result to the training. Therefore, we appealed as well to qualitative research methods resulting thus in a mixed methods research. The reason behind selecting a mixed method approach combining quantitative with qualitative methods was to benefit from the strengths of both research approaches and to address the possible inherent weaknesses of each. Therefore, emphasis is placed on both methods equally. Statistical and numerical evidence is obtained through pre-test post-test scores and through the questionnaire. On the other hand, qualitative data are collected through the analysis of paragraphs' corpus, annotations corpus, and open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the interview.

Statistical evidence is intended to offer rigor and accuracy to the study whereas an interpretive approach would add in-depth understanding of the patterns emerging from data. It is worth to note that the integration of both research methods does not entail any priority given to one method over the other. It would be unwise to rely solely on pre-test post-test as a quantitative data to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the training.

Nor could it be appropriate to limit the study to purely qualitative data with no reference to rigorous statistical evidence.

3.1.1 Research contexts

The study was carried out in the department of English at Mohamed Lamine Debbaghine Sétif2 University. The instructional sessions involved in the study extended over a semester of 14 weeks. It started at the end of the first semester of 2014-2015 academic year and finished at the end of the second semester of the same academic year. The reason behind starting the study at the end of the first semester is to ensure the students' readiness for the training. In the first semester, the syllabus covered paragraph writing including among others the process of writing, the structure of the paragraph, and the main errors that could threaten the quality of writing. They are also supposed to have had enough practice to be acquainted with the correction code used by the teacher when giving feedback, or by peer students when revising their works.

Workshops took place in classrooms, guided by the teacher who is at the same time the researcher conducting the present study.

3.1.2 Population and sampling

For this study, we chose a sample of 90 second year students. Forty-five of them constituted the control group, and another 45 students formed the experimental group. The two groups were taken from a population of 380 students representing the total number of second year students in the department of English at Mohamed Lamine Debbaghine Sétif2 University, during the academic year 2014- 2015.

Given that a primordial condition for the reliability of any study results is the representativeness of the sample, we opted for a proportional stratified sampling. By following such an approach, we hoped to avoid any extraneous variable associated to the level of the students. As a first step in the sampling process, the students' grade point

averages (GPA) of the previous academic year, the first year, were retrieved from the archives of the departments. The objective from this step was to group students in discrete categories based on their results. The whole population was divided into three strata: one stratum comprised all students scoring between 10 and 11.99 in their first year GPA, the second stratum included students scoring between 12 and 13.99, and the last stratum represented students scoring more than 14. Percentages then were computed to be ready for a further use in the selection and distribution of students into control and experimental groups.

Table 3.1

Proportions of the Three Strata in the Whole Second Year Population

Previous level average (GPA)	Students number	Students percentage
10 - 11,99	292 students	76.84 %
12 - 13,99	67 students	17.63 %
+ 14	21 students	5.52 %
Total	380 students	100 %

The selection of the groups of the sample was made in such a way that it allows matching the proportions in the total population. The following equation was used to count the required proportion in each stratum. That is to say, if the whole population comprises 5.52% of students scoring above 14, the sample should comprise the same proportion of students of the same category.

$$\frac{n \ of \ students \ in \ a \ stratum}{(380) total \ number \ of \ students} x \ (45) \ n \ of \ participants \ in \ the \ experimental \ group.$$

Table 3.2

Proportions of the Three Strata in a Group of 45 Students

Previous level average	Students number	Students Percentage
10 - 11,99	35	76.84 %
12 - 13,99	8	17.63 %
+ 14	2	5.52 %
Total	45 students	100 %

By referring to tables 3.1 and 3.2, we notice that the stratum of low achievers (students scoring between 10 and 11.99 in their last GPA) included 292 students, which accounted for 76.84% of the total population. The same percentage is maintained in the sample, so each of the control and experimental groups included 35 low achievers. The same process was followed with the other strata to obtain a sample having proportions of the categories identical to those comprised in the population.

Because intact groups during the academic year 2014-2015 included a number of students inferior to 45 students, it was necessary to distribute each of the control group and experimental group on two intact groups. Hence, the study was conducted on four classes: two groups included participants in the control group, and two groups included participants of the experimental group.

The rationale behind considering the pass average of students and not only written expression marks in the division of strata is the integrated nature of the linguistic competence. The writing skill draws upon a range of sub skills, which are actually dealt with in most of the modules, such as using correct standard grammar, knowing how to fulfill communicative functions through the use of particular sentence patterns, mastering the rules of connecting ideas together, and using correct spelling and punctuation.

Conducting the research with second year students offered us the possibility to deal with students who were more adapted to university study habits in contrast to first year students. Having been used to learning that relied totally on the teacher's guidance in high school, first year students may not be ready for the sudden shift to more autonomous learning entailed by the intervention of this study. Additionally, having acquired in first year the basic knowledge of sentence parts, sentence types, mechanics, and sentence level accuracy, the students are now ready for instruction targeting paragraph writing. The process approach, agreed upon by second year teachers to be the most appropriate to the

second year level students, involves multi-drafting and revision. Teaching students to correct their errors and monitor the whole process of writing would be more appropriate if instruction was framed in process approach than in other approaches.

3.1.3 Procedure

The two groups, the control and experimental, were taught the same syllabus described in the previous paragraph; however, the techniques employed with each group differed. For the experimental group, the underlying principle in the followed procedure was the gradual transition from students' total reliance on the teacher to shouldering more responsibilities during writing and more particularly during revision. In doing this, it could be possible to gradually introduce a number of techniques throughout the 14 weeks and have enough data that allow the comparison of the initial situation with the final one. Three phases were designed to guarantee a smooth transition from one level of autonomy to another.

3.1.3.1 Phase one: Raising metalinguistic awareness

Lasting for four weeks and requiring four one-hour-sessions, this stage aimed specifically, at equipping students with the necessary skills for the transition to phase two of the intervention. One of the prerequisite skills was the ability to identify their weaknesses and the major error patterns they tend to make. For this purpose, students were provided detailed corrective feedback to the four paragraphs they have written. The feedback, which was provided in the space below the students' paragraph (see appendix E), included mostly reformulations of erroneous parts, metalinguistic commentaries and commands. After reading the teacher's response, the students were required to fill in the error log sheet (see appendix F) including a tabulated list of their recurring errors. A cross or a tick should be placed in the corresponding column to facilitate the computation of errors in each error pattern.

In addition to the ability of diagnosing their weaknesses, another ability that students were sought to develop in this phase was the metalinguistic awareness. Central to the ability of diagnosing and correcting errors, is the ability to recognize, and if possible, name parts of speech, parts of sentences, and the type of error occurring at any part. This was achieved through the code system including different types of errors and their codes (See Appendix G). Spending an average time of about five to ten minutes reading the teacher's feedback and filling the error log was believed to be enough for attaining the purpose of developing metalinguistic awareness.

A further purpose from the first phase was introducing the skill of reflection to students. The participants were trained to write down, in the form of marginal annotations, all their concerns, doubts, or queries on the same sheet including the typographically enhanced text and the paragraph they are writing. From such a step, it was aimed to introduce the technique of self-monitoring in the training period, and to give the participants an opportunity to receive feedback on the areas of their concern instead of getting feedback on all or randomly selected errors. Students were required to write the paragraph and the marginal annotations simultaneously. Postponing the writing of marginal annotations until the end of paragraph writing could cause students to forget their queries and leave the space provided for them blank. Because students were not accustomed to the idea of reflective marginal annotations, the teacher wrote on the board some examples of questions like

- Is the topic sentence effective?

- Shall I add another detail, or the idea is clear?

- I'm not sure how to say *la patisserie* in English.

- Is this sentence very long? Perhaps I have to break it down into two.

- I'm not sure whether it is *receive* or *recieve*.

- In line four, a comma or a full stop?

Students were also requested not to limit their annotations to a single aspect of writing like vocabulary or spelling. By the end of this phase, students were able to understand the order and the processes required in each of the four instructional sessions. Moreover, they had received sufficient feedback from the teacher to aid them in diagnosing their weaknesses and recognizing their error patterns.

Table 3.3

Time Schedule of Instructional Sessions Activities in Phase One

Students' activities	Average time allotted to each activity
Reading the comments of the previous assignment and filling in the error log (This step did not occur in the very first session)	5 to 10 minutes
Attending to the highlighted aspects in the typographically enhanced text of the current session	5 to 10 minutes
Responding to the writing prompt and participating in a brief brainstorming	5 to 10 minutes
Writing the paragraph simultaneously with marginal annotations	40 to 45 minutes

3.1.3.2 Phase two: Partial responsibility over responding to teacher feedback

In this phase, the students continue using the previously learnt techniques: reading typographically enhanced texts, self-monitoring through marginal annotations, relying on teacher's feedback to diagnose their error patterns and to revise the first draft of their paragraphs. However, what distinguishes this phase from the previous one is the level of the teacher's involvement. In the previous four sessions, the degree of the teacher's involvement and guidance was fairly high whereas in this phase the students were invited to gradually shoulder some of the responsibilities while writing and revising.

Because students were believed, at this level, to be more aware about their weaknesses, the teacher started brief discussions in which students were inquired about the degree of the severity in each problem and the way the weaknesses could be handled. An example of dialogues that were often initiated with students is the following:

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Teacher: Marwa, what's the error type in which you have most crosses?

Marwa: It's subject/verb agreement.

Teacher: How many crosses do you have?

Marwa: Twelve.

Teacher: It's a considerable number, and what can be done to fix this problem?

Marwa: Maybe I have to revise some rules concerning this point.

Engaging students in this type of dialogues has two aims. The first aim is checking whether students were aware of their linguistic gaps and hence were ready to identify some of their specific learning needs in writing. The second aim is to stimulate their thinking about the possible learning resources they could refer to in order to handle their writing problems and to fulfill both their general learning needs and their specific ones. It was concluded that dictionaries, grammar books, punctuation books, along with the lectures presented in their first year and first semester of second year, were the mostly needed resources for students.

Another aspect distinguishing this phase from the previous one is the feedback the teacher provides to the students' paragraphs. The teacher continues to provide feedback for both the concerns articulated in marginal annotations and the produced work. However, this time students were also given indirect feedback to engage them in self-correction. For this purpose, a table reserved to two cues, was added and placed in the bottom of the sheet including students' paragraphs (see Appendix H). These cues were given as a kind of indirect feedback to guide students in their attempts to correct their own errors. In the first two sessions of this phase, the teacher underlined the erroneous part in the produced paragraph, numbered it, and then specified the number and the code of the error inside the table. In order to increase the challenge, the teacher reduced the directness of the feedback in the remaining two sessions. She would give only the type of error without locating it,

and asked students to both locate the existing error and correct it. Alternatively, she would indicate the number of sentence in which the error occurred and ask students to spot the error and correct it. In each paragraph, students were asked to respond to two indirect feedback instances.

In addition to being engaged in self-correction, students were also required to indicate the cause of the error. They were given three possibilities to choose from: the error is due to not knowing the rule, the error is due to a lack of practice of the already known rule, and the error is due to inattention or a slip of the pen since the rule is fully mastered. To each of the possibilities the teacher attributed a letter *(a)* for the first possibility, *(b)* for the second, and *(c)* for the last. Students had to write only the letter instead of all the explanation of the error source.

Performing this last step was hoped to benefit the students in different ways. This step engages them in more reflective thinking not only about the error affecting the quality of their produced texts but also about the causes that led to making it. The ability to trace back errors to their sources is likely to pave the way to finding solutions to the faced problems. For instance, if the error occurrence was repeatedly explained by a lack of practice in a rule learnt previously, this might urge the student to practice more that particular language element or to consult the necessary learning resources that can help her/ him reinforce it.

3.1.3.3 Phase three: Increased responsibility over initiating and responding to feedback

This final phase was planned to further practice the strategies and feedback behaviours introduced previously. However, it was mainly intended to reduce the teacher's involvement to a minimal level and engage the students in more autonomous behaviours. No feedback from the teacher was provided this time to the students' paragraphs. Instead,

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students were invited to reread the marginal annotations they had written and try to answer them. Additional commentaries had to be added as well, if judged necessary, to any part of the paragraphs they have produced. A space was left in the copy where they were supposed to write the paragraphs for any corrections they initiate themselves (see Appendix I). It is worth to note that students were engaged in self-correction after at least two days of writing the first draft. Such a delay was intended to get students read their texts "with the critical detachment of an outside reader" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 92). Trying to evaluate and correct one's work immediately after its production may be hindered by the inability to be detached from the produced text, and time is hoped to help students solve this problem. The three previous phases were thought to serve as preparatory and transitory phases paving the way for students to be empowered through the practice of those strategies and to gain more confidence once they have the necessary skills for self-correction.

During the three phases in which the treatment was conducted with the experimental group, the control group did not have any systematic training on the aforementioned strategies. Instead, it was introduced to the regular syllabus of the semester that gives equal importance and alternates between teacher's feedback, peer feedback and self-correction. It is worthwhile to note that self-correction through the use of a reviewing checklist was introduced to and encouraged among participants of this group as one of the three possible sources of feedback (see Appendix J). Nonetheless, the instruction alternating between teacher feedback, peer feedback, and self-correction was not in such a systematic way that could target to enhance metacognitive strategies and autonomy.

While the students in the experimental group were exposed to typographically enhanced texts, the control group students were exposed to the same texts but presented as a listening material. The teacher would read a text before each prompt was given. In doing

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so, the aim was to provide an example of the type of paragraphs they were required to write, yet no printed material bearing any visual modifications were used.

Table 3.4

Techniques and Practices Used with the Control and Experimental Groups

Technique	Control group	Experimental group
Exposure to typographically enhanced texts	Exposure to a reading material read by the teacher, but no printed material whether enhanced or not was given to students.	Exposure to one printed typographically enhanced text each session in the three phases.
Marginal annotations	No marginal annotations required to be written by students	Marginal annotations required to be written in the three phases
List of error patterns	No list of error pattern used	List of error patterns used in the three phases to report the number of occurrence of each error type
Reviewing checklist	Reviewing checklist encouraged to be regularly used throughout the semester	Reviewing checklist encouraged to be regularly used in the three phases
Feedback	Alternating between teacher direct feedback, peer direct feedback, and self-correction	Teacher direct feedback exclusively given in phase1 A combination of teacher direct and indirect feedback in phase 2 No teacher feedback, exclusive use of self-correction

3.1.4 Reading materials used in the study

Among the techniques utilised in this study was exposure to typographically enhanced texts (see Appendix K). The theoretical concept underlying such a choice is thoroughly explained in the first chapter. Autonomous learning relies heavily on the learners' use of resources. In the absence of the teacher or any more expert individual gearing the students' attention to the targeted learning elements, learners need a tool to enhance their attentional capacities. Exposure to typographically enhanced texts is believed to be a useful technique that can help students shoulder more responsibilities, particularly when using learning resources beyond classroom borders. Another theoretical concept is the integration of reading with writing skill. Such a step raises the students' awareness about the necessity of an input for a facilitation of output production. The comparison between the student's own production and the productions of more expert writers are believed to trigger noticing of the mismatches between the student's interlanguage and samples of target language use. The typographically enhanced texts may also serve as a reminder of the explicit explanations the students have received from teachers about given

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language forms. This explanation, which was limited in space and time, may be easily forgotten, but with the presence of such texts, it is possible for the student to reexamine again the elements of the input he is supposed to attend to or to imitate successfully.

Throughout the semester of the treatment, 13 typographically enhanced texts have been used: one in a pilot session and 12 texts in the treatment period. In each session an A4 format printed copy of a text was presented to each of the participants in the experimental group. Their produced texts were written down on the same sheet. The typographical techniques differed in each text and included bold typing, circling, underlining, and increasing the size, to mention a few.

For practical reasons, all the texts were composed by the researcher given that a number of conditions should be taken into account when selecting the materials. For one reason, the text length had to be convenient to the duration of the instructional session. A long text, for example, would take much time for reading and would disrupt the students' attention to the targeted elements, and hence fail to meet the objective from this reading activity. Therefore, the length of all texts ranged from 78 and 137 words while the average was 109 words. Because students were required in the prompts to write paragraphs of five to seven sentences, the same criterion was respected in the suggested texts. The minimum number of sentences was four (for a concluding paragraph) while the maximum was seven sentences, and the average was 5.83 sentences per paragraph. Since the students were encouraged to vary both the length and the complexity degree of their sentences, text complexity was also taken into consideration. Texts included different types of sentences: simple, compound, complex, and compound complex. The selection of topics is a further element determining the text characteristics. Beauty contests, learning styles, sugar craving, and writer's block are examples of the selected topics which were believed to raise the interest of the participants. Another reason for composing the texts instead of

selecting them from print or digital resources is the necessity for the text to display and include sufficient instances of the target writing aspect. Each text was prepared to serve the predetermined purpose. For example, in the session targeting punctuation, a variety of sentence types were used to represent the different cases of punctuation use.

3.1.5 Targeted features in the typographically enhanced texts

As mentioned in the preceding section, in each of the reading paragraphs the focus was on one aspect of writing. Thus, typographical enhancement was carried out on one target feature, each time, to avoid overwhelming the students and to facilitate the process of guiding their attention to the targeted aspect. It was hence necessary to limit the number of targeted features and select among the myriad of aspects involved in writing those that help attain the objectives of the research. Therefore, we referred to some theoretical insights to select the features.

The first theoretical insight was gained from the scoring schemes adopted by researchers in assessment of writing. Weigle (2002) provides examples of scoring schemes that allot content and lexico-grammatical accuracy approximately equal points (50 and 45 respectively) and mechanical accuracy is allotted 5 points. Therefore, the biggest share of sessions could be divided equally between content and lexico-gramatical features while mechanical accuracy can be allotted a small share of sessions. The second theoretical insight was gained from Allal, Chanquoy, and Largy (2004). It suggests that the revision of the different aspects of writing do not require the same cognitive effort for each aspect. For instance, the revision of spelling is less cognitively demanding than the revision of coherence. Hence, it would be illogical to devote more sessions to the non-cognitively demanding features than to the demanding ones. Another theoretical insight guiding the selection of the features is the distinction between rule-governed errors and non-rule governed errors (Van Beuningen, 2011). A balance was thought to be desirable between

the features that can be revised by referring to some learning materials like dictionaries or grammar books and the features that could not be revised by referring to learning materials. One example of rule-governed features is subject verb agreement; non-rule-governed features can be illustrated with adequacy of supporting ideas.

In addition to the   previously mentioned theoretical consideration, a preliminary error analysis was conducted to find out the most problematic areas in writing on the basis of which the targeted features would be chosen. A sub-sample of 18 pre-test paragraphs (the fifth of the total sample of 90 paragraphs) was selected using a systematic random sampling. The teacher/ researcher counted and classified the errors then calculated the percentage of errors in each area. The total number of errors found in the 18 paragraphs was 184 errors. They were distributed as indicated in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5

Percentages of Different Types of Error Occurrence in the Preliminary Error

Analysis

Error type	Percentage of occurrence
Content and organisation (adequacy of support, coherence, idea organisation, rhetorical pattern)	11.88 %
Grammar-related problems (e. g. subject/verb agreement, fragments, pronoun/antecedent agreement, verb/tense problems, sentence combination)	24.37 %
Vocabulary-related problems (e.g. word choice, word class, preposition use)	18.9 %
Mechanical accuracy problems (punctuation, spelling, capitalisation)	41.07 %
Other aspects (e.g. use of L1 or L2 wording, addition of unnecessary word, missing of necessary word)	03.78 %

However, due to the theoretical considerations explained at the beginning of this section, these numerical findings were considered with care and reservation; that is the

biggest share of sessions was not systematically allocated to the aspect with the highest percentage of errors. By considering the figures of the most problematic errors, it is noticed that mechanical accuracy accounted for the highest percentage (41.07 %) while content and organisation accounted for a low percentage (11.88 %). If taken into consideration, this numerical result would mean that mechanical accuracy should be devoted more sessions than content and organisation. When correcting the pre-test, spelling errors, for example, naturally outnumber content ones. A student may misspell six different words, and fail to select the right organisation of the ideas, so he ends up with six spelling errors and one error of organisation. Because mechanical errors are considered surface rule-governed errors, their noticing and treatment can be easier than errors made in content and organisation. Besides, not all errors are of the same degree of gravity, and spelling errors do not affect the communicative value and the comprehensibility of the text as errors in organisation may do.

Accordingly, based mainly on the theoretical considerations and some results of the preliminary error-analysis, the selection of the features was as follows: four sessions were devoted to content, six sessions to grammatical and lexical accuracy, and two sessions to mechanical accuracy. The session devoted to content tackled adequacy of support, unity, coherence through the use of transitions and rhetorical pattern. The sessions devoted to lexico-grammatical features dealt with subject-verb agreement, fragments, word form, word choice and verb/tense problems. To this, was added sentence combination as a feature which, though pertains to the grammatical structure of sentences, can help students in organising ideas into well-structured sentences. Mechanical accuracy was devoted two sessions one for spelling and the other for punctuation and capitalisation.

3.1.6 Pedagogical tools

Over the course of the training period, a number of pedagogical tools were introduced to the participants with the purpose of providing alternative choices to reduce dependence on the instructor. In teacher-led classrooms, the diagnosis of the weaknesses is a role assigned to the teacher. Based on the diagnostic tests or the assessment of assignments, the teacher sets goals for the management of the teaching process and plans the necessary steps for the implementation of his decisions. The error log is a tool suggested to assist the participants in having a tabulated form which comprehensively synthesises the areas of weaknesses. Having the possibility to understand the most prevailing errors and limitations in their writing is thought to trigger a chain of goal setting and planning taking into account the individual particularities. Hence, it would be possible for any participant to set individual goals matching his level of writing proficiency along with the goals set by the teacher.

Typographically enhanced texts were introduced to reduce the teacher's involvement in rule explanation and provision of input. By learning how to benefit from reading materials as input for writing, the students would have an optimal use of reading materials in learning contexts other than teacher-led environments.

Marginal annotations were intended to replace the teacher's initiation (and response) of feedback. It was also hoped to involve the student in self-evaluation and problem-solving. Table 3.6 summarises the main purposes for which each pedagogical tool was used during the phases of the treatment period.

Table 3.6

Pedagogical Tools Introduced to Reduce Dependence on the Teacher

Pedagogical tool	Purpose
Error log	- Diagnose one's weaknesses.
	- Set individual goals based on the diagnosed weaknesses
	-Develop metalinguistic awareness.
Typographically enhanced texts	-Enhance noticing the mismatch between the students' writings and the suggested typographically enhanced texts.
	- Reduce the teacher's involvement in rule explanation
	- learn how to use input in contexts broader than the classroom.
Marginal annotations	-Initiation of feedback
	-Formulation of hypotheses regarding more appropriate choices to make.
	- trigger reflection and problem-solving
	- develop self-evaluative habits while writing
	- orchestrate the different processes involved in writing

3.1.7 Pilot study

A week before starting the instructional sessions, one pilot session was conducted to fulfill a number of objectives. One major objective was to test the feasibility of the steps involved in the treatments sessions. All the steps involved in the treatment sessions were designed in the light of the theoretical insights gained from the literature review; nevertheless, it was not guaranteed that the implementation of such steps could be feasible or could occur in a smooth way.

Requiring a student to monitor his evolving text during its production through writing annotations was an unfamiliar task. It was hence necessary to check the way the participants perceive the assigned task in terms of its degree of difficulty and the clarity of its instructions. The researcher as well needed to be familiar with the steps involved in

instructional sessions and with the roles she was supposed to play at each step of the instructional sessions. Another objective was to ensure that the instructional sessions' time could be managed conveniently so that it could be possible to train the students on the use of the strategies in question and to produce a written text and marginal annotations concurrently. The pilot study was also meant to yield pilot corpora, a corpus of marginal annotations and a corpus of paragraphs. Through the study of both pilot corpora, it was hoped to check whether the adopted steps could help in gathering the desired data, namely the main corpus of marginal annotations and the main corpus of paragraphs.

The sample of this pilot study was 10 students selected randomly. The participants responded to the following paragraph writing prompt: *write a paragraph in which you explain the process of learning a skill of your choice*. Prior to the writing task, the students were exposed to a typographically enhanced text titled "how to improve the writing skill". The elements that were enhanced were clauses conveying the major supporting ideas of the general idea. The teacher read the text and asked the students to guess the reason for which some elements in the text were written in bold face and hence to increase their noticing of the writing aspect in question. The students were given a sheet on the upper part of which the typographically enhanced text was printed. The participants were supposed to divide the lower part of the sheet with a vertical line into two parts: one for the paragraph and the other for the annotations. Exposure to the typographically enhanced text was allotted about 10 minutes; the dictation of the prompt took about five minutes; and the composition of the paragraph was allotted 40 minutes.

A pilot corpus of 10 paragraphs and a pilot corpus of 33 annotations were gathered at the end of the pilot session. In the following session, the participants were invited to read the teacher's feedback and to give their opinions about the treatment pilot session. In doing

this, it was aimed to seek further information from the participants themselves about the difficulties or the problematic steps that could reduce the effectiveness of the intervention.

The researcher's remarks and the students' feedback regarding the steps followed in the pilot session allowed for a better management of the tasks and steps involved in the implementation of the intervention. For instance, it was noticed that the students seemed to be confused by the idea of writing concurrently the paragraph and their reflections in the form of marginal annotations. They even delayed writing the annotations till the end of paragraph writing. The students' feedback provided at the bottom of the same sheet confirmed our remarks.

Three of the participants stressed that the task of writing annotations was complicated, difficult, and boring. They attributed the difficulty to their unfamiliarity to such kind of instructions. One of the participants expressed her surprise by the amount of errors flagged by the teacher. She added that she felt disappointed and doubtful about her abilities to write paragraphs. On the other hand, there was positive feedback expressed through these remarks:

"I feel that it is interesting. I like it"

"I enjoy study of writing expression this way"

"I agree with all notes done by teacher"

"The teacher feedback help me a lot especially answering my questions"

The analysis of the pilot corpus indicated that the students' responses to instructions of the tasks varied in terms of quantity and quality. A maximum of seven annotations was reported on the sheet of one participant while another student did not write any annotation. The average annotations were three per student. In terms of quality, the annotations reflected a variety of concerns ranging from the appropriateness of ideas to the topic of the

prompt to the correctness of spelling and punctuation. However, some annotations were too broad and did not specify what the query was precisely about. Illustrative examples are

"Do the details support the main idea?"

"I am not sure of the ideas",

"I need more vocabularies", "are the spellings correct?" and

"Did I use the corrected punctuation?"

Based on the results obtained through the observation of the students' behaviours and responses to the instructions of the pilot session, on the participants opinions expressed in written from and orally, and on the pilot corpus, it was appropriate to make a few decisions that could optimize the effectiveness of the instructional sessions. To address the problem of writing concurrently the paragraph and the marginal annotations, the teacher tried to convince the students that the annotations were not different from the oral questions they routinely asked the teacher or the peers while writing. Therefore, when students asked the teacher, orally, questions to articulate whatever concern related to paragraph writing, the teacher would advise them to write down the query in the space devoted to the annotations. She asked them to avoid delaying writing the annotations since doing it caused them to waste time and effort in trying to remember them later on. The scarcity of annotations produced by some participants was then addressed in two ways. First, while writing the paragraphs, the teacher would continuously remind them to write down their concerns. Second, when providing written feedback on the paragraph sheets, the teacher would add sentences like the following: "where are the annotations?", or "where are your questions?".

Another decision made to solve the problematic steps in the treatment sessions was related to the broadness of the annotations. Below or next to such annotations, the teacher would write down questions asking for further clarifications. For instance, when a student wrote, "I'm not sure of the ideas", the teacher wrote below it, "which one, precisely?". For

more clarity of instructions, and for the sake of a better time management of the session, the teacher/researcher modified slightly the production sheet. The prompt was written below the typographically enhanced text to save the time that could be spent in dictating it. Two headings were added to indicate where the students had to write the paragraph and where they had to add the annotations (see Figure 3.1).

Typographically **enhanced text**. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. **Typographically** enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. **Typographically** enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically **enhanced text**.

Typographically **enhanced text**. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. **Typographically** enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. **Typographically** enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically enhanced text. Typographically **enhanced text.**

Prompt: write a paragraph of five to seven sentences in which you discuss the following topic. Prompt.

Paragraph | **Marginal annotations**

Figure 3.1. Modifications in the formatting of the production sheet: the first version to the left, the modified version to the right.

Based on the same data obtained from the pilot session, the teacher/ researcher decided to reinforce the elements that obtained positive feedback. For example, the students were encouraged to vary the concerns articulated in the annotations. Additionally, the timing allotted for each step in the session was maintained as it proved to be convenient. As regards other observed facts like disappointment due to errors' number and doubt in writing abilities, these are expected feedback from the participants. The teacher/ researcher intended to handle these problems through the provision of teacher initiated written feedback and the gradual transition to more autonomous handling of errors. Table

3.7 summarises the main problems encountered during the pilot session and the solutions thought to solve those problems.

Table 3.7

Problems Faced in the Pilot Session and Solutions to them

Problem	Solution
Difficulty of writing concurrently the paragraph and the annotations	Ask students to turn all the oral queries they have when composing the paragraph into written annotations.
Scarcity of annotations	Invite students to write annotations through written feedback. Invite students, orally, to write annotations.
Broad queries	Include questions asking for further details or clarifications.
Time management	Add slight modifications to the formatting of the sheet. Advise students to avoid delaying writing the annotations.

3.1.8 Internal and external validity

A number of measures were taken to address the threats of validity and to increase the reliability of the study results. One of the main threats to internal validity involves the selection of the participants. Familiarity to the steps involved in the treatment and the predisposition to accept it are other factors with a high potential to influence the outcomes of any experimental research (Creswell, 2011). The selection of students based on their level of achievement in the previous academic year using a proportional stratified sampling was aimed to avoid any heterogeneity that could in turn impact the way students respond to the treatment. If a different sampling method, convenience sampling for instance, was selected; there would be risks of having more good achievers in one group than the other. This imbalance in the categories of students participating in the study may influence the obtained results; in which case, it would be confusing to whether to attribute the results to the impact of the invention or the imbalance in the sample.

The sampling method was also intended to address the problem of *regression*. The post-test scores would be predictable had the participants been selected on the basis of extreme scores. Students having extremely high grades in the pre-test are likely to regress

to the mean in subsequent tests, that is to obtain grades closer to the average ones they would obtain. Similarly, students starting with very low grades in the pre-test are predicted to get higher grades in the post-test (Creswell, 2011). In the current study, attention was paid to avoid the selection of both groups' participants, the control group and the experimental one, on the basis of extreme scores.

Another problem threatening internal validity of the research is *the diffusion of the treatment*; that is, the spread of the intervention content among the control group. Participants in the experimental group might discuss the techniques used in the classroom with other participants of the control group. This problem is unavoidable in any experimental study; nevertheless, it could be minimised by taking a number of preventive steps. In the present study, we deliberately avoided to allow the participants in the treatment group to take with them the error logs and the paragraph copies including as well the textually enhanced texts. At the end of each instructional session, students handed back the production sheets to the teacher for the aforementioned purpose.

To avoid the *Hawthorne effect,* that is, the impact of knowledge that one belongs to the experimental group on the acceptance and responsiveness to the treatment (Newby, 2014), the participants in this study from both groups were not informed about which group they were assigned to. When they were invited to participate in the study, they were simply told that different techniques of teaching writing reviewing would be used with each group to test their effectiveness. Such a step was hoped to solve as well the problem of *John Henry effect*; that is to say, the determination of the control group participants to outperform the experimental group in order to prove their worth.

As regards external validity, the *pre-test treatment interaction* is a problem that can pose threat in experimental studies. The participants in the research can guess what they would be tested on in the post-test if they had previously a pre-test that reveals hints about

the objective of the study. They can be better prepared in the subject of the test and more responsive to the treatment impact (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014). Addressing this problem in the present study was possible through the choice of the test. In both the pre-treatment test and post-treatment test, writing prompts bearing on different topics were assigned to the participants. Considering that the participants knew that paragraph writing was an integral part of the second year syllabus, it was obvious that they would be tested on paragraph writing along the academic year. However, paragraph writing involves different types, functions, and topics; with such an open spectrum of possibilities, the likelihood to increase the responsiveness to studied variable is low.

3.1.9 Ethical considerations

The participants in this study were orally informed at the beginning of the treatment period about their participation in it. However, the signature of the informed consent was postponed until students had a number of instructional sessions. The reason behind postponing the signature was to give students an opportunity to know the content of the treatment and to assure them about the absence of any harm or inconvenience resulting from their participation. An informed consent including the general objectives of the study and its implications was given to participants of the experimental group to be signed (see Appendix L). Although it was mentioned in the consent that their decision to take part in the treatment or to decline was totally bound to their free will, all students expressed their desire to carry on their participation. For more assurance, students were invited to use pseudonyms and were informed that any data appearing in the research will be attributed to the pseudonyms not to their real names.

As regards access to students academic results preceding or succeeding the treatment period, a verbal permissions was acquired from the administrative board. Clarifications were provided about the motive of using the archive in the current study.

Conclusion

This chapter included detailed accounts of the research design, the selected population, along with the sampling procedure, and the steps involved in the conduct of the experiment. The next chapter sheds light on the data collection instruments and the data analysis procedures.

Chapter Four: Data Collection and Analysis

Chapter four: Data Collection and Analysis

Introduction

To attain the aim of the research, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used. This chapter describes the methods used in data collection. In addition, it provides details of the procedures used to analyse the obtained data.

4.1 Data Collection

Data of the present study consisted of pre-study/post-study scores, a corpus of students' paragraphs, a corpus of marginal annotations, a post-study questionnaire, and an interview conducted with the participants. While the scores were collected at the beginning and the end of the study period, the corpus of paragraphs and the corpus of annotations were gathered throughout the course of the second semester.

4.1.1 Pre-test and post-test scores

To investigate the degree of effectiveness that the one-semester training has on the students' performance in writing, a pre-test and post-test were assigned to both the control and experimental groups. The pre-study test consisted of a prompt requiring students to write a paragraph of five to ten sentences about the benefits of time management skills on the academic achievements of students. The post-study test was about the role formal education plays in guaranteeing a prosperous professional career. The choice of the topic was founded on the idea that students at any stage of their education are directly concerned by time management skills and that they constantly consider the ways their formal education would increase their chances of obtaining a job after graduation. In doing so, students would not find problems in generating ideas. Identical characteristics of length were required in the post-training test. Students were required to finish each test within 45 minutes.

4.1.1.1 The scoring procedure of paragraphs

To guarantee a high level of test reliability, we opted for an analytic scoring instead of a holistic one. Holistic marking schemes rely basically on the general impression the rater has about the produced text. They require only a single reading to assign a score; the thing that does not allow the rater to attend to the variety of aspects involved in writing. Hence, the score can be assigned for the strength noticed in, say, the mastery of the linguistic knowledge with no heed to the weakness of the content. Conversely, analytic scoring procedures require several readings of the same produced text. In each reading, attention can be paid to one aspect such as content, grammatical correctness, vocabulary choice, or mechanics. Besides, no vague features such as flavour or diction are included among the criteria of assessment as they can entail some subjective judgements from the rater (Wiegle, 2002).

The analytic scale used in this study was inspired from two sources: the scoring profile devised by Jacob et al. (1981, cited in Wiegle, 2002) and the TEEP (Test in English for Educational Purposes) scale (Weir, 1990, cited in Weigle, 2002). Five aspects are taken into consideration in the profile of Jacob et al.: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Content, receiving 30 points, is the aspect allotted the biggest share of points. Organisation is allotted 20 points which makes all in all 50 points for the aspects related to the substance and the communicative value of the text. The remaining 50 points are divided between grammar (25 points), vocabulary (20 points), and mechanics (5 points). As regards the second source TEEP scale, seven aspects are considered. For the substance of the text, the three incorporated aspects are relevance and adequacy of content, compositional organisation and cohesion. Aspects related to linguistic and mechanical accuracy encompass adequacy of vocabulary for purpose, grammar, accuracy of punctuation and accuracy of spelling.

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In the current study, the variety of aspects was inspired from TEEP scale whereas the distribution of points was an adoption of Jacob et al.'s scale. To adapt the scales to the purpose of the study, some modifications were carried out. In Jacob et al. scale, half of the points were allotted to content and organisation and the other half to the grammatical, lexical, and mechanical accuracy. In this study, three major aspects were considered in rating the participants' works. The aspects related to the paragraph ideational content (global aspects) were allotted four points out of the full score, ten points. An equal amount of points was given to grammatical and lexical accuracy while mechanical accuracy received two points.

A further decision was bearing on the subdivision of the major category of global aspects. In order for the evaluation of global aspects to be more objective and reliable, a number of discrete sub-features were indicated as criteria as it is indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Major Aspects of Writing and Scoring Guide Adopted for the Current Study

Aspect	Sub-aspects	Points /percentage	
Global aspects (Ideational content)	-Support of the major idea/ argument -Unity -Coherence -Appropriateness of the rhetorical pattern	4 points	40%
Language control (grammatical and lexical accuracy)	-Aspects related to grammar use. -Aspects related to vocabulary use.	4 points	40%
Mechanical accuracy	-Format - Punctuation - Spelling -Capitalisation	2 points	20%

The scoring of each paragraph required between two to three readings: one reading targeting the assessment of the content and at least one other reading focussing on

linguistic and mechanical accuracy. This is to mean that no scoring of the three general aspects is done simultaneously in a single reading. The approach followed in grading each paragraph was based on the diminution of a value ranging from 0.25 to one point for each type of error. Because it is believed that not all errors should be handled in the same way, the gravity of the error is one element that was taken into account. Errors affecting the communicative value of the paragraphs were considered more serious than surface ones. For instance, an adequate support of the main idea would cost the test-taker a whole point while an error of mechanics or noun number would cost only 0.25 point.

In order to answer the research question and examine the effectiveness of training on self-monitoring and self-correction strategies, a number of computational procedures were followed. The first test scores means of the control group and experimental group were compared to ensure the homogeneity of the groups. By testing the homogeneity prior to the treatment, it will be possible to ascribe safely the changes, if any, to the impact of the treatment and not to the differences in the characteristics of both groups. The final tests scores means will also be compared to investigate any significant difference (or absence of it) that can be traced back to the experimental treatment. T-tests were run in both cases to yield the necessary numerical and statistical data for the hypotheses guiding this study to be confirmed or disconfirmed.

4.1.2 Paragraph corpus

Relying on the comparison of both groups' scores obtained prior to the treatment period and after it may not be enough to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of SM and SC on improving the students' writing quality and abilities. Students' performance during tests can be influenced by a number of factors including stress, unsuccessful management of the test time, and possible attempts of cheating. Hence, it is necessary to collect data that was produced in more comfortable settings and in repeated points of the

treatment period. During the present study, each student produced a total number of 14 paragraphs. Twelve paragraphs were composed in the instructional sessions (not counting the pilot session), and two others were composed in the pre-study and post study tests. The study of these paragraphs is hoped to provide a picture about the progressive way the treatment may have impacted the students.

The produced paragraphs were responding to prompts suggested by the researcher/teacher. When selecting the prompts, the teacher/researcher attempted to take into consideration the effect of interesting and original topics in motivating students to write. However, the students were welcomed to suggest some topics of their choice. If general agreement was reached, the teacher's prompt would be replaced by the one selected by the students'. Appendix M includes some of the students' production sheets with the students paragraphs, annotations and the teacher's feedback.

The selection of the corpus is related to the selection of the participants in the treatment period. Twelve participants taken from the experimental group were selected to examine their productions during 14 weeks. The selection of these students was based on two factors: the level of achievement in the pre-test and the attendance record. The twelve participants belonged to three categories based on their achievement in the pre-study test: four high achievers, four intermediate achievers and four low achievers. By having an equal number of participants from each category, it was aimed to have an equal size of corpora, and thus have a more ample view of the effects of training. The attendance record was taken into account as a second factor of selection because we wanted to ensure that every student should have compiled 14 paragraphs by the end of the treatment period. Because the experiment extended over a period of 14 weeks, only a minority of students met this condition. A total number of 168 paragraphs was then the size of the corpus.

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Table 4.2

Pre-test Achievements of Students whose Paragraph Corpus is Selected

High achievers		Intermediate achievers		Low achievers	
Name	Mark	Name	Mark	Name	Mark
Rofeida	7.75	Anfale	5.25	Rahaf	4.75
Rym	7.75	Khouloud	5	Douaa	3.25
Thelili	6.75	Yasmine	6	Nour	3.5
Mira	6.5	Afnane	5.25	Zina	4.75

4.1.3 Marginal annotations corpus

Students were asked to write paragraphs and annotations simultaneously to record the concerns they have while writing. Recording the thoughts on the margin was intended to aid in tracking the attention of the students while writing. The analysis of such concerns is intended to answer the research question on whether self-monitoring through marginal annotations guides the students to act as more reflective and responsible reviewers.

When some students expressed the ambiguity of the technique, the teacher explained that they could write down whatever query they wanted to ask the teacher or their peers about. Occasionally, whenever students verbally inquired about a specific clarification, the teacher would respond by asking them to jot down the query on the margin of the paragraph sheet to be answered subsequently via a written feedback. It was stressed by the teacher that writing annotations was fully non-compulsory, yet strongly desirable. In doing so, it was aimed to get students ask genuine queries reflecting their real concerns instead of contrived queries. No annotation number limit was given to the participants; however, when the space devoted for marginal annotation was found blank or the annotations were scarce, the teacher wrote some comments like: "where are the questions?" or "keep asking questions."

As regards the content of the annotations, the participants were invited to write whatever idea be it related to the paragraph content, form, or process of writing. The

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phrasing of queries as well was not restricted to one particular formula or grammatical mood. The characteristics of language used in annotations including tense use, grammatical mood, and length of the annotations, along with the phrasing of the thoughts, are thought to be valuable cues that assist the researcher in deriving prevailing patterns from the data.

In order to allow for an in-depth analysis, we opted to collect data from a narrowed sample consisting of 12 students of the experimental group and belonging to three categories of language proficiency. The narrowed sample selected for the marginal annotations corpus was the same as the one from which the paragraph corpus was collected. The study of the 45 students' (the whole sample) marginal annotations would yield a rich data in terms of quantity, but would also hinder having a closer look to the emerging patterns and making deeper interpretations. Four good achievers, four average achievers, and four low achievers were, therefore, selected on the basis of their attendance record. Computing the productivity of the participants in annotation writing and noticing any changes in the area of concern or the language characteristics would pose problems of reliability and accuracy if the annotations were gathered from participants with fluctuating attendance levels. Appendix N is a collection of the annotations produced by the narrowed sample in the course of the treatment period.

4.1.4 Questionnaire and interview

The fourth research question is about the impact of the treatment on the students' perceptions about their writing quality and writing abilities. We sought to answer this research question through a semi-structured questionnaire and an interview. The purpose from administering the questionnaire was to consider the effects of the treatment from the perspective of the students. The pre-test/post-test design was chosen as a research instrument helping to identify any changes in the students' writing quality perceived from

the angle of the rater. The rater's assessment of the writing quality does not suffice, however, to have a more complete picture. Hence, the researcher judged it necessary to investigate whether the improvement in the writing quality, if any, is due to an enhancement of the writing abilities. On the other hand, adding the interview was intended to provide the opportunity to students to articulate their viewpoints without being oriented by the researcher to any direction.

The questionnaire was administered to both the participants of the experimental group and the control group at the end of the semester; that is, once the treatment period was finished with the experimental group, and regular writing instruction was finished with the control group.

The questions included in the questionnaire were mostly inspired from the insights that the review of literature offered. The information that we sought to obtain through the questionnaire required the choice of close-ended questions to facilitate for students answering the questions and to facilitate for the teacher the coding and analysis of responses. To some of the questions, dichotomous answers were provided while for others, multiple choices were suggested instead. Open-ended questions as well are included to obtain information without limiting the number of possibilities to respondents (see Appendix O).

As regards the information that the questionnaire sought to gather, three areas could be identified. For the students' perceptions about the impact of the treatment on their ability to self-correct their errors, three questions were included. Three other questions were devoted to inquire about the writing quality, and three other questions aimed at gathering information about the ability to act in a more reflective and responsible manner. It is worthwhile to note, however, that two other questions could gather information about both self-correction and responsible writing since both aspects are interrelated.

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The interview was conducted with nine students. The teacher asked students to volunteer and take part in the interview. Then, among those volunteers, the teacher chose an equal number from three categories: good achievers, average achievers, and poor achievers. The categorisation is based on their performance in the current academic year performance in the pre-test.

The teacher/ researcher opted for a focus group interview for a number of reasons. This is a type of interview that allows saving time as opposed to one-on-one interview. It also creates a relaxing atmosphere as each student takes his time to answer while the other interviewees are speaking. Another advantage for which this type is chosen is to overcome the shyness of some students. However, and in contrast to one-on-one interview, some reluctant interviewees may be influenced by other one and may adopt their viewpoints, especially if the suggested ideas compelling and convincing. To cope with such a possible situation, the teacher/ researcher showed no signs of preference to any answer over another. Another strategy was to discuss ideas and show that the counterarguments are equally appealing; in doing so, the interviewer shows that no viewpoint is more preferable than the others.

The interview was conducted one day after the administration of the questionnaire. It lasted for approximately two hours. One hour and twenty minutes were spent in a lecture room, and the remaining 40 minutes in another one. The interruption occurred as it was necessary to leave the room for another teacher and occupy another one. The interview was recorded via a smartphone after obtaining a verbal consent from interviewees to be recorded, but at the same time, the interviewer tried to take notes simultaneously as a preventive step in the event the sound quality would not be satisfactory, or the recording device would malfunction.

Both research instruments were examined by a panel of three lecturers at the department to provide feedback regarding the validity of the instruments. Based on their comments, the researcher removed the items that were not useful to answering the research questions. For example, the questionnaire included a question about the students' preferences regarding classroom assignments and homework. This question was removed since it inquired about their preferences not about the impact of the treatment on their abilities. Likewise, the first version included a question about the students' areas of difficulties and the preference between computer writing and paper writing. These questions were also deemed irrelevant to the research question and were removed (see Appendix P).

4.2 Data Analysis

For purposes of answering appropriately the research questions, a number of procedures have been opted for in the analysis of the obtained data.

4.2.1 Pre-test and post-test scores

The quantitative data gathered from both the experimental group and the control group were first copied on an Excel spreadsheet to be later on imported to an SPSS 20. The statistical analysis was accomplished through the use of a number of *t*-tests. To test the homogeneity of the groups, the data analysis was initiated by running an unpaired samples t-test. Then another t-test was run to examine the response of each group to the adopted instruction. In addition to comparisons made between groups' scores means and standards of deviation, we compared data as well within the experimental group. For this purpose, a One-Way ANOVA investigated the possibility to attribute the obtained results either to the students' level of proficiency or to the writing aspects.

4.2.2 Paragraph corpus

At the end of the treatment period, the students' paragraphs were ready for analysis. The procedure followed in the analysis of the paragraphs was adapted from Gass and Selinker's (2008) error analysis process (See Figure 4.1). It was, however, adapted to the needs of the study since the objective from the analysis was not remediation; instead, it was the comparison of the error occurrence prior to and after instructional sessions. The number of errors made in each paragraph was tallied and written at the bottom of the page. Then, the total number of the errors made over the course of the semester was computed to allow for the frequencies and percentages to be calculated. Only the errors in the target features highlighted in the typographically enhanced texts were computed. In doing this, comparison between the frequency of errors before the instructional session and after it would be possible.
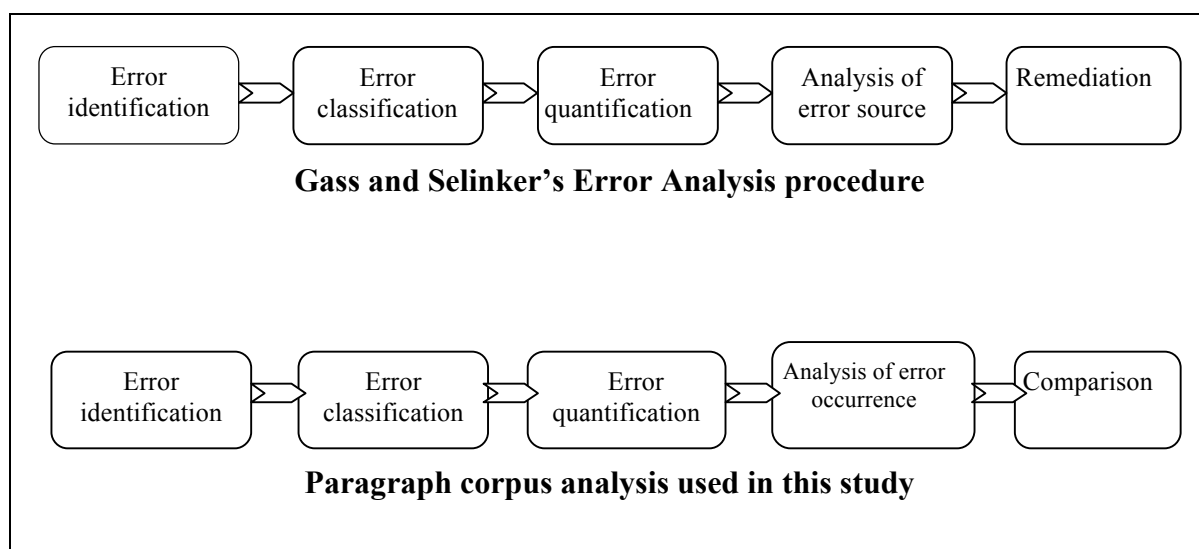
Figure 4.1. An adaptation of Gass and Selinker's (2008) Error Analysis procedure to the needs of the present study.

Corpus analysis was then adopted as an instrument that allowed examining students' productions at different and varied points of the treatment period. The examination of the

14 productions of each participant was aimed to yield more detailed data about the gradual progress, if any, of self-correction ability.

To investigate any reduction of error occurrence of each target feature, the analysis relied on computing the number of errors occurring before the instructional session devoted to that particular aspect of writing and the number of errors occurring after it. The conversion of numbers into percentages would then allow spotting any change or stability in error occurrence and then could be interpreted as a change in the ability to correct one's errors. This change, if any, could eventually be attributed to the impact of the treatment and the manipulation of variables.

The analysis of the corpus was done manually; that is to say, no software was utilised in it. One possible way to conduct it could be to use software that computes errors occurring in a T-unit. By T-unit, it is meant the set of the independent clause and its dependent clauses or non-clausal parts together (Hunt, 1965). However, working on T-units would assume that student writers are able to use punctuation correctly and to be skilful in sentence combination and subordination. T-unit-based analysis is then unreliable in this study, considering that the error analysis displayed a considerable number of errors in aspects like fragments, use of comma and full stops. Accordingly, the total errors were manually computed in each paragraph regardless of the number of errors in sentences or T-units.

Because the analysis of the students' paragraphs was basically chosen to follow a qualitative approach, we did not confine it to numerical results. Attention was also paid to investigate whether the errors were systematically recurring or they tended to appear according to unsystematic patterns of occurrence. Interpretations and accounts were provided in attempt to trace back the systematic errors to an undeveloped knowledge of the rules, and to trace back the unsystematic errors to inattention or slips of the pen. In cases

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where errors seem to result from undeveloped knowledge of the rules, the students'
awareness about the rule was viewed to be lower than in cases where the errors were due to
inattention. Such distinction can help in relating the phenomena observed in students'
paragraphs to the central focus of the study, namely self-correction. Equally important was
to try tracing the disappearance of errors, if any, to its possible causes in order to see how
effective the instructional sessions were.

4.2.3 Marginal annotations corpus

The annotations were transcribed on a word document to facilitate tallying their total
number, the number of annotations per participant, the average number of annotations per
participant, and the average number of words per annotation. These numbers are
considered important to gauge the extent to which students were productive and explicit in
terms of translating their reflections into marginal annotations. The analysis was started
using an inductive approach to derive some common patterns. Fairclough's (2003) insights
on discourse analysis were referred to when analysing both the form and the function of
annotations. Codes were used to investigate numerically the areas of students concerns, the
grammatical mood used in formulating the queries, and function of each annotation. No
predetermined areas of writing (linguistic and conceptual) were adopted while analysing
the data; instead, the emerging areas were categorised into overarching ones until a
comprehensive categorisation was reached.

The identification of categories and patterns paved the way to an interpretive
understanding of how those emerging patterns could relate to the major area of the current
study. Those patterns were afterward discussed in the light of the major theoretical
concepts bearing on SM, autonomy, and revision. This step is performed to interpret the
occurrence of the patterns and give explanations directly related to the subject of this
study.

To ensure a higher degree of findings' reliability, the researcher coded the corpus of marginal annotations twice with an interval of six months between the first and the second coding. The intra-coder agreement was 96.87%. The 3.13% of divergent codes were due to the interrelationship existing between different features of writing. For instance, in one coding, an annotation was classified in the category of concerns about preposition use, and the same annotation was tagged as a collocation query in the second coding.

4.2.4 Questionnaire and interview

The data obtained through the questionnaire and the interview required two different ways of analysis. The quantitative analysis was used with the responses to the close-ended questions of the questionnaire while a qualitative analysis was conducted with the open-ended responses of the questionnaire and the responses of the interview.

4.2.4.1 Analysis of quantitative data of the questionnaire

The quantitative data of the questionnaire was analysed via SPSS, the Statistical Package of Social Sciences. Given that addressing the fourth question requires a comparison between the responses of the participants on the experimental group to those of the control group, statistical tests were used to measure the significance of difference, if any. Firstly, in an excel spreadsheet, the responses were taken to calculate the frequencies and percentages. Then, the obtained results were transferred to the SPSS to run Chi-square tests. This step was intended to help identifying the statistical differences between the responses of both groups.

4.2.4.2 Analysis of the qualitative data of the questionnaire and the interview

The adopted data analysis procedure was inspired from the model suggested by Creswell (2011) on processing qualitative data. Once the data was collected, the interview was transcribed, and the data was coded. The step of coding consisted in identifying segments that could be classified within the same categories. The purpose from setting

categories is to organise information, which later on facilitates its interpretation. As this steps requires moving from specific elements to general ones, it is considered an inductive process. For this purpose we used two techniques: the use of coloured highlighter pens with the interview and the tables with the qualitative data of the questionnaire. We attributed a colour to specific categories of the data; for example, words, phrases, or utterances related to abilities to self-correct were highlighted in yellow, and segments related to abilities to be responsible were highlighted in green. Then, the categories were grouped according to the emerging themes under which they fall. For the questionnaire, we copied every segment related to a specific theme, say reflection while writing, and pasted it in a table devoted o that specific theme. We chose to do the coding step of the interview and the questionnaire's qualitative data manually based on a directive given by Creswell (2011). According to this writer, when the database does not exceed 500 pages, which is the case of our transcribed interview, it is preferable to work on it manually.

The preparation of data categories facilitates the identification of broader themes. For example, an utterance like *"I was annoyed when I was supposed to correct my errors"* was classified in a category labelled *first reaction to the teachers' command to self-correct errors*. This category falls in turn within the theme of *self-correction*. Under the same theme of self-correction, other possible categories are the difficulties hindering students' self-correction, and the factors contributing to change perceptions about the ability to self-correct.

The final step in the data analysis procedure followed in this study is the interpretation of the data. The discussion of the main findings was geared towards answering the research questions. Based on the obtained categories and themes, interpretive comments were provided by referring to the literature and other empirical research on the same topic.

Conclusion

This chapter provided clarifications about the procedures followed in collecting and analysing data in an attempt to pave the way to answer the research questions. Information was given about the pre-test/ post-test scores and how they were analysed. In addition, detailed descriptions were provided on the size and nature of the corpora selected for analysis. Similarly, a description was added to explain how the questionnaire and interview were meant to gather the desired data. In the following chapter, the main findings of the research are presented and discussed.

Chapter Five: Results and Discussion

Chapter five: Results and Discussion

Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the analysed data are presented to answer the research questions guiding this study. First, the descriptive and statistical results of the pre-test/ post-test scores are presented then discussed in the first section. In the following two sections, the findings of the paragraph and annotations corpora are discussed. The last section deals with the results of the questionnaire and the interview. In each of the sections, interpretations and discussions are provided in the light of theoretical insights and previous research in the same area of study.

5.1 Results of Pre-test /Post-test Scores

This section aims at displaying and discussing the results of the pre-test and post-test scores to test the efficiency of the treatment. The analysis of the data allows for answering the first research question: *Does training on self-monitoring (SM) and self-correction (SC) lead to improved quality of paragraph writing?* and for testing the main hypothesis: *training on SM and SC lead to improved quality of paragraph writing*. It is also intended to verify whether the improvement of the writing quality, if any, is attributable to the level of the students and whether it is attributable to the nature of the writing aspects. Thus, it could be possible to test as well the secondary hypotheses: (a) *the improvement of the writing quality, if any, is attributable to the level of the students*; (b) *the improvement of the writing quality, if any, is attributable to the nature of the writing aspects.*

Given that the writing quality is measured by scores, the testing of hypotheses relies heavily on the performance of the students in the pre- and post-tests. First the pre-test scores are analysed to verify the comparability of the control and experimental groups. Then a comparison of post-test scores in made between groups to test the efficacy of the

treatment. This step is followed by a within-group comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores.

5.1.1 Verifying the comparability of the groups

The main hypothesis of this study is: *training on SM and SC lead to improved quality of paragraph writing*. The first step in testing this hypothesis is to verify the homogeneity of the control group and the experimental one; without this step it could not be possible to compare in further sections the significance of the treatment outcomes.

Table 5.1

Between Group Comparison of Pre-test

	Control group (45) pre-test		Experimental group (45) pre-test		df	t	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Mean	Std. deviation	mean	Std. deviation				
Scores	5.1667	1.65660	5.2556	1.24714	44	-0.266	0.792	Not significant

In order to check the homogeneity of the groups before the treatment period, we used unpaired samples t-test. The figures in Table 5.1 indicate that there are no significantly meaningful differences in the scores means of both groups. The means of the control group was 5.1667 (SD=1.65660) whereas for the experimental group, the means was 5.2556 (SD=1.24714). The result of *t-test* run on the pre-tests of both groups was -0.266 and the probability level was set at 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$), which showed that there is no statistically significant difference. The comparability of both groups could be attributed to the sampling procedure. The selection of students from the different population strata and the assignment of equal proportions of participants from both groups, experimental and control ones, reduced the risk of starting the treatment with heterogeneous groups.

Once the comparability of the experimental and control groups has been statistically proven, it is possible to attribute any difference in the scores means of the post-tests to the effects of the treatment involving strategy training.

5.1.2 Verifying the treatment efficacy between groups

To examine the hypothesised change, we carried out an unpaired samples *t*-test. Through this *t*-test it could be possible to examine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the post-test scores means of the control and experimental group. Table 5. 2 reports the obtained results.

Table 5.2

Between Group Comparison of Post-test

	Control group (45) post-test		Experimental group (45) post-test		ddl	t	Bilateral Sig.	Statistical decision
	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation				
Cont. and org.	1.5889	.51993	1.7500	.56408	45	1.250	.218	Not significant
Sent. Lev. acc	2.1389	.76045	2.5889	.63995	45	2.930	.005	Significant at 0.05
Mech. Acc	.8222	.58295	1.1500	.60631	45	2.751	.009	Significant at 0.05
Total scores	4.5444	1.39427	5.5000	1.27475	45	3.085	.004	Significant at 0.05

Note. Cont. and org.= content and organisation; sent. Lev. Acc.= sentence level accuracy; Mech. acc= mechanical accuracy

The examination of post-test scores of both groups shows that the experimental group (mean= 5.5000, SD= 1.27475) has significantly outperformed the control group (mean= 4.5444, SD= 1.39427). The value of *t*-test (3.085) is statistically significant (α = 0.05). These results provide evidence about the improvement in the experimental group performance after the treatment period. This change can be attributed to the intervention consisting in training on the strategy of self-monitoring and the use of self-correction as a type of written corrective feedback. Hence, the noticed statistically significant difference in the post-test scores means of the control and experimental group allows us to confirm that training on SM and SC led to improved quality of paragraph writing.

A closer look at the descriptive statistics in Table 5.2 is, however, useful to examine the aspects at which the difference was more significant. In the aspect of paragraph content and organisation, while the experimental group mean is 1.7500 (.56408), the control group mean is 1.5889 (.51993). Using the *t*-test, the comparison between both means shows a

non-significant difference (1.250, α = 0.05). As regards sentence level accuracy, a significant difference is between the experimental group and the control one, (mean= 2.5889, SD=.63995) and (mean= 2.1389, SD=.76045) respectively. In the last aspect, mechanical accuracy, again a significant difference is noticed in the scores means of both groups. While the post-test mean score in mechanics was 1.1500 (SD= .60631) for the experimental group, for the control group, it was .8222 (SD= .58295). These figures indicate that the effectiveness of the treatment was more apparent in sentence level accuracy and mechanic aspects. Even though the instructional sessions of the treatment period targeted some higher order issues of paragraph writing like achieving content unity and maintaining coherence through the use of transitional words, the participants of the experimental group did not display any statistically significant gains in this aspect.

5.1.3 Within group verification of the treatment efficacy

Once it has been clear that statistical evidence proved the efficacy of the treatment, further questions need to be posed. First, it is necessary to understand whether the improvement was more perceivable in one writing aspect than another. Then an account is given to clarify the impact of the students' level on the responsiveness to the treatment. Guided by these two inquiry objectives, the following secondary hypotheses are tested.

(a) *The improvement of the writing quality, if any, is attributable to the nature of the writing aspects.*

(b) *The improvement of the writing quality, if any, is attributable to the level of the participants.*

5.1.3.1 Within group verification of the writing aspects

The post-test scores means of the experimental group show a significant difference in both sentence level accuracy and mechanics (mean=2.5889, SD=.63995) and (mean=1.1500, SD=.60631.) respectively. In content and idea organisation, however, no

significant difference is reported (mean=1.7500 , SD=.56408). The figures in Table 5.3 indicate that the general improvement in the experimental post-test scores were mainly due to the students' improved performance in the word level, and sentence level aspects. This variation in the significance of difference shows that students did not respond positively to all the targeted aspects involved in instructional sessions. Therefore, lower order aspects occurring at the level of words, phrases, or clauses are more likely to benefit from the strategy training than higher order textual aspects.

Table 5.3

Within Experimental Group Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores Based on the Aspect of Writing

	Pre-test (45)		post-test (45)		df	T	Sig. level	Statistical decision
	Mean	Std. deviation	mean	Std. deviation				
Cont. and org.	1.8778	.60449	1.7500	.56408	44	1.347	.18	Not significant
Sent. Lev. acc	2.3389	.79264	2.5889	.63995	44	-2.265	.02	Significant at 0.05
Mech. acc	.9889	.61919	1.1500	.60631	44	-2.006	.0	Significant at 0.05
Total scores	5.1833	1.44443	5.5000	1.27475	44	-2.057	.04	Significant at 0.05

Note. Cont. and org.= content and organisation; sent. lev. acc.= sentence level accuracy; Mech. acc= mechanical accuracy

5.1.3.2 Within group verification of the participant level

Because the participants of the experimental group were categorised into three subgroups: high achievers, intermediate achievers, and low achievers (see sampling procedure: Section 3.1.2), we chose to verify whether the improved scores of the experimental group is associated to the level of the students. A One-Way ANOVA test was then run on the participants' scores means. It is noticed that the *(f)* value was .895 for the paragraph content and organisation, 1.087 for sentence level accuracy, and 1.755 for mechanics. As regards the *(f)* value of the all the three aspects together it was 2.489 taking into account the (α) value is set at .05 with the specific aspects and the overall scores.

Table 5.4 below displays the results of the test in details and reveals no significant difference attributable to the level of the students. It is then possible to reject the second

secondary hypothesis stating *the improvement of the writing quality, if any, is attributable to the level of the participants.*

Table 5.4

Within Experimental Group Comparison of Pre-test And Post-test Scores Based on the Students' Level

		Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	(f) value	Sig. level	Statistical decision
Cont. and org.	Between subgroups A,B,C	.573	2	.286	.895	.416	Not significant
	Within subgroups A,B,C	13.427	42	.320			
Sent. Lev. acc	Between subgroups A,B,C	.887	2	.443	1.087	.347	Not significant
	Within subgroups A,B,C	17.133	42	.408			
Mech. acc	Between subgroups A,B,C	1.248	2	.624	1.755	.185	Not significant
	Within subgroups A,B,C	14.927	42	.355			
Total scores	Between subgroups A,B,C	7.577	2	3.789	2.489	.095	Not significant
	Within subgroups A,B,C	63.923	42	1.522			

Note. Cont. and org.= content and organisation; sent. lev. acc.= sentence level accuracy; Mech. acc= mechanical accuracy

5.1.4 Discussion of Pre-test /post-test scores results

In an attempt to operationalise the construct of writing quality, we chose to score the students' paragraphs based on the extent to which they successfully developed the paragraph content and on the level of language accuracy. Numerical data in the form of scores given to the pre-test and post-test paragraphs indicated that the experimental group has outperformed the control group. It can be concluded that training on self-monitoring and self-correction have assisted students in improving their performance in writing. Self-monitoring is thought to increase among the participants in this experimental treatment reflection on both the processes involved in writing and the quality of the developing text while self-correction seems to increase the engagement of student writers in revision the process.

Whereas the results of this study are in line with a number of theoretical premises and empirical findings, they also contradict others. Since the findings of the current study

indicated the efficacy of self-correction as a self-initiated form of feedback, it supports a number of other studies. To explain the reasons for which the treatment seemed to bring some gains, a number of relevant studies are revisited.

Makino (1993) explains in his study on self-correction that students are more likely to activate their linguistic knowledge when they are given cues to correct their errors. According to the same researcher, the gains of having access to one's linguistic knowledge would not be possible if the students were directly given the correct version for their inaccuracies. Because the participants in our study's intervention were encouraged to use learning resources, namely, dictionaries, concise grammar and punctuation books, they had more chances to reconsider the rules of language use than if the correct versions were given to them.

The present study findings do not contradict as well the explanation given by Ferris (2011) for the students' reluctance to use self-editing strategies. Ferris holds that writing instruction contributes to instill the lack of confidence in student writers and prevents them from being more active in terms of error correction. However, if strategy instruction interferes to equip the students with both the pedagogical tools and the strategic skills, students can grow more confident. Strategy training is prone to succeed if it consists in raising the learner's awareness about their error patterns and encourages them to prioritize when selecting errors for correction.

Truscott (1996), one of the most eminent voices in the feedback efficacy debate, claimed that providing a response for the student's erroneous product can be of little value. He traces back this failure to the fact of not taking into account the developmental readiness of the student to benefit from the revision suggested by the more experienced writer. We can contend that self-correction, though not yielding a fully satisfactory revised version for the experienced corrector, fits better the level and the readiness of the student

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writer. Another viewpoint held by Truscott regarding feedback efficacy bears on the desired outcomes of corrective feedback. He argues that student writers receiving help from teachers in refining their drafts manage to write better productions after getting response but this does not make them better writers if they are given the chance to write a different assignment. A distinction then can be made between writing classroom instruction targeting the improvement of students' reflective and responsible habits and the one targeting improvement of the first drafts. The present study is in agreement with Truscott's viewpoint given that the underpinning conception in self-correction is that the student writer should be the most active agent in the revision process in order to trigger any development in rule internalization.

The findings of our study are also favorably consistent with previous theoretical arguments on self-monitoring. More particularly, it corroborates Cho et al.'s (2010) arguments that the quality of writing is believed to improve if students are able to spot weaknesses in their writing, if they are aware of the processes involved in successful writing, and if they can anticipate the audience response to their communicative intent.

As regards empirical studies, Chandler's (2003) experimental study on a variety of feedback types yielded positive effects from the use of self-correction both in terms of accuracy and fluency. The same study used other feedback types like error description and error location. Chandler asserted that teacher feedback was found to be the fastest; however, self-correction was found to be the most advantageous in terms of learning. He concluded that no feedback type was superior to the other; rather, the goals and contexts of learning impose the choice of one type over the other.

We think that the students' performance in the post-test is impacted by the training students had on the use of reflection and the attempt to address their own problems while writing. Accordingly, the obtained results seem to lend support to Xiang's (2004)

statement that SM through marginal annotations fulfills a twofold objective: assisting learners to improve their drafts and enhancing their writing proficiency. He further explains the premise underpinning the efficacy of the strategy by the possibility for learners to refer to the teacher's suggested solutions in subsequent writing assignments.

The effectiveness of the treatment involving self-monitoring and self-correction proved in the current study is in contradiction with the results of other studies. One of the studies providing statistical evidence on the little gains yielded by self-correction compared to other feedback types is conducted by Van Beuningen, De Jong, and Kuiken (2008). Direct feedback was the type yielding long-term effects on improved accuracy unlike indirect feedback, practice, and self-correction. In another study, (Ibarrola, 2013), the efficacy of self-correction is compared with that of reformulation. It was noticed that the use of teacher's reformulation helped the students to detect 50% more errors than with self-correction. This superiority was, however, reported only in error detection as both strategies proved to be efficient in error correction. To explain this, Ibarrola (2013) suggests that error spotting is more cognitively demanding than error correction.

One possible interpretation to the failure of self-correction to bring about any improved quality in subsequent writings or any gains in learning, in the instances of previous research, is that training on self-correction is often confused with leaving students to their own devices. Students' self-correction can be a daunting experience if they are not trained to detect the most prevailing errors in their writings, to select among the strategies the most useful and to use learning resources to address any inaccuracy or inappropriateness.

In the presentation of statistical results, we tried to extend our understanding about the efficacy of the training by shedding light on the aspects of writing benefitting mostly

from training. Similarly, we investigated whether the students' level of proficiency play any role in increasing the responsiveness to the training.

With regard to the aspects of writing benefitting most from the training, Table 5.3 displays numerical data confirming that improvement in writing quality is more likely to be noticed at word-level and sentence-level aspects. At the level of idea presentation, organization and appropriateness, no gains were reported. This study supports, therefore, a number of other researches. Makino (1993), for example, specifies that grammatical errors and more precisely morphological areas to benefit from self-correction. Moreover, in their study on the use of marginal annotations as a tool to monitor one's writing, Menargez et al (2012) reported advantageous impacts from the use of SM though limited to sentence-level concerns. Aspects like idea quality and content organization and clarity were not among the participants concerns. Further research need to shed more light on the reasons explaining the students' limited ability to attend and improve higher order aspects of writing.

As for the influence of the participants' level of achievement on the responsiveness to the treatment, the results seem to reject any relation between both variables. In the present study, Table 5.4 revealed no significant difference that can be attributed to the level of achievement. This suggests that high achievers as well as average or low achievers, alike, can benefit from the use of self-monitoring and self-correction. Conceivably, this finding agrees partly with insights from some researchers of corrective feedback. Ferris et al. (2012, p. 2) hold that "every teacher knows that there are always individual responses to any pedagogical treatment within a group of students differences caused by factors such as prior educational and language backgrounds, motivation and attitude, and external constraints and distractions". Although the differences in the linguistic abilities tend to make struggling students less likely to benefit from the training, factors like motivation and

affective factors might strike the balance in favour of the motivated average or struggling students.

Statistical evidence about the efficacy of self-monitoring and self-correction has been provided in this section. Reflection and responsibility over the revision have thus the potential to assist students to improve their developing texts. The use of scores as numerical data to gauge the improvement of the writing quality can be a valuable tool to answer the research question posed in this study; nonetheless, more insights can be gained into the effects of the training through qualitative data collection tool.

5.2 Findings from Paragraph Corpus

This section aims at complementing the global quantitative analysis of the intervention effects with a more in-depth qualitative analysis. It targets particularly answering the second research question: *does the training on SM and SC lead to reducing the number of errors in students' paragraphs?* First, a general overview of the error rates changes is presented. Then, a thorough analysis of the intervention impact on error reduction across writing features is made. This analysis is followed by a study of individual cases of students illustrating improved performance, unchanged performance, or a declining performance in terms of error reduction.

5.2.1 A general overview of the findings

The computation of the total number of errors made in both the target features and the remainder of other features allowed for the detection of changes in error patterns before the instructional sessions and after them. A total number of 1142 errors were detected in the corpus of 168 paragraphs. The targeted features are subject verb agreement, fragment, word form, verb/tense, sentence combination, punctuation, capitalisation, spelling, transitions between sentences, provision of sufficient support, unity, word choice, and rhetorical pattern). The rest of the other features, labeled *miscellaneous features* in Figure

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5.1, include, among others, features like missing word, pronoun-antecedent agreement, faulty parallelism, word order, articles, prepositions, tense shift, pronoun shift, and misplaced modifiers.

Before the instructional sessions, the total number of errors in the targeted features was 490 errors while in the other features, it was 652 errors. Errors in the targeted features accounted thus for 42.90%, and the miscellaneous features constituted 57.10% of the total number (1142 errors). After the instructional sessions, errors in the targeted features accounted for 286 (25.04%) and in the miscellaneous features, the figure became 856 (74.96%). Figure 5.1, indicates how the percentage of targeted features was representing 42.90% of the total number of errors, and how it dropped to 25.04%.
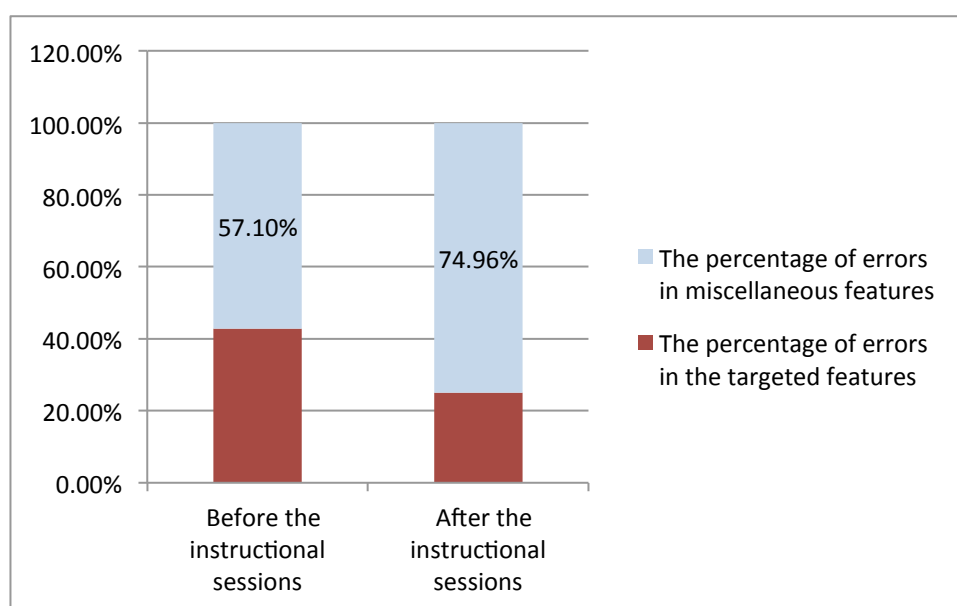
Figure 5.1. Comparison of error percentage between targeted features and other miscellaneous features.

This global view can be further amplified if data are examined more closely. For this reason, it is required to find the percentages of errors occurring across different categories in both productions preceding the instructional sessions and in productions subsequent to the instructional sessions.
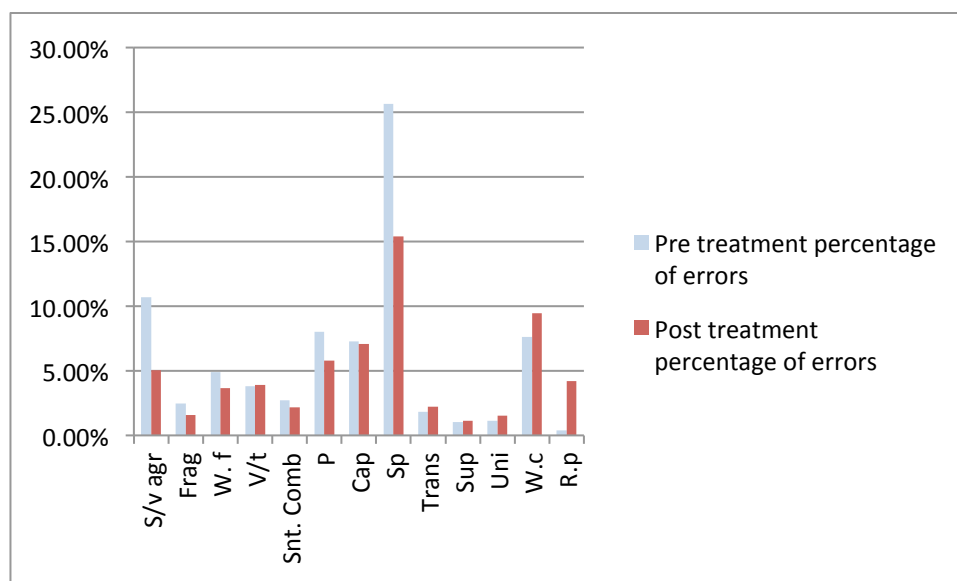
Note. S/v agr= subject verb agreement; Frag= fragment; WF= word form; V/t = model verb use; Snt.Sub = sentence subordination; P= punctuation; Cap = capitalisation; Sp = spelling; Trans = transitions between sentences; Sup = provision of sufficient support; Uni= unity; W.C = word choice; R.p = rhetorical pattern.

Figure 5.2. Pretreatment and post-treatment error percentages across the targeted features.

As it is illustrated in Figure 5.2, varied results have been noticed as regards error reduction. A decline in the number of errors is noticed in the following categories: subject-verb agreement, fragments, word form, sentence combination, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. On the other hand, no gains in error reduction were observed in the categories of verb-tense, use of transitions, support, unity, rhetorical pattern and word choice. The effectiveness of the treatment varied as well from one student to another. To gain a deeper understanding of how the treatment on different strategies has affected the participants' writings, the analysis of the corpus is conducted in two different ways. The first one involves examining each targeted feature separately while the second way examines individual students' cases that exemplify varying degrees of treatment effectiveness.

5.2.2 The study of the training effectiveness across the writing features

To investigate whether the effects brought by the intervention vary according to writing feature, we grouped the features into two parts. First, we examined illustrative

cases of features in which error reduction was noticed, and we provided interpretations in the light of insights suggested by other researchers. Then, we proceeded in a similar way with the features in which no gains were brought.

5.2.2.1 Writing features in which error reduction was noticed

Subject verb agreement is one category of errors that dropped from 10.71% to 5.05%. By considering the students' errors collected before the instructional session, it can be noticed that violations of subject-verb agreement rules were not due to a complexity of the sentence syntactic structure. They were more likely a result of inattention or undeveloped rule acquisition. In examples (1), (2), (3), and (4) below, no phrase or other sentence part is separating the subject from the verb, which makes it easier to achieve agreement. In the sentences (5), (6), and (7) confusion appears to stem from the inclusion of relative pronouns in the sentences. The entire set of examples below displays the amenability of some errors, made before the instructional session, to self-correction.

1.   *For one thing, time management <u>organize</u> the student's studies life.*

2.   *Second, it <u>help</u> students to avoid stress and confusion.*

3.   *He will not be able to do what he <u>want</u> whenever he <u>want</u>.*

4.   *Also, when he <u>manage</u> his time, he will have same free time to do samething he love.*

5.   *I want to see my brother who <u>are</u> in Italy.*

6.   *Turkish is the contry wich <u>contain</u> a lot of beautiful places.*

7.   *Travelling is very important for any one who <u>prefer</u> to discover new place.*

A comparison can be made between errors made before the instructional session targeting subject-verb agreement and the ones made after the instructional session to qualitatively assess the amenability to error reduction and the impact of the intervention.

The following seven sentences were produced after the instructional session devoted to subject-verb agreement.

1. *This channel <u>have</u> all news in all the world.*

2. *When he <u>search</u> for a job, he will face problem.*

3. *Education <u>give</u> the persone a respectful job.*

4. It (the channel) <u>show</u> us important themes.

5. *Also, everyone <u>have</u> leisure time.*

6. *He may live more time and do whatever he <u>want.</u>*

7. *Eating healthy food <u>protect</u> your body.*

As revealed by the second set of illustrative excerpts, the types of subject-verb mismatches are similar to the first set appearing in paragraphs produced before the instructional session. This leads to conclude that the errors were not caused by a change in the syntactic structure of the sentence such as having a prepositional phrase separating the subject from the verb. The errors again are treatable and could have been successfully revised had the students used more reflection in their revisions. It is worth to note that the violations of subject-verb agreement were not systematic; they occurred in paragraphs where the same rule was successfully applied in other sentences. Therefore, in spite of the gains in error reduction in this feature, reflective revision could have effectively reduced more errors.

Another category of errors in which the number has significantly dropped is spelling. Before the instructional session devoted to spelling, errors in this category represented 25.67% of the total number of errors. This percentage has significantly decreased to 15.42% in the paragraphs written after the instructional session. As it is displayed in Figure 5.3, seven students out of 12 managed to reduce their spelling errors.
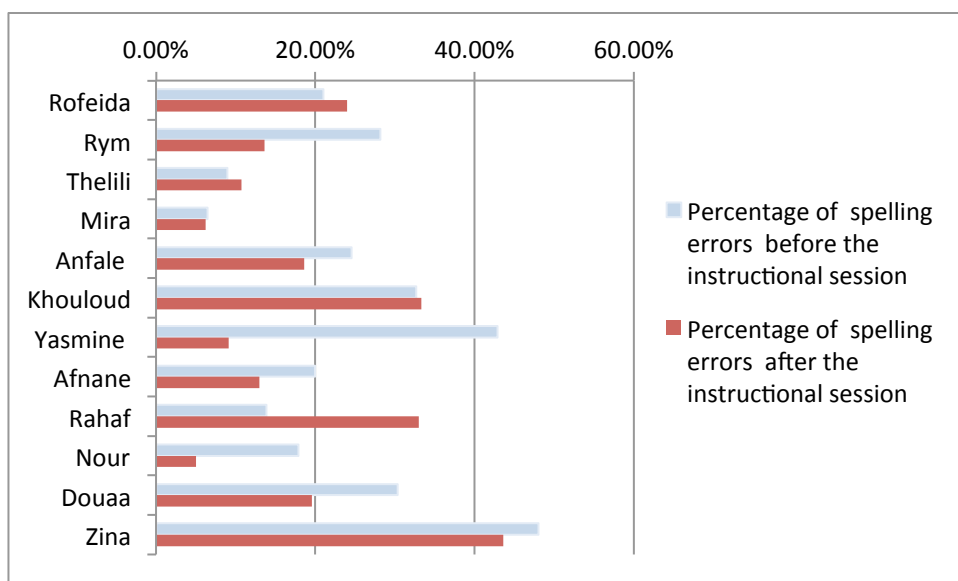
Figure 5.3. Percentage of spelling errors in pre- and post instruction paragraphs.

Considering the easiness with which spelling errors can be revised, it is convenient to account for gains brought with some errors and the persistence of a number of others errors. A significant number of the spelling errors noticed in the present corpus were due to the influence of pronunciation such as in "*musik*", "*intertaining*", and "*saficiant*". The revision of such errors is not time consuming, neither is it effortful. Nevertheless, students seemed to hesitate to refer to dictionaries because of the familiarity of the word. For instance, words like "*discomfer*", "*interrest*", and "*mentaly*, appeared misspelled in the paragraphs probably because they were not regarded as orthographically difficult words.

The gains in other categories were not of the same significance as in subject-verb agreement and spelling. For example, another category of errors having a rule-governed nature and occurring at clause level is sentence fragments. The error rate dropped from 2.49% to 1.58%. In sentence combination, the gains were translated in a slight decline from 2.73% to 2.15%. At word level, errors in word form decreased from 4.91% to 3.67%, and in punctuation they rate dropped from 8.03% to 5.80%.

The amenability of these error categories to treatment is illustrated through the examples below.

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1- *The high-definition system* <u>*which attract the youngers*</u>*. (fragment)*

2- *Secondly, taking a relax by traveling, to knowing a new villages and traditions. (fragment)*

3- *stress is another bad effect of not giving enough care to physical activity* <u>*and*</u> <u>*also*</u> *how mental alertness is big problem by the neglecting physical activity. (faulty coordination)*

4- *First, a personne who has a hoby is* <u>*more confidence*</u> *about his self. (word form)*

5- *Everyone should practise physical activity and shouldn't neglect it due to the negative effects on his* <u>*healthy*</u>*.*

6- *Turkish is the country wich contain a lot of beautiful places such as "Istambol, Ankara…"* <u>*therefore*</u> *I want to visit it because it is so attractive place.* <u>*So*</u> *most tourists go their.*

In the first and second examples, the error of sentence fragments can easily be corrected if the student checked whether the sentence or the independent clause includes a finite verb. In example 3, the faulty combination of the sentence could be fixed if the student who produced it opted for a compound subject *"stress and low mental alertness are problems resulting from the neglect of physical activity."* Errors in examples 4 and 5 are due to faulty derivational morphology. The use of the incorrect affixes caused the chosen word to be from a different grammatical class than the target word. Thus, the students used *confidence* as a noun instead of *confident* as an adjective, and *healthy* as an adjective instead of *health* as a noun. Such confusions could be handled through the use of dictionaries or grammar books. The last example (6) illustrates the use of punctuation around conjunctions. Students have repeatedly been instructed about the correct punctuation in these cases, and they had recorded straightforward rules and examples

related to this aspect. Accordingly, each of the aforementioned aspects was amenable to self-correction due to their rule-governed nature.

It can be concluded then from the previous discussion that the effectiveness of the treatment in particular categories is interpreted by the amenability of some error categories to treatment more than others. Spelling, subject verb-agreement, and punctuation are language elements that can be revised by referring to handbooks, lectures, or dictionaries. Their handling is easier than others due to their rule-governed nature (Van Beuningen, 2011). Another possible explanation for the effectiveness of the treatment is associated with the level of the error category. Erroneous instances at word level and phrase level categories are easier to fix than clause level or discourse level categories. Accordingly, the results of this study are partially consistent with studies conducted by other researchers (Bartley & Benítez-Castro, 2013; Van Beuningen, 2011).

5.2.2.2 Writing features in which no gains were noticed

Word choice is one of the aspects that impact on the overall quality of the students' writing. After the instructional session, it was noticed that the problematic use of some vocabularies did not lessen, but it became more noticeable instead. The figure of error percentage grew from 7.62% to 9.47%. For a better interpretation of the reasons why the intervention did not yield any gains, an account is necessary about what constitutes a word choice error, the causes of their occurrence, and how autonomous practices can interfere with error occurrence in this feature.
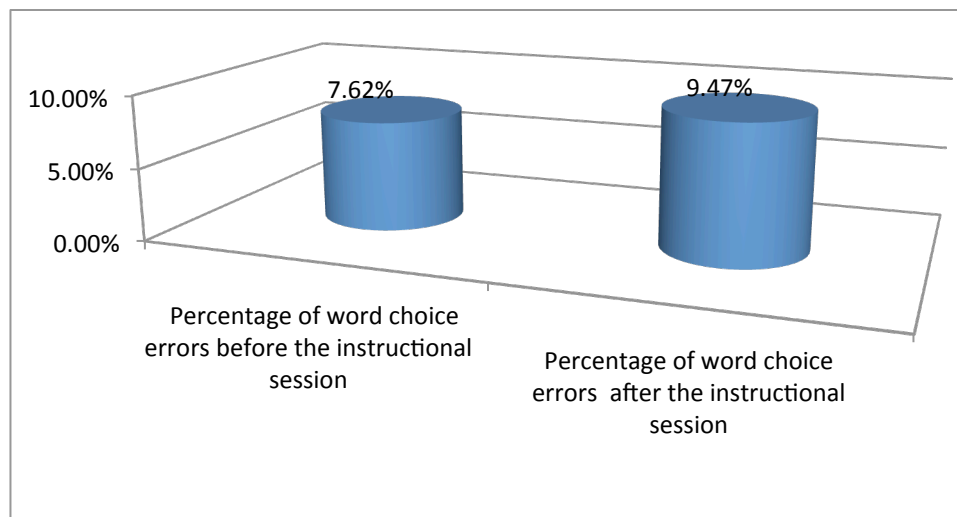
Figure 5.4. Word choice errors percentage before and after the instructional session.

Word choice involves the selection of vocabularies, the building blocks of the produced texts. When collecting the errors related to word choice in students' paragraph, a number of criteria were referred to. Appropriateness to the communicative goal is the key criterion against which a word is deemed successfully chosen or not. The following are examples taken from the participants' paragraphs before they received the instructional session on word choice.

1.   *This means you need <u>to participate</u> your preferable hobby*

2. *I want to visit the <u>State</u> of Liberty and New York.*

3. *In doing this, the person will never feel boring and <u>abomination</u> in his life.*

4. *It leads to dangerous diseases such as blood pressure and increasing of <u>grease.</u>*

5. *<u>Medecines</u> always advice people to practice home activities.*

6. *Japanese have <u>high</u> behaviour, they respect even animals.*

7. *So they must <u>protect</u> their time by having a hobby.*

8. *The family members should prepare invitations then <u>spread</u> it for the guests.*

9. *The lack of concentration in exam revision is one of most <u>famous</u> problems within students.*

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It is worth to point that the examples include other errors than word choice, but only the underlined ones are relevant to the feature under study. Obviously, they were flagged due to the problematic interconnection between them and the juxtaposing words. Moreover, it is possible to guess the intended meaning from the context and to detect the dissonance between the target meaning and the actual meaning of the words. In examples (1) and (2), the verb "*participate*" is used instead of "*practice*" and the noun "*state*" is erroneously occurring instead of "*statue*". The phonological resemblance between the words could be the cause of the wrong vocabulary retrieval and use. Whereas it can be inferred that there was no appeal to dictionary use in the cases of examples (1) and (2) errors, the problematic word choice in examples (3) and (4) could be due to the ineffective dictionary use. By "*abomination*", the student intended to mean "*boredom*", and by "*grease*" it was meant "*fat*". This observation corroborates East (2008) theoretical insights on the risks posed by dictionary use, namely the one of inappropriate use of language. It also suggests that even self-directed practices like the independent use of resources can be ineffective if reflection is not used. As regards the use of *"medecine"*, "*high*", and "*protect*", direct translation from L1 and L2 seems to be the source of the error. However, because of the familiarity of the words, students did not feel the necessity to consult the dictionary. The underlined errors in examples (8) and (9) are related to collocation and logic. While it is more appropriate to use "send" with "invitation cards", it is more logical to use "*common*" with a "*problem*".

It suffices to have a glance at the errors made after the instructional session to realize that they share the same nature and sources with the first set.

1. By hiding the truth from them, they get <u>injured</u> later on.

2. It is not fair to hide reality from him because <u>after</u> if he knows he may hate you.

3. It (the channel) <u>show</u> several programs.

4. It (education) help them to get a good job and easy one with a good <u>pay</u>.

5. *Education gives learners capacities and <u>concessions</u>.*

6. *Education put the person in the place the he <u>preserved.</u>*

7. *He stops to take <u>medicament</u> and food.*

What can be concluded from the above discussion is that even though word choice belongs to a word-level category and that it can benefit from the use of resources, no gains in accuracy were noticed. Students failed to reduce the number of word choice errors because of a number of reasons. When using familiar words, they felt confident about their diction knowledge, so they abstained from using the dictionary. Alternatively, they might use the dictionary but the absence of reflection caused them to select an inappropriate word. Connotational, denotational, as well as logical dissonances were often the result of hasty use of the dictionary. Students lacked also the knowledge that some words are conventionally associated with others; as a result, they randomly associated words with wrong ones. Self-initiated practices accompanying writing can be of little efficiency if they are not reinforced with reflection.

Similarly, revising conformity to the rhetorical pattern poses further challenges. Errors in this category represented 0.4% of the total errors before the instructional session. This percentage increased to 4.22% in the productions following the instructional session. In the last instructional session, students were engaged in writing an evaluation paragraph. In the previous sessions, however, they were assigned prompts to write paragraphs of the following types; cause/effect, problem/solution, contrast, classification, and argumentation. The order of the types of writing was motivated by the gradual movement towards writing that requires higher order thinking skills. Given that evaluation is considered a higher order thinking skill, it was left to the end.
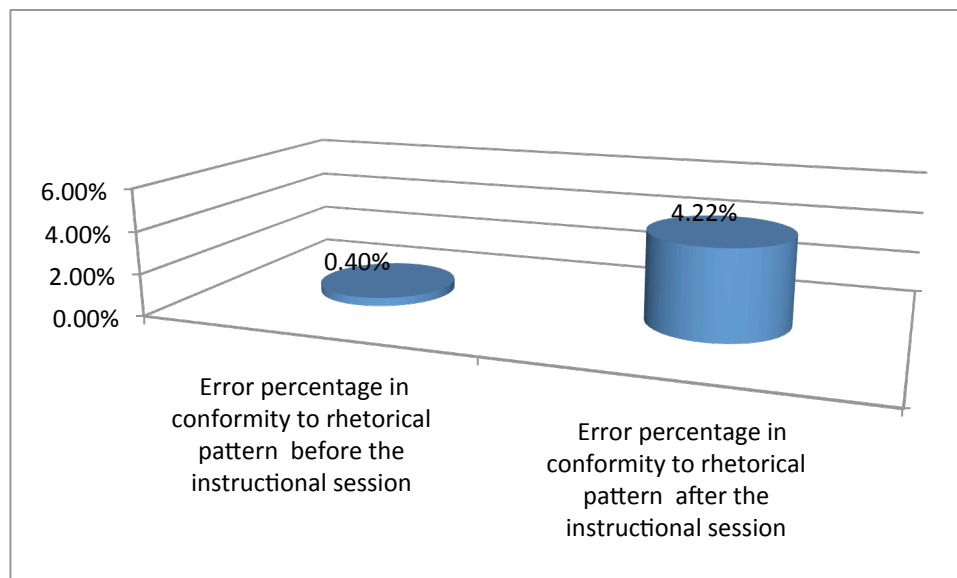
Figure 5.5. Comparison of error percentage in conformity to rhetorical pattern before and after the instructional session.

While writing, it was possible for students to refer to the instructions given by the teacher in the lectures. Guidance was provided before each writing assignment regarding the type of details to be used for supporting the topic sentence and the elements of each type of writing. The students thus were acquainted with elements of evaluation writing, yet they did not have sufficient practice to reinforce their skills in this type. Not surprisingly, students failed in their last paragraphs (on TV channel evaluation) to give judgments to particular criteria; instead, they mostly discussed reasons why the channel is worth watching. This can be noticed in Douaa's paragraph, for example.

BBC is the TV channel which I prefer to watch it in all my leisure time. News is one thing that intrest me in this channel because the news of BBC is able to containe about everything in the world which help me to know what happend in the world about variety events with a good way and many details. BBC's documentaries and the English language is another reason that lead me to like it more. With the diverse of motion picture and documentaries I get a lot of information and I acquire a good pronunciation and new words with BBC English.

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When writing an evaluation paragraph, the students were supposed to set a number of criteria against which they make their judgments. Then, they had to give evidence to support the judgments they made for each criterion. Obviously, in this paragraph, Douaa included ideas and cohesive devices that were not appropriate for evaluating a channel. The supporting details informed more about the benefits she got from watching the channel. Each sentence was rather a reason for preferring the channel and not a judgment given to specific criteria. Her use of *"another reason"*, as a cohesive device, and *"lead"*, as a verb, are examples that support our claim. To revise the choice of the rhetorical pattern, Douaa had the possibility of checking the lecture, or any other resource, on this aspect; however, no specific guidance could be obtained regarding the particular topic she was writing about, evaluating a TV channel.

As regards unity, provision of sufficient support, and the appropriate use of transitions, the absence of gains in these categories can also be interpreted by the referring to the notion of error treatability. The following are excerpts illustrating the non-treatability of this category of errors.

1- *Neglecting physical activity is a problem that many people want to solve. One solution to this problem is to avoid sleeping in the morning and try to wake up as possible. Another solution that can solve the problem of neglecting sport is to aware people the negative effects of not practicing sport.*

2- *For a long time, I hoped to visit Turkey for many reasons. The first one, I like turkey because it is very fantastic and beautiful…. Next, turkey is a big civilisation…. Last, this country is famous by its food and cakes…*

3- *As well as, having a hobby can help people to remove stress in everyday life.*

In excerpt 1, the student provided two solutions for the problem of neglecting physical activity. Waking up early does not necessarily entail more activity; neither does

the action of raising people's awareness. Both ideas seem to be irrelevant or at least needing other details to be better connected to the central idea of the paragraph. By including only details with little relevance to the topic, the main idea of the produced paragraph was obscure due to the weak supporting details given by the student. Problem solving is a thinking skill that can be trained but that cannot be revised through the use of a resource, especially that no book includes all the solutions for any problem.

Excerpts 2 and 3 demonstrate an infelicitous use of transitions. The way punctuation is placed around *the first one*, *last,* and *as well as* indicates that the writer of the excerpt meant to use them as logical connectors ensuring the smooth flow of ideas. However, the students failed in their endeavour. Similarly, the use of *next* is not effective as it is more appropriate to displaying events in a given chronological order.

Although instruction has been provided on the importance of supporting the central idea of any developing paragraph, students do not have a reference they can check to verify this point. Besides, a comparison of the processes involved in revising features like subject-verb agreement and spelling to content and organization features lead to major variations in term of time and effort required for revision. The certainty of the decision that needs to be made also differs from one feature to another. A subject-verb agreement rule can decisively clear the students' doubts on a particular language use instance whereas it is less straightforward to decide upon the adequacy of supporting ideas or their unity.

5.2.3 Illustrative individual cases of changes in error patterns

Given that the collection of the corpus data is adopting a longitudinal approach, the present analysis requires an examination of individual cases at different points of time. The comparison of error patterns made before instructional sessions and those made after the sessions is necessary for the identification of possible changes or stability in error patterns. The cases that are developed in the subsequent part are by no means comprehensive, but

they are selected on the basis of representativeness. The selected instances are grouped in three categories: cases yielding error reduction, cases of error persistence, and cases of error increase. For more representativeness, care was taken to deal evenly with students displaying different levels of achievement in the pretest.

Table 5.5

Students' Distribution Based on Pretest Performance

High achievers	Intermediate achievers	Low achievers
Rofeida	Anfale	Rahaf
Rym	Khouloud	Douaa
Thelili	Yasmine	Nour
Mira	Afnane	Zina

5.2.3.1 Cases of positive effects

Yasmine's gains in spelling

In Yasmine's paragraphs written before the instructional session, spelling errors represented 42.85% of the total number of errors. They ranged between errors in the ordering of letters (13.88%), errors in the addition of unnecessary letters (36.11%), errors of letters' substitution with erroneous ones (30.55%), and errors in omission of necessary letters (19.44%). Misspelled words like *"lern"*, *"fainaly"*, and *"airobics"* are instances of phonologically influenced errors. They reveal the student's reliance on her knowledge about the words' pronunciation to spell the words. Moreover, errors like *"planing"*, *"buillding"*, *"verry"*, and *"familly"* are signs of the student's limited knowledge about rules of doubling consonants. Consonants were doubled where they should not, and they were not doubled where they should be. Because *"cultur"*, *"periode"*, *"abilitie"*, and *"humain"* are English-French cognates, Yasmine was uncertain about their spelling, and she wrote them in the French form. Other errors were merely due to random decisions. Overall, regardless of the motivation behind misspelling words, the student efforts to verify the correct spelling in a dictionary seem to be very little before the instructional session.

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Table 5.6

Yasmine's Spelling Errors Made before the Instructional Session

Session	Erroneous form	Correct Form	Type of error
Pretest	Weisly	Wisely	Ordering
	abilitie	ability	substitution
	lern	learn	omission
	easily	easily	substitution
Session 1	Realy	Really	omission
	verry	very	addition
	it's	its	addition
	cultur	culture	omission
	wight	white	addition, ordering, and omission
	fainaly	finally	addition and ordering
Session 2	Bilud	Build	Ordering
Session 3	themselfs	Themselves	addition and substitution
	enjoynment	enjoyment	addition
Session 4	buillding	Building	addition
	esteam	esteem	substitution
	confortable	comfortable	substitution
Session 5	humain (body)	human (body)	Addition
	gaing	gaining	omission
Session 6	Luck	Lack	Substitution
	easally	easily	substitution and addition
	necessaty	necessity	substitution
	airobics	aerobics	substitution
	fittness	fitness	addition
Session 7	Planning	Planning	Omission
	write	right	addition, omission,
	familly	family	addition
	periode	period	addition
	gests	guests	substitution
	enogh	enough	substitution
	freinds	friends	ordering

In the instructional session, the typographically enhanced text included, in bold, words that can raise uncertainties about spelling. The following are examples of commonly misspelled words appearing in the text: *choose*, *comfortable*, *finally*, *environment*, *rough*, *and switch off*. In session eight paragraph, the one devote to spelling, Yasmine used correctly the words *comfortable* and *finally* in the paragraph about the solutions to concentration problems in exam revision. As it can be deduced from Table 5.7, Yasmine seemed to benefit from the instructional session devoted to spelling, for she managed to fix many of her spelling inaccuracies. Obviously, the typographically enhanced text helped her to notice the mismatches between her spelling decisions and the correct ones. It was, however, pointed in the session that the use of the dictionary is the best way to solve

problems of uncertainties concerning spelling. In the same paragraph produced by Yasmine, the word *ready* appears in brackets *redy*. It is corrected right after with the correct spelling (see Figure 5.6). This can be explained by the student's reflection and growing awareness of one of her frequent error patterns, pronunciation influenced errors. In the subsequent sessions' paragraphs, words which were misspelled or which represented some of the student's error patterns in previous sessions appeared in a correct form. Examples include the words *enough* (previously the *u* was omitted), and *themselves* (previously *v* was substituted by *f*), *affected* (previously the doubled consonant was omitted), and *patient* (previously vowels appear in wrong order). Quantitatively speaking, the percentage of Yasmine's spelling errors has decreased to 12.12% after the instructional session devoted to spelling.
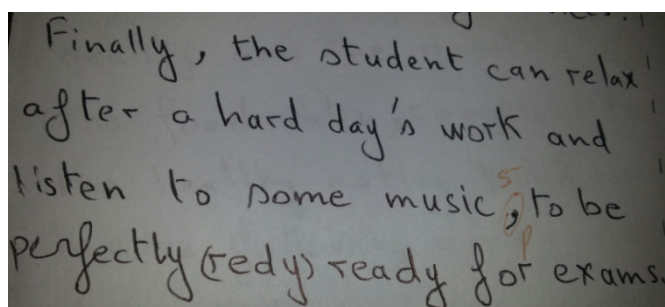
Figure 5.6. An excerpt of Yasmine's revised writing.

Table 5.7

Yasmine's Spelling Errors Made after the Instructional Session

Session	Erroneous Form	Correct form	Type of error
Session 8	wisly	wisely	omission
Session 9	/	/	/
Session 10	groupes	Groups	addition
Session 11	desease	Disease	substitution
Session 12	spacially	especially specially	substitution
Post test	/	/	/

Afnane's gains in avoiding sentence fragments

Afnane's earliest paragraphs showed some weaknesses in the production of complete sentences. In the example below, the subject was missing, and the verb appeared directly after the transitional expression.

Most importantly, facilitate their path to succeed with graduation.

Because, in the paragraph, the sentences preceding this example were used to support the main idea of time management benefits, the implied subject of this sentence is *time management*. In a similar case, Afnane juxtaposes two gerund phrases leading to two possible corrections.

Secondly, taking a relax by traveling, knowing a new villages and traditions.

The first possibility is to use the gerund phrases as a subject, and to provide a predicate for this subject in order to obtain a complete sentence. Alternatively, the gerund can be turned into a finite verb, and the sentence can be completed by supplying a subject.

In the sessions following the instructional session devoted to fragments, Afnan displayed abilities to handle sentences of medium length and complexity without resulting in sentence fragments. The following are examples of sentences that the student managed to produce without making fragment errors.

1.   *Finally, the movement of students from time to time can motivate them better than sitting long hours in revising.*

2.   *Neglecting physical activity can lead to many diseases, especially obesity.*

Afnane's gains in avoiding fragment errors were obvious from the figures of the percentage of fragment errors. While prior to the instructional session this category of errors represented 7.69% of the total errors, this figure dropped to 00%. This gain cannot be attributed to an internalization of the rule since rule internalization does not occur in such a short notice but to an adoption of more solid revision strategies.

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Anfale's gains in subject verb-agreement

Subject-verb agreement is one of Anfale's most prevailing error patterns. Throughout the sessions preceding and following the session devoted to this feature, her writings revealed an obvious reduction of errors in this category. Starting with a percentage of 22.72% of subject-verb agreement errors, Anfale managed to reduce this figure to 4.87% in the paragraphs following the instructional session on this aspect.
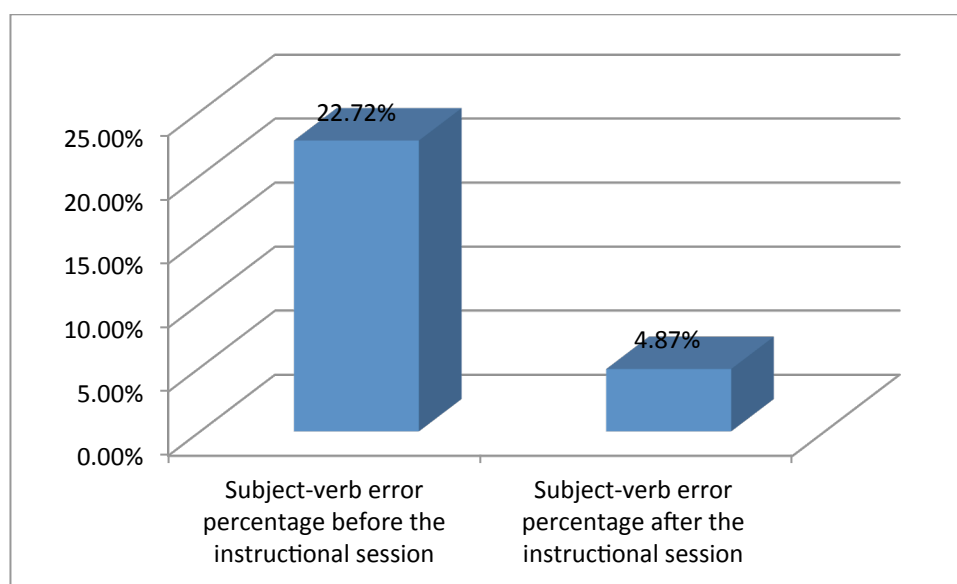
Figure 5.7. Comparison of Anfale's subject-verb agreement errors before and after the instructional session.

To illustrate, here are some examples where Anfale failed to achieve agreement in her earlier productions.

1.*Time management help to forget stress.*

2.*First it (a country) have a beautiful and historical place.*

3.*It have lows and all people must do it.*

The verb in each of the sentences did not match the subject. In the same paragraphs (pretest and session 1 paragraphs), the student wrote other sentences where the verb matches the head noun in number.

Life is too easy.

What can be inferred from these examples is that failing to match *have* with *it* was by no means a slip of the pen; it was rather a systematic error. However, this does not imply a deficiency in rule knowledge given that the background instruction that this student has been exposed to had extensively dealt with agreement. This suggests that the student knew perfectly the rule, but knowing the rule did not suffice her to apply it.

In the paragraphs following the instructional session, Anfale's writings revealed a developing ability to achieve agreement such as in a number of examples. In one of those instances, the subject was a noun phrase "*Lack of physical activities*"; such a case is said by researchers to cause confusion as the head is singular while the noun in the adjectival prepositional phrase is plural (Haskell & MacDonald, 2003).

 Lack of physical activities is a problem.

In spite of this confusing syntactic complexity, Anfale provided a matching form of the auxiliary to be. It is worth to note as well that in the last session, Anfale self-corrected the following erroneous sentence.

The first version: *It (the channel) have all the news in all the world.*

The revised version: *It (the channel) has all the news in all the world.*

The previous cases displaying positive gains can be explained by a change in the revision behaviours. The students seemed to be more aware about the weaknesses they have spotted in the phase of linguistic awareness. Their shouldering of responsibility in error correction was obvious from the significant progress they made in the indicated features. Interestingly, the three of the cases involve average achievers, which excludes the possibility that strategy manipulation may be limited to good achievers.

5.2.3.2 Cases of unchanged error rate

Some students maintained the same percentage of error occurrence in the course of the semester. The students maintained approximately the same percentage of errors before the instructional session and after it. Accordingly, their performance seemed to be unaffected by the intervention.

Rofeida's unchanged error rate in word choice

As regards the correct use of word choice aspect, Rofeida showed a consistent level whether before or after the session devoted to this feature. The reported percentage was 20.75% before the instructional session and 20% after the instructional session. The following are sentences including wrong choice of vocabulary produced in her earlier paragraphs.

A hobby is an effective <u>tool</u> to reduce stress.

Obesity is one of the most <u>famous</u> causes of many serious diseases.

The family have to make a list of guests in order to be able to make <u>the destination</u> about the place of the party.

The lack f concentration in exam revision is one of the most famous problems <u>within</u> students.

In the four examples, Rofeida displayed a problem in the choice of vocabulary items. Her lexical inaccuracies can be classified within the category of lexical confusion because they all result from a similarity in the semantic properties between the target word and the chosen word. The lexical item *tool*, for instance, which is the chosen word, could better be replaced by *way* as it seems the appropriate target word, and *famous* could be replaced by *common*. Similarly, the word *destination* could be dropped to keep only the word *place*, and the word *within* could be substituted by *among*.

Session 11 was devoted to the aspect of word choice. Through the typographically enhanced texts it was aimed to raise the students' awareness about the subtle differences that could exist in some lexical items. It was also aimed to encourage them to use the dictionary to verify the meaning of the word, its connotations, level of formality, and its collocations. Two word choice errors are provided below to exemplify lexical inaccuracies in the paragraphs produced by Rofeida after the session devoted to the aspect in question.

At the same time avoid everything that may <u>rise</u> his pains.

This illness also can be an opportunity <u>to revise</u> his relationship with God.

Because Rofeida's spelling errors are very scarce, which reveals her acceptable knowledge of spelling, the use of the word *rise* was flagged as a word choice error not a spelling one. This student could have easily figured out the difference between the target word *raise* and the selected word *rise* if she had used the dictionary. Moreover, the second sentence includes the word *revise* that could be substituted by *reconsider*.

Although Rofeida is a good achiever student, she seemed not to benefit from the instructional session devoted to this aspect. This can be explained by the complexity of this aspect and the significant knowledge student writers need to be able to use accurately lexical items. Moreover, it is too ambitious to expect students to develop, after one instructional session, a lexical knowledge that enables them to notice subtle semantic variations between near-synonyms or semantically related words.

Zina's unchanged error rate in spelling

This student started with a percentage of 48% of spelling errors to reduce this figure to 43.58%. In spite of this numerical slight reduction in the percentage of spelling errors, the overall quality of this feature did not improve in Zina's writing. A look at the table below indicates that this student was not cautious of the accuracy of spelling before the instructional session.

Table 5.8

Zina's Spelling errors before the Instructional Session

Session	Erroneous Form	Correct Form	Type of Error
Pretest	the write	the right	addition and substitution
	samthing	something	substitution, omission
	puting	putting	omission
	organaze	organize	substitution
	moduel	module	order
Session 1	there	their	omission, addition
	theis	this	addition
	cominucate	communicate	omission, substitution
	everythink	everything	substitution
	olde	old	addition
	emportant	important	substance
Session 2	hobbite	hobby	Substitution
	there	their	omission, addition
	samething	something	substitution, omission
	shair	share	omission, addition
	compitition	competition	substitution
Session 3	Persal	Pearsal	Omission
	apstract	abstract	substitution
	there	their	omission, addition
	beneficaill	beneficial	order
	enjoyes	enjoys	addition
Session 4	shair	Share	omission, addition
Session 5	theire	their	Addition
	consequant	consequence	omission, addition
	sameone	someone	substitution
Session 6	theme	them	Addition
	finde	find	addition
	probleme	problem	addition
Session 7	invates	invites	Substitution
	same	some	substitution
	seconde	second	addition

Although spelling errors are by no means errors that can interfere with communication, they affect the overall quality of the composition and they reflect the extent to which a student is cautious about accuracy. Zina obviously made the same errors repeatedly without benefitting from the direct feedback received in the phase of raising linguistic awareness. For example, the misspelled word "*samthing*", which occurred in the pretest, shows clearly the influence of pronunciation on the way the word is written. In session 2, session5, and session7 the words *"samething", "sameone"*, and *"same"* respectively, occurred in the produced paragraphs.

As session8 was the one targeting focus on the feature of spelling accuracy, it was expected from students to pay more attention to this aspect, especially that the revision of

this feature is neither time consuming nor effortful. In the paragraph produced in session 10, the misspelled word "same" (used for "some") recurs. The persistence of this error shows that this student did not change her revision processes.

Another prevailing spelling error in Zina's written productions is the addition of a final *'e'* where it is not necessary and its omission where it should be added. While in the paragraphs preceding the instructional session we can notice the words "theire", "theme", "seconde" and "olde", in the sessions following the instructional session we find also "hase", "diseas", "whil" and "habites".

Table 5.9

Zina's Spelling Errors after the Instructional Session.

Session	Erroneous Form	Correct Form	Type of Error
Session 8	enverment	Environment	substitution, addition
	whil	While	omission
Session 9	obisty	Obesity	omission, order
	diabt	diabetes	omission
	habites	habits	addition
	whil	while	omission
Session 10	same	Some	Substitution
Session 11	hase	Has	addition
	diseas	Disease	omission
Session 12	showes	Shows	addition
	borde	bored	order
	diffrent	different	omission
	it's	its	addition
Post test	offred	Offered	omission
	compinies	companies	substitution
	contry	country	omission
	instanse	instance	substitution

Obviously, in the case of Zina, the treatment period involving raising metalinguistic awareness, provision of both teacher-initiated and self-initiated feedback, and exposure to typographically texts did not seem to bring any change in the student's readiness to take more control over the revision of spelling.

Yasmine's unchanged error rate in sentence combination

This student seemed to have a number of problems all leading to erroneous sentence combinations. This is illustrated in the following sentence produced in the first session of the treatment period.

I really want visit U.S.A or the new land like people say nowadays. because I am verry curious about having a real and clear image about it's culture, and also because it fasinates me a lot.

This sentence is the topic sentence of the first session paragraph. The sentence includes not only problems of sentence combination, but also problems of wordiness, punctuation and topic sentence effectiveness. Instead of concisely capturing the gist of the paragraph in a clear topic sentence, Yasmine tried to say too many things in the same sentence. She tried to comment on the name of the country, to express her intense desire to visit it, and to give the reasons behind her desire to make the trip. Although the sentence includes a full stop breaking it down into two parts, it was obvious that conceptually speaking it functions as only one sentence. The full stop Yasmine placed before the subordinating conjunction, *because*, caused the sentence to bear an additional problem of punctuation and fragment sentence. Furthermore, in this sentence, both the subordinating conjunction, *because*, and the coordinating conjunction, *and*, occurred twice.

This infelicitous way of combining sentences, albeit not very common, persisted after the instructional session on the aspect of sentence combination. The following example is a point in case.

Another difference is related to the quality and the quantity of food eaten; compared to the healthy eating habits which involve following a piticular diet which can ensure the enough quantity of food and the variety of substances and vitamins.

This sentence, comprising 40 words and functioning as the last supporting detail, accounts for more than half of the paragraph length. It is preceded by three other sentences; all of them together comprise 35 words. The cause behind this unbalanced sentence length and sentence complexity is the excessive use of subordinating clauses in this example.

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Again, because Yasmine wanted to tackle many ideas at the same time, she produced a long sentence lacking clarity of meaning and accuracy of structure.

5.2.3.3 Cases of regression

In this third category, we have grouped examples of cases where no improvement could have been observed in the participants' performance. On the contrary, more errors have been noticed after they received instruction on the targeted feature.

Rahaf's regression in sentence combination

Examining and measuring Rahaf's mastery of sentence combination was not a straightforward task. For one thing, this struggling student faced an array of problems in formulating sentences. Those problems ranged from word choice and word order to sentence parts and sentence combination. Examining one aspect by isolating it from others was thus an illogical decision. However, to facilitated comparison, focus was mainly placed on the student's ability to combine sentences, and little attention was paid to the other errors.
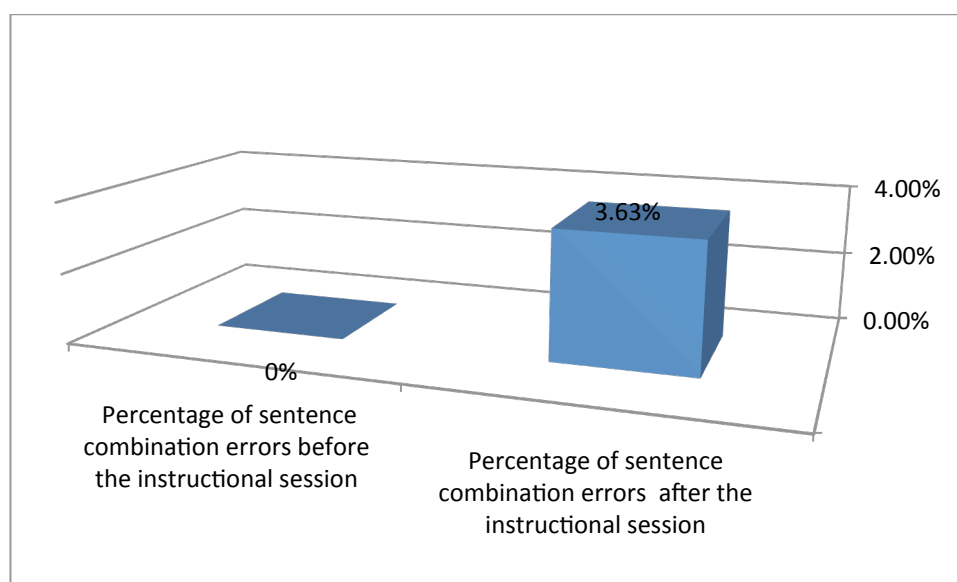
Figure 5.8. Comparison of Rahaf's sentence combination errors before and after the instructional session.

The computation of sentence combination errors in Rahaf's produced texts indicated a noticeable increase after instruction about this feature was presented in the sixth session. Errors in this feature represented 3.63% of the total errors in her latest productions while in the earliest ones they represented 0%.

To understand the causes of the treatment ineffectiveness in Rahaf's situation, it is necessary to examine thoroughly how this student practised sentence combining in her productions. In the first five sessions, Rahaf relied primordially on simple and short sentences. Her use of complex or compound-complex sentences was limited, and most of the dependent clauses included at this stage were adjectival ones. The following set of excerpts illustrated her choices.

1. *First, he will discover his skills or ability through time.*

2. *For that we should spend our time in beneficial things to avoid losing our life for unimportant thing.*

3. *In addition to that it lows mental alertness and doesn't concentrate.*

4. *Travel is very important for someone who prefer to discover new place.*

Although adding an infinitive phrase in sentence (2) or a complex predicate in sentence (3) does not seem to require a high level of language proficiency, the student could not produce error-free simple sentences. Sentences (1), (2), and (3) included a number of errors like faulty parallelism in "*skills or ability*", a missing comma after "*For that*", a direct translation from Arabic in "*losing our life*", and a problem of number in "*unimportant thing*". The fourth sentence as well included an agreement problem between "*someone*" and "*prefer*". Clearly, producing simple sentences and short complex ones were already presenting a challenge to Rahaf.

Starting from the sixth session, the one corresponding to the instruction devoted to sentence combining, Rahaf started to produce more complex sentences. Taking into

account that an attempt to move to a higher level of sentence complexity requires knowledge in the manipulation of dependent and independent clauses, it seems that Rahaf was not ready to adopt the new change. She was already struggling with other issues of agreement and parallelism in less grammatically complex sentences. As it is shown in the following set of examples, the shift to longer and more complex sentences exacerbated things for Rahaf.

1. *Another solution can replace the lack of physical activity via participating the sport everyday or every week because it is very important to avoid lazyiness by at least walking for one hours*.

2. *For instance, when they revise during the exams, they shouldn't use the internet, watching the TV and should switch off their mobiles.*

3. *Another difference between them that eating healthy habits help to sleep regularly without any problem, but unhealthy causes a sleep deprivation because a person feels that his stomach is very heavy and he can't sleep.*

Compared to the first set of examples, which were clear in terms of meaning despite the errors, these three sentences lack clarity and comprehensibility. The length and the complexity of the sentences obscured meaning, and made it difficult for the student to revise them. If the first set of sentences required only minor modifications and additions to fix the faulty parallelism or agreement problems, every sentence in this set requires a total restructuring of its component.

Seen from a perspective of learning to revise autonomously, Rahaf's case poses a number of challenges. The most salient one is related to the possibilities that struggling students have when revising. Caught in a dilemma, students from this category can neither write accurately complex sentences, nor can they revise the sentences for effectiveness. Appealing to strategic competence can solve, however, the problem. Self-assessment

strategies can prove to be very useful in similar cases. By assessing one's abilities, Rahaf could have considered the level of complexity that would have allowed her to make a minimum of errors interfering with communication. Alternatively, she could have reflected over the possibility of gradually adopting sentence complexity. It is worth to note here that in spite of the usefulness of the teacher's interference in such cases, it is difficult to provide a reformulated version when the intended meaning is obscure.

Rofeida's regression in punctuation

In many instances of Rofeida's written productions, it was clear that she had a good command of punctuation rules' use. Sentence (1), which was produced before the instructional session, included a proper use of comma after the conjunctive adverb. The student has failed, nevertheless, to apply the same rule in sentence (2). Another erroneous use of punctuation in sentence (2) is the use of comma instead of a semicolon to separate two independent clauses.

1. *However, obesity is one of the most famous causes of many serious diseases.*

2. *However a lot of breaks within shows is annoying, the repetition of them is without breaks.*

Knowing that the second sentence was produced after the instructional session on punctuations, we can infer that the error is not due to a deficiency in her knowledge, but to her revision practices. When students do not devote sufficient time to review their produced texts, their attentional resources are not efficiently activated; hence, they cannot notice any dissonance. In the present case, what helped to distinguish between Rofeida's errors of competence and errors of performance (mistakes) are the instances of correct punctuation use. The consistency with which this student has been using comma correctly left no doubt that she needed to be more heedful when revising her texts rather than to work on reinforcing her knowledge about the relevant system of rules.

Another example illustrating this point can be found in sentences (3) and (4). The same rule pertaining to use of comma before a coordinating conjunction in complete independent clauses has been applied in one sentence and violated in another. The comma was not placed before "*and*" in sentence (3), but it was placed before "*so*" and "*but*" in sentences (3) and (4) respectively.

3. *This plan will guide him <u>and</u> his daily revision will be limited<u>, so</u> the task of concentration will be easier.*

4. *Having healthy eating habits is one of the reasons for many deseases such as diabets<u>, but</u> the healthy ones act as solutions or treatments for many of those illnesses.*

Seeing that both sentences were taken from her latest productions, it can be inferred again that Rofeida did not struggle with understanding the rule, but she needed to devote sufficient time for the reviewing of the produced text before its submission.

Douaa regression in rhetorical pattern

Knowing which mode to use in the development of paragraph ideas does not pertain to the linguistic competence as much as it does to conceptual knowledge. Douaa is one of the students who have weaknesses in different levels of language: word-level, phrase-level, and sentence-level. However, besides these form-accuracy-related problems, she displayed other weaknesses in generating and organizing the content according to the required type of paragraph.

Throughout the earliest sessions of the treatment period, Douaa responded fairly in her produced texts to the suggested prompts. As mentioned in an earliest section, the first sessions were mostly engaging students in cause–effect writing. Douaa did not face difficulties in composing this type of writing. For instance, when asked to provide the reasons for which she wants to visit or live in a country in session (1), she selected Italy, and she justified her choice by the following motifs.

1. *Visiting the historical places.*

2. *Joining the brother.*

3. *Studying there.*

In another paragraph (session 6), she provided these solutions to the problem of neglecting physical activity.

1. *Practicing sport.*

2. *Walking or dancing regularly.*

The difficulties arose when the prompt of session (8) required the student to suggest a process for overcoming concentration problems during exams. To respond correctly to this prompt, the supporting ideas should consist in steps and not merely solutions. Douaa suggested the following ideas.

1. *Management of time.*

2. *Selecting the place of revision.*

3. *Having enough sleep.*

The three ideas can work perfectly as solutions to the problem of concentration, yet they do not follow any chronological order. The absence of any cohesive devices indicating the principle of chronological ordering confirmed the fact that Douaa was merely enumerating solutions and not explaining a process.

Session (12) was the one devoted to the rhetorical pattern, and the corresponding prompt required the student to evaluate a TV channel. Cognitively speaking, evaluation is regarded as a higher level thinking skill involving giving judgments based on a number of criteria. As a result, for a student who was seldom involved in evaluative writing, this prompt caused confusion and difficulty. The following are the ideas developed by Douaa.

1. *The news contain about everything in the world.*

2. *The English language.*

3. *Motion pictures allow getting information and acquiring pronunciation.*

In her evaluative paragraph, Douaa listed a few reasons for preferring the selected channel, but she failed to clearly give judgments based on criteria. When comparing the percentage of errors in this aspect before and after the session targeting the rhetorical pattern, the figure shifted from 1.98% to 2.94%.

To interpret Douaa's regression in this pivotal writing aspect, a number of parameters come into play. Through the above discussion, we understand that the challenges arising when generating and organizing the ideas are tightly related to thinking skills rather than to linguistic competence. The lack of previous opportunities to utilize evaluative skills while writing and the predominance of argumentation through cause-effect relationship led to poor paragraph content. As an active promoter of learner autonomy, the teacher could play an important role in such cases by scaffolding the learning process. Douaa needed assistance in balancing reflection on both content and form. She also needed to be more aware of her weaknesses pertaining to the selection of the appropriate type of paragraph to write so that more efforts could have been furnished by this student in constructing and revising the content of the paragraph.

Another factor emerging in the case of Douaa is the lack of linguistic knowledge. A quick glance at the student's error figures allows guessing that her attempt to achieve linguistic accuracy might have distracted her from paying attention to content. Her performance in idea generation, idea organization, and content revision was decreased by the resulting cognitive load.

What can be inferred from this last category is that the noticed absence of any error reduction could not be attributed to a negative impact of the intervention. Rather, it pertains to a number of points. For one thing, the increased number of errors can be due to the student's sudden decision to adopt a higher level of language complexity without

having the linguistic prerequisite for such a shift. Another reason was the fact that errors themselves were not due to a lack of knowledge about how to use the rule properly, but they were due to inattention. Students failed to notice these errors either because they submitted the assignments without revising the product due to time constraints, or they skipped the step of revision as they did not feel the necessity for it. Moreover, students with poor linguistic resources deploy all their reflective resources to linguistic accuracy at the detriment of content.

5.2.4 Discussion of corpus analysis findings

To conclude, gauging the effectiveness of the training on self-monitoring and self-correction through the analysis of the corpus revealed a number of findings. Though numerical data has revealed a slight, yet noticeable reduction of error percentages after the instructional sessions on the targeted features, it is illogical to claim full effectiveness of the intervention. Expecting students to internalize a language rule or to adopt some reviewing strategies right away after the presentation of an instructional session is a too ambitious objective to have. Nevertheless, by training students on a number of revision-related practices, it was noticed that some students took more responsibility for using easily accessible resources, such as dictionaries, to self-correct their inaccuracies.

Another finding for this analysis is that the reduction of errors was more noticeable in some writing and language features than in others. Because, generally speaking, rule-governed and word-level aspects are more treatable compared to non-rule governed and discourse-level aspects; gains in accuracy were noticed in a limited number of aspects such as spelling, and subject-verb agreement.

One additional finding is related to understanding the reasons for which errors have increased after the intervention in some cases. Because out of confidence, some students skip the revision step, they do not notice mistakes and slips of pens. They also limit their

product correction to the features they are not certain about. Furthermore, when struggling students decide to increase the complexity of their language without considering equipping themselves with the linguistic knowledge, they risk to make more errors. This fact does not contradict the theoretical foundation on which the training lies; on the contrary, it confirms the necessity for reflection and for personalized goals. Students should not gear their learning practices solely to the goals set by the teacher or the educational institution; rather, they can set their own goals to handle their weaknesses and cope with their pace of learning.

We conclude that training students to use self-monitoring and self-correction strategies has a differential effect across different writing features and among students of varying proficiency backgrounds. Partial gains in error reduction can, then, be obtained and autonomous behaviours can be encouraged if learners are trained to use those strategies.

5.3 Findings from Marginal Annotations Corpus

This section addresses the main findings yielded by the analysis of the participants' marginal annotations. As the objective from practicing this technique was the use of self-monitoring strategy, it is imperative to have a close examination of the way annotations were geared to the promotion of reflection while writing. A discussion is, thus, provided to associate the numerical and the non-numerical data to the core concepts of reflection, autonomy, and writing revision. In doing so it is intended to answer the research question of whether or not self-monitoring through marginal annotations guides the students to act as more reflective and responsible reviewers.

5.3 .1 A general overview of the predominant patterns

As a preliminary step to the assessment of the training on self-monitoring outcomes, data presenting the predominant patterns are considered. Given the unfamiliarity of the

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idea of writing annotation to students, it is crucial to examine the extent to which students were productive in terms of the marginal annotations. A total number of 288 annotations were reported in the sample of 144 paragraph productions that the 12 students produced over the course of 12 sessions. The minimum (12 annotations) and maximum (32 annotations) numbers of annotations were produced by Anfal and Thelili respectively.

Different patterns have emerged from the coded and categorized data. Guided by Fairclough's (2003) insights in the analysis of discourse, we proceeded the coding to examine more than one aspect in the data. Area of concern, form and function of annotations are examples of the patterns that can be referred to in subsequent parts to analyse the findings from different perspectives.

5.3 .1.1 Areas of concern

One of the general patterns that emerged from the coding and categorization of annotations is related to the annotations' area of concern. Four major areas were identified based on the participants' marginal annotations: global issues, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. A fifth area was added to include other miscellaneous concerns like formality, objectivity and process of writing while a sixth area was set to include the ambiguous annotations with more than one interpretation or with vague content. This last category is labelled "unspecified".

As it is indicated by the frequencies of the annotations in Table 5.10, students engaged in reflection on varied aspects of writing. The most substantial share of the annotations centred on grammar (30.55%). Annotations pertaining to each of vocabulary and mechanics represented 20.83%. An approximately equal rate (20.13%) was reported in aspects related to global issues including content and content organization. Together, the vague annotations with those on miscellaneous concerns like formality, objectivity, and process counted as 7.63% of the total number. Taken as a whole, the data emerging from

the categorization of annotations suggest a clear concern about local issues, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, at the expense of global ones. However, caution is preferred in the interpretation of these figures. The significant number of annotations devoted to sentence, phrase, and word acceptability can be sign of the importance given to issues below sentence level. Nevertheless, these grammatical entities can also be regarded as semantic entities contributing to the overall meaning of the paragraph.

Table: 5.10

Annotations' Areas and Sub-areas of Concerns

Area of annotation	Subareas	Number of annotations	Total number /percentage
Global issues	Topic sentence	15	58
	Coherence	2	20.13%
	Unity	3	
	Use of transitions	6	
	Adequacy of support	23	
	Rhetorical pattern	1	
	Idea organization	5	
	Paragraph structure	1	
	Title	2	
Grammar	Sentence acceptability	9	88
	Phrase acceptability	17	30.55%
	Sentence combination	3	
	Sentence length	1	
	Tense/ verb/ modal	19	
	Word form/ class	13	
	Word order	2	
	Subject- verb agreement	3	
	Number	3	
	Article	7	
	Prepositions	3	
	Possessive and personal pronouns	7	
	Quantifiers	1	
Vocabulary	Word choice	51	60
	Vocabulary redundancy/ variety	4	20.83%
	Collocation	5	
Mechanics	Punctuation	24	60
	Spelling	35	20.83%
	Capitalization	1	
Miscellaneous	Formality	1	10
	Objectivity	1	3.47%
	Process	5	
	Technique	2	
	Paragraph Vs Essay Structure	1	
Unspecified		12	12 4.16%
			288 100%

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5.3 .1.2 Grammatical mood of the annotations

The examination of the annotations' grammatical mood was intended to obtain in-depth insights into the way students communicated their thoughts. The overwhelming majority of annotations (87.5%) were phrased in the interrogative form. This is evidence that the participants were actively engaged in questioning while self-monitoring. Their cognitive resources were centred on a search for answers that could aid in shaping meaning. A more cautious interpretation for the prevalence of interrogative annotations is the participants' perception of annotations as a tool to receive answers from the teacher through feedback or from themselves in subsequent revisions of the produced paragraphs. Declarative sentences occurred in a less significant percentage (12.5%). They were mostly employed to describe problematic situations or to evaluate a product. Taken as a whole, the grammatical mood selected by the participants indicated the perception of self-monitoring as a means to engage in reflective interactions and a search for better choices.

Table 5.11

Grammatical Mood of Annotations

The grammatical mood of annotation	Number	Percentage
Declarative sentence	36	12.5%
Interrogative sentence	252	87.5%

The following examples illustrate the way the grammatical mood shapes the communicative choices and reveals whether the participants are opting for either dialogic or monologic patterns in interrogative annotations, or whether they are merely describing facts in declarative annotations.

Douaa: *I write always directly on the paper without using first draft.*

Thelili: *can I say throughout all the year?*

Obviously, Douaa chose to phrase her annotation in the declarative form because she was describing a practice that might affect both her writing process and the quality of her

produced texts. The thought appears to be directed to herself as an admission to have selected a wrong writing habit. She might not be expecting the teacher to respond or comment on this annotation. On the other hand, Thelili was wondering in the second example whether the phrase '*throughout all the year*' was acceptable or not. She probably articulated this query to obtain an answer from the teacher and not only to express a doubt.

5.3 .1.3 Functions of the annotations

By function, we mean the "actional meanings" performed by the participants through their annotations. The idea of carrying the analysis at this level is inspired from Fairclough's (2003) guide to discourse analysis. He used the term "actional meanings" to include meanings like statements, demands, and offers. However, to adapt the idea to the purposes of the present analysis, we identified the following emerging actional meaning: a query about a decision to make or already made, a descriptive statement, an evaluative statement, and a request.

The numerical results showed that more than half of the annotations (55.55%) expressed queries either about the decision to make in a given situation or about the quality of a linguistic or conceptual element they have already used. In 91 annotations (31.59%), the participants were undecided between two choices, and they needed to opt for the most appropriate one. Twenty-seven annotations (9.37%) were in the form of descriptive statements. They were written to describe problematic situations. Evaluative statements, on the other hand, were declarative sentences that included adjectives evaluating the quality of a choice the participants have made. The most frequently used adjectives were "effective" and "good". An unexpected function emerged with the analysis of data was the annotation functioning as a request. For one participant, the purpose from writing annotations was unclear, so she annotated her paragraphs with requests of clarifications that did not pertain

directly to the paragraph she was writing. Examples below illustrate each type of annotation.

A query about a decision to make

Shall I use "who" after students have ... ?

An evaluative query about a decision already made

Is the spelling of colistirol true or false?

A choice between two alternatives

Shall I say "work" or "working"?

A descriptive statement

I think that I repeated many words in many times.

An evaluative statement

I think the topic sentence is no good.

A request

Can you tell me about the effective and ineffective sentence and how to distinguish between them?

Table 5.12

Numbers and Percentages of the Annotations' Functions

Function of annotation	Number	Percentage
Choice between two alternatives	91	31.59%
Queries about right decisions	160	55.55%
Descriptive statements	27	9.37%
Evaluative statements	8	2.77%
Request	2	0.69%

The choice of the functions reveals that while writing, students were mostly engaged in reflecting on the right decisions. They were also weighing critically the alternative possibilities they had in order to opt for the most appropriate ones. The use of self-

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monitoring offered them, conceivably, the possibility to act in a variety of manners to orchestrate the processes involved in writing.

5.3 .1.4 Degree of specificity

A further perspective from which the annotations can be examined is their degree of focus. Because the students were not familiar to the idea of writing annotations, some of their first annotations lacked focus. They seemed to be confined to the examples given by the teacher in the pilot session. The phrasing as well lacked variety and showed that it was not clear how to use the technique simultaneously with the paragraph production. A few of the selected annotations exemplify how the participants gained more clarity about the use of the technique after a number of sessions.

Session 1

1. Zina: *I am not sure about punctuation* (session 1)

2. Nour: *Is spelling correct* (session 1)

3. Rahaf: *How to distinguish between the order of importance and the chronological order?* (session 1)

Session 11

4. Zina: *Shall I use the comma instead of repeating "and"* (session 12)

5. Nour: *shall I say must or replaced by "should"?* (session 11)

6. Rahaf: *is it better to say forgive or forgiveness?* (session 11)

Asking about the correctness of punctuation in one's produced paragraph, in annotation (1), is obviously a broad query. It reveals that the participant has not located a problem of punctuation in a particular sentence or clause, but was trying to revise the aspect in all the sentences. Conversely, annotation (4) is more focused as it refers to a specific problem in a paragraph. Annotation (2) is a further example illustrating the lack of focus in locating problems or translating doubts. As regards annotation (3), the student

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seemed to misconstrue the objective from writing annotations. Instead of translating her doubts or queries, she preferred to ask a question of no relevance to the paragraph she was writing. In annotations (5) and (6), the queries were bearing on precise issues of modal choice and word form respectively.

One aspect to which clarity of annotations can be associated is the length of the annotation and the amount of details they included. To illustrate, two examples produced by Thelili are explained. In the second session, Thelili wrote the following annotation:

Shall I use 'you' or I can't

Although the student was clearly inquiring about the possibility to use a specific word, the cause of her worry was not sufficiently explicit. Whether she was worried about being informal or making a shift of personal pronoun remained to be guessed by the reader of the annotation. Conversely, in the fourth session, she was adequately clear in the following annotation:

Shall I use a semicolon before he or a period because I begun with because and I have used a coma when starting the benefits of having a hobby.

This annotation includes three clauses helping in understanding the whole situation that confused Thelili. She even justified her doubt with an implicit reference to a rule of clause placements in complex sentences.

In spite of the clear improvement of some students in terms of the precision and specificity with which the annotations were phrased, taken as a whole, the annotations were not sufficiently informative about the participants' worries. Due to this fact, many of the annotations inquiring about sentence and phrase acceptability were difficult to interpret. For instance, an annotation starting with *"is it possible to say + phrase/ clause/ sentence"* poses challenges of whether to interpret it as a concern about the grammaticality

of the phrase, clause, or sentence; or a concern about the semantic function of the entity and how well it serves the general meaning of the paragraph.

5.3.2 Assessing outcomes of self-monitoring use

To gauge whether writing annotations brought some gains or was ineffective in enhancing responsible reflection, we opted to draw upon some theoretical and empirical insights. Given that SM through annotations has extensively been associated with reflection, revision, reader awareness, and responsibility, the analysis of the annotations was conducted in an evaluative approach to tackle the aforementioned aspects.

5.3.2.1 Identifying areas of weakness

In different instances, the participants were expressing their concerns about weaknesses either in one component of their writing proficiency or in a produced element. Their marginal annotations seem to express their awareness about both linguistic and conceptual abilities. Any process of problem-solving starts with the step of locating the problem. In many cases, the participants pinpointed the aspect needing more revision to increase lexico-grammatical accuracy or the content clarity.

1. Rofeida: *I did not find a synonyme for the verb "to revise" so there is a lot of repetition!*

2. Rofeida: *I feel that the 5th sentence is too long!*

3. Nour: *I think that my last sentence have a mistake but I don't know where?*

4. Zina: *I think I did not use enough details.*

5. Zina: *I think I have many speeling mistakes.*

6. Rahaf: *I find a difficult in getting the ideas.*

The problem could be localized precisely in the developing paragraph such as in examples (1) and (2) where repetition and sentence length respectively are diagnosed as problems. Alternatively, the student might rely on intuition to detect an erroneous language

use without localizing the error or specifying its nature such as translated in Nour's annotation. In examples (4) and (5), Zina named the areas of adequacy of support and spelling as the areas needing revision.

Based on the insights gained from the theoretical premises of learner autonomy, the students develop awareness about their abilities by identifying the weaknesses and the strengths in their writing. Then, they compare between their abilities and the ones required to produce the targeted text. As students identify the weaknesses, they engage in a cycle of goal setting, choice of learning practices and materials, and eventually assess their own outcomes and performance. In the context of this study, it is too ambitious to state that writing annotations triggered learning. Nevertheless, it can be claimed that annotations engaged students in diagnosing the areas they had to improve, and helped in detecting the problems they needed to solve, which could lead to long-term improvement of writing quality and writing abilities.

5.3.2.2 Verbalizing the intentions

One further aspect that can be revealed through annotations is the extent to which students' writing behaviours were goal-directed. When verbalizing the intentions, students were in fact pondering over the meanings they needed to convey in order to respond to the writing prompt. The gathered annotations revealed scant clues about the students' intentions regarding how they perceived their final product. The predominant concern translated in the marginal annotations was about whether or not a vocabulary item, a phrase, or a sentence was acceptable. The participants rarely accounted overtly for their concern by adding the higher order purpose from selecting effectively a vocabulary item or formulating a phrase or sentence. The following are examples of the rare cases in which students indicated a purpose for making a given decision.

1. Shall I put "and" to combine two these sentences.

2. Wich word can I replace instead of "prepare" to avoid repetition.

3. I want to change the word patient by another one but I can't find.

In annotation (1), the use of the coordinating conjunction is overtly justified by the need to combine two clauses. Likewise, in annotation (2), the student expressed the need to replace a word for another one by her attempt to avoid repetition. However, in annotation (3), the desire to replace the word by another one was not justified, and it can only be guessed to be motivated by an avoidance of repetition.

It is worthwhile to note that when training the participants to use annotations, they were not required to write purposes of every query they wrote down or to justify them with their intentions, which explains partly why they refrained from doing it. However, when considering the form of the annotation, a diverging finding can be revealed. The computation of the queries and the requests to help in choosing from two alternatives showed that 54.86% of the total annotations were formulated to express a future action. This fact demonstrates that about half of the annotations were written to help translate concerns felt before the decision is made about the problematic language or ideational element. An exemplification of the distinction between annotations reflecting a decision to be made or an evaluation of a decision already made is the following.

1. Is the last sentence effective?

2. Is "individually" correct in spelling?

3. Shall I say "decoration" or it's better to say "decorative thing"?

4. Do we have to mention in each solution the problem we are solving?

In the first annotation, it is obvious that the student has already finished writing the paragraph and was evaluating a sentence he has written. Similarly, in the second annotation, the student was expressing a doubt about the spelling of a word she used in a

sentence. Clearly, both annotations do not reveal any intention to formulate a sentence or write a word, instead they were meant to evaluate two already produced elements. The two following annotations demonstrate different situations. It can be inferred from annotation (3) that the student intends to convey a meaning with two possible language elements: either a noun or a noun phrase. In annotation (4), it seems that the student was in the process of writing a problem-solving paragraph, but she has not mentioned the problem in question.

Therefore, it seemed that the participants used a considerable number of annotations (54.86%) to translate their immediate intentions about varying aspects of their writing. However, they have not provided details regarding the way those immediate intentions about the manipulation of word-level, phrase-level, and clause-level choices could relate to other higher-level goals in writing.

5.3.2.3 Using evaluative thinking skills

In addition to goal-setting and planning, evaluation is another strategy closely tied to self-monitoring. Central to the evaluative thinking is the idea of establishing clear criteria to assess the quality of given elements in one's writing. Words like "effective", "appropriate", "correct", or "good" recurred in the students' annotations. This can be a sign that while evaluating the writing performance, the students were trying to refer to the criteria they had so far accumulated through learning writing and reception of teacher's feedback. Effectiveness and correctness were the predominant criteria used with linguistic, ideational, and textual elements. Table 5.13 illustrates the use of particular criteria to evaluate different elements of writing ranging from idea organisation to spelling.

Table 5.13

Adjectives Used by Students to Evaluate or Inquire about the Quality of Some Elements

Adjective/ Criterion	Element
Effective	Topic sentence, sentence, detail, idea,
Correct /incorrect	Spelling, vocabulary item, punctuation, order of idea,
Possible	Use of a phrase,
Balanced	Statement
OK	Use of a phrase,
Appropriate	Topic sentence, transitions,
Relevant	Detail,
Good/bad	Transitions, explanation of a quotation, use of a vocabulary item, topic sentence,
True/false	Spelling, topic sentence,
Right/Wrong	Use of vocabulary item, conjugation of a verb, spelling, use of a technique to develop a conclusion, punctuation,
Exact	Verb, meaning of a quotation,
Enough	Support,
Strong	Argument

The most noticeable fact in the annotations is the predominance of queries about the phrases and sentences acceptability or effectiveness. When expressing their concerns about the effectiveness or acceptability, students failed to specify in a more focussed manner whether they were targeting grammatical or semantic acceptability. Considering that each sentence conveys an idea, it is unclear whether the writer of the annotation is concerned about the grammaticality of the sentence or the relevance or acceptability of the idea. For example, Rofeida expresses her doubt as follows:

Is the third sentence effective?

The sentence she indicated is from the paragraph on party preparation process. This is how it appears in its context.

(1)Planning for a party is a hard task that needs a lot of preparation in order to be well organized. (2) First, the date of the party should be fixed with the agreement of all family members. (3) This step is important because the time of the rest preparation will be limited.

The ambiguity arises because it is not clear if the student is uncertain about the grammatical correctness of the sentence or about the relevance of the detail explained in the third sentence to the topic of the paragraph.

Likewise, the use of adjectives such as *"good", "bad"*, or *"OK"* reveals little about the exact source of concern. To illustrate this, the following annotation written by Rym is chosen.

Is it OK to start with "to me"?

The use of such a phrase can raise concerns about varying issues. In a paragraph about the country the student writer dreams to visit, the use of such an empty phrase can be a threat to conciseness. Everything written by the student is implied to be his/her opinion, so starting with "to me" would not add further information. Another threat could be related to the degree of objectivity and formality the student wished to achieve. If the student desired to discuss the characteristics that make a country worth visiting, there would be no need to present the facts as personal points of view. Accordingly, the phrase "to me" would preferably be dropped. Conversely, if the purpose of the paragraph was to show a very personal attachment to a country, adding the phrase in question could be possible. For the same reasons, formality is also involved in the decision of starting with or dropping the phrase.

Used uniquely to teacher's evaluation, the students seem to demonstrate a somewhat limited yet acceptable vocabulary related to evaluation. This can be attributed to the inadequate knowledge about the criteria of evaluation. Alternatively, they might have the required knowledge, but because their linguistic knowledge did not allow them to express it, they preferred to utilise broad and vague vocabulary. Understandably, any cognitive efforts devoted to a clear phrasing of the annotations could be at the expense of the text quality due to time constraints and cognitive ones.

5.3.2.4 Reflecting on linguistic, ideational, and process choices

By reflecting on the quality of their evolving texts, students were constantly trying to make the right choices. The recursive nature of writing compelled writers to manipulate linguistic, conceptual, and textual elements in a recursive fashion. They also had to monitor the different steps involved in the process of writing. The participants' annotations abound with instances of choice making ranging from surface elements like punctuation and spelling to title selection and idea organisation. The examples bellow illustrate the different aspects benefitting from the participant' reflection.

1. Douaa: *Why I am always find difficulties about how to start?*

2. Douaa: *I write always directly on the paper without using first draft.*

3. Thelili: *Shall I title the paragraph "the country dream"?*

4. Afnane: *Do I use the technique of making a recommendation in the right way?*

5. Zina: *I think I did not use enough details.*

6. Rym: *Should I mention the categories in the T.S.?*

7. Anfal: *When I say person and I want to use the pronoun "him, her" which shall I use?*

8. Nour: *How we call a person who have a party?*

9. Mira: *We write beneficial with "e" or "i"?*

Annotations (1) and (2) were written in the same session by Douaa, a low achiever. The student was probably reflecting on the choice she made with respect to the process of writing. She did not overtly link the difficulties she faced when starting a paragraph to the fact of skipping the draft writing. Nevertheless, she might have implied it since both annotations appeared in the same assignment. Annotation (3) was written to reflect on the choice of the title that captures the general idea of the paragraph. Knowing that the assignment did not require the student to formulate a title matching the content of the

paragraph, she chose to find a concise phrase to summarise the content she developed in the whole paragraph.

In the same vein, Afnane inquired in the fourth annotation about the compatibility of her concluding paragraph to the targeted technique, "*making a recommendation*". Such a choice compelled the student to reflect on the overall content rather than on local items such as words or punctuation marks. Annotation (5) illustrates reflection on the adequacy of support. Such a thought could entail the addition of other supporting details to clarify the intended point and to respond adequately to the assignment prompt. Annotation (6) is a reflection on the structure of the topic sentence. Starting from the idea that a topic sentence can have different forms including the topic sentence that summarises the main ideas, the student was considering the choice that fitted best her objectives.

Contrary to the previous instances, annotations (7), (8), and (9) bear on local issues, namely grammar, vocabulary and spelling respectively. Accuracy in word choice, and spelling was obviously a concern in their formulation of sentences.

It could be inferred that when students articulated their uncertainties or writing concerns they were actively engaged in problem solving. Expressing a doubt about the adequacy of support is likely to entail the generation and addition of other ideas. Similarly, the need to avoid repetition could be expected to trigger a search for synonym. The produced paragraphs were the outcome of revision processes triggered by the reflections made while writing. The participants' objective to shape meaning could not be attained if choice was not made among the alternatives they had at hand.

The use of specific terminology is another important point which emerges while using language to reflect on the produced language. It is noticed that the participants used a considerable number of grammar-related and content-related terminology. They have also employed words referring to the steps involved in writing. Below are examples of

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metalinguistic instances bearing on a number of aspects. Terms appear underlined for the purpose of emphasis.

Annotations including terms related to the process of writing

I write directly on the paper without using first draft.

Annotations including terms related to content, structure, and organization

I did not find an effective minor detail for the first major detail.

Do I give the exact meaning of Logan's quote?

Are the ideas in a chronological order?

Good or bad transition words?

Annotations including grammar terminology

Shall I use the modifier "always" before or after "reinforce"

Shall I say "a healthy" with article "a"?

I am not sure about the conjugation of the verbs

Annotations including vocabulary terminology

Is there any synonym for patient?

Shall I say "fill" to express "pass time"

Annotations including terminology related to surface features

Is the spelling of the word twice correct?

Shall I put a comma here?

In many instances, however, the students did not use the accurate terms referring to the language element they were reflecting on. They used either a general term such as word for a modifier in the example (1) below or they might phrase it without referring to any terminology such as in example (2). Alternatively, an erroneous term appeared in one annotation (example 3) to refer to transition words.

1. *Is the word "interesting" correct?*

2. *Can we say should or must*

3. *Do I use the appropriate quantifiers to organize my ideas?*

The above elaboration indicates that writing annotations has involved students in reflecting on different levels including conceptual, grammatical, or surface ones. To increase the clarity of the annotations, the participants have also made deliberate efforts to name the item they were reflecting on.

5.3.2.5 Interacting with the text from the perspective of the potential reader

While shaping meaning, the choices made by the writer are very decisive for the meaning of the text to be interpreted in the same way it was intended by the writer. The investigation of annotations in the light of the reader awareness concept revealed a number of points.

When a participant wrote *"Is my argument strong or not?"*, obviously, the concern she expressed was not accuracy-oriented. Rather, the student wanted to reflect on the effect her argument can leave on the potential reader.

A further case is the annotation in which the student inquired about the compatibility of contraction to academic writing purposes. This annotation "*Should I say 'don't' or 'do not' because it is academic writing*" shows that the participant was approaching writing from the perspective of selecting from the register repertoire what satisfies the audience profile. The participants' interaction with the text from the perspective of the potential reader is further illustrated in the following annotation:

Does the last sentence represent result?

The student was uncertain about the compatibility between her intention to express result and the effect she obtained through her formulation of ideas. Likewise, in another annotation, the participant was not certain whether the phrase *"pay no heed"* she selected

fitted precisely her intended meaning "neglect". Moreover, when a participant inquired *"Is there a link between my three ideas"*, she implied that assuring coherence in the three ideas was one of the goals she set when constructing her text.

Such queries demonstrate a concern about clarity in the presented content. Obviously, the intended meanings were clear to the participants, but when they changed the perspective and read their texts as it could be interpreted by the prospective reader, they became less certain. Detecting the mismatches between the actual intention and the possible interpretation of the imagined reader was one of the crucial processes involved in shaping meaning.

4.3.2.6 Responsibility over revision

In addition to the examination of the impact left by annotations on the immediate decision taken at the moment of paragraph writing, a further point that can be examined is the way annotations impact on the revisions made in the subsequent session. In the final phase of the treatment period, students were invited to take more control over responding to the feedback they had initiated through marginal annotations. Below, a number of examples illustrate the varying ways students responded to their own queries.

Example (1) Douaa:

Sentence: Cancer is one of dangerous deseas that a lot of people can't say to those who carring it

Annotation: can I say who carring?

Revision: Cancer is one of dangerous deseas that a lot of people can't say to those who carrying it

Example (2) Zina

Sentence: Also, it is better to told him, because he will have the chance to do what he want.

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Annotation: shall I use a comma between "to told him" and "because"

Revision: Also, it is better to told <u>him, because</u> he will have the chance to do what he want

Example (3) Khouloud

Sentence: The quality of this channel is another reason why people should watch it because it's emissions is very amusing.

Annotation: Shall I write very amuse or very amusing?

Revision: The quality of this channel is another reason why people should watch it because it's emissions is very amusing.

In the first example, Douaa expressed her doubt about the spelling of "to carry" in the progressive form. She wrote it "carring" when composing her paragraph, and she corrected it in the next session, a week after. The correction was made by underlining the word, numbering it and providing a correct form in the margin. Revision was made easier when the participant had an annotation that reminded her of the uncertainties she had while composing a week before.

A closely similar case was encountered with Zina. In one of her last paragraphs, she placed a comma between an introductory independent clause and a dependent clause (example 2) although she was not sure of its necessity. In the following session, Zina underlined the unnecessary comma occurring in her sentence, and answered with *"no"* the question asked in her annotation.

In the third example, Khouloud used correctly the adjective *"amusing"*, but she was uncertain between this word and *"amuse"* as it was expressed in the marginal annotation. Since the use of the adjective was correct, Khouloud indicated her confirmation of her choice correctness with a tick under *"amusing"*.

The three examples above indicated how annotations helped students to articulate the thoughts impacting not only the students' choices while composing the paragraph, but also the modifications brought while revising the produced text a week later. Reading the first draft few days after it was written guaranteed a detachment from the text and made it easier to assess the extent to which the text was written with a sense of the reader. However, with the marginal annotation functioning as a reminder of the previous thoughts, the students had more possibilities to draw upon for responding to their own productions. Those possibilities include both thoughts of the first draft writing and those of the subsequent session revision. The examples below represent other cases suggesting different insights.

Example (4) Yasmine

Sentence: Sponsors, however, are very rich and contributes with a lot of financial element, they still unknown people to the public and followers still ask about their money resources.

Annotation: I am not sure of my last argument, can I provide a negative argument in such paragraph?

Revision: (annotation1) this detail is not used according to topic sentence

(annotation2) this argument is somehow against the topic.

Example (5) Anfal:

Sentence: the patient do some works that he didn't do it before and passé his time with his family.

Annotation: when I say person and I want to use the pronoun "him, her" which shall I use?

Revision: the patient do some works that he didn't do it before and passe his time with his family.

Example (6) Rahaf:

Sentence: Doctors should tell the patients about the disease when they have a cancer or any dangerous illnesses.

Annotation: Am I correct when I put have in the first sentence or I must put "suffer" better?

Revision: Doctors should tell the patients about the disease when they have a cancer or any dangerous illnesses.

In her evaluative paragraph, Yasmine provided a number of details to evaluate the selected TV channel. The first evaluation criterion she has considered was the variety of the programs; the second one was the quality of the image. The last detail, however, was not a judgment given against a criterion; instead, Yasmine inquired about the sources of financial support. Clearly, the student was doubtful about the relevance of the detail to the overall purpose of the prompt, yet she included it at the end of the paragraph. When asked to revise her production a week later, Yasmine did not provide a correction or a reformulation to the detail. She responded with two annotations in which her tone was more decisive. Firmly, she confirmed that the detail did not support the topic sentence.

Yasmine's example illustrates how annotations served as a pedagogical tool to initiate feedback and respond to it not through a modification of the erroneous part, but through other annotations. Marginal annotations have thus the potential to provide opportunities for students to learn and practice writing in an interactive way. Interaction through annotations is not confined to a teacher-student dialogic pattern; it can occur in a monologic one creating a conversation transcending time constraints. The revision, therefore, has greatly benefitted from both the dialogic and monologic communication held on the margin of the paragraph.

Contrary to the examples discussed above, examples (5) and (6) are cases where participants did not respond neither with a correction nor with an annotation. The participants might have considered writing annotations as part of the assignment requirement and not as a means to translate and communicate one's concerns. Consequently, when engaged in revision, they did not consider their previous concerns, nor did they refer to the choices they raised.

Taken as a whole, the analysis of self-monitoring through marginal annotations revealed that writers could benefit in a number of ways from articulating their concerns. Writing annotations provided the participants opportunities to reflect on their linguistic and conceptual choices to shape the meaning of the paragraph. Student writers seemed to gain awareness about their abilities and weaknesses, which might help them in setting goals for solving the writing problems. The initiation of feedback contributed in increased involvement and responsibility in the revision of the written product. However, in spite of the reported gains, in many cases, annotations lacked clarity and precision, and did not lead to any autonomous self-correction.

5.4 Questionnaire and Interview Findings

The analysis of the data obtained through the questionnaire and the interview has yielded quantitative results and qualitative findings. This section is initiated with a presentation, comparison, and discussion of the quantitative results of the questionnaire. Then, the qualitative findings collected through the open-ended questions of the questionnaire are presented and discussed. Next, the interview findings are described and discussed.

5.4.1. The quantitative results of the questionnaire

The responses to close-ended questions are presented according to their relevance to the three investigated areas: the students' perceptions about the impact of the training on

their abilities to correct their errors, to improve their writing skills, and to become more autonomous writers.

5.4.1.1 The students' perceptions about their abilities to correct their errors

To elicit information about the way students perceived their ability to self-correct their errors after one semester of instruction, we considered their answers on a number of issues including confidence, the possibility to self-correct with minimum interference of the teacher, and the difficulty of self-correction.

Item 1: Confidence

Participants from both groups reported an increase in their confidence to correct their own errors after the second semester program (85.36% for the control group and 88.09% for the experimental group). A higher percentage (88.09%), however, was noticed among the experimental group. Interestingly, the percentage of participants who felt less confident to self-correct is also higher in the experimental group as it is displayed in Table 5.14. In spite of the high percentage of experimental group participants feeling an increase in confidence, the chi-square test indicated that the difference was not statistically significant (df=2, χ^2=1.187^a, α= 0.05).

Table 5.14

Frequencies and Percentages on Confidence to Self-correct Errors

Item 1 After the second semester,	Control group Frequency (Percentage)	Experimental group Frequency (Percentage)	Total Freq.	df	Chi-square χ^2	Sig.	Statistical decision
I feel more confident about correcting my own mistakes	35 (85.36%)	37 (88.09 %)	72	2	1.187^a	.553	Not significant
I feel less confident about correcting my own mistakes	3 (7.31%)	4 (9.52%)	7				
No change in my confidence occurred	3 (7.31%)	1 (2.39%)	4				
Total	41	42	83				

Item 2: The difficulty of different steps in fixing errors

To examine how the degree of difficulty in different types of corrective feedback is perceived, students were provided a number of options ranging from error detection to error correction. Table 5.15 below indicates that the most difficult step in error correction for both groups is the detection of the error without the teacher's help. As it is shown in Table 5.15, the chi-square test reveals that though there are differences in the students' responses, they are not significant (df=3, χ^2=1.452[a], α= 0.05).

Table 5.15:
Students' Perception of the Difficulty of Different Steps in Correcing Errors

Item 2 Order the following actions from the most to the least difficult:	Control group Frequency (Percentage)	Experimental group Frequency (Percentage)	Total	df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
To detect the errors in one's text without the teacher's clues	15 (36.58%)	19 (45.23%)	34	3	1.452 [a]	.693	Not significant
To detect the errors in one's text with the teacher's clues	4 (9.75%)	3 (7.14%)	7				
To identify the type of the error	15 (36.58%)	16 (38.09%)	31				
To provide a correct form for the error	7 (17.07%)	4 (9.52%)	11				
Total	41	42	83				

By relating the information from this questionnaire item to the previous one bearing on confidence, it can be concluded that students in both groups gained confidence in the correction of the error but not in its detection and identification of its nature.

Item 3: Control over noticing and correction of errors

Closely related to the perception of the difficulty of error correction steps is the perception about the ability to engage in those different steps without the help of the teacher. In Table 5.16, it can be noticed that although the control group reported a high percentage regarding this ability (70.74%), the experimental group seems to be more certain (80.95 %). The chi-square test shows, however, that there is no significant

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difference between the responses of the control group and the experimental one (df=1, χ^2=1.185^a, α= 0.05).

Table 5.16

Students' Perceptions about their Ability to Self-Correct Errors

Item 3 Ithink	Control group	Experimental group	Total	df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
I will always need the help of the teacher to notice and correct my errors	12 (29.26%)	8 (19.04%)	20	1	1.185 ^{a}	.276	Not significant
I can learn to notice and correct my errors by following some strategies.	29 (70.74%)	34 (80.95%)	63				
Total	41	42	83				

Item 4: Self-correction

The participants' perception about self-correction could be investigated more deeply by asking the students whether their evaluation of the difficulty at the end of the semester matches the ideas they have about it before the semester. By referring to the frequencies and percentages appearing in Table 5.17, we notice some variations in the way both groups perceive the ability of self-correcting. In the control group, more than half of the participants (53.65%) chose the statement of "self-correction was more complicated than I thought" knowing that the only technique for self-correction introduced to this group was the use of the reviewing checklist. A considerable proportion of students from the experimental group seems to find self-correction easy (47.61%), probably because the participants in this group were trained to reflect while writing, to diagnose their weaknesses, and to use the necessary materials for self-correction in addition to the use of reviewing checklist. This suggests that training students to edit their developing texts requires more than using the reviewing checklist. The investigation of the statistical differences between both groups' responses through chi-square test does not reveal a significant statistical difference as indicated in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17

Students' Perceptions about the Difficulty of Self-correction

Item 4	Control group	Experimental group	Total	df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
Self correction is more complicated than I thought	22 (53.65%)	17 (40.47%)	39	3	3.514 [a]	.319	Not significant
Self correction is easier than I thought	13 (31.70%)	20 (47.61%)	33				
My opinion has not changed; I still find it complicated	6 (14.63%)	4 (9.52%)	10				
My opinion has not changed; I still find it easy	0 (00%)	1 (2.39%)	1				
Total	41	42	83				

5.4.1.2 The students' perceptions about improving their writing ability

This part of the research question is answered by examining the students' perceptions about the improvement they felt over the semester. Moreover, we examined their views on the required steps for first draft improvement.

Item 5: Change in writing ability

When asked "has your writing ability changed after the second semester", the overwhelming majority in both groups answered positively. In the experimental group, all the participants chose "yes" while in the control group two students (4.87%) answered "no". This indicates that the adopted syllabus did impact the writing ability regardless of the employed techniques or strategies. The results of the chi-square test reveal that no statistical difference exists between the groups responses (df=1, χ^2=2.099[a], α= 0.05).

Table 5.18

Students' Perception of Change in their Writing Ability

Item 5: After the semester,	Control group	Experimental group	Total	Df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
my writing ability has changed	39	42	81	1	2.099 [a]	.147	Not significant
my writing ability has not changed	2	0	2				
Total	41	42	83				

Item 6: Nature of change in the writing ability

In the previous question, the nature of change was not specified in the questionnaire item. Thus, another question was introduced to inquire about potential improvement in the writing ability. By aggregating the percentages reported in answers of "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree", and "neutral", it was intended to clearly separate the results indicating improvement from those which did not.   In both groups, only a minority disagreed or was indecisive regarding the improvement of the writing ability (control group: 17.06%, experimental group: 11.9%). Therefore, 88.08% experimental group chose either agree or strongly agree while 82.92% of the control group made the same choice. No significant difference, however, was reported by the results of the chi-square test (df=4, χ^2=6,351[a], α= 0.05).

Table 5.19

Students' Perceptions about the Improvement of their Writing Ability

Item 6: My writing ability has improved after the second semester.	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Control group	00	00	2	4.87	5	12.19	24	58.53	10	24.39
Experimental group	1	2.38	1	2.38	3	7.14	17	40.47	20	47.61

5.4.1.3 The students' perceptions about their abilities to act as autonomous writers

Another important point worth of investigation is the students' perceptions about autonomous learning of writing and whether this ability has improved after the treatment period. Information was gathered by asking students about their use of learning materials, their understanding of the distribution of roles in the writing classroom, and their readiness to shoulder more responsibilities in learning writing.

Item 7: The ability to revise without the teacher's help

When asked to choose the statement that describes best their ability to notice and correct errors without the teacher's help, the majority of students in both groups chose the second option: "I think I can learn to notice and correct my errors by following the strategies we have been trained on in the program". Table 5.20 shows that the percentage of the experimental group participants who are more willing to be autonomous (80.95%) exceeds the one of the control group (70.74%). This high percentage proportion does not entail significant difference in statistical terms (df=1, χ^2=1.185[a], α= 0.05).

Table 5.20

Students' Readiness to Learn Writing Autonomously

Item 7: I think	Control group	Experimental group	Total	Df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
I will always need the help of the teacher to notice and correct my errors	12 (29.26%)	8 (19.04%)	20	1	1.185 [a]	.276	Not significant
I can learn to notice and correct my errors by following some strategies.	29 (70.74%)	34 (80.95%)	63				
Total	41	42	83				

Item 8: Role of the teacher

With regard to the degree of agreement with the statement about the role assigned to the teacher in the writing classroom, the majority of both groups favoured to be taught how to self-correct instead of being corrected all the time. However, the percentages

demonstrate that the experimental group has more positive opinions towards the idea. While 60.97% of the control group chose either "agree" or "strongly agree", 76.18% of the experimental group expressed agreement. Furthermore, more than a quarter of the control group (26.82%) were undecided regarding this opinion whereas only 9.52% in the experimental group showed this neutral opinion. The use of the chi-square test to check the significance of the statistical difference revealed no significant difference (df=4, χ^2=7.262[a], α= 0.05).

Table 5.21

Students' Perceptions about the Role of the Teacher in Writing Classroom

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
Item:8 I think the teacher's role is to teach me how to correct my errors instead of correcting them all the time.	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Control group	1	2.43	4	9.75	11	26.82	16	39.02	9	21.95
Experimental group	1	2.38	5	11.90	4	9.52	12	28.57	20	47.61

Item 9: Role of teacher in improving earlier drafts

To further investigate about the understanding of the teacher's role, the students were asked to select the task that the teacher should perform to guide his/her students in the revision of earlier drafts. As a matter of fact, the options from (*a*) through (*d*) were representing degrees of autonomy in developing text revision, with (a) and (b) as the behaviours demonstrating more dependence on the teacher, and (c) and (d) as the behaviours demonstrating more autonomy.

Table 5.22

Students' Perception about the Role of the Teacher in Responding to Students'

Earlier Drafts

Item 9:	Control group	Experimental group	Total	df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
a- The teacher has to **mark** all my errors and **provide the correct forms**	3 (7.31%)	1 (2.39%)	4	3	4.235 [a]	.237	Not significant
b- The teacher has to **mark** some of my errors and **provide the correct forms**	8 (19.51%)	4 (9.52%)	12				
c-The teacher has to **mark** my errors, and **I correct them** by myself	13 (31.70%)	21 (50%)	34				
d- The teacher has to **give some clues** so that **I find** the errors and **correct** them by myself	17 (41.46%)	16 (38.09%)	33				
Total	41	42	83				

Table 5.22 shows that the experimental group demonstrated a more favourable

opinion towards the idea of shouldering more responsibilities in draft revision. In the

experimental group 88.09% of students chose(c) and (d); conversely, in the control group,

73.16% held the same opinion. Based on the chi-square test, the differences revealed by

the frequencies and the percentages do not bear any meaningful difference in terms of

statistical significance.

Item 10: Use of dictionaries

With respect to the use of learning resources that could help in text revision, the

percentage of the experimental group respondents displaying an increase in the use of

dictionaries was superior to that of the control group (59.52% and 46.31% respectively).

More than one third of the control group stated that they did not experience any change in

the use of dictionaries. In the experimental group, only 16.66% said that the frequency of

dictionary use stayed the same after the participation in the study. The results of the chi-square test do not indicate a statistical difference in the obtained responses (df=2, χ^2=3.362^a, α= 0.05).

Table 5.23

Changes in the Students' Habits of Dictionary Use after Participation in the Study

Item 10: After the semester,	Control group	Experimental group	Total	df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
my use of the dictionary has increased.	19 (46.31%)	25 (59.52%)	44	2	3.362 ^{a}	.186	Not significant
my use of the dictionary has decreased.	8 (19.51%)	10 (23.80%)	18				
my use of the dictionary has stayed the same.	14 (34.14%)	7 (16.66%)	21				
Total	41	42	83				

Item 11: Use of grammar books

In the same vein, the investigation of changes in the use of grammar books aimed at eliciting information about the use of learning resources that could reduce dependence on the teaching during developing paragraph revision. In both groups, more than the half of students demonstrated no change in the use of grammar books whereas a small proportion of them claimed an increase in the use of these books. Again, no statistical difference was reported by the chi-square test.

Table 5.24

Changes in the Students' Habits of Grammar Books use after Participation in the

Study

Item 11: After the semester,	Control group	Experimental group	Total	df	Chi-square	Sig.	Statistical decision
	Frequency (Percentage)	Frequency (Percentage)					
my revision of grammar rules has increased.	9 (21.95%)	8 (19.04%)	17	2	.542 [a]	.763	Not significant
my revision of grammar rules has decreased.	8 (19.51%)	11 (26.19%)	19				
my revision of grammar rules has stayed the same.	24 (58.53%)	23 (54.76%)	47				
Total	41	42	83				

5.4.2 The qualitative findings of the questionnaire

To complement the analysis of close-ended questions, the following section includes an analysis of the open-ended questions. Similar to the previous section, three areas are investigated in the qualitative data: the students' abilities to self-correct, the improvement of the writing skills, and the enhancement of autonomous learning of writing.

5.4.2.1 The students' perceptions about their abilities to correct their errors

The ability to respond to one's writing was investigated through questions that invited students to evaluate the strategies they have used during the study period. It is worth to remind that the experimental group was intensively and exclusively trained on self-correction. They were exposed to typographically enhanced texts to increase noticing of writing aspects. They were also prompted to use reflection through self-monitoring while writing and to keep a log on which they record the frequency of their errors occurrence. The control group, on the other hand, was alternating between different types of written corrective feedback with no technique reinforcing self-correction except the

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reviewing checklist. In the following account, the convergent perceptions are listed first; then, the divergent ones are displayed to discern the potential impact of the intervention.

In both groups, the participants referred to self-correction as a difficult strategy requiring efforts, but at the same time contributing to learning. Its difficulty was frequently associated to the identification of errors and the treatment of the spotted errors. They also agreed on acknowledging the importance of self-correction as a step towards improving one's writing and reducing dependence on the teacher. They often explained that self-correction increases the likelihood of avoiding the same errors in subsequent writings.

Below are illustrative examples of the main perceptions related to self-correction.

From the control group

"it helps us to be independent and not rely always on teacher's correction at the same time I disliked when I can't find my errors to correct them"

"self-correction is so difficult sometimes because I don't have a big deal of knowledge to correct them but when I find my errors I learn from them and I don't repeat them"

"I can't identify all my errors"

"I don't have enough background to correct myself"

"it improves the student skills and confidence"

From the experimental group

"I like it to see myself but sometimes I find it difficult"

"it increase the confident that I will not do the mistakes twice"

"sometimes it is hard for me to find my mistakes"

"I see it a hard work because the lack of knowledge"

With respect to the diverging perceptions, it was noticed that the experimental group pointed to some issues that were unperceived by its control counterpart. Though the

difficulty of the strategy was repeatedly stressed, in many instances, the experimental group statements included insights into the use, the evaluation and the benefits of self-correction. Those insights are illustrated in following excerpts taken from the experimental group responses.

"it is somehow difficult because I'm obliged to search to find the correction of errors"

"now I can notice my errors and my ability to correct mistakes is increased"

"it helps me to relay on myself to correct my mistakes"

"It helps me to discover my mistakes by myself not asking others or teacher"

"even I find it difficult but I like it because it help me to know my errors by myself and correct it"

"it is really beneficial because you feel that I'm capable to distinguish between the different errors without needing the teacher"

"I like it because I think it gives self-confidence and helps to reinforce the point of weakness in writing"

"it helps me to rely on myself with a little help from the teacher"

The excerpts above, taken from the experimental group responses, show a more positive stance towards the use of self-correction. Attributing the difficulty of self-correction to the need to "research" implies that the use of learning resources is perceived as an acknowledged step towards mastering the use of self-correction. As a matter of fact, one of the researcher's objectives from the treatment was to acquaint the students with the necessary steps assisting the student-writer to use self-correction.

Furthermore the ability of noticing has been mentioned in association with self-correction. One other idea mentioned only in experimental group responses is that teacher's clues have the potential to facilitate self-correction and reduce confusion. The

students in this group have also related the step of error correction to a logically preceding one, namely the one of identifying the weaknesses. They have also repeatedly evaluated their ability to self-correct their errors.

5.4.2.2 The students' perceptions about improving the writing ability

In the close-ended question inquiring about the changes in the writing ability, the phrasing of the question did not specify the kind of perceived change; an open-ended question was thus added to invite the students to give more details about the nature of the change.

The clarifications given by both groups' participants shared a number of similarities and a fewer number of differences. The most common clarification provided in both groups was that they noticed an improvement in their writing skills. Students expressed this idea in a varied way.

From the control group

It has changed because I saw some difference between 1st semester and 2nd semester, so better than before.

It changed and became good and clear.

I became more skilled in writing.

From the experimental group

I improved my writing skills.

My writing is better than before.

The more I write, the more I notice that that I improved my skill.

The above examples are general statements including words such as *"better"*, *"good"*, *"improved"*, *and "skilled"*. They reflect to a great extent a convergence in the perceptions of both the control and experimental groups. Other statements specifically

indice improvement in particular aspects such as structure, grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. The following examples illustrate the situation.

From the control group

Before, I did not know how to select the right vocabulary. Now, I know how to select it and how to write correct sentences.

I can organise my ideas better.

I started using grammatical sentences.

I am able to correct my mistakes and the others' mistakes.

From the experimental group

I find that I am able to write well and I can find a solution to those errors.

Now I respect the structure of the paragraph.

I didn't know the steps that should follow for good writing but now I know.

My paragraph's structure, grammar, vocabulary change to the better.

In spite of the noticeable consensus across both groups about the listed aspects, there were a few meaningful differences. One of the differences is that, to a larger extent, the experimental group placed a clear emphasis on the ability to handle mistakes. One respondent put it as follows: "*now I'm more attentive to mistakes*"; another respondent wrote*: "now, I'm able of writing my paragraph or essay, and I notice my mistakes".* Attention and noticing, which were mentioned in the explanations of the experimental group, did not appear in any of the control group answers. Another respondent in the experimental group made the following comment: "I start judging my writing critically, and this is a great plus". Such a hint to the enhancement of the evaluative skills was not found in the control group explanations. A further difference can be inferred from this statement: *"I know my errors and how to correct it".* The verb *"know"* points to the ability to spot one's weaknesses and language gaps. On the other hand, the responses provided by

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the control group included some statements about the ability to correct their errors and others' such as in this comment: *"I'm able to correct my own mistakes and others' mistakes"*. This reflects the focus of the control group on peer correction as a form of error treatment.

In addition to the clarifications obtained with respect to the nature and the aspects of the change, the open-ended question helped also in identifying the factors contributing to this change.

From the control group

Through knowing new writing strategies and techniques

It has enhanced since I applied different techniques

By writing regularly I improved my level of writing

Now I am writing with all the rules

By writing paragraphs and ask if there is mistakes or not in them

I learnt new things that help me avoid my previous mistakes

From the experimental group

I have new strategies of writing

A lot of practice in-class assignments advice and guidance of the teacher

I know more rules about effective writing

We enjoy writing with those new techniques

I check the dictionary and the lesson

In both groups, the use of new strategies and techniques was a factor that was reiterated in a number of responses, yet no specific clarifications were added to rename them. Similarly, both groups attributed the improvement to practice and to learning of the writing rules. The responses diverged, however, in a number of points. Only one response about the use of dictionaries was found in the control group while in the experimental

group, this point was frequently encountered in the responses. Interestingly, a respondent from the control group attributed the improvement to feedback that accompanied practice.

5.4.2.3 The students' perceptions about their abilities to act as autonomous writers

Diagnosing weaknesses is a pivotal component of learning. Autonomous learners tend to develop this ability so that the planning and choice of learning strategies and practices are in conformity with the diagnosed needs. When explaining what helped to know the writing difficulties, the participants identified a number of major ways. Both groups shared the perception that practice and teacher feedback were the primary sources of assistance in weakness diagnosis. To a lesser extent, they also mentioned class assignments, the use of dictionaries, and rule learning. Divergence was, however, noticed across both groups as the experimental group added other sources that were not mentioned by the other group. For instance, error log was frequently indicated as one source of difficulty diagnosis. Furthermore, some respondents did not use the terms of "teacher feedback" or "teacher correction"; instead, they wrote "teacher's guidance" or "teacher's steps". A further answer distinguishing the experimental group perception is "the teacher giving chance to self-correct". The following excerpts illustrate the way participants from each group noted their sources.

Excerpts from the control group on what helps to know difficulties

"working with my classmates and correct each other"

"when I read my paragraphs in front of my classmates teacher correct my mistakes"

"I always compare myself with the experts"

"when I swap my work with my classmates or when the teacher correct it"

"the teacher correct my paper or exchanging with my comrades"

Excerpts from the experimental group on what helps to know difficulties

"the teacher by giving us chance to correct our errors"

" the teacher's guidance"

"when counting the type of errors"

"writing and reading"

"when doing assignments, exercises, and homeworks"

"the regular writing and the repetition of the same mistakes"

"the more writing I do, the more I realize what is missing in my writings"

Closely related to the idea of diagnosing ones' weaknesses is the idea of planning learning. None of the answers of the control group pointed to this issue while in the experimental group, the diagnosis of weaknesses was regarded as a step paving the way to knowing what to reinforce in learning. A student wrote, *"it (counting errors) help me to know where I should reinforce myself in order to avoid error next time"*. This statement implied that learning has a cyclic process starting with paragraph production, then comes revision as a following step allowing for the detection of weaknesses; after which decisions can be made about further learning objectives to be fulfilled through practice.

Another component of autonomous learning that was investigated through open-ended questions is the use of learning resources. Participants in both groups mentioned the use of dictionaries as tools that could help in learning writing. They also listed reading among the means by which students can spot the weaknesses. They did not, however, specify the nature of the reading materials that could help in promoting revision skills in particular or writing skill in general.

The experimental group has, nevertheless, provided clarifications about the way reading typographically enhanced texts helped them in writing. The participants viewed texts as a tool that facilitated writing and provided them with "inspiration". They

frequently pointed to the possibility of being guided by the text as it included clues about paragraph structure, idea organisation, and grammatical structures. They also regarded them as a source of new vocabulary. Below are typical examples from the experimental group participants explaining the way reading helped them.

I realy like reading a text before writing because it guide me and help by giving a general idea about the way I should write my paragraph"

"I like reading text before writing because text helps me to know the structures the correct form of clauses and so on"

"I like it because it gives a brief idea about how to get the correct form and steps to write about specific topic"

"I liked that the text gives me an idea and a technique of how to write"

"we can enrish our vocabulary and grammar and also to follow its structure"

Checking progress in writing is a further component of the concept of autonomy. The participants of the control group did not mention this step when commenting on the strategies they have used during the study period while the experimental group pointed to it indirectly. Although students in this group have never been informed about the importance of checking progress in writing, they viewed the error log as a tool helping in gauging accuracy progress. *"I like to see which mistakes I make it a lot and see if I'm making my mistakes each time less and less"* said one student.

With respect to the use of reflective thinking while writing, a student in the experimental group summarised her perception about marginal annotations as follows, *"it helps to know our problems in writing and try to find solution for them"*. This idea of approaching reflection while writing as a problem-solving process was not mentioned in the answers of the control group. Another statement made by an experimental group participant was *"I start judging my writing critically"*. This suggests that the enhancement

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of evaluative skills was one of the gains of the training. Again, no respondent from the control group mentioned it.

5.4.3 Discussion of the questionnaire findings

To answer the fourth research question, both quantitative results of qualitative findings of the questionnaire are synthesised allowing thus a better discerning of convergences and divergences of perceptions between the experimental group and the control group. The differences in viewpoints could then be attributed to the treatment conducted with the experimental group.

The first part of the research question investigated the impact of training on the use of some strategies and techniques on the ability to self-correct. Although both quantitative and qualitative findings indicate positive perceptions about abilities to use self-correction across the experimental group and the control group, there were some noticeable differences.

Numerical data (frequencies and percentages) indicated that the participants of the experimental group showed a high level of readiness to use the strategies they have learnt to notice and self-correct their errors (80.95%). This confidence was openly expressed by 47.61% of the experimental group who said that self-correction turned out to be easier than they thought. A number of significant insights were obtained from the open-ended questions into the reasons of this finding. Students in the experimental group seemed to be at grip with the necessary skills and behaviours that empower them to self-correct. While the control group seemed so helpless when one of its participants stated, *"self-correction is so difficult sometimes because I don't have a big deal of knowledge to correct them"* or *"I don't have enough background to correct myself",* the answers from the experimental group showed a more positive stance. This attitude is summarised in this statement, *"it (SC) is really beneficial because you feel that I'm capable to distinguish between the*

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different errors without needing the teacher". "*Mental efforts*" and "*searching*" are the required conditions for self-correction to happen according to some respondents from the experimental group. More specific answers came from students who wrote about the teacher's help in self-correction "*I liked the idea of self-correction and believe it is very effective but without the teacher's clues sometimes I do not even notice that what I wrote is wrong (though those are rare cases)*".

This last finding is in accordance with Ferris and Hedgcock's (2005) theoretical insight about the teacher's role as a facilitator of error correction not as the only active agent in it. According to Ferris and Hedgcock (2005), succeeding in error detection and error correction without the help of a more expert person is very rare. Through the questionnaire conducted in this study, the students showed a perceived ability to correct their own errors. They have stressed, however, their desire to receive assistance in the detection of errors and in providing clues to facilitate error correction.

A possible interpretation of the obviously more positive attitude towards self-correction among the experimental group is associated to the techniques and strategies with which SC is paired. Because students in the control group relied in self-correction only on the reviewing checklist, they viewed it as a difficult strategy. Conversely, the experimental group students viewed SC as a difficult, but possible, given that a number of techniques were paired with SC including exposure to typographical enhancement texts, error logs, and marginal annotations. Having been more aware of their weaknesses, and having been encouraged to constantly reflect on the quality of the text, the students accepted SC more favourably. This interpretation is in accordance with Vickers and Ene's (2006) findings. In their study, Vickers and Ene's (2006) encouraged students to use self-correction after being exposed to typographically enhanced texts. The enhanced noticing abilities were then believed to promote in turn the autonomous treatment of errors. Therefore, it can be

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concluded that in order for SC to be possible and less frustrating, it needs to be facilitated through other assisting techniques. This idea is also in line with Ferris and Roberts' (2001) contention that the teacher should be more aware of the frustration that could result from requiring students to self-correct errors without assistance.

Investigating the impact of the treatment on the improvement of writing abilities through the second part of the research question revealed some positive results in the experimental group. The entire group (100%) felt a change in their writing abilities after the semester over which the intervention was conducted. In the control group, 95.13% of the sample answered positively to the question about the change in the writing ability. In both groups, the change was articulated as an improvement in the writing abilities and was attributed to the strategies they have been trained to use. The answer of the open-ended question has clearly demonstrated the way students associated the improvements in their writing quality to the gains they made in terms of learning. The listed aspects that improved after strategy instruction ranged from content organisation to vocabulary choice and punctuation. This finding is in accordance with Chandler's (2003). In his study, he pointed to the students' perception that learning is enhanced through the use of self-correction.

The participants of the experimental group provided varying explanations for the gains. They argued that correcting one's errors aided in remembering them in subsequent assignments. Interestingly, in the study of Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) on the teachers' and students' preferences regarding feedback, the teachers provided the same argument for preferring SC as a means to increase learner autonomy. They (teachers) explained that learners remember better their errors when they are more involved in their treatment.

With regard to the last part of the research question, the impact of training on the use of some strategies and techniques to enhance autonomy, the results revealed a more

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favourable attitude towards autonomous learning of writing in the group who was trained to take in charge his learning. In the experimental group, 76.18% held the perception that the teacher's role is to teach the students to be autonomous in the revision of their evolving texts. The students could then be empowered if they learn to notice and correct errors by themselves. These figures demonstrate that the students who were trained to take more responsibilities over the revision of their texts had favourable views towards autonomous learning of writing. This finding supports Lee's (2004) views about the influence of teachers' practices on the students' preferences in terms of corrective feedback. In this regard, he (2004, p. 303) warns the teachers of the "harm done to students and themselves by treating errors comprehensively and by correcting all errors for them". He adds that students' preferences are directly shaped by the teachers' practices. Thinking that the teacher's job is to revise their work for them, the students prefer to perpetuate the situation and to have the task done for them instead of shouldering more responsibilities. The study supports also Lee's contention when he stresses that the teacher's practices should be geared towards the long-term objectives of assisting students to treat their errors more independently.

In spite of the quantitative and qualitative data indicating the positive change in the writing abilities in the experimental group, the chi-square tests revealed no significant difference between the perceived gains of both groups. This could have a number of explanations.

The participants of the control had received conventional instruction relying on alternating between teacher's feedback, peer feedback, and use of the reviewing checklist. Such a writing instruction could have proved advantageous to students; hence, they felt confident that their writing abilities have improved.

Another possible explanation for the absence of any statistical difference in the perceived gains can be ascribed to the insufficient length of the training period. The treatment period extending over 14 weeks included a preparatory phase (four sessions) targeting to raise their metalinguistic awareness and to develop their reflective and noticing skills. Only two phases (eight sessions) were devoted to enhancing autonomous behaviours. In order for the participants in the experimental to perceive the impact of the treatment, they may need a longer period of strategies use.

Alternatively, and most importantly, the participants of the experimental group know what it entails to be autonomous or to use self-correction, so they tend to be cautious in expressing confidently their perceptions. For example, when asked to select the statement that translates the respondents' beliefs, about half of the experimental group (47,61%) chose "self-correction is easier than I thought". This can be understandable since the students felt that they were equipped with the necessary strategies. However, in the control group as well a relatively considerable percentage (31,70%), albeit inferior to the experimental group, made the same choice. Hence, the students in the control group who expressed their view that self-correction was easy made that choice probably not because it is so for them, but because they did not know that self-correction requires more than the use of the reviewing checklist. Therefore, notions like easiness, confidence, improvement and responsibility may not mean the same thing for students in each group.

5.4.4 Findings from the interview

The findings of the interview are presented to address the question of the participants' perceptions regarding the impact of the treatment on first promoting self-correction ability, then improving the writing ability, and finally enhancing of autonomy.

5.4.4.1 The students' perceptions about their abilities to correct errors

With respect to the ability to correct errors, the interviewees said that they noticed that they developed their abilities to fix what they perceived as erroneous language use. They also provided clarifications regarding the factors influencing these abilities and the aspects at which self-correction could be performed.

These reported positive views varied in the degrees of confidence from one student to the other. Whereas one interviewee said confidently "*now, I feel that it is possible for me to correct*", another remarked "*I still feel stuck in this phase*" referring to the phase of reading the earlier drafts for detecting errors.

The students admitted, nevertheless, that before the treatment period, they held different views about their abilities to correct their errors. All the interviewees shared one same idea: "*We have changed our mind. Before, we thought that it is his* (the teacher) *job to correct errors and this should occur all the time. But now, we no longer think so*". Before they were trained on the use of self-monitoring and self-correction, they regarded self-correction as a "*burden*", a "*punishment*", or at least something they were "*incapable*" to do as it has been stressed in the following statements.

I felt afraid and disappointed (when we were first asked to self-correct)

It was a burden, a punishment.

I felt incapable of correcting my errors because only the teacher can do this. But I changed my mind later.

In the last statement, the student seemed to claim that self-correction was hindered by the perception that only the teacher could fix the students' writing errors. According to some interviewees, the daily practices of the teacher, involving the continuous correction of errors, generated overdependence on his feedback and prevented students from having a greater role in error correction. One student went further in explaining the factors that

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contributed to the change in their perception by mentioning the first phase of the treatment period. According to her, the error log made her notice the frequent error patterns, and thus made it easier for her to correct her errors. She put this idea as follows: *"it is through the first phase that we learnt to notice our frequent mistakes through the use of the table* (error log)*"*. Another student said: *"you made us read again and again our paragraphs; something we were not doing at the beginning of the year"*. To this remark, another interviewee added: *"read with a critical eye"*.

In some statements, students seemed to be aware about the areas of weaknesses needing correction. They hence clarified their targeted aspects as follows,

"*for me, I realised that I use wrong words very often*"

"*for me it is capitalisation and spelling*"

The interviewees implied in some of their responses that in order for students to be more responsible, they need some help from the teacher in identifying the areas requiring reinforcement. By specifying aspects like vocabulary choice, capitalisation, and spelling, students seem to have developed the abilities of noticing the mismatches between the intended meaning and the linguistic choices they made to convey it. They also appear to have enhanced their metalinguistic awareness. Both noticing and metalinguistic awareness, along with the evaluative skills mentioned earlier, are abilities required for self-correction to happen.

5.4.4.2 The students' perceptions about improving their writing ability

The investigation of the way interviewees perceived the gains of the treatment period in terms of writing quality and writing abilities revealed a total agreement about the positive impact. The interviewees displayed their gains by explaining how they shifted from one pattern of language use to a different one influenced by the instruction they

received over the semester of the intervention. They listed a number of aspects in which they sensed improvement.

In terms of ideas, Hala said that she felt "*more comfortable using simple ideas. Before, I tended to complicate things*". Rym linked the complexity of her style and ideas to her previous zeal in the use of sophisticated and rich vocabulary when she admitted: *"I also wanted in an enthusiastic way to make use of my rich vocabulary, which caused me to have a complex style and high risk to make error. Then I decided to use simpler ideas"*. At the level of sentence effectiveness, Hala expressed her satisfaction to shift from choosing long sentences to shorter ones as they are safer in terms of accuracy. Regarding the same aspect, Rym said that her decision was to use varied sentences instead limiting herself to simple and complex ones. Rukaya said that she became more careful about subject-verb agreement as she paid attention to the subject and identified the predicates with which they had to agree. With respect to minor aspects like capitalisation, Hala admitted "*before, I was not aware that I was writing capital letters where they should not occur and writing them in the wrong place, but now even in computer I am aware*". Rukaya found that the use of dictionaries improved her spelling.

Some students acknowledged that previous instruction, high school and first academic year at tertiary level, encouraged practice and provided feedback. Nevertheless, it resulted only in limited accuracy. This is expressed in the following statements:

Bassima: *"I used to write a lot at high school and used to give them to my teacher to be corrected and commented on. At that time, he didn't focus on the things we are dealing now. He focussed on verb tenses, on punctuation, capitalisation, spelling. But now we focus on many elements."*

Rym: *"now we focus on both content and form"*

The students seemed to agree with the last point concerning the balance between focus on content and focus on form to achieve a better writing quality.

5.4.4.3 The students' perceptions about their abilities to act as autonomous writers

The perceptions regarding potential improvement of abilities to learn writing autonomously were investigated by asking both about the habits they developed in the course of the semester and their readiness to be more responsible after the treatment period. Furthermore, changes in their perceptions about the roles played by teachers and students in the teaching/ learning processes can elicit valuable information about the same issue.

The habits involving students in increased responsibility include among others recognising the areas of weaknesses, and correcting one's errors. One example of steps taken by students to take in charge their learning of writing was the identification of error patterns. According to Thelili, *"when you know your weaknesses, you will focus on those aspects while writing"*. The same interviewee held that the student is ready to be autonomous *"when the teacher helps him understand weaknesses, once he gets used to it, he can work independently"*. This implies that the sequences of autonomous behaviours were triggered by weaknesses' identification. The second statement shows that the student accepted that the teacher should be playing the role of a facilitator in this process and not the only responsible in it.

Besides acquiring responsible habits over the course of the treatment period, students displayed a readiness to adopt responsible behaviours beyond the experimental study contexts. One of those behaviours is related to finding texts that could serve as input for writing activities. Because the typographically enhanced texts were perceived as highly advantageous in terms of triggering noticing abilities, students insisted on searching for similar materials. One student suggested the following:

"With the enhanced texts, we notice things from the first reading, but with the others (texts bearing no typographical enhancements) *we have to read and reread until we notice."*

Recording one's concerns to monitor performance in writing is another behaviour some students were willing to use in the future. Bassima, for example, said *"I may adopt this technique (recording one's queries in a notebook) even if I do not expect an answer, it can work. I may be writing and some questions arise, I can write them in a copybook so that later I can ask the teacher or search in books; having answers for my questions will certainly improve my writing"*. This view was not shared by all the other interviewees. Hala admitted *"it is hard to write and not expect anyone to answer. I can confront my weaknesses without having them written"*. She seemed to agree with the idea of reflecting on one's writing weaknesses but without recording them. Though, on the surface of it, her statement reveals a dependence on initiating feedback to be only responded by the teacher, this student opposed the idea of writing down the reflections and not reflecting itself.

The interviewees agreed on the point that a teacher may be contributing to the perpetuation of students' dependence. Hala said: *"sometimes it is the teacher who is blamed for creating dependence, which is a wrong situation and mistake from the part of the teacher. Their practices lead directly to overdependence on the teacher"*. When asked to provide examples of those practices, the interviewees listed them as follows.

"He never misses a mistake"

"He never ask us to rely on ourselves in correcting mistakes"

"They do not try to make students confident"

Regarding teachers feedback, they said it should *"make us notice the errors so that we do not do them again"*.

They also showed a favourable attitude towards the way the teacher/researcher encouraged the use of dictionaries.

You insisted every time to use the dictionary instead of giving us directly the answer Although you knew the meaning you wanted us to read the one we found ourselves

Concerning the practices that can be adopted by students to promote autonomy the interviewees listed some interesting insights.

To have knowledge about the rules

Use dictionaries, grammar books

Try to apply every new thing that you learn

Reading plus analysis

Write a lot of drafts and keep correcting those drafts

Practicing writing regularly

A further insight provided by the interviewees about the impact of the intervention in promoting autonomy bears on the sequencing of tasks assigned to the students. All the interviewees agreed about the idea that a smooth transfer of responsibilities to students is more efficient than an abrupt one. They argued that the first phase prepared them both linguistically and affectively to shoulder more responsibilities in paragraph revision. This fact would not happen had they been required to self-correct right from the first phase. The idea of moving directly to more responsible tasks without being prepared was commented and criticised as follows.

It would be harder

May be we could have noticed some of the mistakes, but only those minor ones like capitalisation punctuation...

What boosted our confidence is when you asked us to try and to ask the teacher when we fail to solve the problem; regular practice was so important to create this confidence

5.4.5 Discussion of the interview findings

Responses pertaining to the point of self-correction indicated a clear shift from not accepting the idea of self-correction to approving it and recognising its importance after the intervention period. What could be inferred from the students' explanations is that a number of factors contributed to the change in the perceptions about their abilities to self-correct their written productions.

Andrade and Evans (2013) pointed to the problematic situation of the students' little engagement in writing revision. They traced back this problem to the fact that students "may be more accustomed to taking a passive role and expect their teacher to direct them"(p. 60). Similarly, in the context of this study, self-correction seemed to be hindered by the previous perception that only the teacher could correct errors. This perception was a by-product of the previous teaching practices that leave no room for the students to make significant decisions in error correction. When students were empowered through acquiring a number of skills and insights through the intervention of the current study, they started accepting the possibility of having a more active role in text refinements and particularly in error treatment. Because most those skills were acquired during the first phase, the interviewees agreed unanimously that self-correction "*would be harder*" if they were directly asked to treat their errors without going through that preparatory phase.

One of those skills is the identification of error patterns, which in turn geared their attention to particular areas. This skill is reinforced by the metalinguistic awareness that allows students to use language in order to reflect or discuss on language issues. Another skill with a facilitative impact on the process of revision is the recursive reading of the

evolving text. The interviewees pointed to the use of critical examination of the written product to characterise the type of reading that facilitated self-correction.

It is worthwhile to note that students had highly favourable views regarding the teacher's responses to their marginal annotations. This seemingly reveals a limitation in their abilities to fully handle their errors and concerns. However, the initiation of feedback is an important step as it engages the student in both problem identification and suggestion of possible solutions. Students were obviously accustomed to a predominant pattern of error treatment, namely, the unidirectional response initiated and completed by the teacher.

Another factor that appears to assist them in self-correction was multi-drafting. The confidence they gained in self-correction was probably emanating from the perception that the product can continuously be refined through multiple drafts and it had not to be perfect from the first attempt.

As regards the improved writing abilities, the interviewees' responses revealed that both their performance and their abilities have improved. They provided further explanations regarding the areas of improvement that could be summarised in a balance between form and content. The responses and the explanations revealed an improved discernment among the interviewees about the subtle conceptual and linguistic details that could contribute to the writing quality. According to some interviewees, the clarity of content was better guaranteed if simpler ideas were use. This finding lends support to what Xiang's (2004) study has revealed; the organisation of compositions can be improved if learners use reflection while writing. Sentence variety, agreement, and sentence level accuracy are few examples of choices they have made as a result to improved writing abilities. Capitalisation, spelling, and punctuation were also mentioned as areas in which improvement was noticed; this improvement was traced back to the ability to notice and handle surface level problems.

Through their responses, the interviewees demonstrated as well an ability to understand how interrelated the elements of writing are, and how linguistic choices can affect content and vice versa. For instance, one interviewee attributed the complexity of ideas in her productions preceding the intervention to her unsuccessful choice of vocabulary. She reported that her ideas became clearer after she had shifted to less sophisticated vocabulary items. Taken as a whole, the finding of the interview is consistent with some empirical studies and theoretical frameworks. Cho et al.'s (2010) study for instance has also proven that training students on the use of self-regulated strategies including self-monitoring can empower students to improve their writing.

The impact of the intervention on the students' ability to be more autonomous writers was revealed through a number of insightful views. The findings emerging of the interview analysis indicated a favourable attitude from the part of students towards the smooth transfer of responsibility from the teacher to the learner. The interviewees remarked that neither were they able, nor accepting, to have more responsibilities to revise and self-correct if they were required to show autonomous behaviours directly in the first phase. Without being prepared, students may be reluctant to accept new approaches of learning in which their roles are more active than the teacher's. From the interviewees' responses, it could be inferred that students needed confidence, the skill of manipulating learning resources, and efficient strategic competence as prerequisite conditions to be more autonomous. With respect to the affective factors like confidence, Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2007) have stressed the role played by the "heightened sense of personal efficacy" (p. 69) in promoting effective writing.

After the intervention, all the interviewees appreciated the teacher's feedback and attributed the improvement they felt in their writing abilities to the feedback. However, they did not regard the teacher as a part of the learning/teaching process who was expected

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to shoulder the greatest share of revision responsibilities. Rather, they perceived him as a source of assistance to spot weaknesses and pave the way to determining the learning goals.

Little (2007) has stressed the importance of such scaffolding to set the stage for learner autonomy. He argued that scaffolding encourages dialogic interaction between the teacher and the students and can lead to reflective revision. Moving from a pattern of interaction that involves expert and learner to a pattern involving primordially the learner examining critically his work was the objective of the step-by-step approach of the current intervention. In the present study, the interviewees welcomed and showed favourable attitudes towards the teacher's assistance that paves the way to autonomy not the one that perpetuates dependence. This shared perception among the interviewees showed that the understanding of the teacher's role can have an impact on the students' engagement in his learning process. In his study, Ceylan (2015) also recognised the way the students' behaviours can be shaped by their perceptions about roles' distribution in the classroom. Because the learners believe that most of the responsibilities should be shouldered by the teacher, they might show little involvement in autonomous learning according to the same researcher.

The interviewees revealed, through their responses, that autonomy requires a number of conditions. One of those conditions was knowledge of the rules. The term *rules* used by students probably encompassed writing conventions, grammar rules, punctuation, and spelling rules. This condition seems to corroborate Hedgcock and Ferris' (2013) argument that "As students progress in their acquisition of English syntax, morphology, and lexis, as well as their formal learning of more complex discourse conventions, they can be given more responsibility for correcting their own errors". However, the interviewees mentioned other conditions like the manipulation of learning resources, dictionaries and

grammar books in the case of learning the writing skill. This suggests that knowledge of rules can also be acquired in a self-directed way if learners are equipped with the skills of resourcing. The interviewees also insisted on the regular practice, but they did not specify whether they meant the practice guided by the teacher and occurring within the classroom borders or the free practice occurring beyond classroom borders. A further suggestion was analytical thinking. By repeatedly mentioning higher order thinking skills, the interviewees appeared to value reflection throughout the writing process.

Conclusion

In this chapter, a detailed account was given about the results and findings of the study. Numerical and statistical evidence were employed to answer the research questions requiring quantitative analysis. Interpretive comments were also given to discuss the findings of the qualitative data. The next chapter includes a synthesis of the main findings and a number of recommendations and suggestions for further research.

Chapter Six: Conclusion, Implications, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Research

Chapter Six: Conclusion, Implications, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Research

Introduction

In the previous chapter, results of the analysed data have been reported along with discussion on their significance. This chapter concludes the thesis with a synthesis of the main findings and revisits the research questions posed in the initial chapters. It also presents some pedagogical, theoretical, and methodological implications that relate to the topic of the study. Some suggestions for further research are discussed in the light of what has been revealed by this study and what remains to be researched.

6.1 Summary of Main Findings

The intervention conducted in this study helped to answer a number of questions and to gain understanding about the way empowering students with writing revision strategies and habits can impact their performance, behaviours, and perceptions.

6.1.1 The efficacy of training on SM and SC on improving the quality of paragraph writing

RQ1: *Does training on self-monitoring (SM) and self-correction (SC) lead to improved quality of paragraph writing?*

This question aimed at investigating the impact of manipulating the variable of strategy training on improving the paragraph writing quality among the participants of the experimental group. The statistical analysis of data resulted in confirming the hypothesis. Both between group comparisons and within group comparisons indicated a significant difference. The experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test. This improvement can be attributed to the impact of the use of SM and SC strategies since both groups were proved to be homogeneous before the start of the treatment period. A closer look at the statistical data showed, however, that the improvement occurred only at the

level of the sentence and mechanical accuracy. Higher order writing aspects including support adequacy, coherence through transitional words, and unity, seem to not benefit from the use of SM and SC. Furthermore, the improvement was not limited to a category of students.

The explanation of these findings requires appealing to theoretical and empirical foundations framing this study. The improved quality of writing can be explained by the advantageous use of reflection during writing and the adoption of more responsible behaviours in revising one's writings. Monitoring involved the students in an interactive three-dimensional relation including the student as a writer, his text as a product that shapes his ideas, and the writer himself as a reader. The reflective way writing was approached, in this study, allowed for a constant search for weaknesses and strategies to address those weaknesses. This made of the whole writing process a goal-oriented activity benefitting from the teacher's scaffolding instead of a passive activity limited to fulfilling the teaching aims exclusively set by the teacher.

A possible reason for the training to bring about gains in some aspects and not in others is that not all the aspects have the same degree of 'treatability'. Aspects occurring at, or below, sentence level like subject-verb agreement, word form, or spelling can be addressed in an easier way than aspects like idea translation. Noticing the error at this level is less cognitively demanding than it is at the level of the paragraph meaning. Moreover, the use of resources like dictionaries and grammar books facilitates checking the accuracy of spelling, tense use, or sentence completeness. The revision of idea relevance to the general meaning of the paragraph, for example, requires the activation of higher order thinking skills, but no handbook is available for this purpose to assist students in meaning revision.

A further interesting finding relates to the relation between responsiveness to the training and the level of the students based on the categorisation used in the sampling procedure. Contrary to what was expected, the improvement of the scores, and hence the writing quality, was not limited to the category of good achievers. No systematic relation could be inferred to attribute the efficacy of training to the student's level. This can be explained by the fact that language background is not the only factor that comes into play when building writing skills; motivation, and attitude to learning writing, can equally have their role to play.

6.1.2 The impact of training on SM and SC on reducing error occurrence

RQ2: Does the training on SM and SC lead to reducing the number of errors in students' paragraphs?

The longitudinal examination of the students' paragraphs corpus produced over the course of a semester was hoped to give an in-depth understanding of the way applying SM and SC can assist student writers in reducing errors. Numerical data showed that the percentage of errors made in the targeted features accounting for 42.90% of the total number of errors before the instructional sessions has dropped to 25.04% after the instructional sessions. This decline, though noticeable, was not reported evenly in all the targeted features. Subject-verb agreement, fragments, word form, sentence combination, punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling are the areas in which error occurrence has declined. No gains in error reduction were noticed, however, in other areas like word choice, verb-tense use, coherence through transitions, adequacy of support, and unity. The possible explanation for error reduction to be limited to the abovementioned areas is the possibility to refer to a set of rules to correct the error. Errors of spelling, for example, dropped from 25.67% to 15.42% because students can clear doubts about a word correct

spelling by simply consulting a dictionary. Such a step is not possible if the doubt is about the adequacy of support.

The analysis of the cases illustrating varying degrees of error reduction revealed that error reduction was not limited to high-achievers; it was also noticed across the other categories based on the students' levels. It can be inferred from this finding that other factors than linguistic abilities interfere in self-correction. To illustrate, overconfidence prevented good achievers sometimes to verify the correct use of a grammar or vocabulary item. On the other hand, low achievers might succeed better in self-correction when their linguistic knowledge was adequate for addressing the writing problems.

The gains in error reduction cannot, however, be attributed to the rule revised in the instructional session, but to developing a more responsible attitude towards paragraph revision. The use of error logs is also believed to play a role in reducing the number of errors since students became more aware about their prevailing error patterns. They hence enhanced their abilities to spot autonomously their errors.

6.1.3 The impact of using self-monitoring through marginal annotations on fostering reflection and responsible behaviours while writing

RQ3: Does self-monitoring through marginal annotations guide the students to act as more reflective and responsible writers?

With regard to the use of self-monitoring technique, the investigated effect was the engagement of students in more reflective and responsible paragraph revision. The analysis of marginal annotations revealed that participants were actively reflecting on linguistic and ideational choices while simultaneously writing their paragraphs. The continuous articulation of their concerns assisted them in both diagnosing the weaknesses hindering them from performing well and considering the available possibilities to solve the encountered problems. This problem-solving endeavour appeared to aid the participants in

having a clear idea about their actual writing abilities and the writing skills they had to target in the learning process. A concrete example of this claimed gain can be the cases reported in the participants' marginal annotations where they expressed uncertainty about some linguistic choices and resolved them in the next session through either annotations or revisions.

Students appeared to realise the possibility to benefit from a new type of interaction while writing. Dialogic interactions involving the teacher and the learner are not the only way to mutually revise the developing texts. The participants seemed to understand that feedback could be initiated by the student writer himself. The laps of time between first draft writing and the subsequent revisions helped students in achieving what Hyland and Hyland (2006, p. 92) called "the critical detachment" while not totally losing the thread of their previously articulated concerns. Marginal annotations allowed the participants to be active writers and readers and the same time. The detachment facilitated the evaluation of one's produced text and the provision of feedback to the worries articulated by the same participants. As students realised the facilitative role of SM in the evaluation and revision of their products, they accordingly discovered their potentials as responsible writers. The sense of responsibility was likely to reduce reliance on the teacher and make students benefit from a greater range of learning resources available beyond classroom borders.

In spite of the abovementioned gains, some students seemed not to understand the purpose of the technique. They appeared to engage in annotation writing as part of the task requirement. In subsequent revisions, they neither responded to the queries asked in previous sessions, nor did they attempt to correct the inaccuracies in their products. A further problem preventing student writers to benefit fully from the use of SM is the limited area of concern. Numerical evidence showed that 72.21% of the annotations pertained to grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Only the remainder of annotations were

on the content of the paragraphs. Students confined their reflection to the linguistic problem disregarding, hence, the higher order aspects of writing. The focus on their limitations in the use of language prevented them to place more importance on the achievement of the communicative intent. Therefore, most of the revisions addressed only language accuracies and failed to bring significant improvements to ideational aspects.

Another problem with the use of SM was the lack of clarity in a number of annotations. Probably due to the poor mastery of language or to the difficulty to engage in dual text production, some annotations were vague and ambiguous. Some students either indicated the area of concern with no further detail about the nature of the problem or expressed their doubt about two alternative choices with no further clarification.

Taken together, the analysis of the annotations seemed bring a number of gains. It aided the student writers to spot their areas of weakness and gauge in a more reliable manner their writing abilities. It improved among them reflective and evaluative skills. It also raised their awareness about their potentials as more responsible revisers.

6.1.4   The Participants' Perception of the Effectiveness of the Training

RQ4: What are the students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the training?

The questionnaire and the interview sought to investigate the impact of the study on the participants' perceptions about the impact of the instruction they received on their abilities to self-correct errors, to improve the writing abilities and to be autonomous. The findings indicated a positive impact that was noticed in the experimental group. The treatment seemed to empower the participants of the experimental group in terms of playing a more active role in error correction. Almost half of the students believed that self-correction was easier than it seemed to be. They also revealed that what kept them from having a more proactive role in self-correction was not their inability to do it, but their perception that only the teacher could do it. By discarding those impeding beliefs, the

students started feeling more confident to treat their errors. They stressed, however, the importance of the facilitative role that the teachers cues can have in the process of error correction.

In terms of writing abilities, the experimental group showed an improved discernment of the element and skills that contribute to optimal performance. Both content and form were stressed as complementary components of good writing. The ability to manipulate the knowledge of language with the conceptual knowledge was hence acknowledged as having a decisive role when writing. As regards the impact left by instruction on their readiness to be more autonomous, the participants of the experimental group showed more readiness to take control over noticing and correcting errors through the use of the learnt strategies.

The positive impact was not, however, limited to the experimental group; the control group as well seemed to benefit from the instruction they received. A high percentage among the participants of the control group expressed a confidence in self-correction, felt an improvement in the writing abilities, and think that the role of the teacher is to teach them how to revise their writings. The chi-square tests run to investigate the significance of the differences between both groups revealed no significance in the responses differences. Such a finding can be interpreted as a failure of the treatment to bring a significant impact on the experimental group; however, the analysis of the open-ended questions helped to obtain some interesting emerging themes. The participants of the experimental group mentioned insightful themes that were unperceived by the control group like the importance of using learning resources while revising one's writing and the necessity to identify one's error patterns as a step preceding error correction. They also appeared to develop evaluative skills aiding them at discerning the extent to which they were able to handle their errors. As regards developing writing abilities, the experimental group showed

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a better understanding of the abilities that can improve performance such as noticing, reading critically one's work, and considering one's recurrent weaknesses. A further point mentioned uniquely by the experimental group is the view of reflection while writing as a problem-solving process.

6.2 Implications

This study findings allowed suggesting a number of implications bearing on both writing pedagogy, theory, and methodology.

6.2.1 Pedagogical implications

The pedagogical implications that arise from the obtained result involve education policymakers, syllabus designers and teachers.

First, education policymakers can have their share of decision making to resolve the limitations of teacher-centred approaches. They could clearly set the priorities and state the major objectives from education in general and language instruction in particular. All teaching practices should aim at empowering learners so that they can act as individuals who can gear their learning to the self-set goals. Education that target to impart only procedural knowledge to the learners can guarantee only short-term success. It also limits the gains to classroom settings. With the availability of learning resources, it would be unwise to limit instruction to classroom settings. Therefore, in addition to procedural knowledge, education policymakers have to encourage fostering metacognitive knowledge. Efforts need to be invested in involving the learner in managing the learning process by helping him identify his own needs, select the necessary strategies, choose among the available learning resources, and evaluate the learning outcomes. Reflection should accompany every step in the learning process.

Syllabus designers can also be involved in the empowering learners by incorporating in the syllabus and the course elements fostering autonomy. Because language classrooms

tend to be heterogeneous and students differ in terms of aptitude, needs, level of proficiency, a course design that does not take into account these variations could be of little efficiency. Students need to be prompted to set individual learning goals with reference to the general goals and work to fulfil both of them. General goals are the ones set by the syllabus and course designers to guide the learning/ teaching process. Students who are not equipped with the prerequisite abilities to attain the general goals need to work on those limitations so that they do not prevent them from attaining the goals set by the syllabus designer. Conversely, students whose level allows them to perform better than what was planned in the syllabus have to set other goals matching their aptitudes.

In the writing classroom, for example, the general goal for second year syllabus is to improve the students' writing abilities so that they can write different types of paragraphs. Students who still struggle with sentence-level correctness should consider the individual goals of learning how to ensure sentence-level accuracy. Unless they act accordingly, the struggling students would not achieve the goals set by the syllabus/ course designer and would not be able to follow the road map planned by the more expert instructor. Similarly, good students with a good mastery of sentence-level and discourse-level aspects should not be content with recycling the knowledge that teachers plan to impart and which is already acquired. They should move to more complex and specific aspects such as improving the writing style through sentence variety and vocabulary richness, working on tone, and adapting the style of writing to varying audiences.

In a similar way, a distinction between evaluation and self-evaluation should be stressed. Instruction targets to evaluate the students' performance in writing based on the criteria they have set. The selection of those criteria is dependent on the goals set during the design of the syllabus and the course. Such an approach in evaluation would overlook the individual goals set by the learners to handle their limitations and cater to their

individual needs. Self-evaluation should then occupy a key component in the writing syllabus.

As regards teachers, learner-centred instruction should by no means understood as teaching with fewer responsibilities. They should experiment with the scaffolding practices that aid learners to be more autonomous instead of the ones that perpetuate dependence on the more expert other. Andrade and Evans (2013, p. 60) say, "it takes much more skill to lead learners in making their choices and revisions than it does to take over the drafting, revision, or editing processes. However, the former is critical in developing self-regulated writers."

This means that if a teacher intends to increase self-regulation in writing course and more particularly in text revision, his involvement should not be reduced but it should be increased. The teacher's role then is to guide the learner in his identification of his limitations not by identifying them but by empowering students so that they can diagnose them independently. The same thing holds true for the selection of the learning resources, learning strategies and the implementation of evaluative tools.

6.2.2 Theoretical implications

Feedback efficacy

Framed in the context of corrective feedback, and as a contribution to the debate exiting regarding this issue, this study reveals that all types of feedback are worth using in writing classroom. If seen from a perspective of learner involvement and responsibility, feedback types can be arranged in a continuum having at one extremity reformulation combined with metalinguistic explanation and at the other extremity no feedback at all. The efficacy of a feedback type over another is not to be tackled as an inherent feature that shows the supremacy of a feedback type but as a suitability of the type of feedback to the desired level of autonomy the teacher wants to have and to the purpose of intervening. If it

is desired to raise the students' metalinguistic awareness, or to raise the sense of audience awareness, it is preferable to provide learners with direct feedback reinforced with metalinguistic explanation. Students are believed to fail sometimes in assessing their work; they either overrate or underrate their products. With the teacher's direct feedback, it is likely that students know how readers perceive and evaluate their work. Indirect feedback is more appropriate in situations where autonomous behaviours are to be established and enhanced. Situations where no feedback is given may be appropriate to engage learners in all steps of error correction starting from error detection to error type identification to errors correction. The diversity of the students' levels in the same class can interfere as well with the teacher's choice of feedback. Therefore, it is not considered wrong practice if in the same classroom, the teacher gives individualised/ personalised feedback to students based on their needs and on their readiness to be engaged in more autonomous practices.

An integrated approach to teaching writing

Couzjin (1999) have argued in favour of learning by observing others' performances in writing. This contention was an attempt to address the limitations of learning to write by exclusively doing exercises, a method which is also referred to by *learning-by-doing* by the same author. He points out that learners might not be able to distinguish between good quality writing and poor one if he is not equipped with knowledge about the criteria against which the evaluation was made. The study we have conducted corroborates Couzjin's (1999) thoughts and stresses the importance of incorporating textual enhancement to increase the noticing of the variety of multi-layered aspects involved in writing. In opting for this pedagogical technique, the student writers could easily set the criteria to evaluate their own productions and others' as well.

Developing strategy skills

The findings of this study, along with other researchers' contentions (Andrade & Evans, 2013; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2007), confirm the key role that can be played by strategy skill building. Instruction focused on building language skills can be effective; however, its outcomes are limited to classroom contexts. Writing instruction should be guided by the objective of improving learners' writing proficiency not learners first drafts. This could be possible if the students develop their strategic competence.

6.2.3 Methodological implications

Seen from a methodological perspective, through this study it was sought to provide a few insights for both previous and prospective researchers in the same area of research. The study of the construct of autonomy within classroom settings can suggest to the academic community with the same area of concern guidelines to the design of the appropriate methods to investigate this field. In order to achieve more methodological rigour, the operationalisation of the construct of autonomy should stop being equated with the degree of teacher involvement; rather, it should be equated with the quality of teacher involvement. Measuring learner autonomy based on the number of times the teacher interferes would be unwise and of little reliability; therefore, more focus need to be placed on the degree of reflective thinking that the teacher can inspire to his students. The use of error logs, typographically enhanced texts, and marginal annotations as pedagogical tools introduced by the teacher is seemingly similar to other techniques like underlining students' errors, providing direct feedback, or presenting focus-on-form mini-lectures. The first set of techniques fosters learner's autonomy while the latter is more likely to solve instantly accuracy problems but perpetuate dependence on the teacher. In the same way, if the focus is on the outcomes of strategy training, gains of any intervention should not be measured only in terms of the students' scores, attitudes or beliefs. It is more rigorous to

study the degree of their engagement in critical reflection across the cycle of learning: spotting weaknesses, setting goals, planning learning, selecting learning strategies and materials, and evaluating outcomes. Both introspective and retrospective and observational research tools can be of great help to the researchers to understand autonomous behaviours.

6.3 Research Limitations

In spite of the insights provided by this study into effective ways to help students improve their writing abilities and have more control over the writing process, and more particular the revision step, there are a number of limitations that need to be discussed.

Relying on the experimental design to investigate any impacts of the treatment was intended to achieve numerical accuracy and the rigour of variable manipulation. Nevertheless, this design has a number of flaws affecting the very rigour of the study. Any claimed gains from this study, in terms of learning, should be presented with reservation because "any causal chain in language learning is inevitably long and complex, involving many conditions" (McDonough & McDonough, 1997, p. 157). Noticing a change in students' writing behaviours, or reporting testimonies from students about the impact the treatment has after a semester of variable manipulation are not sufficient to guarantee the initially desired outcomes.

The proportional stratified sampling took into consideration the students' final pass averages as they were thought to reflect the overall language proficiency including not only the writing skill, but also other skills and knowledge subjects like oral expression, grammar, phonetics, and literature. However, the variables that might affect the intervention success are not limited to language and general knowledge achievements. They transcend to individual differences including primordially, but not limited to, motivation. No research instrument has been utilised to homogenise the control group and the experimental one in terms of students' motivation.

In addition to the broad research design and the sampling procedure, flaws need to be acknowledged in other areas. The collection of data from students through the questionnaire and interview may not report faithfully what the researcher desires to investigate. Students start a treatment period with very poor evaluative abilities and inadequate knowledge about the criteria against which they can judge their performance or their learning gains. As they become more acquainted with those necessary skills, the students grow more aware about their abilities and tend to become less confident regarding them. This growing awareness entailing more objectivity in self-evaluation affects the reliability of the results as the participants might have the impression that writing became more complicated after the treatment.

Moreover, working on the concept of autonomy involves paying close attention to learning behaviours both within and beyond classroom borders. Given that this empirical study relied on investigating the students' ability to develop more autonomous behaviours in text revision, it was not possible to obtain reliable scores by examining their performance outside the classroom.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

In the light of the this study limitations and based on the assumption that writing quality improvement through strategy skill development has the potential to solve many issues related to teaching writing, a number of areas of research are suggested.

The study findings revealed that self-correction as a type of feedback has proved partial efficacy. Improvement in writing quality was noticed only in grammatical, lexical, and mechanical accuracy. The meagre gains at the level of paragraph content stress the need to consider writing instruction that values the communicative role of this skill. More research is then necessary in enhancing thinking skills in writing classrooms.

Ferris and Hedgcock (2013, p. 294) argue "As students progress in their acquisition of English syntax, morphology, and lexis, as well as their formal learning of more complex discourse conventions, they can be given more responsibility for correcting their own errors". As much as this contention clarifies an essential condition for responsibility to be handed over to students, it paints a blurred picture about the same issue. Determining the necessary level of progress in the different types of the required knowledge is a difficult task to do. Besides, the process through which an agreement is attained about the adequate level of progress is vague. On real grounds, the situation is more ambiguous in classes with varied proficiency levels.

More research can shed light on the students' readiness to shoulder responsibility over revision. Readiness can be studied with regard to the students' progress in linguistic knowledge including lexis, grammar, discourse, and writing conventions; however, it can be explored as well with regard to the degree of strategy development. Samples having varying linguistic and strategic backgrounds can be selected to be compared in terms of their response to autonomy enhancing treatments.

A further area of research worth investigating is the role of scaffolding in self-directed writing classrooms. Due to the ambiguity prevailing on the teacher's role in self-directed settings, more concrete strategies and techniques have to be suggested to explain the procedures whereby a teacher can scaffold a student writer to assist him in self-editing. Bearing in mind that assistance implies directing the teaching process exclusively towards fostering autonomous behaviours, innovative and efficient practices have to be suggested.

The usefulness of personalised editing instruction to cater for the students' different needs is another area deserving attention from the academic community specialised in writing skill. Central to this area of study is the fact that student writers, even attending the same course, have different aptitudes, needs, and preferences towards independent

learning. Providing the same editing instruction might meet the needs of a small category of learners and overlook the other learners who do not respond to this instruction.

Delving from real writing classroom experiences, instructors and researchers in writing can suggest some pedagogical tools to enhance the students' self-evaluative skills. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are necessary to explore the responsiveness of learners to differing tools of self-evaluation. This necessity emerges from the limitations of summative evaluation mostly used in teacher-directed classrooms, and its failure to aid students in gauging the outcomes of their learning and assessing the students' writing abilities. A study in such an area would be of huge utility to the improvement of the writing quality and the developing of autonomous learning.

Conclusion

Through the present study, we answered a number of questions that can contribute to a better understanding of how learners can play a more proactive role in improving their writing abilities and performance, and in managing the whole process of writing. The findings have clearly indicated the potential that self-monitoring and self-correction have in assisting students throughout the writing process. In spite of the insights gained through this contribution, other questions related to effective revision strategies and autonomous learning of the writing skill remain to be answered.

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Appendix A: Pre-study Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire aims at exploring the students' perceptions about learning writing and revising their produced texts. We kindly request that you complete the following short questionnaire by putting a tick (✓) near the appropriate answer or by making a full statement if necessary. The information you provide will be of great help to the researcher. Your name will not appear in the research or be kept in any other records. All data and information obtained from this research tool will be coded and stored confidentially. Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

1- To learn about the writing skill, do you
   a- Rely entirely on the teacher's guidance
   b- Refer to other sources

2- By whom do you prefer your text to be corrected?
   a- The teacher
   b- The classmates
   c- Yourself
   d- The computer
   Why?

   ………………………………………………………………………………………

3- Indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements:
   a- The teacher has to identify all the errors in the students' writings
      a. Strongly Disagree □
      b. Disagree □
      c. Neutral □
      d. Agree □
      e. Strongly Agree □
   b- The teacher ahs to provide the correct form of the students' errors
      a. Strongly Disagree □
      b. Disagree □
      c. Neutral □
      d. Agree □
      e. Strongly Agree □

c- I feel often surprised after I get my assignment corrected by the teacher because I do not expect that big number of errors.

    a. Strongly Disagree □

    b. Disagree □

    c. Neutral □

    d. Agree □

    e. Strongly Agree □

Thank you for your assistance

Appendix B: Results of Pre-study Questionnaire

Item 1:

To learn about the writing skill, do you	Frequency	Percentage
a-Rely entirely on the teacher's guidance	59	71.08%
b-Refer to other sources	23	27.71%
No answer	1	1.21%

Item 2:

By whom do you prefer your text to be corrected?	Frequency	Percentage
a-The teacher	77	92.77%
b-The classmates	1	1.20%
c-Yourself	2	2.40%
d-The computer	1	1.20%
No answer	2	2.40%

Why?

Answer	Justification
a-The teacher	He is an experienced person – the teacher is the best guider for the student - he has high level than others – he would suggest the adequate answer – she knows better than the others – because I trust my teacher and I know that is correct – he corrected my mistakes – the only source I trust – she is the only one who gives me rules – she is capable of finding my mistakes – to evaluate me and provide me good ideas than I do – she can judje me in correct way – it is his domain – teacher know you well, your weak points and how to correct it – she knows my capacities – the teacher ran into a lot of texts, and he will be able to give me some advice – he is an expert of the field of education - the teacher find all the errors in my work and give me the right answer
b-The classmates	It's just a habit, we exchange paper
c-Yourself	To know my errors and try to correct them myself to not do them again – although both teachers and classmates can correct my text on a grammatical level, but I give more importance to ideas

	provided, that's why I like correcting myself because nobody can manipulate my ideas better than me
d-The computer	I will not be embarrassed in front of the teacher

Item 3:

The teacher has to identify all the errors in the students' writings.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No answer
Frequency	1	13	11	35	22	1
Percentage	1.20%	15.66%	13.25%	42.16%	26.50%	1.20%

a- The teacher has to provide the correct form of the students' errors

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No answer
Frequency	3	11	9	32	24	4
Percentage	3.61%	13.25%	10.83%	38.55%	28.91%	4.81%

b- I feel often surprised after I get my assignment corrected by the teacher because I do not expect that big number of errors.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No answer
Frequency	3	23	10	27	19	1
Percentage	3.61%	27.71%	12.04%	32.53%	22.89%	1.20%

Appendix C: Teacher's Pre-study Interview

1. How do you evaluate the quality of second year writing?

2. What are the aspects in which they have weaknesses?

3. Why do students have weaknesses in such aspects?

4. Are students aware of the weaknesses they suffer from?

5. To what extent can the teacher's feedback help students improve their writing quality?

6. To what extent do students take in charge the improvement of their writing quality?

Appendix D: Transcription of pre-study teachers' interview

Teacher 1

1. How do you evaluate the quality of second year writing?

It is average on the whole.

2. What are the aspects in which they have weaknesses?

Students have individual differences. They have weaknesses in idea organization, grammar and vocabulary. They generally have good ideas, but they have problems in organizing them according to the norms they have to follow. As for vocabulary, students do not use the appropriate words to convey meaning.

3. Why do students have weaknesses in such aspects?

I keep asking the same question. May be it is due to the lack of feedback from the teacher. There is no individual treatment of errors from the teacher. Besides, some students do not admit the importance of writing. They do not benefit from the teacher's feedback and they do not practice enough. They write only when they are obliged to.

Students do not set their own objectives. If a student sets an objective to fix some grammatical, sentence-level problem, or whatever other problem, he can select the strategies that work for him and help him solve the problem once for all. What I have noticed is that their goals and objectives are short termed. When I teach grammar, they focus only on grammar and forget about other aspects. The student succeeds at that moment, but later on his production reflects a perpetuation of the problem which seemed to be already solves.

4. Are students aware of the weaknesses they suffer from?

Generally, the students cannot evaluate themselves. The majority of students feel that they do well, but when they receive the teacher's feedback they see the difference.

5. To what extent can the teacher's feedback help students improve their writing quality?

To a great extent. There is total ignorance from the teacher to give feedback to students. Sometimes they justify this avoidance with overcrowded classes. So the teacher cannot give individual feedback. Each student has his own weaknesses which are different from other students', which requires different feedback from the teacher. When the teacher gives an oral feedback to the whole class based on one student's production, the feedback is not helpful to the other students. Individual feedback can solve the students' writing problems.

6. To what extent do students take in charge the improvement of their writing quality?

The students do not take in charge the improvement of their writing quality. They act only when they are obliged to (by the teacher). Only a minority, about 5%, do that. Generally, they are good students achieving well in all modules. This category are the ones who do their own efforts to improve the quality of their writings. This leads the teacher to do everything, like motivation, showing the

importance of writing, the benefits of having a good writing style, showing weaknesses, showing how to correct and how to revise.

Teacher 2

1.   How do you evaluate the quality of second year writing?

Students struggle in writing. They write oral English. Sometimes, they have good ideas, but they don't know how to put them in coherent passages.

2.   What are the aspects in which they have weaknesses?

In content, students don't outline. This is why they have problems of coherence and structure.

In grammar and punctuation, they are disastrous. Many elements of writing are absent.

3.   Why do students have weaknesses in such aspects?

Students don't read a lot. They lack vocabulary. They also lack focus, and the influence of oral English is obvious.

4.   Are students aware of the weaknesses they suffer from?

Students are not aware of the weaknesses in their writing. They are not able to evaluate the quality of their productions.

5.   To what extent can the teacher's feedback help students improve their writing quality?

The teacher's feedback can help a lot, but only good elements. Some of the students are accustomed to errors, so they made them over and over again. Some students do not understand the teacher's feedback, or they view it as criticism.

6.   To what extent do students take in charge the improvement of their writing quality?

They do when there is a scholarship or any other incentive. That is to say if there is self-motivation or intrinsic motivation. So only very few students take the initiative and try to improve their writing quality.

Teacher 3

1.   How do you evaluate the quality of second year writing?

On the whole, the second year students are poor writers. Of course there is an exception of few students who are acceptable.

2.   What are the aspects in which they have weaknesses?

They lack the writing conventions. They have poor prewriting skills; which is why they have problems in generating ideas and organizing them. They also have limited vocabulary knowledge and grammar knowledge.

3.   Why do students have weaknesses in such aspects?

It's due to a number of factors. Factor one is that these students have poor writing skills even in their mother tongue. If they fail to produce coherent paragraphs in English, we have to bear in mind that

they are also incapable of writing coherent paragraphs in Arabic. Poor writing abilities will be reflected in English.

Factor two is the interference of L1. They think in Arabic and translate it into English.

Factor there is related to the English language itself. The students are not well formed in English. They have little knowledge in English grammar and vocabulary.

4.   Are students aware of the weaknesses they suffer from?

They lack noticing, so they are totally unaware of their weaknesses. Even if they are corrected in one element, they make the same error again.

5.   To what extent can the teacher's feedback help students improve their writing quality?

Immensely! Given the students writing, they are incapable of noticing errors or knowing the type of error they made. Teacher feedback can help them notice the errors, their type, and their correction.

6.   To what extent do students take in charge the improvement of their writing quality?

For me, they make zero effort to improve their writing quality. They lack the awareness of writing quality, errors, types of errors.

Appendix E: Phase one assignment sheets including typographically enhanced texts

Learning History through Films

Although historical films may be considered boring, they can be **very instructive**. *For one thing,* they teach viewers about **important events** that occurred in particular periods and places. Viewers can *also* learn about **eminent people** who influenced history with their ideas, decisions, or inventions. *Another advantage* of historical films is the **presentation of already known events in a new and unfamiliar manner** that reflects the film producer's perspective and viewpoint. Such innovative presentations get people to ponder over what has long been accepted, and consider the alternative interpretations of the same event. However, *the greatest value* of historical films is that they offer priceless **lessons from the past that can guide the future**.

▪ In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about

<u>Paragraph</u>   <u>Marginal annotations/ questions</u>

The benefits of time management skills

Time management <u>skills</u> **are** very important for students to succeed in their academic career. First, <u>students</u> who know how to control their time **are** more likely to perform well and get good grades. Not only **are** <u>they</u> able to finish their assignments before deadlines, but <u>they</u> also **can accomplish** high quality works. <u>Another benefit</u> of having good time management skills **is** reducing stress levels under which the work is done. <u>Knowing</u> that plenty of time is available before the submission of the assignments **allows** the students to do all that is necessary for accomplishing high quality works. Furthermore, good <u>time managers</u> **have** more free time that can be devoted to practising sports, hobbies, and other relaxing activities. <u>Leading</u> an active life **is** the key to a healthier body, a more balanced personality, and a better social interaction.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the benefits of having a hobby.

<u>Paragraph</u>   <u>Marginal annotations/ questions</u>

Michael Altshuler once **said**, "The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot ". When failing to accomplish the planned tasks, people **tend** to blame the brevity of time. They **claim** that 24 hours a day are not sufficient to be productive enough. However, they **seem** to forget that they have to take control over their time. Students, in particular, **need** to use their time wisely as their future depends on how to schedule it. To succeed in their academic career, students **need** to have some time management skills.

- Start an introduction about the benefits of having/ taking up a hobby with the following sentence.

Logan Pearsall Smith once said, "If you are losing your leisure, look out, you may be losing your soul".

Introduction	Marginal annotations/ questions

Time management can bring many rewarding results to students such as working under relaxing conditions, accomplishing high quality tasks, and enjoying leisure time in doing amusing activities. Therefore, students need to plan ahead all their tasks and leave some spare time for unexpected assignments. Self-imposed deadlines can also prove to be very important in getting the students to finish their planned works on time. By acting in this way, students can control better their life and enjoy success.

- Write a conclusion about the benefits of having a hobby using the technique of "making a recommendation".

<u>Conclusion</u>   Marginal annotations/ questions

Appendix F: Error Log Sheet

Type of error	code	Number of occurrence (indicated with a tick or a cross)
Ineffective topic sentence	**In ts**	
Coherence	**Coh**	
Unity/ irrelevant details	**ir**	
Use of transitions	**tr**	
Rhetorical pattern	**R p**	
Amount of detail	**exp/red**	
Subject Verb Agreement	**S-V agr**	
Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement	**Pro Agr**	
Sentence combination	**S c**	
Faulty Parallelism	**// fp**	
Dangling / Misplaced Modifier	**Dm/ mm**	
Fragment	**Fr**	
Word order error	**wo**	
Word form error	**wf**	
Wrong word	**ww**	
Missing word/ insert	**V**	
Redundancy	**rep**	
Tense/ verb error	**T/V**	
Articles	**ar**	
prepositions	**prep**	
Punctuation	**p**	
Spelling	**sp**	
capitalisation	**Cap**	
Indentation	**↔**	
margins	**↔**	

Appendix G: Error Codes Used in Feedback

Code	Meaning
In ts	Ineffective topic sentence
Coh	Coherence
ir	Unity/ irrelevant details
tr	Use of transitions
exp/red	Amount of detail
S-V /agr	Subject-Verb Agreement
Pro /agr	Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement
S c	Sentence combination
Fp	Faulty Parallelism
dm mm	Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers
Pas	Passive Voice Construction
Wo	Word order error
Wf	Word form error
Ww	Wrong word
∨	Missing word/ insert
Rep	Redundancy
Fr	Fragment
Sh	Shift
Ar	Articles
Prep	Prepositions
P	Punctuation
Sp	Spelling
Cap	Capitalization
↔	Indentation
↔	Margins

People (should) control their consumption of sugar because the possible effects of sugar overconsumption can be very scary. Overconsumption of sugar (may) increase the risk of developing chronic diseases that may include diabetes and cancer. Some studies have provided evidence that a sugar-heavy diet (can cause) the aging of the brain cells, which (will) eventually lead to memory problems. Obesity is another undesirable effect that can **be caused** by the overconsumption of sugary food. Overweight in turn is likely **to** trigger a number of dangerous diseases. **By** indulging in sugary treats, people (might) actually be reducing their life expectancy.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the effects of neglecting physical activity. You may need the following notes :   weight gain   / loss of muscle mass , low bone density/ sleep disorders/ low mental alertness/ stress/

Paragraph   Marginal annotations/ questions

Craving sugary food is a problem **that** very few people want to solve; **however**, by considering its effects, it becomes an urgent need to reduce one's consumption of sugar. One effective solution to this problem is to replace sugar by other food such as fruit, dried fruit, or natural sweeteners. Another solution **that** can reduce sugar craving is to consider this latter as a kind of addiction **that** has to be combated instead of considering it a hunger. Involving other family members or friends in such a resolution can prove to be very effective **because** it is extremely hard to try to overcome sugar temptation **while** a sibling **who** is sitting to the same table is taking a delicious dessert.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the solutions that may be suggested to solve the problem of ………………

Paragraph   Marginal annotations/ questions

Spending a relaxing trip and satisfying the whole family are possible if every detail of this trip is planned ahead of time. First, the family should study the budget that can cover all the expenses. This step is important because it will determine many other details such as the destination, the duration, the hotels, and so on. Once the budget is fixed, the travelers can start choosing the place and time of their trip. The family members may have a lot of disagreement regarding the right choice, yet they have to remember that fun and relaxation are the main objectives of the trip. Finally, the fellow travelers can pack their luggage, buy their tickets, and start enjoying the holidays.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the steps that should be followed to plan a perfect party.

Paragraph   Marginal annotations/ questions

The writer's block, which is one of the students concerns, can be overcome by following these instructions. First, the student should choose a comfortable and calm place because the working environment can play either a positive or a negative role. To facilitate concentration on the task being done, the cell phone and other distracting devices must be switched off. After that, the student has to define his goals and start generating as many ideas as possible on rough papers. Such a step enables the writer to choose among a number of ideas which not all of them are expected to be perfect. Finally, the student can write and show the first draft to a friend who is interested in reading his texts.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the steps that should be followed to solve concentration problems in exam revision.

Paragraph   Marginal annotations/ questions

Appendix I: Phase three assignment sheets including typographically enhanced texts

*Studying at high school and studying at university <u>differ</u> in a number of aspects. <u>**While**</u> being a student at high school obliges the learner to accumulate knowledge and memorise it, being at the university requires from the student to analyze knowledge and to think critically. <u>Another difference</u> is related to the involvement of teachers in students' learning. <u>**Unlike**</u> high school where students are supposed to study mostly in the classroom guided by the teacher, the university compels students to learn independently. <u>Additionally,</u> both levels of studies <u>may vary</u> in terms of students' attendance. In high school, the learner's attendance is obligatory in all the subjects; <u>**in contrast**</u>, at the university the student is given relatively <u>more</u> freedom.*

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the differences between healthy eating habits and unhealthy ones.

<u>Paragraph</u>   <u>Marginal annotations/ questions</u>

Students can be grouped into **three categories** according to their learning styles. **Visual learners** are those who learn better though `pictures`. To retain information, they try to `visualize` some mental `images` about the subject. **Auditory learners** are those who prefer to rely on `listening`. They remember better the information presented `verbally`. **Kinaesthetic learners** tend to concentrate better when they `move` in `the space` they are in. While processing information, they like to `physically interact` with the parts of the task they are performing.

▪ In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the categories of students according to their revising habits.

Paragraph

Marginal annotations/ questions

Girls should not take part in beauty *contests*. Physical beauty is an inherited trait not an achievement that can be done through any sort of hard work. Having a *beautiful* body or face is a matter of *chance* decided by inherited genes, and it is not fair to feel proud because of it. Furthermore, participating in such contests keeps girls from pursuing *important* achievements. It is better to *spend* one's time in *acquiring* knowledge or learning arts and crafts than in competing to get the title of the most beautiful girl. Self-esteem *problems* may result from excessive failure in being the winner in these contests. Hundreds of girls may take part in beauty contests, but only one will be a *winner,* which causes a lot of *disappointment* for those who do not win the title.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, argue for or against plastic surgery.

<u>Paragraph</u>　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　<u>Marginal annotations/ questions</u>

The Gourmet is a restaurant which deserves to be visited by any lover of gastronomy. The food quality in this restaurant is able to satisfy a variety of tastes. Whether customers like traditional cuisine or prefer modern delicacies, their taste buds will enjoy the highly refined dishes. Cleanness is another reason that contributes to the good reputation of this restaurant. The room, the table clothes as well as all the tableware are so tidy and clean. Prices, however, are relatively high there. For such good meals and a clean place, the customer does not have to hesitate to pay more.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, evaluate a TV channel that you either recommend to watch or not.

Paragraph   Marginal annotations/ questions

Appendix J: Reviewing Checklist

<div style="border:1px solid black">

<u>Reviewing Checklist</u>

<u>Content/global characteristics</u>

- Does the paragraph contain only one main idea?
- Does the paragraph contain a topic sentence?
- Is the topic sentence an effective one? It should be neither too narrow nor too broad.
- Do all following sentences in the paragraph support the topic sentence?
- Is sufficient evidence provided to support your point?
- Are details sequenced according to a principle?
- Have you used transitions to link sentences and ideas together?

<u>Sentence structure</u>

- Do all verbs agree with their subjects?
- Do all pronouns agree with their antecedents?
- Are sentences of varied lengths, complexities, and openings?
- Are sentences as clear and concise as possible?
- Have you checked to see if there are no run-on sentences, sentence fragments, or comma splices?
- Does each modifier clearly modify the appropriate sentence element?
- Are parallel structures used where needed?

<u>Spelling and punctuation</u>

- Is spelling correct?
- Is punctuation correct?
- Is capitalization used where necessary?

<u>Format</u>

- Is the first sentence of the paragraph indented?
- Is the title centered on the top line?(In case you are required to write a title)
- Have you checked the structure of the title? It should not be a complete sentence.
- Have you capitalized all the words in the title except short prepositions such as *on, to, in,* and for, short conjunctions such as *or and so,* and articles such as *a, an, and the.* ?

</div>

Appendix K: Typographically Enhanced Texts

Session 1:

> **Enhanced feature:** Coherence through pattern of development and key words
> **Typographical cues:**
>   **Text:** Times New Roman (size 12)
>   **Enhanced parts:** Lucida calligraphy fonts (size 12), bold face, and underlining

Learning History through Films

Although historical films may be considered boring, they can be **very instructive**. *For one thing,* they teach viewers about **important events** that occurred in particular periods and places. Viewers can *also* learn about **eminent people** who influenced history with their ideas, decisions, or inventions. *Another advantage* of historical films is the **presentation of already known events in a new and unfamiliar manner** that reflects the film producer's perspective and viewpoint. Such innovative presentations get people to ponder over what has long been accepted, and consider the alternative interpretations of the same event. However, *the greatest value* of historical films is that they offer priceless **lessons from the past that can guide the future**.

Session 2:

> **Enhanced feature:** Subject-verb agreement
> **Typographical cues:**
>   **Text:** Segoe Print font (size 12)
>   **Enhanced parts:** Segoe Print font (size 12)**,** bold face, and underlining

The benefits of time management skills

Time management <u>skills</u> **are** very important for students to succeed in their academic career. First, <u>students </u>who know how to control their time **are** more likely to perform well and get good grades. Not only **are** <u>they </u>able to finish their assignments before deadlines, but <u>they</u> also **can accomplish** high quality works. <u>Another benefit </u>of having good time management skills **is** reducing stress levels under which the work is done. <u>Knowing</u> that plenty of time is available before the submission of the assignments **allows** the students to do all that is necessary for accomplishing high quality works. Furthermore, good <u>time managers</u> **have** more free time that can be devoted to practising sports, hobbies, and other relaxing activities. <u>Leading</u> an active life **is** the key to a healthier body, a more balanced personality, and a better social interaction.

Session 3:

> **Enhanced feature:** Sentence completeness (absence of fragments)
> **Typographical cues:**
> **Text:** Footlight MT Light font (size 13)
> **Enhanced parts:** Footlight MT Light font (size 13), bold face, and underlining

Michael Altshuler once **said**, "The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot ". When failing to accomplish the planned tasks, <u>people</u> **tend** to blame the brevity of time. <u>They</u> **claim** that 24 hours a day are not sufficient to be productive enough. However, <u>they</u> **seem** to forget that they have to take control over their time. <u>Students</u>, in particular, **need** to use their time wisely as their future depends on how to schedule it. To succeed in their academic career<u>, students</u> **need** to have some time management skills.

Session 4:

> **Enhanced feature:** Word from
> **Typographical cues:**
> **Text:** Footlight MT Light font (size 13)
> **Enhanced parts:** Footlight MT Light font (size 13), bold face, and circling

Time management can bring many (rewarding) results to students such as working under (relaxing) conditions, accomplishing high quality tasks, and enjoying leisure time in doing (amusing) activities. Therefore, students need to plan ahead all their tasks and leave some spare time for unexpected assignments. (Self-imposed) deadlines can also prove to be very **important** in getting the students to finish their (planned) works on time. By acting in this way, students can control better their life and enjoy success.

Session 5:

> **Enhanced feature:** Verb/tense
> **Typographical cues:**
> **Text:** Footlight MT Light font (size 11)
> **Enhanced parts:** Footlight MT Light font (size 11), circling, and underlining

People should (control) their consumption of sugar because the possible effects of sugar overconsumption can be very scary. Overconsumption of sugar (may) (increase) the risk **of** <u>develo**ping**</u> chronic diseases that (may) <u>include</u> diabetes and cancer. Some (studies) (have) provided evidence that a sugar-heavy diet (can) (cause) the aging of the brain cells, which (will) eventually <u>lead</u> to memory problems. Obesity is another undesirable effect that can **be caused** by the overconsumption of sugary food. Overweight <u>in</u> turn is likely **to** <u>trigger</u> a number of dangerous diseases. **By** <u>indul**ging**</u> in sugary treats, peop(le) (might) actually be <u>reducing</u> their life expectancy.

Session 6:

> **Enhanced feature:** Sentence combination
> **Typographical cues:**
> **Text:** Footlight MT Light font (size 12)
> **Enhanced parts:** Footlight MT Light font (size14) and bold face

Craving sugary food is a problem **that** very few people want to solve; **however**, by considering its effects, it becomes an urgent need to reduce one's consumption of sugar. One effective solution to this problem is to replace sugar by other food such as fruit, dried fruit, or natural sweeteners. Another solution **that** can reduce sugar craving is to consider this latter as a kind of addiction **that** has to be combated instead of considering it a hunger. Involving other family members or friends in such a resolution can prove to be very effective **because** it is extremely hard to try to overcome sugar temptation **while** a sibling **who** is sitting to the same table is taking a delicious dessert.

Session 7:

Enhanced feature: Punctuation and capitalization **Typographical cues:** **Text:** Footlight MT Light (size 12) **Enhanced parts:** Elephant (size 13) and Goody Stout (size 20) fonts and bold face

Spending a relaxing trip and satisfying the whole family are possible if every detail of this trip is planned ahead of time**.** **F**irst**,** the family should study the budget that can cover all the expenses**.** **T**his step is important because it will determine many other details such as the destination**,** the duration**,** the hotels**,** and so on**.** **O**nce the budget is fixed**,** the travelers can start choosing the place and time of their trip**.** **T**he family members may have a lot of disagreement regarding the right choice**,** yet they have to remember that fun and relaxation are the main objectives of the trip**.** **F**inally**,** the fellow travelers can pack their luggage**,** buy their tickets**,** and start enjoying the holidays**.**

Session 8:

Enhanced feature: Spelling **Typographical cues:** **Text:** Footlight MT Light font (size 13) **Enhanced parts:** Footlight MT Light font (size 13) and bold face

The writer's blo**ck**, **wh**ich is one of the students con**c**erns, can be over**c**ome by fo**ll**owing these instru**c**tions. First, the student should cho**o**se a **c**om**f**ortable and calm place because the working environ**m**ent can play either a positi**v**e or a negati**v**e role. To facilitate con**c**entration on the task being done, the cell phone and other dist**r**ac**t**ing devices must be switch**ed** o**ff**. After that, the student has to define his goals and start **g**enerating as many ideas as possible on rou**gh** papers. Such a

step enables the writer to choose among a number of ideas which not all of them are expected to be perfect. Finally, the student can write and show the first draft to a friend who is interested in reading his texts.

Session 9:

> **Enhanced feature:** Coherence through transitional words
>
> **Typographical cues:**
>
> **Text:** Monotype Corsiva font (size 14)
>
> **Enhanced parts:** Monotype Corsiva font (size 14), bold face, and underlining

*Studying at high school and studying at university <u>differ</u> in a number of aspects. **<u>While</u>** being a student at high school obliges the learner to accumulate knowledge and memorise it, being at the university requires from the student to analyze knowledge and to think critically. <u>Another difference</u> is related to the involvement of teachers in students' learning. **<u>Unlike</u>** high school where students are supposed to study mostly in the classroom guided by the teacher, the university compels students to learn independently. <u>Additionally</u>, <u>both</u> levels of studies <u>may vary</u> in terms of students' attendance. In high school, the learner's attendance is obligatory in all the subjects; **<u>in contrast</u>**, at the university the student is given relatively <u>more</u> freedom.*

Session 10:

> **Enhanced feature:** Support
> **Typographical cues:**
> **Text:** Footlight MT Light font (size13)
> **Enhanced parts:** Britannic Bold (13) and bold face

Students can be grouped into **three categories** according to their learning styles. **Visual learners** are those who learn better though `pictures`. To retain information, they try to `visualize` some mental `images` about the subject. **Auditory learners** are those who prefer to rely on `listening`. They remember better the information presented `verbally`. **Kinaesthetic learners** tend to concentrate better

when they **move** in **the space** they are in. While processing information, they like to **physically interact** with the parts of the task they are performing.

Girls should not take part in beauty *contests.* Physical beauty is an inherited trait not an achievement that can be done through any sort of hard work. Having a *beautiful* body or face is a matter of *chance* decided by inherited genes, and it is not fair to feel proud because of it. Furthermore, participating in such contests keeps girls from pursuing *important* achievements. It is better to *spend* one's time in *acquiring* knowledge or learning arts and crafts than in competing to get the title of the most beautiful girl. Self-esteem *problems* may result from excessive failure in being the winner in these contests. Hundreds of girls may take part in beauty contests, but only one will be a *winner,* which causes a lot of *disappointment* for those who do not win the title.

The Gourmet is a restaurant which deserves to be visited by any lover of gastronomy. <u>The food quality</u> in this restaurant is able to satisfy a variety of tastes. Whether customers like traditional cuisine or prefer modern delicacies, their taste buds will enjoy the highly refined dishes. <u>Cleanness</u> is another reason that contributes to the good reputation of this restaurant. The room, the table clothes as well as all the tableware are so tidy and clean. <u>Prices</u>, however, are relatively high there. For such good meals and a clean place, the customer does not have to hesitate to pay more.

Appendix L: Informed Consent

Informed consent

I am Mrs. Bouzeraa, lecturer at the Institute of Foreign Languages in Mohamed Lamine Debaghine University, Sétif 2. I am conducting a research on the use of self-monitoring and self-correction in students' paragraph writing. This form is given to students to express their acceptance of taking part in the research. Some general information about the purpose, the benefits, and risks of the participation is necessary before taking the decision.

Over the writing courses of the current semester, students will receive different types of feedback for their writings. Most of the time, the teacher will provide comments for the students production by either correcting the errors or helping them correct them. This study aims at enabling students to take more control over the revision of their writings through the use of some strategies, namely self-monitoring and self-correction.

By taking part in the current study, the students will personally benefit from the opportunity to learn how to be more independent in the revision of their written texts. They can also have more chances to share their concerns about all aspects related to the writing process with both the teacher and the classmates. The benefits will not be limited to the writing module, but they transcend it to cover all aspects of correct language use. Besides the benefits students get from being guided by the teacher towards more autonomy, they will contribute through the final findings of the research to a better understanding of the efficient techniques in teaching writing.

Being a participant in this research represents no risks to the students whether in terms of academic achievements or confidentiality. As regards the academic aspect, students will be following the same syllabus intended for second year level. The study does not entail any change or reduction in the content of the syllabus. Confidentiality will be maintained through the use of pseudo names or numbers to refer to their cases or to provide illustrations from their productions.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Student's consent
I have read carefully the information provided above, and I accept voluntarily to take part in this study.
Name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

The benefits of time management skills

Time management <u>skills</u> (are) very important for students to succeed in their academic career. First, <u>students who know</u> how to control their time (are) more likely to perform well and get good grades. Not only (are) they able to finish their assignments before deadlines, but (they) also can accomplish high quality works. Another <u>benefit</u> of having good time management skills (is) reducing stress levels under which the <u>work</u> (is) done. Knowing that <u>plenty of time</u> (is) available before the submission of the assignments (allows) the students to do all that is necessary for accomplishing high quality works. Furthermore, good time <u>managers</u> (have) more free <u>time</u> that (can be) devoted to practising sports, hobbies, and other relaxing activities. <u>Leading</u> an active life (is) the key to a healthier body, a more balanced personality, and a better social interaction.

Having a hobey can improve capacities, build new relation ships, and increase self confidence. First, having a hobey can give us the chance to improve and discover our capacities. For escample, when someon has a hobey, this can help him to know what is the best for him and what can he do. Second, it helps us to build new relation ships. To share others the same hobies, or different hobies can make people friends. The most important benifit is to increase self-confidence. To have a specific hobey, and be good in it, this can make the person's personality strong, and he will be self-confident.

*= Is my first minor detail sufficient? It is not clear.
*= Is the spelling of my words correct? which one? specify.
*= Is the structure of my paragraph correct? Which sentence? specify.
*= Is my last minor detail the appropriate one? the idea is good, the sentence can be revised.
*= what about S/V agreement?

1. sp. a hobby. 2- Good T.S. 3- discover, improve. 4- wordorder, what he can do. this is an affirmative sentence not a question.

Time management can bring many (rewarding) results to students such as working under (relaxing) conditions, accomplishing high quality tasks, and enjoying leisure time in doing (amusing) activities. Therefore, students need to plan ahead all their tasks and leave some spare time for unexpected assignments. Self-imposed deadlines can also prove to be very (important) in getting the students to finish their (planned) works on time. By acting in this way, students can control better their life and enjoy success.

- Write a conclusion about the benefits of having a hobby using the technique of "making a recommendation".

Conclusion	Marginal annotations/ questions
having a hobby is really something beneficial because it makes life every interesting and makes people prove to theirselves that they are very talented such as being creative ones. It is very important to have a hobby, because it fills the free time and put people away from bordrom. So, it should be saved and, developed, and practised all the Time tobe memorized.	• Have you doubted that the word "theirselves"? • where are the questions?

1 cap. Having. 2 p.no (,) comma.
3 - WF themselves. 4 - Reword.
5 - 6. omit these parts. ⇒ they are very talented and creative. 7.w.F
fill: verb, full: adjective.
8. sp. boredom. 9: it refers to what?
10, cap. time. 11. WW.

Michael Altshuler once **said**, "The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot ". When failing to accomplish the planned tasks, people **tend** to blame the brevity of time. They **claim** that 24 hours a day are not sufficient to be productive enough. However, they seem to forget that they have to take control over their time. Students, in particular, **need** to use their time wisely as their future depends on how to schedule it. To succeed in their academic career, students **need** to have some time management skills.

Start you introduction about the benefits of having a hobby with the following sentence.
Logan Pearsall Smith once said, "If you are losing your leisure, look out, you may be losing your soul".

Introduction	Marginal annotations/ questions

Introduction

1 Logan Pearsall Smith once said, "If you are losing your leisure, lookout, you may be losing your soul". It is good to have passion for doing or practising something because you will make time full in doing special your things, and no place for borring in your life which make consider that you are very talentive {So, if you wont to have a goal and interst time just have a hobby because it is very beneficial to help people to discover their ablities} 6.

1- leave an indentation . . 2. WF boredom. 3- talented . 4 Reward, 5 interest . 6 - In. T.S.

Marginal annotations/ questions

- I'm not sure about the underline sentence if it is correct or not.

  it is correct

- if the common? is in here place or I can't put in there?

- Is the thesis sentence correct or not? and how I can formulate it?

- the T.S. needs to be revised. Either mention all the three benefits in the T.S. or none. You can't mention only "discovering the abilities" and neglect the others.

The writer's block, which is one of the students concerns, can be overcome by following these instructions. First, the student should choose a comfortable and calm place because the working environment can play either a positive or a negative role. To facilitate concentration on the task being done, the cell phone and other distracting devices must be switched off. After that, the student has to define his goals and start generating as many ideas as possible on rough papers. Such a step enables the writer to choose among a number of ideas which not all of them are expected to be perfect. Finally, the student can write and show the first draft to a friend who is interested in reading his texts.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the steps that should be followed to solve concentration problems in exam revision.

Paragraph.

Concentration problems in exam revision, which is the most difficult affliction that students faces, can be overcome by following these instructions. First, the student should manage his time because time management provides the individual with many benifts to reach success. After that, the student has to choose a comfortable and / calm place in addition to switching phones, forgeting about facebook and other devices. Finally, the students can take a rest between revising two modules in order to not get stressed. F. p.

Marginal annotations/ questions

- Is it necessarly to put a comma before "in addition"?. NO.
- Is it right to not get?

g w.o.

1. Good topic sentence!!
2. sp. provides. 3. sp. benefits.
5. faulty parallelism. + vocab. choice.
.. when saying ... facebook and other devices".. this suggests that 'facebook' is a device, which is wrong.
=> sources of distraction.
7. wF. revision. 8. w.order.
in order not to..... or.
to avoid getting stressed.

| 4. sp. Success (c) |
| 6. sp. forgetting (b) |

Craving sugary food is a problem **that** very few people want to solve; **however**, by considering its effects, it becomes an urgent need to reduce one's consumption of sugar. One effective solution to this problem is to replace sugar by other food such as fruit, dried fruit, or natural sweeteners. Another solution **that** can reduce sugar craving is to consider this latter as a kind of addiction **that** has to be combated instead of considering it a hunger. Involving other family members or friends in such a resolution can prove to be very effective **because** it is extremely hard to try to overcome sugar temptation **while** a sibling **who** is sitting to the same table is taking a delicious dessert.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, write about the solutions that may be suggested to solve the problem of the lack of physical activity

Paragraph	Marginal annotations/ questions

The lack of physical activity is a problem that is widely spread in this era of information when everything could be done by sitting at home; however, by considering its effects, it becomes a necessity to start a phy practising a physical activity. One effective solution to this problem is to devote at least ~~one day a week~~ two hours a week to practise a sport, make it stable and honour that time so you would not miss it no matter what. Another solution is to be aware of the benefits of physical activities as much as the bad effects of their lackiness. Involving a friend in such a resolution can make it easy to go on with and even a funny thing when it is shared because it is extremely hard at first to maintain a habit like you are not very enthusiastic about.

Marginal annotations:
- "Era of Information", I believe there is a better statement to use !!
- "As much as the bad effects of their lackiness !!? I don't think it is a right sentence but I could not find a better one.
- 1 – T.S. Don't you notice that this is a very long topic sentence. Keep these small details to introduction writing.
- 2 – I suggest "technology" instead of information. -u, ww.
- 5 – This sounds very informal.
- 7. Reword to improve the style.

→ neglecting them

3 sp. – practise	
6 ww. – neglecting them	

Spending a relaxing trip and satisfying the whole family are possible if every detail of this trip is planned ahead of time. First, the family should study the budget that can cover all the expenses. This step is important because it will determine many other details such as the destination, the duration, the hotels, and so on. Once the budget is fixed, the travelers can start choosing the place and time of their trip. The family members may have a lot of disagreement regarding the right choice, yet they have to remember that fun and relaxation are the main objectives of the trip. Finally, the fellow travelers can pack their luggage, buy their tickets, and start enjoying the holidays.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to 7 sentences, write about the steps that should be followed to plan a perfect party.

Paragraph.

Having a perfect party that everyone would enjoy require [1 agr] a lot of planning ahead. First, the place and the time of the party should [2] appropriate for everyone invited. This step is important because no one would party if the guest will not attend due to the inappropriate time. Once the checking [3 ww] of place and time is done, the guest list [4] needs to be well prepared for no one wanted [agr] a non-wanted guest on their party or a long guest list for a small party place. Finally, you must make sure that there is plenty of food for everyone if not even more in case, and of course provide funny games or music so the guest will not get bored.

Marginal annotations / questions

- I'm lost : "no one want" or "no one wants" ?!
- The use of "you" is it informal ?!

-3 – ww choice, 4 agr. list needs:
-5 – Reword, 6. S.C. start a new sentence here.

1 agr. -C- requires
2 V. -C- should be appropriate

The writer's block, which is one of the students concerns, can be overcome by following these instructions. First, the student should choose a comfortable and calm place because the working environment can play either a positive or a negative role. To facilitate concentration on the task being done, the cell phone and other distracting devices must be switched off. After that, the student has to define his goals and start generating as many ideas as possible on rough papers. Such a step enables the writer to choose among a number of ideas which not all of them are expected to be perfect. Finally, the student can write and show the first draft to a friend who is interested in reading his texts.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to 7 sentences, write about the steps that should be followed to solve concentration problems in exam revision.

Paragraph

Concentration problems is one of the serious obstacles for the student to revise for their exams, but to avoid it you should as follow some steps. First we should choose the appropriate place for revising. The calm area make revision more easier than other one. Moreover, we should remove all the problems from your head and make it clear. Finally, we should take rest between the first module and the other one because when you carry on you will feel up and you stop directly.

1. sp. problem. 3. sing/pl. ⇒ one of ... the obstacles.
5. sp. exam. 6. Pronoun inconsistent use.
In just two sentences you used: the student (he) their, you, and we. Try to use only one.
7. Vart ⇒ the. 8. agr. the calm area makes.
9. the same as 6. 10. Rewrite ... ⇒ to avoid feeling boredom.

2. sp.
4. agr.

The Gourmet is a restaurant which deserves to be visited by any lover of gastronomy. The food quality in this restaurant is able to satisfy a variety of tastes. Whether customers like traditional cuisine or prefer modern delicacies, their taste buds will enjoy the highly refined dishes. Cleanness is another reason that contributes to the good reputation of this restaurant. The room, the table clothes as well as all the tableware are so tidy and clean. Prices, however, are relatively high there. For such good meals and a clean place, the customer does not have to hesitate to pay more.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to7 sentences, evaluate a TV channel that you either recommend to watch or not.

Paragraph	Marginal annotations/ questions
MBC 4 is a channel which deserves to be viewed by any lover of watching TV programs. The programs interesting in this channel are gives spectators more amusement for pursing a different kind of films with different languages. Whether spectators like watching healthy programs, like the doctors program, That gives advise to protect our healthy or prefer to pursing a news of Artist. tradiction programs is one speacial advantage because all of programs was tradiction in Arabic language That good for spectators who not understand english by language.	– The time is over and I can't revise my paragraph? – I must reduce Time to check dictionary. 3 cap interesting. 4 w.w → Translation

1 – interesting programs adj+N		←
2 – (v/t) are gives		←

Girls should not take part in beauty *contests*. Physical beauty is an inherited trait not an achievement that can be done through any sort of hard work. Having a *beautiful* body or face is a matter of *chance* decided by inherited genes, and it is not fair to feel proud because of it. Furthermore, participating in such contests keeps girls from pursuing *important* achievements. It is better to *spend* one's time in *acquiring* knowledge or learning arts and crafts than in competing to get the title of the most beautiful girl. Self esteem *problems* may result from excessive failure in being the winner in these contests. Hundreds of girls may take part in beauty contests, but only one will be a *winner*, which causes a lot of *disappointment* for those who do not win the title.

- In a paragraph of approximately 5 to 7 sentences, argue for or against plastic surgery.

Paragraph	Marginal annotations/ questions
Telling someone about his illness is better than hiding on him the truth. Patient has the right to know about his illness because it concern his life. In addition, when telling him it would help him to resist and face the problems and would have a psychological defme and a desire to cure. More than that, when telling a patient about his bad situation in the right time he will accept and live normally with the desease rather than discovering his one problems one day, that may create a psychological crises.	• Is the work "patient" correct ? • " " " "normally" correct ? • Yes the spelling of "patient" is correct. • Yes it is correct (for normally). • topic sentence is short. I think it should be more long ① ⇒ I think that there is a problem in the coherence in the problem.

Appendix N: Corpus of Marginal Annotations

Rofeida

Session	Annotation	Number
Session1	-I use the present tense or the past? -The spelling of proper nouns?	2
Session2	- Is this sentence (consequently….better) effective? - Is the topic sentence effective? - I didn't find an effective minor detail for the first major detail, while for the second I think about many of them!	3
Session3	-Is "exhausted" correct in spelling? - Am I right in using "but" to link the thesis statement with the previous sentences?	2
Session4	-Is the last sentence effective? -What about the 1st one?	2
Session5	-Shall I say are neglecting or neglect directly? - Is "neglection" correct in spelling? -Is this statement "about the negative and dangerous "balanced? -Is the last detail effective?	4
Session6	-"ameliorate" is it correct in spelling? -Workers" is it correct in spelling? -Is the idea of "another …students" effective -Should I say the only way or the best way?	4
Session7	-Is the 3rd sentence effective? -I feel that the 5th sentence is too long!	2
Session8	-Are the ideas in chronological order?	1
Session9	- Is the topic sentence effective? -I feel that there is a lot of repetition!	2
Session10	-I didn't find a synonyme for the verb "to revise" so there is a lot of repetition! -I feel that the 3rd sentence is not effective? -Is individually" correct in spelling?	3
Session11	-Is there any synonyme for patient?! -Is it better to say dangerous illnesses or diseases? -Is the last sentence effective?	3
Session12	-Is it possible to use "all the categories of the society"? -What about "an important factor" -I feel that the last sentence is not effective!	3
Total number	247 words	

Rym

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-Is it Ok to start with to me? - I like "its" or "their lifestyle"? -is the second major detail relevant? - I be able or I'll be able?	4
Session2	-what is the right spelling for 'hobby'? -is the topic sentence relevant? -good or bad transition words? - to say to be uncomfortable? -'selfs' or 'selves'?	5

Session3	/	0
Session4	-Mentally or mentally?	2
Session5	-Aware of or about	
Session6	- Do we have to order the solutions in a specific one? -Do we have to mention in each solution the problem we are solving?	2
Session7	- Finaly + this process ends ⇒ isn't repetition?	1
Session8	/	0
Session9	/	0
Session10	Should we mention the categories in the T.S.?	1
Session11	/	0
Session12	/	0
Total number	106 words	

Thelili

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-Shall I title the paragraph "the country dream"? - Shall I use the adjective "developed" to describe the development of Japane. -Shall I use the verb "to hallow" to describe the strong love of working and reading?	4
Session2	-Shall I say parctising - Shall I say "are" or "is" to having hobbies? -Shall I write "stead" like t his -Shall I use coma before having -Shall I use "you" or I can't - Must I see we or he each time	6
Session3	-Shall I say "has" or "had" -Shall I put coma or period before but - Shall I use the question: is it normal? And am I subjective in saying this? -Shall I say "fill" to express "pass time" -Shall I write interesting with this way? -Shall I replace this last to replace hobbies?	6
Session4	-shall I use semicolon before he or a period because I begun with because and I have used a coma when starting the benefits of having a hobby. - am I wrong when I say abomination are they synonyms	2
Session5	-Is it a appropriate topic sentence by explaining of physical activity	1
Session6	- Shall I say "intertaining" or "entertained"	1
Session7	-Shall I put a coma before "for" -Shall I say decoration or it's better to say "decorative thing	2
Session8	"-Shall I say "face" or "faced" -Shall I put a coma before like?	2
Session9	/	0
Session10	-Can I say throughout all the year? -Can I say: "is those" or "are those"?	2
Session11	- Shall I say "patient" to refer to the person who is sick - Shall I put a coma before also or full stop? -Shall I write disappoint with double "p" -Shall I say "another reason" to move to another idea.	4
Session12	- Shall I say English channel? -Shall write programme with double "m"	4

	-Shall I say "categories of society"?	
	-Shall I use the modifier always before or after "reinforce"	
Total number	306 words	

Mira

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-How to say طقوس in English? -How to say فاخرة in English? -Is the word " sari" correct	3
Session2	-We write beneficial with "e" or "I"? - Should I write "don't" or "do not" because it is an academic writing	2
Session3	-We say "life" or "lives" with plural nouns ⇒ (people make their "life" or "lives" have a sense - Should I say " a lot of free time" or "much free time"	2
Session4	- Does the last sentence represent result? -Should I use "doing" or "having" in doing a hobby is a way to avoid boredom.	2
Session5	-Shall I say "people who" or "people whom" - can the phrase "pay no heed to" replace the verb "neglect"	2
Session6	-Shall I say "listening music" or "listening to music" -Shall I say "for practising" or "to practise"	2
Session7	-Shall I write "include" or "conclude" -Shall I say "determined" or "fixed"	2
Session8	-Shall I say "things that are distracted" or "distractive"	1
Session9	-Shall I write "diabetes" or "diabets"	1
Session10	/	0
Session11	-With what shall I replace the word "patient" -Shall I say "may enter coma" or "may enter to coma"	2
Session12	/	0
Total number	178 words	

Anfal

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-how to write "toure Ifel" in English?	1
Session2	-I think that the topic sentence is no good. - I think that the word that I use is not the correct to speak about the benefits of hobbies -when the teacher sepecifies I can't write. I can't exprime what he need and found myself out of the subject.	3
Session3	-shall I say unimportant thing or unimportance thing? -shall say the pronoun "you" or I can use people?	2
Session4	- can I say preserve a time or keep time ?	1
Session5	/	0
Session6	-shall I say give some solution to this problem or find some solution ? -shall I say solution to this problem is to have or no?	2
Session7	/	0
Session8	- Shall I say "the less concentration in exam" ?	1
Session9	/	0
Session10	/	0
Session11	- I use person but I think that he didn't have a meaning	2

	-When I say person and I want to use the pronoun "him, her" which shall I use?	
Session12	/	0
Total number	155 words	

Yasmine

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-How to start such TP ste? -major details are a lot To see and discover the city of light "newyork" and other state/cityes -it is right to say and also in the same time	3
Session2	-can we say "practising"? -"have new, several discussion" is this correct, -can we say "making release"?	3
Session3	-How can we use the wright tense-mixture of tenses? -can we say get an amount of fun?	2
Session4	-can we say: increasing the self esteam? -I did't find the exact verb so I changed it with "loosing".can i? -can we get enough of just one recommendation?	3
Session5	-we say: gaining seight or weight gaining?	1
Session6	-easlly or easly? -necessaty? Can we say it? -practising or practicing?	3
Session7	/	0
Session8	-can we put a comma here "that students face and, it can overcome….?	1
Session9	-can we say: increase immunity? -the variety of substances?	2
Session10	-when we say "in the other hand" we have to in the begining "in one hand"?	1
Session11	Can we say a deadly desease?	1
Session12	-can we say: "financial elements"? -I am not sure of my last argument, can I provide a negative argument in such paragraph?	2
Total number	180 words	

Khouloud

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-How to do the introductory sentence. -Where I should put the punctuation marks	2
Session2	-Is my topic sentence good or not? -The spelling of opportunity is true or false	2
Session3	-If my explanation of the quotation good or not -If the spelling of the verb lose true or false -If my sentence "so they have ……kill their routine" coherent or not. -If this sentence "having a hobby is a chance ….benifit has a relation with the previous ones?	4
Session4	-Shall I say "work" or "working"? -Is the word disappearance true or false? -Is my recommendation true or false	3
Session5	-Is my topic sentence true or false?	3

	-Is the spelling of practising true or false.	
	-Is the spelling of colistirol true or false?	
Session6	-Shall I put a comma here?	1
Session7	-I want to change the word revise by another one but I can't find?	1
Session8	-Shall I put the auxiliary "to be" before messy or not.	3
	- Iwant to change the word organizer by another word but I can't find	
	-Should I say the home or home	
Session9	/	0
Session10	-The spelling of divide true or false?	4
	- The spelling of difficult true or false?	
	-Is there any combination in this sentence?	
	-I want to change the word module by another but I can't find?	
Session11	- The spelling of patients true or not?	4
	-Is my 3 arguments are strong or not.	
	-I want to change the word patient by another one but I can't find.	
	- The spelling of treatment true or not	
Session12	-Is my argument strong or not?	3
	-Shall I write very amuse or very amusing?	
	- Is my argument strong or not?	
Total number	265 words	

Afnane

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-Do I use the appropriate quantifiers to organize my ideas?	3
	-Do I use the punctuation correctly?	
	-Do I list my ideas in the correct orderthat my teacher said, or do I put a god and convinced reason that why I want to visit such a country?	
Session2	-Does my topic sentence is effective?	4
	-Is the spelling of the word "remoove" right or wrong.	
	-Is there a link between my three ideas	
	-Is the verb "are enjoying" conjugated in the wright form.	
Session3	-Do I give the exact meaning of Logan's quote?	4
	-Is my repeatition of some words such as "time" is wrong?	
	-Is my thesis statement general?	
	-Shall I add details to this introduction or my previous details are sufficient?	
Session4	-Do I use the technique of "making a recommendation" in the right way.	4
	-Shall I wright (we are interesting with) or (we are interested with)? Or other expression.	
	-Must I wright "the" with spare time or not.	
	-Is my conclusion too short?	
Session5	-I couldn't give other ideas to the notes you give us.	1
Session6	-Shall I write "it help to reduce" or "it help in reducing.	1
Session7	-Shall I write "then spread it" all use another word instead of "spread"	2
	-Wich word can I replace instead of "prepare" to avoid repetition.	
Session8	-Shall I put "and" to combine with two these sentences: "one biggest…lack of concentration and to solve that" or the comma is right?	4
	-does stress considered as a problem to students or not? Because some students when they start to revise too late, and they find many lesson, they feel stress!	
	-Shall I write tv in capital letter?	
	-shall I put a comma before because in "student should avoid stress, because …"	

Session		number
Session9	-I don't know how to say the word " يعرض "d in English.	2
	-did I use the contrast expressions in a correct way.	
Session10	-can I criticize a category in a paragraph or essay?	1
Session11	-Can we use the time sequencers when giving the arguments?	1
Session12	-Are my criteria evaluated?	1
Total number	326 words	

Rahaf

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-How to say العثمانية الدولة in English?	2
	-How to distinguish between order of importance and chronological order?	
Session2	-can you tell me about the effective and ineffective sentence and how to distinguish between them?	2
	-I don't understand when you give us a subject to talk about it and write an essay about what write the previous homework.	
Session3	-I'm not good at spelling how to avoid this problem?	4
	-I find a difficult in getting the ideas.	
	-is the thesis statement in the introduction of an essay as the topic sentence	
	-I don't understand providing a summary introduction well and also for conclusion point out the value or signcance of the essay subject.	
Session4	-is the word "interesting" correct?	1
Session5	-can in write give rise to stress as my paragraph?	1
Session6	/	0
Session7	-is the word "nearers" correct?	3
	-can I use comma in the first sentence?	
	-please Madam, can you repeat the last course we don't attend	
Session8	/	0
Session9	/	0
Session10	/	0
Session11	-am I correct when I put have in the first sentence or I must put "suffer" better?	2
	-It is better to write forgive or forgiveness.	
Session12	/	
Total number	178 words	

Douaa

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-How can I start beging my paragraph?	1
Session2	-why I am always find difficulties about how I start?	6
	-how I can avoid my punctuation errors and also grammatical.	
	-I think when I write in my mind always I think in arabic.	
	-I'am always think that my words Is incorrect and they don't have meaning.	
	-when I write I forget the rules and I think, I am just write	
	-I write always directly on the paper without using first draft.	
Session3	-shall I say have a good hobbies or having a good hobbies?	5
	-can I say wastages time or wastage your time.	
	-can I say sinple solution or sinply solution.	
	-can I say aquires benefits and positive things	
	-how can I omit the stress when the teacher	
Session4	-can say should or must.	2

	-can I say the hobbies or hobbies	
Session5	/	0
Session6	/	0
Session7	-can I say consider or considered And sugges or suggested?	1
Session8	/	0
Session9	-can I say full or stuff?	1
Session10	-can I say without annoy or annoyance?	1
Session11	-can I say who carring? -can I say authers / auther? -can I say it is perfect orpreferabl	3
Session12	-can I say TV channel which that or that? -can I say intested me or intrest me?	2
Total number	197 words	

Nour

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-Is the topic sentence effective -Is a good title "Turkish" -Shall I put commer after "in addition" -Is spelling correct	4
Session2	-A person who has a hoby (we say is more confident or mor confidence) ? - we can say discovering new relationship or we prefer to say make a connection with others? -How we write "safition"? -am I sure about the conjugation of the verbs? -Is the topic sentence in my paragraph good?	5
Session3	-Shall I say they must protect or they should protect? -shall I put commer or ; after "in addition to that"? -shall I say to be happy in his life or to be happy in life?	3
Session4	-Shall i say have a hobby or practice a hobby ? -Shall I put commer after "everyone" at the last line?	2
Session5	-Is my topic sentence effective ? -shall I say increase by obesity? -shall I put commer before because?	3
Session6	-Is the spelling of the word « twice » is correct? -Shall I say "a healthy" with article "a"? - I am not sure about the verb "mouve" writing by "ou" or "o"?	3
Session7	-How we call a person who have party ? -shall I replace "person" by "you"?	2
Session8	-Shall I use (who) after students have… ? - I think that my last sentence have a mistake but I don't know where?	2
Session9	-shall I say eating « unhealthy food » or I have to write healthy eating habits ?	1
Session10	-Shall I say "alone" or "lonely"?	1
Session11	-May I use must or "replaced" by "should" ?	1
Session12	Is it correct when I say "it show us important themes" or it's better to replace show by "bring" or something else ?	1
Total number	275 words	

Zina

Session	Annotation	number
Session1	-I am not sure about punctuation. -I am not sure about the order of the ideas. -I am not sure about the sentences I think there is many sentences. -problem in the paragraph. -I think I did not use enough details. -I think I have many speeling mistakes.	6
Session2	-I think that my topic sentence is very large -I am not sure of the speling of the word "competition" -I am not sure about the time of the verbs that I used. -I think that I reapeted many words in many times	4
Session3	-shall I use the artical "an"or "a" before the word "apstract" -I am not sure about the spelling of the word "apstract" -shall I use the verb "see" or "observe" -shall I use "to them" or no	4
Session4	-shall I use discovering. or discover. -shall I use belies or hide. -shall I use a period or (,) before By doing so…..	3
Session5	-shall I use the artical "an" before other -shall I use: " I used to, or, I'am…… -shall I use : "who is too fate" or "who is suffring from overweight"	3
Session6	-shall I use the artical "a" before very -shall I use (,) before "that" -shall I use "facing" or "suffring" -shall I use: "they do not practise theme" or "they do not aware about their effect"	4
Session7	-shall I use the verb : "is" or "are"	1
Session8	-shall I use (,) before it	1
Session9	-shall I use the word "debases" or "reduces"	1
Session10	-shall I use (,) before "is students"	1
Session11	-shall I use the word: "coincidently" -shall I use the comma between "to told him" and "because"	2
Session12	-shall I use the comma after "also". -shall I use the comma instead of repeating "and"	2
Total number	281 words	

Appendix O: Post-study Questionnaire

Control group

Dear students,

This questionnaire aims at understanding the students' perceptions of the writing skill in general, and their ability to correct their own errors when revising their works in particular. We kindly request that you complete the following short questionnaire by putting a tick (✔) near the appropriate answer or by making a full statement if necessary. The information you provide will be of great help to the researcher.

Your name will not appear in the research or be kept in any other records. All data and information obtained from this research tool will be coded and stored confidentially. Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

Item 1

After the second semester,

- I feel more confident about correcting my own mistakes

- I feel less confident about correcting my own mistakes

- No change in my confidence occurred

Item 2

Order the following actions from the most to the least difficult:

- To detect the errors in one's text without the teacher's clues

- To detect the errors in one's text with the teacher's clues

- To identify the type of the error

- To provide a correct form for the error

Item 3

Choose the statement that matches your opinion

- I think I will always need the help of the teacher to notice and correct my errors.

- I think I can learn to notice and correct my errors by following some strategies.

Item 4

Choose the statement that matches your perception

- Self correction is more complicated than I thought

- Self correction is easier than I thought

- My opinion has not changed; I still find it complicated

- My opinion has not changed; I still find it easy

Item 5:

After the semester,

- My writing ability has changed

- My writing ability has not changed

how?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Item 6:

Indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement

My writing ability has improved after the second semester.

-Strongly Disagree

-Disagree

-Neutral

-Agree

-Strongly Agree

Item 7:

Indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:

I think the teacher's role is to teach me how to correct my errors instead of correcting them all the time.

-Strongly Disagree

-Disagree

-Neutral

-Agree

-Strongly Agree

Item 8:

Choose the statement that corresponds to your opinion

- The teacher has to **mark** all my errors and **provide the correct forms**

- The teacher has to **mark** some of my errors and **provide the correct forms**

-The teacher has to **mark** my errors, and **I correct them** by myself

- The teacher has to **give some clues** so that **I find** the errors and **correct** them by myself

Item 9:

After the semester,

- My use of the dictionary has increased.

- My use of the dictionary has decreased.

- My use of the dictionary has stayed the same.

Item 10:

After the semester,

- My revision of grammar rules has increased.

- My revision of grammar rules has decreased.

- My revision of grammar rules has   stayed the same.

Item 11:

Write what you liked and what you disliked about each of the following

- Teacher feedback

……..

……..

- Peer feedback

……..

……..

-   Self-correction

……..

……..

Thank you for your kind assistance

Experimental group

Dear students,

This questionnaire aims at understanding the students' perceptions of the writing skill in general, and their ability to correct their own errors when revising their works in particular. We kindly request that you complete the following short questionnaire by putting a tick (✓) near the appropriate answer or by making a full statement if necessary. The information you provide will be of great help to the researcher.

Your name will not appear in the research or be kept in any other records. All data and information obtained from this research tool will be coded and stored confidentially. Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

Item 1

 After the second semester,

- I feel more confident about correcting my own mistakes

- I feel less confident about correcting my own mistakes

- I feel more confident about correcting my own mistakes

Item 2

Order the following actions from the most to the least difficult:

- To detect the errors in one's text without the teacher's clues

- To detect the errors in one's text with the teacher's clues

- To identify the type of the error

- To provide a correct form for the error

Item 3

Choose the statement that matches your perception

- I think I will always need the help of the teacher to notice and correct my errors.

- I think I can learn to notice and correct my errors by following some strategies.

Item 4

Choose the statement that matches your perception

- Self correction is more complicated than I thought

- Self correction is easier than I thought

- My opinion has not changed; I still find it complicated

- My opinion has not changed; I still find it easy

Item 5:

After the semester,

- My writing ability has changed

- My writing ability has not changed

how?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Item 6:

Indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:

My writing ability has improved after the second semester.

-Strongly Disagree

-Disagree

-Neutral

-Agree

-Strongly Agree

Item 7:

Indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:

I think the teacher's role is to teach me how to correct my errors instead of correcting them all the time.

-Strongly Disagree

-Disagree

-Neutral

-Agree

-Strongly Agree

Item 8:

Choose the statement that matches to your perception

- The teacher has to **mark** all my errors and **provide the correct forms**

- The teacher has to **mark** some of my errors and **provide the correct forms**

-The teacher has to **mark** my errors, and **I correct them** by myself

- The teacher has to **give some clues** so that **I find** the errors and **correct** them by myself

Item 9:

After the semester,

- My use of the dictionary has increased.

- My use of the dictionary has decreased.

- My use of the dictionary has stayed the same.

Item 10:

After the semester,

- My revision of grammar rules has increased.

- My revision of grammar rules has decreased.

- My revision of grammar rules has   stayed the same.

Item 11:

Write what you liked and what you disliked about each of the following

-Reading a text before writing

……...
……...

- Writing marginal annotations

……...
……...

- Filling in the list of most common errors (error log)

……...
……...

-Self-correction (with and without the teacher's clues.)

……...
……...

Thank you for your kind assistance

Appendix P: Post study Interview Questions

1- How did you perceive the impact of the experiment period?

2- How do you perceive the effectiveness of each technique/strategy used in the

experiment?

a) Error log

b) Self-corrections with and without clue

c) Exposure to typographically enhanced texts

d) Marginal annotations

e) Teacher feedback to your queries

3- When comparing your first writings with your last ones, do you see a difference?

4- What is a good piece of writing according to you? What determines the quality of a

piece of writing according to you?

5- Do you think the effects of the experiment can last for a long time?

6- What can you, as students, do to reduce dependence on the teacher?

Appendix Q: Post-Study Students' Interview Transcription

1- How do you perceive the impact of the experiment period generally speaking?

Rym: beneficial.

Yasmine: great, (teacher: this is very emotional; can you use a more precise adjective) interesting, not boring.

Melissa: very helpful

Bassima: motivating especially the marginal annotations. If I can use a smiley, it is a face with smile ☺

Thelili: innovative.

Hala: efficient

Rukaya: beneficial. The experience helped me a lot to open my mind and see my errors with great view not like before.

2- How do you perceive the effectiveness of each technique/strategy used in the experiment?

a) Error log. What about the list of most frequent errors was it a waste of time to spend few moments putting ticks in boxes?

Thelili: no. it made me discover my frequent errors and the kind of error I tend to make most

Bassima: it was very beneficial. It made us recognise our mistakes. Because when you know your weaknesses, you will focus on those aspects closely while writing.

Hala: it helped me to know the type of mistakes I tend to make most

Thelili: for me I realised that I use wrong words very often

Bassima: for me, it is capitalisation and spelling

Rukaya: at first, it seems boring and thought I don't need to know the name of my errors, but later on it was good tip to have general view of our errors.

Hala: though it is useful at given stage, I think it will be a waste of time if we keep using it. They are beneficial but only at early stages. I think that we should have used it only at the two first stages. For the third it is a waste of time.

b) Self-corrections with and without clue. What did you think and how did you react when your teacher first corrected your errors?

before

Thelili: liked enjoyed the dependence on the teacher

Rukaya: I felt that I was totally dependent on the teacher and I realised how my background knowledge is limited.

Hala: I liked the idea of having someone to identify my errors

now

Hala: I am not totally independent but moreorless I still feel the need to be guided but not as much as in the beginning

Rukaya: now I realise that it is very important.

Would you answer honestly this question. Have you felt disappointed when I first asked you to use the clues and correct the errors.

Melissa: I felt afraid and disappointed

Bassima: it was a burden, a punishment

Rym: (interferes) but it was beneficial later on

Rukaya: I liked the idea even before. I thought this is an opportunity to correct my own mistakes. I thought that at that time I had a sufficient background that can help me correct my errors.

Thelili: I felt incapable of correcting my errors because only the teacher can do this. But I changed my mind later on.

Hala: surprised and disappointed. Not very long after, I started accepting the idea.

What if we didn't move through that step, and I directly asked you to correct errors at the first phase?

Rym: it would be harder.

Bassima: may be we could have noticed some of the mistakes, but only those minor ones like capitalisation punctuation…

Melissa: we were lost at the beginning, but with practice we ….

Rym: it would be harder. Because it is though the first phase that we learnt to notice our frequent mistakes through the use of the table.

Other students agree

Bassima: you made us read again and again our paragraphs (something we were not doing at the beginning of the year

Rym: read with a critical eye

Rukaya: it was like a challenge

Hala: I still feel stuck in this phase

Rym: it is reading different drafts that made us realise that we can notice

Teacher: are you convinced now that you need more than one draft

Thelili: before I was worried of making more errors while trying to correct the already existing errors. Now I feel that it is possible for me to correct

Hala: the comparison between my first draft and what I am capable of writing. The programme increased my noticing abilities.

Many students think that when they are asked to correct they find that everything is correct how can he notice an error

Hala: of course no one is admitting that he is making mistakes. Everyone thinks that he has produced a perfect piece of writing. One way can be to get them correct their classmates errors because noticing the others errors is easier than noticing one's own.

c) Exposure to typographically enhanced texts

if the text was not graphically enhanced(including bold face circling underlining) would there be a difference?

Rym: yes of course they helped us notice better elements in the text

Bassima: for example structure was easier to understand when the major details were enhanced ; sometimes we tend to imitate what you gave us to write our paragraphs

Rym: especially the elements that help distinguish between different patterns

Teacher: what will you do now that the teacher will not give you texts anymore?

Bassima: we have to read and look for texts in

Teacher: these are texts composed by the teacher for a purpose. You will not find similar texts in the net

Rym: it will be difficult. With the enhanced text, we notice things from the first reading, but with the others we have to read and reread until we notice

Can you compare between the way you used to read before the second semester program and after

Rukaya: now as we read, we pay attention to the form of the sentence

Yasmina: before, it was a quick reading

Rukaya: for pleasure

Lylia: I used to read just to understand something

Bassima: I used to read in order to get the general idea without paying attention to small details

Hala: read to answer possible questions; general idea

Bassima: now I focus on the grammatical side, grammar, and especially punctuation

Rukaya: I pay attention to types of sentences and try to know whether it is simple, complex…

Thelili: techniques used to move from one sentence to another

Lylia: I try to focus on both sides content and form

Teacher: is it possible to claim that typographically enhanced texts improved our way of reading

Total agreement from students

d) Marginal annotations. What was the attitude of each of you at earlier stages and now? Start with the describing the case before.

Bassima: it was so hard to focus on two things at the same time. We were asked to organise ideas , and write the questions

Rym: it required efforts

Hard difficult

Bassima: and sometimes we were embarrassed to ask questions that we considered silly

Rym: Because even when having a question in our minds, we were busy focussing on generating ideas and writing a perfect paragraph, we didn't find a way to express those ideas

Thelili: I was very happy right from the start because I had someone to share my concerns and stupid ideas like shall I put a comma or a full stop here.

Rukaya: it was really difficult to get some questions and write it down, but after I was spontaneously writing my paragraph and think about question fits the situation

Bassima: later, we started asking questions but later we think that we got answers for everything we want to know. For me it became harder to ask questions

Hala: it became spontaneous

Rym: and nisrine: still hard

Bassima: it is easier now to do both at the same time

(nb when students complained of not being able to do it the teacher said you stop each time having a question to ask the teacher. Instead of asking the teacher, write it on the margin)

What was your reaction when you first received the first answers?

Rym: I realised that I was doing too many errors. And some of your answers I already know them(were not new to me)

Bassima: I was happy because I thought that my answers couldn't have such simple answers you simplified the answer

Lylia: I was shocked because of the amount of the errors

Do you consider using this technique even if the teacher will not be reading it and no one will answer your questions?

Hala: no impossible

others: idem

teacher: what about recording one's questions in a notebook to be answered later on at leisure

Thelili: may be this will help me correct my mistakes

Hala: possible, as it will be a kind of confronting one's mistakes, but I tend to be hesitant if no feedback will be received by the teacher

Bassima: I may adopt this technique even if I do not expect an answer ; it can work . I may be writing and some questions arise, I can write them in a copybook so that later I can ask a teacher or search in the books ; having answers for my questions will certainly improve my writing

teacher: how can a number of questions be helpful to you an improve your writing; it is just a number of questions

Hala: they are not going to remain questions ; I will search I will try to find answers and this way I will

teacher: what do you think about her opinion? Do you think she may be right and you may be wrong by thinking that it is useless

Hala: it is not useless, but it is hard to write and not expect anyone to answer

I can confront my errors weaknesses without having them written

Teacher: but when having them recorded somewhere/ written will make things easier for you

Hala: it is better but at the same time it will be a waste of time

e) Teacher feedback to your queries. Having the teacher correcting everything how was your reaction?

Bassima: it took allthe burden off my shoulders. However I took the teachers feedback into consideration

Did those comments and responses provided by the teacher answer accurately all your questions

Bassima: I can say that 80 % of the answers fulfilled my needs. Most of them were convincing

Hala: in 50 % of cases they answered my needs. But they helped me to understand better

Thelili: may be in 70 % of the cases the answers satisfied my needs. I benefitted a lot from what the teacher suggested like expressions more appropriate words…(she means the reformulation)

Do you think that the teacher understands better when I talk to her face to face?

Hala: when she takes them because I formulate my question in a very concise way such as in this example: is it better to say this or this. But when I talk to her I tend to be very talkative; I start speaking and speaking and end up by losing the point I was looking for(inquiring about).

Thelili: for me, it is the opposite. Face to face communications allows me to use gestures or any other means that makes my question explicite

What about feedback, do you think that the quality of classroom/ face to face feedback is more satisfactory than the one obtained on marginal annotations?

Thelili: I still prefer the one received face to face.

Hala: face to face was more helpful to me. But annotations themselves were helpful as they helped understand my questions.(what I am struggling with in my writing)

3- When comparing your first writings with your last ones, do you see a difference?

Rym: a huge difference.

Rukaya: a lot. Because we practised for a long time and we wrote many paragraphs never expected to write before. All that helps student to improve his writing skills.

Other students agree.

4- What is a good piece of writing according to you? What determines the quality of a piece of writing according to you?

Bassima: one that includes complex language, sophisticated vocabulary…

Rym: one that includes varied sentences

Lylia: one that has been produced by going through the steps of the writing process.

Thelili: one in which transitions are used correctly.

Hala: one in which correct English is used including grammar, spelling, and so on.

Rym: the broad criteria against which the piece of writing should be judged are content and form.

To what extent is correctness an important criterion that should be taken into account?

Bassima: on a scale from 0 to 10 it is 7

Other students 5

Bassima: if I understand the meaning, it is OK.

Hala: I do not agree …if the spelling or grammar is not correct this affects the quality of writing even if I understand the idea.

Rym: I think that when the student is evaluated, correctness matters a lot. The worries about the mark may interfere here. Even if the ideas are good the mark will be affected by the amount of errors in the piece of writing.

Rukaya: without doubt, because the reader when he sees many errors in your paragraph, he directly evaluate it badly even if you have strong and good ideas.

Teacher : so you agree that correctness is important but it is not everything.

Is it possible to say that at the beginning of the semester, you had different criteria of what is a good text/ piece of writing

Bassima: yes, and this caused me to make a lot of mistakes. I also wanted (in an enthusiastic way) to make use of my rich vocabulary, which caused me to have a complex style and a high risk to make error. Then I decided to use simpler ideas

5-   What can you, as students, do to reduce dependence on the teacher?

What is in your opinion the right time for students to start being independent of the teacher

Rym: after having a good foundation, after building a strong basement (sic basis) after learning the rules

Lylia: (who agrees with her friends statements) this is possible in all modules and not only in we.

Bassima: he is ready when the teacher helps them understand his weaknesses; once he gets used to it he can work independently. The learner is ready to be independent after he understands his weaknesses; this is only possible after the teachers feedback(a necessary phase of feedback. The teachers' effort is a necessary phase at first to make him recognise his mistakes; that should precede the attempt of making the learner autonomous.

Hala: sometimes it is the teacher who is blamed for causing/ creating dependence, which is a wrong situation and a mistake from the part of the teacher. Their practices lead directly to overdependence on the teacher

Can you give examples

Hala: always correcting his errors

Thelili: the same idea

If I asked you at the beginning of the year the same question would you answer in a similar way

Students

together: We have changed our mind. Before we thought that it is his job to correct errors and this should occur all the time. But now we no longer think so.

Hala: now I start thinking that at the level of university it is essential to rely on ourselves to correct our errors(solve our problems). The situation of dependency is perhaps acceptable at high school and other levels, but in the university we should not be like this

Can you think again of examples of practices that cause dependency

Bassima: he never misses a mistake

Hala: he never ask us to rely on ourselves in correcting mistakes; they never say that we must correct ourselves

Rym: they do not try to oblige students to do this

Hala: they do not try to make students confident. Now I feel more confident

what caused you to feel more confident

Rym: each time you tell us try try. What boosted our confidence is when you asked us to try and to ask the teacher when we fail to solve the problematic situations; regular practice was so importance to create this confidence

Hala: I think that the three phases were helpful to us because they were step by step(sic)

do you think that you could have reached the same satisfactory(for you at least) results if the order of the phases has been reversed

all students: no

Bassima: you were correcting our mistakes and giving us feedback ; and when we write we take that feedback into consideration, so we pay attention to our mistakes. Although we were not able to correct our mistakes at that time, we paid attention to our mistakes because we were taking the feedback into consideration. We tried to apply what you told us in the feedback. We discovered other mistakes and that improved us. Although at the beginning we were not able, but you feedback made us notice and pay more attention not to write in the wrong way

Rym: the feedback made us notice the most frequent mistakes so that we do not repeat them in the future

* So you think that the teacher's feedback should not have the objective of creating dependency?

All students : yes

 So what is this objective?

Rym: to make us notice the errors so that we do not do them again

Hala: now I got rid of60 % of my most common errors. I no more forget to use a capital letter at the beginning. I stopped using capital letters when they are not necessary, in the middle of the sentence; I leave the indentation

Rym: over time the errors are reducing

Hala: one problem that I am happy to get rid of is that I no longer use long sentences. It is safer to write short sentences

Rym: for me it is variety; I use varied sentences. I used to use only simple or complex

We are making sure that the sentences are related to each other

Hala: now I feel more comfortable using simple ideas. Before I tended to complicate things/ ideas. When you gave us a topic, I was so enthusiastic about writing a very good piece of writing, so when I wrote with simple language I was not convinced/ satisfied

Again,what is the right time to learn autonomy

Hala: at university

Lylia: after they know their weaknesses

Rym: I do not think that it should start necessarily at the university. A learner can be ready to correct his errors at high school if the right things were done concerning feedback provision by the teacher

So you think that this does not have to do with the level

Rym: no it has to happen after the learner has a solid background that allows him to start correcting his errors. Once they know their weaknesses. I used to write a lot at high school and used to give them to my teacher to be corrected and commented on. At that time he didn't focus on the things we are dealing with now. He focussed on verb tenses on punctuation, capitalisation, spelling. But now we focus on many elements.

Rym: now we focus on both content and form

* If students want to reduce that dependence what should they do?

Bassima: read, read and read more

Rym: dictionaries

Bassima: books

Hala: I do not agree. I don't think that reading can be effective. I tend to read a lot but I never pay attention to the form of the sentence. I used to read just to understand the idea or the story; but lately I discovered it myself

Is it the way of reading which is responsible for the change/ or the desired effect

When I asked you before how you used to read and how to read now , you said you read differently; it is possible that reading alone is not sufficient, but if reading is combined with something else it can be effective; what is that element / feature that should be there in order to make a difference.

Rym: (interrupting) with attention

Do not tell me that reading was not that beneficial to you because your level is clearly better than many other students

Hala: what I want to say is that now I start to pay attention to the form of the sentence, to how the writer is writing his sentence, the structure the words …

Can I say that reading alone, I mean reading only for meaning, is not sufficient, so you need reading plus what?

Rym: attention

Bassima: reading plus analysis

Hala: not attention only but the background.

Rukaya: reading helps a lot students because it helps to give students the general idea how paragraph must be. Also, it's a good way for developing writing skill.

Your case is perhaps different as you stopped one year before you resume the second year. This may caused you to forget the basics that you have learnt in second year, which is why you insist on having a background

Hala: I even didn't attend regularly in first year

Bassima: what is noticeable is that we tend to make efforts to get our children read a lot since their early age, we make less effort to make them write. They are asked to read just for entertainment they are not involved in any sort of analysis, this is why they don't know how to write.

Do you mean that reading and writing complete each other

Bassima: yes. Because obviously every writer must have read a lot. But not everyone who reads a lot is able to write.

What else do you suggest to get rid of dependence on the teacher

Rym: use dictionaries, grammar books

Lylia: to have a knowledge about the rules

Rym: practice

Bassima: try to apply every new thing that you learn

Hala: and write a lot of drafts, and keep correcting those drafts

When I asked some students whether the use of dictionaries has increased or decreased, few said that it had decreased because they were confused about some words and now thet know them. So they no longer need the dictionaries

Lylia: (seemingly/ apparently misunderstanding the remark) for me the way I use the dictionary has changed a lot. Before, I cared only about the meaning, but now I want to know whether it is a noun , verb, adverb, adjective …

Bassima: for me it has not changed

Rym: you insisted everytime to use the dictionary instead of giving us directly the answer

Hala: although you knew the meaning you wanted us to read the one we found ourselves

Lylia: even when looking for a word, you may find a word that interests you, so you try to learn this as well

A student told me that I have learnt all the words

Bassima: (Laughs) you can never know all the words

Hala: it can be true when I look for some words that I misspell, but once I know how it is spelled

Other students together agreed with the idea of learning spelling, and added that for meaning it can't happen because we always need to learn more words. It is open ended no limits can be set for the knowledge of vocabulary

Lylia: we need to use new words every time instead of overusing only few.

6- Do you think the effects of the experiment can last for a long time?

When I asked you to compare between your first writing and your last writing you said that you sensed

Rym: (interrupting) a huge difference

Do you think that the difference could exist even without the treatment/ the experience you have been through? You have been studying for a whole academic year and you have seen a lot of texts, you have been exposed to the teachers' talk from which you can learn. You learn from reading, from the lectures that you have been summarising. Do you think that improving one ability to write is normal without being through the study programmes.

Rym: of course the progress and the change can be related to programme because if it were because of other reasons it could have happened a long time ago not necessarily now, especially with essay patterns etc.….

But all the groups studied different patterns not only you. You have been given the same programme (the teacher explained the difference between their programme and the control group's)

Rym: What we have been…

Thelili: absolutely

Hala: a small thing may change a lot of things….

Do you think that the effects of this experiment can have long term effects or may be they can last only for a short time

Rukaya: yes, I am not passing complements but really it was good experience that had a really good effect to students not only in written expression, but also in other modules.

Bassima: and nisrine: it will be effective for a long time provided that students keep practising and writing regularly.

Bassima: students are supposed to become teachers. We have to carry on writing. But if we will have another plan that does not involve writing, we will lose this ability / skill

Hala: to keep writing and keep searching for new mistakes. May be now I am not aware about this mistake, but next year I will notice it; to keep searching for the weaknesses. This applies to me. Before I was not aware that was writing capital letters where they should not occur and writing them in the wrong place, but now even in the computer I am aware.

Bassima: I do not think that we could have improved our abilities if we have studied in another way or love writing. Now we love writing

Rym: now it is fixed in our minds to try to use correct English.

Bassima: at the beginning I didn't believe that practice makes perfect; how writing 30 paragraphs can be … . Now since I applied it I really believe that it is true. I remember that we used to complain at the beginning from being obliged to write a paragraph each time, but now we are noticing that it is paying off.

Students agree with her and mention the point of revising one' earliest writings to conclude that practice can be a good way to be more independent.

Teacher: thank you for your participation.

Students: thank you for the efforts you made.

Résumé

Pour aider les apprenants à améliorer la qualité de leurs productions écrites, il est nécessaire de développer leurs stratégies de l'écrit et de promouvoir l'apprentissage autonome de cette habileté. Cette étude quasi-expérimentale examine l'efficacité de l'autocontrôle et l'autocorrection à améliorer la qualité de la production écrite des apprenants, d'une part ; et à développer l'autonomie en termes de révision, d'autre part. Pour cet objectif, 90 étudiants au niveau du département de l'anglais à l'université de Mohamed Lamine Debbaghine Sétif2 ont été choisis au moyen d'un échantillonnage proportionnel stratifié pour former un groupe expérimental et un autre témoin. Une approche de méthodes mixtes a été adoptée afin de répondre aux questions de recherche. Un pré-test / post-test et des questions fermées d'un questionnaire ont été utilisés pour recueillir et analyser statistiquement les données quantitative afin d'évaluer d'éventuel efficacité de l'intervention. L'analyse inductive du corpus des paragraphes, des annotations marginales, et des questions ouvertes du questionnaire a également visé l'évaluation des effets de l'intervention. Les résultats obtenus ont démontré une amélioration de la qualité des productions écrites des participants et une baisse du nombre d'erreurs. L'étude a également révélé que l'autocontrôle au cours de la production écrite a promu l'autonomie. Les données quantitatives du questionnaire n'ont pas révélé des différences signifiantes en termes des perceptions des participants sur l'efficacité de l'intervention. Par contre, les données qualitatives du questionnaire et de l'entretien ont montré une amélioration concernant l'usage de la réflexion et la localisation des faiblesses. La recommandation principale de cette étude incite les enseignants à aider les apprenants à prendre plus de responsabilité lors de la révision des productions écrites.

ملخص

تتطلب مساعدة الطلبة على تحسين نوعية و قدرات التعبير الكتابي لديهم تطوير إستراتيجيات الكتابة و تنمية التعلم المستقل لهذه المهارة. تهدف هذه الدراسة الشبه تجريبية لاختبار فعالية المراقبة الذاتية و التصحيح الذاتي على تحسين نوعية الكتابة و تنمية الاستقلالية في ما يخص المراجعة. لهذا الهدف ثم اختيار عينة طبقية نسبية تتمثل في 90 طالب من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد لمين دباغين سطيف2. قسمت هذه العينة الى مجموعتين إحداهما تجريبية و الأخرى ضابطة. للإجابة على أسئلة البحث اتبعت الدراسة منهجا يضم أساليبا كمية و كيفية لجمع و تحليل المعطيات. تم اختبار فعالية التجربة بواسطة قياس قبلي و بعدي و أسئلة مغلقة من الإستبيان. كما ساعد التحليل الإستقرائي لمجموعة الفقرات و مجموعة الملاحظات الهامشية و إجابات الأسئلة المفتوحة للإستبيان و المقابلة على تقييم فعالية التجربة. بينت نتائج الدراسة تحسن في نوعية كتابة الفقرة و انخفاض في نسبة الأخطاء. أظهرت النتائج أيضا بأن المراقبة الذاتية خلال الكتابة تنمي الإستقلالية. المعطيات الكمية للإستبيان لم تخرج بفروقات دالة فيما يخص رؤية الطلبة لفعالية التجربة إلا ان المعطيات الكيفية بينت تحسنا في التفكير و تشخيص نقاط الضعف. التوصية الأساسية لهذا البحث تحث الأساتذة على مساعدة المتعلمين لتحمل مسؤوليات أكبر خلال مراجعة نصوصهم المكتوبة.