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Department of English Language and Literature**

# **Thesis**

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## **Doctorat En–Sciences**

in Psychopedagogy and Foreign Language Teaching

by: **Samra CHOUBANE**

### **THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION WRITING WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE**

**A Case Study: Second Year Students at the English Department,  
Ferhat Abbes University**

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**2014**



# ***DECLARATION***

*I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.*

*Date :*

*Signed :*



# DEDICATION

*I dedicate this thesis to the soul of my lovely father, Dad, and Mum who greatly shaped my life and always dreamt to see me a PhD holder.*

*To my dear parents whom I owe my success. They always encouraged a love of learning in and expected the best of me.*

*To my lovely sisters and my brother Khalifa who have truly waited anxiously and patiently for the moments of my success.*

*To my best friends who have helped me even with a smile.*

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## ABSTRACT

Writing is a productive skill that is extremely complex cognitive activity, including many variables which are required to be demonstrated such as: content, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling. However, many difficulties may face both learners in doing tasks and teachers while teaching them writing compositions. In the present research, we aim at describing a situation of some Algerian University teachers, by exploring the way they teach compositions to EFL learners with reference to grammatical competence. Moreover, because writing is a complex and challenging activity for many students, written expression teachers focused on the grammatical concepts that are really essential to reach clear communication of meaning. One important result we could achieve through our analysis is that grammar instruction which is separate from writing instruction cannot improve students' writing competence. Another important finding is that written expression teachers employed various strategies to teach grammar in the context of writing. Such strategies could help students to see grammatical concepts as choices that can enhance their writing purpose. Students soon grew more receptive to revising, editing, and proofreading their writing. By incorporating grammar terms naturally into the processes of revising, editing, and proofreading, written expression teachers could help their students understand and apply grammar purposefully to their own writing. Strategies such as partnership writing, grammar mini- lessons, and peer response groups are all valuable methods for integrating grammar into writing compositions. Finally, grammar is a skill to be taught. It should examine three roles in EFL education. First, it is used as an enabling skill that enables competence to develop especially in the area of writing. Second, as a motivator that is; when our students express a desire to learn grammar, most teachers naturally respond by trying to provide what students want. So both students as well as teachers are motivated. Third, grammar can be a means to self-sufficiency, i.e. grammar instruction assists our students in becoming aware of a structure and corrects their own mistakes. The ability to self-correct leads to self-sufficiency. Regardless of their proficiency level or goals, almost all students can benefit from learning English grammar.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FB: Feedback

L1: Native language

L2: Second Language

PFB: Peer Feedback

SS: Students

TT: Teachers

TFB: Teacher Feedback

WET: Written Expression Teacher

WETs: Written Expression Teachers

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Introduction

Classrooms are usually conducive to provide learners with speaking and writing opportunities. Foreign languages writing is an essential strand in language teaching and learning that is tightly interwoven with three other strands: Reading, Listening, and Speaking. In most people's mind, written language has somehow more importance and authority than spoken language, since the latter is full of false starts and hesitations as Chomsky's Generative Grammar has proved. The writing skill then has gained a significant status, since it is a very interesting area that has attracted many researchers investigating the teaching of writing compositions or the teaching of grammar through writing, in particular. In this respect, Van Lier (1995) said: "*The spoken language is seen as less structured, less neat and tidy, less sophisticated and complex*" (p 87).

This may lead us to base our research on writing, rather than speaking, since the former is more inclusive. Writing is originally based on speech and predicting areas of difficulties that face learners and resulting in some difficulties that can be analyzed in writing rather than speaking. Following Van Lier's view (1995), "*Speech is lexically sparse, but grammatically complex, and writing is lexically dense, but grammatically simple*" (p 87).

Writing is a productive skill that is extremely complex cognitive activity, including many variables which are required to be demonstrated such as: content, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling. This, in fact, can be both at a sentence level or beyond such level, i.e. the writer must be able to integrate information into coherent paragraphs and texts with correct grammar. However, many difficulties face both learners in writing compositions and teachers while teaching them compositions.

## Aims of the Study

The present research aims at describing a situation of some Algerian University teachers, by exploring the way they teach grammatical concepts through writing compositions to EFL learners and some factors that may affect EFL writing development.

On the other hand, EFL learners' survival in academic settings depends on their ability to write well, because teachers evaluate their students on the basis of their written work. In addition, learners who acquire strong writing skills usually advance academically, whereas those who do not acquire these skills advance more slowly. Our *purpose* is therefore to;

*\* Understand how do EFL teachers instruct the different stages of the writing process.*

*\* Investigate writing classes to explore problems students might face when learning grammar via writing compositions.*

## Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

Based on the works of researchers like Scarcella and Oxford (1992), Clifford (1991), Ur (1996) Hedge (2000), Williams (2003) and Hyland (2003) on writing instruction and writing process, this study may highlight how writing teachers teach students writing compositions, and how they can make writing effective and enjoyable for EFL learners. This research investigates real teaching contexts of grammatical concepts in writing sessions as they occur in second year classes at Setif University in order to be able to explore;

*\*What are the problems that lie behind the students' under-achievement in written productions?* It stems from my twelve years experience in teaching English to Algerian University students.

*\*Why are the students unsatisfied about the teachers' ways of teaching writing?* It stems from students' comments and dissatisfaction outside the classrooms about teachers' ways of teaching writing, in addition to personal observation to other writing classes. All this may lead us to ask many questions that can be researched for, like:

RQ 1: Why do some groups of EFL learners seem to benefit from their writing teachers and enjoy writing compositions more than others? And what are the factors that may affect EFL learners' writing development?

RQ 2: How can EFL learners reach composition writing proficiency?

RQ 3: How do teachers teach grammar in composition writing classrooms?

RQ 4: How can writing teachers create in EFL learners the desire to write compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness?

RQ 5: What are the strategies used by writing teachers to teach grammar in the context of writing compositions?

### **- Hypotheses:**

The research questions could yield the following hypotheses:

1- If teachers use good strategies to reach clear, fluent, and effective communication of ideas to teach grammar in the context of writing composition, they will stimulate students' openness to the teacher, the classmates and even the language itself, and thereby foster success as English learners in general, and improve their achievement in writing compositions in particular.

2- EFL learners would reach composition writing proficiency if they apply grammar knowledge correctly in writing classes.

3- The most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar is to use students' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts.

### **Structure of the Study**

The present *thesis* has *seven* chapters; chapter *one* contains the theoretical background to the study and reviews the related studies that touch upon the present topic. It deals with the teaching of writing and compositions adopting the process of writing. It deals with the approaches to writing, the ways teachers teach writing to EFL learners, models of L1 and L2

Writing, factors affecting the EFL students' written compositions and the sources of error in L2 Compositions.

Chapter *two* deals with the stages of the writing process: drafting, revising, and editing. Grammar instruction can be integrated during those stages. After students have written their first draft and felt comfortable with the ideas and organization of their writing, writing teachers may wish to employ various strategies to help students see grammatical concepts. This chapter also deals with the way to achieve proficiency in writing EFL compositions, Grammar and proficient writing compositions, and Writing proficiency in the Tapestry Approach.

Chapter *three* describes how research is designed, and the procedures used in collecting and analyzing data. Three procedures are adopted: questionnaires, interviews and observation used in the second year classes, aiming at illustrating different ways and strategies used for teaching grammar through writing compositions.

Chapter *four* and *five* deal with the analysis and discussion of the findings obtained from the questionnaires and interviews. They are given to both writing teachers and second year students at the English Department, aiming at illustrating the different responses towards the teaching of grammar through writing compositions and the big role that feedback plays in improving their future writings.

Chapter *six* is concerned with the findings obtained through my observation to the writing class and the various strategies adopted by writing teachers to help their students develop their composition writing. In addition, some pedagogical implications are drawn and suggestions are offered about how to motivate students to write adequately and to enhance learning grammatical concepts through writing compositions. This is explained in the *last* chapter of our research.



# **CHAPTER ONE: THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING;**

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## Introduction

It is worth to start our work with defining writing, as an important skill in teaching English as a foreign language, and then discussing the different approaches that are applied in teaching that skill, focusing on the various obstacles that the learners face when trying to master it in class.

The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments. Writing skills must be practiced and learned through experience. Writing also involves composing, which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or to transform information into new texts, as in e x p o s i t o r y o r a r g u m e n t a t i v e w r i t i n g .

### 1.1. Definition of Writing

Writing is a method used to represent a certain language in visual form. It is the symbolic representation of speech. Emig (1977:123) defines it as: "*Originating and creating a unique verbal construct that is graphically recorded*". For Pincas (1962:125), it is "*a system of graphic symbols, i.e. letters or combinations of letters which relate to the sounds we produce while speaking*". Obviously, the symbolic representation of speech should be combined following certain defined conventions, to create words, clauses, sentences and texts. Being a complex process, for Ghaith(2007): "*It allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. Writing encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection*"

The biggest obstacle that the learners of English as a foreign language face is how to produce a piece of writing that truly, and exactly, respects the conventions of spelling, punctuation, grammaticality and coherence.

## 1.2. Writing as a Dynamic Process

Writing is a process that requires intellectual operations like: thinking, organizing, developing, revising and editing. The writer writes, revises, corrects, then writes again (Emig.1971). For Crowhurst (1988:07), the writing process is: "*The thinking processes that go on during writing*". This is, in a way, a cause of seeing writing as a difficult skill to be mastered.

Moreover, some researchers, like Grabe and Kaplan (1996:06) see writing as: "*a set of skills which must be practiced and learned through practice*"

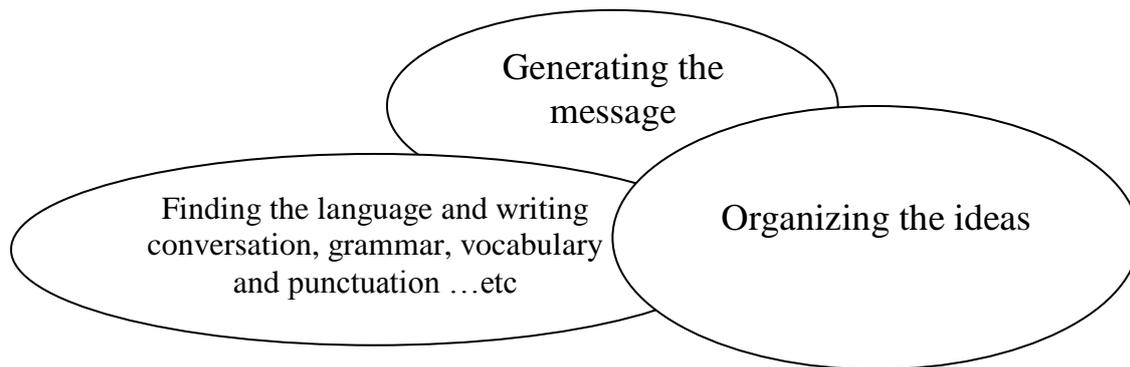
Mastering writing means to be proficient in dealing with grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation, "*Learning to write well is arguably a complex task. Becoming a proficient writer requires experiences that help make the meaning and importance of written communication transparent. Good writing instruction required active involvement and engagement to ensure the joy, pleasure, and value of writing are appreciated*"(Gambrell.2006: xi)

## 1.3. The Importance of Writing

Writing plays an important role in our lives. It is a "communicative tool" to keep ties between people. It has a number of uses and has an important functional role in our lives. The visible form of written language means that it provides ideas and thoughts with a degree of permanence and enables meaning to be conveyed to others or recorded. Thus, writing reflects a life long learning.

## 1.4. The Components of the Writing Process

Many studies were conducted as far as the writing process is concerned. Among them is Clifford (1991). He summarizes the three main competencies of the writing process in the following diagram:



**Figure 1:** The Components of the Writing Process. Marian Clifford (1991, p 41)

Each circle refers to one stage of this process. The first circle refers to the initial stage which is the generation of the message, the topics, content, ideas ...etc. The second circle refers to the organization of the ideas, i.e. the way in which they are sequenced. However, these two circles and what they involve are interrelated. The third circle refers to the principal tools used to convey the message: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation ...etc. This circle is also related to the other two circles, because it is the means through which the message is organized to get the final product. Clifford (1991), through this diagram, attempts *"to give a sense of the interactive dynamic nature of the writing process"*.(p 42)

It is through writing that a writer can discover ideas and new ways to organize them, and this obviously, leads to the research for better more accurate and more effective tools to succeed in convincing the reader and conveying the message as well.

Adopting the Tapestry Approach, Scarcella and Oxford (1992) found that students could develop effective writing strategies. Their study is "process-oriented"; it gives students needed practice in all stages of the writing process including:

**\*Pre-Writing: idea gathering.**

**\* Pre-Writing: information gathering.**

**\* Writing (drafting).**

Pre-writing involves finding a topic, thinking about it in a way that ideas are generated, shaped, refined, and organized. Then, pre-writing includes considering the audience and the purpose of the writing task. Finally, drafting contains writing the words down that express the ideas. Moreover, Gorell (1992) points out that writing is a productive skill in which we take into consideration the wider picture of communicative purpose, content and context of speaker and writer. Communication cannot then only be measured through the spoken language, but also through writing. Gorell (1992) studied writing and argued that in order to be considered as communicative, accurate, fluent, and cohesive, a piece of writing must have a situation which involves: a writer, an audience, and a purpose . This way, "*a communication of an idea from someone to someone, for a purpose*" (Gorell, 1992: p 02) would be possible.

In fact, writing reflects the communicative competence of the learners and in order to write something, we use all our previous knowledge in grammar, vocabulary, and reading. So, writing is an integrated skill. Gorell (1992) found that the learners should know the grammar well, the punctuation, being relevant in their writing. Among the sub skills that Gorell (1992) tested are: coherence (to see if the learner is able to connect sentences), cohesion (to test the unity of the topic), relevance (learners' ability of the use of appropriate context, i.e. to stick to the topic) in addition to punctuation and grammar (to test their knowledge of the rules governing the language used), and the communicative competence (the ability to communicate ideas).

Gorell (1992) concluded that the lack of grammatical competence may hinder meaning, and therefore fail to express ideas in academic context. This goes with Arnold's view (1991): *"Saying that we do not need to teach grammar is like saying that you can have a chicken walking around without bones"*. (p03).

A further study was carried out by Miller(1997). He focused on writing as communication. This is mainly seen in Brazil, exactly in Rio de Janeiro schools, which are well-known because of the quality of teaching, and because of the size of the classes. There were two classes: the first class is a maximum of eight students in the communicative course classes, and the second class of twelve in the general English course classes. In this school, there was an emphasis on speaking, reading and listening, but a great importance was given to "writing" , as it was preferred by them as the communicative competence, i.e. learners after being able to listen, read and speak, they should know how to use these abilities in achieving a successful writing. So, it is noticed that the British Educational System tends to favor the "written" form.

## **1.5. The Functions of Writing**

As a life time skill, writing serves some crucial, enduring purposes for the learner: communication, critical thinking and problem solving, and self-actualization.

### **1.5.1. Writing is an Essential Form of Communication**

As a form of communication writing is used to express ideas, plans, recommendations, values and commitment. For students, writing is a primary medium through which they demonstrate their understanding and interpretation of concepts and theories studied for many weeks or months. Almost all these tasks, though disparate in purpose, invariably require use of the composing skills learned in the composition class.

### **1.5.2. Writing is for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**

Words are the vehicle to express our thoughts, which we then measure against our experience and that of others. The mind is forced to sift through our perceptions and thoughts to establish a pattern of what is meaningful and to help us make some sense of our lives and the world around us. Writing can help us discover gaps in our understanding and flaws in our thinking. It can tell us when we need to gather additional information or insights, when we need to rethink a question, or when we need to discard a belief or idea. Writing becomes a way of defining ourselves and our problems, of clarifying our knowledge and our ideas, of understanding and solving our problems.

### **1.5.3. Writing is for Self-Actualization**

Writing, as a way of discovering and developing ourselves, is a means for self-actualization. What we learn about ourselves and develop within ourselves through writing can help us to realize our individual potential and to achieve personal goals. Therefore, besides being external activity through which we communicate with others, writing also serves our inner selves. Thus, when we write we are also discovering something about who we are and what we believe.

As part of the basic human quest for self-actualization, one immediate goal frequently held by student-writers is success in the academic world. They need to demonstrate their knowledge, their understanding of subject matter and their ability to communicate that knowledge and understanding intelligently to another person. They are required to write reports, research papers, essays and examinations to show that they know and understand the thoughts of others and can synthesize the new knowledge into their own thinking (Hughey et al. 1983). Their success is determined, at least in part, by how efficiently meaning is conveyed. The ability to produce well-written papers will enhance students' academic success.

Thus, student-writers need to have writing skills which enable them to address problems explicitly and concisely.

Research data from second language learning suggest that writing also serves to foster development in other modes of language. For second language learners, writing becomes a means to improve their language skills. As learners seek to present and explain their ideas in writing, they search for precise word choices and suitable structures in which to frame their ideas. Writing enables them to expand other areas as they work to develop fluency in their language. As they search for evidence to support a point of view or position on an issue, their reading skills are enhanced. Through reading, their writing skills are reinforced. They begin to acquire a feel for the readers' expectations which in turn influence each student's composing process (Hughey et al 1983).

Writing fosters and reinforces vocabulary skills as ESL writers endeavor to make suitable word choices for their writing. In addition, the spelling system of English demands that the writers master a wealth of morphological information not required in the speech system (Byrne 1979). Recognition of these morphological structures enables learners to build their vocabularies more quickly as they visualize (picture in their minds) word development. Grammar skills are enhanced as ESL writers make decisions about the form in which to present ideas (Hughey et al 1983). They must apply their knowledge of sentence patterns, frequently visualized as isolated rules, to shape their ideas into acceptable and effective sentences. They actively use knowledge of coordinating and subordinating structures, for example, to emphasize or deemphasize ideas. In so doing, ESL writers put into practice the theoretical information they have been given.

## 1.6. Differences between Writing and Speech

Classrooms are usually conducive to provide learners with speaking and writing opportunities. Writing is essential strand in language teaching and learning that is tightly interwoven with three other strands: Reading, Listening, and speaking. In most people's mind, written language has somehow more importance and authority than spoken language since the latter is full of false starts and hesitations as Chomsky's Generative Syntax has proved. The writing skill then has gained a significant status since it is a very interesting area that has attracted many researchers investigating the teaching of writing compositions in particular.

Therefore, the written and spoken languages differ in many ways. One of the most important differences between them is that writing has to be instructed and taught, as contrary to speech. Raimes (1983) puts that people learn to speak their mother tongue without going to school, whereas they should be taught to write in that language. In this respect, Van Lier (1995) said: *"The spoken language is seen as less structured, less neat and tidy, less sophisticated and complex"*.(P87). This may lead us to base our research on writing rather than speaking since the former is more inclusive. Writing is originally based on speech and predicting areas of difficulties that face learners and resulting some difficulties that can be analyzed in writing rather than speaking.

Furthermore, speaking and writing involve different processes. Brown (1983), however, states that the written language requires an elaborated and dense pack of information at the text level, whereas spoken language is simpler. Following Van Lier's (1995) View, *"Speech is lexically sparse but grammatically complex and writing is lexically dense but grammatically simple."* (p87).

Other differences can be stated:

- Writing is usually permanent and lasting, whereas speech is not always so.

Punctuation is found in writing, never in speech.

- Written language is more regular than spoken language, in the sense that it respects Grammar rules, more appearing in academic contexts.
- Writers receive no immediate feedback from their readers, whereas speech is a shared activity between people and *creates* the feedback.
- Writers can use layout, colors and headings, things never found in speech.
- Writing is deliberate, conscious process, which should be planned and organized but speaking is usually spontaneous activity.

In this respect, Norman Coe and Robin Rycroft (1983) said: “*Writing skills aim to help foreign learners of English to improve their writing of letters, stories, and other texts. Speaking is usually a spontaneous activity, but writing is deliberate, conscious process, which can and should be planned and organized. The various exercises in writing skills are designed to make learners aware of what a well-written text is, and how it is difficult from a series of poorly connected sentences. Having become conscious of the differences, the learners then have the opportunity to practise the skills that are needed in order to write well.*”(p1).

All in all, writing is a productive skill that is extremely complex cognitive activity including many variables which are required to be demonstrated such as: Content, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling. This, in fact, can be both at a sentence level and beyond such level, i.e. the writer must be able to integrate information into coherent paragraphs and texts. However, many difficulties face both learners in doing tasks and teachers while teaching them compositions.

### **1.7. Approaches of Teaching Writing to EFL Students**

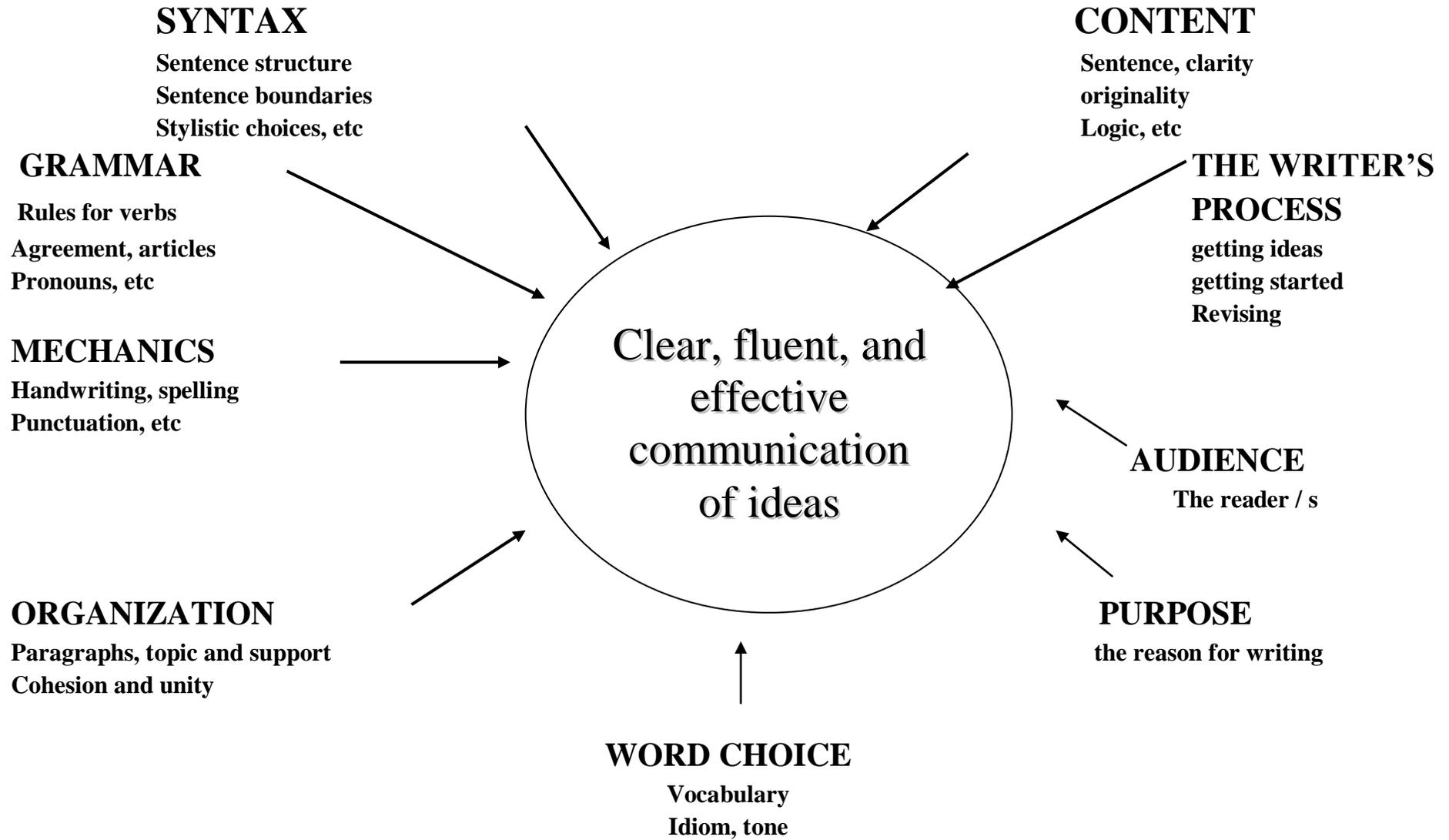
There is no one answer to the question of how to teach writing in EFL classes. There are as many answers as there are teachers and teaching styles, or learners and learning styles. The following figure (Figure 1) shows what writers have to deal with as they produce a piece

of writing. As teachers have stressed different features of the diagram, combining them with how they think writing is learned, they have developed a variety of approaches to the teaching of writing.

### **1.7.1. The Controlled-to-Free Approach**

Controlled composition (sometimes referred to as guided composition) seems to have its roots in Charles Fries's oral approach, the precursor of the audio-lingual method of second language learning. Typically a controlled composition consists of a written model with directions for conversions or specific language manipulations in rewriting the model. The degree of control lies both within the model and within the type of manipulation the student is asked to execute on the model (Paulston and Bruder, 1976).

According to Raimes (1983) the controlled-to-free approach in writing is sequential: students are first given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically by, for instance, changing questions to statements, present to past. With the nature of this type of composition with strictly prescribed operation, it is relatively easy for students to write a great deal yet avoid errors. The text produced by the students becomes a collection of sentence patterns and vocabulary items -a linguistic artifact, a vehicle for language practice.



**Figure 2: Producing a Piece of Writing**

**Source:** Ann Raimés (1983, p. 6). Techniques in Teaching Writing. OUP.

### 1.7.2. The Free -Writing Approach

Some teachers and researchers have stressed the importance of the quantity of writing rather than the quality. They have, that is, approached the teaching of writing by assigning vast amounts of free writing on a given topic with only minimal correction of error. Students need to give vent to their feelings, put across their own ideas and get a feeling of independent achievement in the new language. The major guidelines, then, to procedures dealing with free compositions on this level should be to preserve this sense of achievement by minimizing the possibility for and emphasis on errors. Students on the intermediate and advanced levels need much practice in writing free compositions. Our students write a composition a week, but a more useful guideline is probably to have the students write as many free compositions as the teacher can reasonably correct. (Paulston and Bruder 1976)

To emphasize fluency even more, some EFL teachers begin many of their classes by asking students to write freely on any topic without worrying about grammar and spelling for five or ten minutes. At first, students find this very difficult and end up writing, "*I can't think of anything to write*". As they do this kind of writing more and more often however, some find that they write more fluently and that putting words down on paper is not frightening after all.

### 1.7.3. The Product Approach

" *This is a traditional approach , in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text*"(Steele.2004).It is a form-based approach, i.e. focusing on what is produced, after assigning a writing task to students, then correcting it. The Product Approach to writing focuses on the end result of the act of composition. Here, the aim is to see the correctness and grammaticality of the produced pieces of writing. Teachers can provide support for learners during the composition, in order to avoid mistakes.

Moreover, some writing models are given to be strictly imitated.

The model texts are read, then important features of the target structures are highlighted. After that, students are asked to produce their own writing piece, just copying what was given. The main objective of the Product Approach is accuracy in writing, neglecting students' own freedom to write or communicate.

#### **1.7.4. The Process Approach**

The Process Approach developed as a reaction to the confines of the Product Approach. Rather, it enables learners to clearly decide about their own writing " *by means of discussion, tasks, drafting, feedback, and informed choices [thereby] encouraging students to be responsible for making improvement themselves*" (Jordan.1997:168).

The Process Approach makes the students more creative, imaginative, purposeful, interested in writing on different topics, and personal in their writing. That approach also focuses on the content rather than on the form. Process Approaches to writing focus more on the varied classroom activities which promote the development of language use: brainstorming, group discussion, re-writing (Steele.2004). Within the task, students are given considerable freedom.

There are four stages in writing according to the Process Approach: prewriting, composing/drafting, revising, and editing ( Tribble.1996). These stages are recursive (non linear), and Zamel (1982:206), for example, sees that " *Planning is not a unitary stage but a distinctive thinking process which writers use over and over again during composition*". Flowers and Hayes (1981), however, claim that writers, when re-writing, are trying to anticipate their readers' expectations. Also, Maimon et al (1982:61) see that: " *Successful papers are not written; they are rewritten*".

Process Writing	Product Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Text as a resource for comparison</li> <li>➤ Ideas as starting point</li> <li>➤ More than one draft</li> <li>➤ More global, focus on purpose, theme, text type, i.e., reader is emphasised</li> <li>➤ Collaborative</li> <li>➤ Emphasis on creative process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Imitate model text</li> <li>➤ Organization of ideas more important than ideas themselves</li> <li>➤ One draft</li> <li>➤ Features highlighted including controlled practice of those features</li> <li>➤ Individual</li> <li>➤ Emphasis on end product</li> </ul>

**Table 1:** Comparison between the Product and the Process Approaches

(<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/articles/product-process-writing-a-comparison>)

### 1.7.5. The Genre Approach

Davies(1988) proposes a combination of the product and process approaches, which is the Genre Approach. She claims that the student and the teacher are both concerned with both product and process, respectively.

In defining her approach, Davies (1990:58) says: "*A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes*"

The Genre Approach "strategy" consists of modeling a target genre for the students, then constructing a joint text between the teacher and students, and at last the latter create their own texts. It is a kind of creative writing relying on different genres. The teacher can lead the students to be able to write a joke, a poem, a short story, a biography, a novel, a newspaper article....etc.

## 1.8. Research on Teaching Writing Compositions to EFL Students

If one looks through the literature on the teaching of composition in foreign language classrooms, one finds a multitude of suggestions as to how to teach it. The various approaches are generally based on the personal experiences of the authors and their ideas of what teaching of writing entails. Much can certainly be learned from these experts and methodologies. Thus, the success of a particular method or approach may have been due to a number of factors that are only partially or minimally related to a particular technique, such as the level of intelligence, motivation or affective considerations (Zamel 1976). The point is that without research and some of the answers it can provide, a teacher is faced with the practically impossible task of deciding which approach to adopt.

The literature on the teaching of composition in the second language seems to indicate that there is a consensus as to how writing should be taught: while grammatical exercises are rejected as having little to do with the act of writing, there is, at the same time, a great concern with control and guidance. Despite the agreement that learning to write entails actual practice in writing, this practice is often no more than the orthographic translation of oral pattern practice or substitution drills. There are those that are critical of these pseudo-writing exercises, encouraging the elimination of total control, thus coming closer to identifying what composing is really all about. These, however, are the exception. The majority of approaches emphasize and focus on practices that have very little to do with the creative process of writing.

Traditionally, instruction in Foreign Language composing has assumed that the most important variable, is grammatical accuracy. As Zamel(1976) has described it: *“Methodologists have devised particular exercises which, while not based on learning grammar are in fact based on the grammatical manipulations of models, sentences or passages. For them, writing seems to be synonymous with skill in usage and structure, and the*

*assumption is that these exercises will improve the students' ability to compose. Influenced by audio-lingual methodology, writing is seen as a habit formed skill, error is to be avoided and correction and revision to be provided continuously". (p.69)*

According to Peter (1973), *"It's no accident that so much attention is paid to grammar in teaching of writing. Grammar is the one part of writing that can be straightforwardly taught"* (p.138). Because of the attention given to the mastery over grammar, syntax and mechanics, little time is left for attention to the ideas and the meaning of a piece of writing. Paulston (1972) suggests the use of models and the manipulation of their patterns upon which to base one's writing. Dykstra (1964) likewise provides a series of model passages which students are to manipulate according to a series of steps, Spencer's (1965) manipulations entail the recasting of whole sentences following a single pattern and Rojas' (1968) drill type exercises of copying, completion and substitution clearly reflect concern with the prevention of error.

Ross's (1968) combinations and rearrangements of patterns are based on a transformational grammar approach and both Pincas (1962) and Moody (1965) emphasize the need for tight control by endorsing the habitual manipulation of patterns. Thus, while the teaching of grammar is expressly rejected by these methodologists as having little to do with writing, the kinds of exercises they suggest are based on the conception that writing entails grammatical proficiency. Implicitly, grammatical facility means writing ability.

Organization, style and rhetoric become the crucial aspects of skill in writing, but, here again, control and guidance are essential; drill predominates, but on the rhetorical level.

Rather than sentences to manipulate, whole reading passages become the models that students are to differentiate and imitate. Kaplan (1967), pointing out the effect that cultural differences have upon the nature of rhetoric, suggests the study and imitation of paragraphs. Pincas (1964) creates a multiple substitution technique that involves habituation in the use of

certain styles. Arapoff (1969) concentrates on the importance of discovering, comparing and imitating stylistic differences. Carr (1967) stresses the importance of reading, studying and analyzing the organization and logical arrangement of passages and Green (1967) reiterates the practice needed in specific varieties of written language. While this group of methodologists approaches more closely what writing, in the sense of creating, truly entails, they still, like the first group, insist upon control. Rejecting the notion that writing is the mastery of sentence patterns, they nevertheless put restraints on the composing process. Writing for the EFL students is still seen essentially as the formation of a habit.

It is obvious that there is a predominant concern with the quality of the students' output; because the students are attempting to compose in a language other than their own, control and guidance are paramount. Opposed to this position are those who believe that the composing process necessitates a lack of control; rather than emphasize the need to write correctly, the proponents of this approach stress the need to write a lot and often. In other words, it is quantity, not quality, that is crucial. Erasmus (1960) claims that the greater the frequency, the greater the improvement and Bi'ere's (1966) pilot study seems to indicate that, when the emphasis is upon writing often rather than error correction, students write more and with fewer errors. Povey (1969) reiterates this theme, underlining the importance of providing opportunities to say something vitally relevant. It is no wonder, in the light of the foregoing discussion, that ESL teachers are confused and still searching for answers. They face the decision of having to choose one of the several approaches. These approaches can be seen as points along a spectrum ranging from total control to total freedom:( See figure 3 below)

total control (increase in complexity ). free composition →

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substitution, manipulation or transformation of sentences and patterns	imitation & differentiation of stylistic patterns	frequent, uncontrolled writing practice
--	--	--

### **Figure 3: Moving from Total Control to Free Writing**

**Source:** Zamel, (1976, p. 70).

### 1.8.1. Foreign/Second Language Writing Process Studies

Influenced by developments in native language composition, researchers have turned their attention to looking not just at the writing on the page but at writers as they write, observing them, interviewing them, videotaping them, measuring the length of pauses, asking them to compose aloud and coding all their activities, all this in order to discover how the words get onto the page.

The picture shown by this third type of research, with its emphasis on *processes*, is not similar to the picture produced by the *product* oriented research. It does not depict foreign language writers fighting against the rhetorical and linguistic patterns of the first language and fighting against errors. Rather, it shows EFL writers using strategies similar to the ones native speakers use. It shows them exploring and discovering content - their own ideas - through prewriting, writing and revising, in a recursive way, just as native speakers do. Their planning skills are similar, and planning skills in first language transfer to second/ foreign language (Jones and Tetroe 1987). They will not necessarily know what they are going to say before they start to write and the act of writing itself can help them discover content. They think as they write and writing aids thinking, they interact and negotiate with the emerging text, their own intentions and their sense of the reader (Raimes 1985).

Knowledge of the first language writing helps writers form hypotheses in second/ foreign language writing (Edelsky 1982) and sometimes writers use first language to help when composing in foreign language (Lay 1982). In short, researchers have found that, in this complex cognitive task of writing, the difficulties of EFL writers stem less from the linguistic features of new language and the contrasts with second language than from the constraints of the act of composing itself.

This new emphasis on what writers do as they compose has led to classroom approaches that emphasize strategies: the invention and revision of ideas, with feedback from

readers. EFL literature thus is similar to the literature on the first language in that it recommends journals, free writing, brain-storming, students' choice of topics, teaching heuristics (devices for invention), multiple drafts, revisions, group work, peer conferencing and supportive feedback. All these appear to be a radical departure from the paragraph patterns, guided writing, controlled compositions and grammar exercises that characterize a more traditional approach to teaching EFL writing.

### **1.8.2. The Development of Second Language Writing Process Studies**

On the whole, early L2 studies attempt to describe all aspects of L2 composing processes. Early L2 researchers are apparently trying to grasp whatever they can about the nature of L2 composing, especially concerning which behaviors seem to be successful or unsuccessful in producing effective L2 compositions. Later L2 researchers focus on specific composing behaviors, specific types of L2 writers, or features unique to L2 composing.

Chelala (1981) conducted one of the first second language writing process studies, using a case study approach to investigate composing and coherence. Her two Spanish speaking subjects, both "professional" women, composed aloud four times and were interviewed twice. Using Perl's coding scheme to analyze the subjects' tapes of composing aloud and several previously developed methods to analyze coherence of their written products, Chelala identified effective behaviors and ineffective behaviors. Included among the latter were using the first language for prewriting and switching back and forth between the first and second language, findings that contradict those of later studies (Lay 1982; Cumming 1987).

In another early L2 writing process study on rhetorical concerns and composing, Jones(1982) also investigated the written products and writing processes of two L2 writers, designating one "poor" and the other "good", thus distinguishing between effectiveness and ineffectiveness in writing, as Chelala (1981) had done. Unlike Chelala's subjects, Jones's

students had different profiles: The poor writer, a Turkish speaker, was a graduate-level student, whereas the good writer, a German speaker, was a freshman level writer. Also, the poor writer demonstrated somewhat less L2 grammar proficiency than the good writer. The subjects "composed aloud" as they produced a self-generated narrative and revised a paragraph of kernel sentences. Jones analyzed the composing strategies by noting two composing behaviors: writing or generating text and reading the text already generated.

His findings indicated that writing strategies affected writers' rhetorical structures.

According to Jones, the poor writer was bound to the text at the expense of ideas, whereas the good writer allowed her ideas to generate the text. Jones concluded that the poor writer had never learned how to compose, and this general lack of competence in composing, rather than a specific lack in L2 linguistic competence, was a source of her difficulty in L2 writing. Jacobs (1982) also made the point that factors beyond linguistic competence determine the quality of students' writing in her study of the writing of eleven graduate students -six native and five non-native speakers of English. The students' written works, thirteen essays each, and interviews with them about arranging information comprised Jacobs' data. Jacobs functioned as writing teacher for all the students who were taking a premedical course.

Although Jacobs' study was primarily based on product analysis, her findings relate to process- oriented research, particularly to the notion that linguistic competence does not affect composing competence among second language writers. She observed that the "*High reduction load*" of academic writing tasks resulted in two writing problems: "*integrative thinking*" and "*phrasing for correctness and readability*"(p. 63). She found that there was an apparent inverse relationship between integrative thinking and grammatical accuracy among her subjects, and she conjectured that this relationship related to a student's development as a writer. Finally, her study revealed no significant differences between L1 and L2 subjects.

Zamel (1982) also found that competence in the composing process was more important than linguistic competence in the ability to write proficiently in English, as Jones (1982) and Jacobs (1982) had indicated. Her subjects were eight university-level "proficient" L2 writers, one of whom was a graduate student. Her data consisted of interviews about her subjects' "writing experiences and behaviors" (p. 199), which were retrospective accounts of writing processes, and the students' multiple drafts for the production of one essay each. Zamel found that the writing processes of her L2 subjects were like those of the subjects described in L1 studies. She concluded that L2 composing processes indicated that L1 process-oriented writing instruction might also be effective for teaching L2 writing.

Zamel maintained that when students understood and experienced composing as a process, their written products would improve. Zamel's (1983) study of six advanced L2 students provided more support to a theme that was developing among L2 writing process studies - that L2 compose like L1 writers. For this study, Zamel again used a case study approach, observing her subjects while they composed, interviewing them upon conclusion of their writing, and collecting all of their written materials for the production of one essay each, which they had unlimited time to complete.

Direct observation differentiated the research method of this study from that of Zamel's (1982) earlier study. Her subjects were her own university-level students, designated as skilled and unskilled as a result of evaluations of their essays by other L2 composition instructors. The skilled L2 writers in her study revised more and spent more time on their essays than the unskilled writers. In general they concerned themselves with ideas first, revised at the discourse level, exhibited recursiveness in their writing process, and saved editing until the end of the process – all writing strategies similar to those of skilled L1 writers, as described in L1 writing process studies (e. g., Pianko 1979; Sommers 1980). Zamel's (1983) unskilled L2 writers revised less and spent less time writing than the skilled

writers. They focused on small bits of the essay and edited from the beginning to the end of the process, very like the unskilled writers in Sommers' (1980) report of her L1 writing process study, which investigated revising strategies.

Zamel (1983) also investigated how writing in second language influenced the composing process. Her subjects "*did not view composing in a second language in and of itself [as] problematical*" (p. 179), thereby indicating that writing in a second language did not have a major impact on the composing process in general. She maintained that the skilled writers in her study "*clearly understand what writing entails*", whereas the unskilled writers did not; a conclusion similar to that of Jones (1982). Trying to gain insight into her students' composing process, Pflingst (1984) investigated the composing-aloud protocol of one of her undergraduate students –a native speaker of Spanish. According to Pflingst, the student's subsequent composing-aloud protocol exhibited improved composing strategies, which she attributed to her using the protocol as a pedagogical as well as a research tool.

Hildenbrand's (1985) case study also offered suggestions on how teachers might help their L2 students improve their writing. Hildenbrand daily observed her Spanish speaking subjects write in two community college courses. Findings indicated that the subjects preferred writing mode - creative, personal writing - conflicted with the academic mode expected of her, thereby hindering her writing process. Once again, factors beyond the L2 writer's linguistic competence were found to impede the student's composing process.

Jones (1985) set out to investigate further the factors that might constrain second language writers. In the study he applied Krashen's monitor theory to analyze the writing behaviors of his two subjects. He reported that "*monitoring does not lead to improve writing*" (1985: 112), and he maintained that monitoring was, then, a factor constraining the L2 writing process. He speculated that monitor use among L2 learners might result from instructional methods. Jones's study, like Zamel's (1982,1983) studies, provided for the use of process-

oriented composition pedagogy in L2 classes, especially in the light of the call for L2 classrooms to be placed, enabling the acquisition of English rather than just the learning of English, an emerging "*paradigm shift*" discussed by Raimes (1983).

Another study providing support for process-oriented teaching of second language writing was by Rorschach (1986). Findings of this study indicated that reader awareness led the writers to focus on correctness rather than content. Rorschach concluded that her study calls into question composition teaching that concentrates on form, a conclusion that agrees with Jones's speculation about the relationship between instruction and overusing the monitor. The studies of Hildenbrand (1985), Jones (1985), and Rorschach (1986), then, implied that certain L2 instructional approaches might not develop the composing competence that was intended. Furthermore Jones (1985) commented, "*It is worth noting that many of the proposals for improving first language composing are also effective in helping second language learners develop acquired linguistic competence*" (p. 114).

Providing support for Jones's comment, the studies of Diaz (1985) and Urzua (1987) articulated the benefits of process-oriented composition teaching for L2 learners. Diaz's (1985) first task was to establish a process-oriented classroom environment; then she observed what happened to the students and their writing. Based on hypotheses that grew out of her classroom-based ethnographic study, Diaz concluded "*that not only are process strategies and techniques strongly indicated and recommended for ESL students, but also when used in secure, student-centered contexts, the benefits to these students can go beyond their development as writers*" (1986 : 41), thus recalling Jones's (1985) remark. Urzua (1987) came to the same conclusion about the benefits of process-oriented teaching with L2 writers when she reported the progress of four children, two fourth graders and two sixth graders. She observed that the children acquired three significant composing skills: "(a) *a sense of audience, (b) a sense of voice, and (c) a sense of power in language*" (p. 279).

Diaz's and Urzua's studies strongly indicated that what had proved effective in L1 classrooms was also effective in L2 classrooms. Additional research provided specific information on L2 college-level basic writers, one type of writer often targeted in L1 composition research (e. g., Perl 1978). Zamel (1983) found that unskilled L2 writers wrote like unskilled L1 writers and that the lack of composing competence in L1 was reflected in L2 students' writing ability. Raimes (1985) offered even more information on unskilled L2 writers. The eight subjects in her study were deemed "unskilled" by their performances on a holistically scored university-wide writing test, a measure similar to that used to assess the writing proficiency of Zamel's (1983) subjects. With most of her subjects, she observed very little planning before or during writing, a behavior previously observed among unskilled L1 and L2 writers (e. g., Perl 1978; Zamel 1983).

However, she also observed that her subjects, unlike the unskilled writers in previous studies, paid less attention to revising and editing than she had expected and that they seemed to reread their work to let an idea germinate. Raimes conjectured that L2 writers might not be "*as concerned with accuracy as we thought they were, that their primary concern is to get down on paper their ideas on a topic*" (p. 246).

Furthermore, whereas Zamel (1982,1983) pointed out similarities in the writing behaviors of L2 and L1 writers, Raimes (1985,1987) found differences when she compared her subjects to the L1 subjects of Pianko (1979) and especially Perl (1978). Raimes (1985) reported that her subjects wrote more, exhibited more commitment to the writing task, produced more content, and paid less attention to errors than Perl's subjects. Raimes (1987) concluded that L2 writers were different from L1 writers in that L2 writers "*did not appear inhibited by attempts to edit and correct their work*" (p.458). Before Raimes, L2 researchers had underscored the likeness between L1 and L2 writers, both skilled and unskilled. Raimes agreed that likeness certainly existed, but differences between L1 and L2 writers existed as

well, and for this reason, Raimes suggested the adaptation rather than the wholesale adoption of L1 instruction. Although much has already been learned about language writing processes, so much more lies undiscovered. Early L2 studies pointed out similarities between L1 and L2 composing.

More recent studies have questioned these similarities and have presented differences to be considered in future research. The details remain unclear. Even so, each study provides new knowledge; each study offers new question to ask and new areas to explore. As a field of research, then, the second/foreign language composing process is rich and full of vitality.

Yet, if we look at the development of the composing process studies presented above, there is a domination of research done in the U.S.A. As to why researchers in other parts of the world are not interested in this area is unknown. Because of this, then it was felt necessary to work in this area to show that the research on composing process should not be neglected outside the U.S.A. The results of the research could be interesting as ESL students in the U.S.A are in some ways different from ESL students in other countries because most of them (ESL students in the U.S.A) are immigrants who learn English in the English-speaking country.

Through the studies reviewed before, teachers were so much interested in teaching writing through the process approach. Indeed scholars like Hyland(2003) and Williams (2003) have also highlighted the importance of usefulness of teaching the learners step by step writing approach rather than emphasizing the final product. In agreement with them, my research may open the door to the idea that writing involves so much more than just a finished product and all the processes leading up to that point require more attention, i.e. The focus is on the why and how of writing rather than the product.

In the present research, we attempt to adopt such process approach as followed by those researchers. Such study then differs in the way that we focus on the grammatical aspect and how WETs can teach grammar through writing. We try to examine the relationship between grammar and writing improvements following all the stages of the writing process. We distinguish grammar and usage, and suggest some strategies for teaching grammar in the writing composition classes.

We personally think that the most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar in writing is to use students' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. It is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety and usage in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills. This is what we intend to observe.

Effective grammar instruction begins with what students already know about grammar, and it helps them use this knowledge as they write. By connecting their knowledge to written language, teachers can demystify abstract grammatical terminology so that students can write and read with greater competence and confidence.

Grammar instruction is most naturally integrated during the revising, editing, and proofreading phases of the writing process. After students have written their first drafts and felt comfortable with the ideas and organization of their writing, teachers may wish to employ various strategies to help students see grammatical concepts as language choices that enhance their writing purpose. Students will soon grow more receptive to revising, editing, and proofreading their writing.

The primary aim of this study is to investigate real teaching contexts of grammar in writing compositions as they occur in second year university students at the English Department of Sétif university in order to be able to explore the problems that lie behind the students' underachievement in written productions.

For this to be possible, I used descriptive, analytical and classificatory approach in my research. In doing so, questionnaires and interviews have been designed in addition to my observation to the writing class.

## **1.9. Factors Affecting the EFL Students' Written Compositions**

### **1.9.1. Social Factors**

Both social and cognitive factors affect language learning. Exploration of social factors gives some idea of why learners differ in rate of L2 learning, in proficiency type (for instance, conversational ability versus writing ability), and in ultimate proficiency (Ellis, 1994). Research based on direct (self-report questionnaires) and indirect measures generally shows that learners with positive attitudes, motivation, and concrete goals will have these attitudes reinforced if they experience success. Likewise, learners' negative attitudes may be strengthened by lack of success or by failure (Mc Groarty, 1996).

Needless to say, although ESL learners may have negative attitudes toward writing for academic purposes, many of them are financially and professionally committed to graduating from English-speaking universities, and as a result, have strong reasons for learning and improving their skills. There is a direct relationship between learner attitudes and learner motivation. Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model is designed to account for the role of social factors in language acquisition. It interrelates four aspects of **L2** learning: the social and cultural milieu (which determines beliefs about language and culture), individual learner differences (related to motivation and language aptitude), the setting (formal and/or informal learning contexts), and learning outcomes. Integrative motivation involves a desire to learn an L2 because individuals need to learn the target language to integrate into the community. In addition to this interest, the people or the culture represented by the other language group may also inspire them.

On the other hand, instrumental motivation acknowledges the role that external influences and incentives play in strengthening the learners' desire to achieve. Learners who are instrumentally motivated are interested in learning the language for a particular purpose, such as writing a dissertation or getting a job. According to the theory, if second language learning takes place in isolation from a community of target language speakers, then it benefits more from integrative motivation, whereas if it takes place among a community of speakers, then instrumental orientation becomes the more effective motivational factor. Despite problems in Gardner's research design, it can be concluded that motivational factors *"probably do not make much difference on their own, but they can create a more positive context in which language learning is likely to flourish"* (Bialystok 1998, p. 140).

Learners' attitudes, motivations, and goals can explain why some L2 writers perform better than others. For example, at the beginning of each of my ESL writing classes, I often ask students to fill out a personal information form to determine their needs and interests when planning my course. The answers to questions such as, "Do you enjoy writing in English?" and "What are your strengths and weaknesses in writing?" are revealing. Most students will answer that they hate writing in English (and in their native language, for that matter), and are only taking the course for educational and/or career purposes. In fact, it seems that many of the students would prefer to be practicing conversation. Students may enjoy writing e-mail messages to friends around the world, but challenges, such as difficulties getting started, finding the right words, and developing topics, abound.

However, if students show an overall interest in the target language (integrative motivation), perceive that there is parental and social support, and have a desire to achieve their professional goals (instrumental motivation), they can become more proficient in their

ability to write in English, despite the initial lack of self-motivation. Writing teachers should be aware of how the instrumental motivation of their L2 students will influence the effectiveness of their lessons. Common purposes for learners writing in an EAP context include writing a research paper for publication in an English-speaking journal or writing a business report for a multinational company. These learners may be less motivated to write stories or poetry, because they perceive that these tasks are not related to their needs. Even writing a standard research essay may seem like a waste of time for those who will need to write project reports and memos. If learners perceive writing tasks to be useless, they may approach them in a careless manner. Consequently, it is likely that they will be inattentive to errors, monitoring, and rhetorical concerns (Carson, 2001). However, if students are highly motivated, then any sorts of writing task, expressive or otherwise, are welcomed.

Social factors also influence the quality of contact that learners will experience. Indeed, we cannot assume that "more contact" with the target language will result in more acquisition of the L2. Certainly, instructors recommend that students studying English for academic purposes should read academic texts, attend academic lectures, and even work with students who are native speakers in order to become more acquainted with the discourse.

However, if they do not engage in the texts, understand the talks, or actively contribute to the study sessions, these activities will have little effect on student progress. Interaction is key. A common complaint among ESL students at university is that they have difficulty meeting native speakers and getting to know them. Students are often disappointed that they do not have as much interaction with native speakers as they had expected. In addition, they often associate with other students from their L1 and speak their native language. Unfortunately, this pattern can slow down L2 development in all skill areas. The instructor is often responsible for providing incentives or opportunities for interactions with

native speakers. Generally speaking, if L2 learners are motivated to integrate into the L2, they will develop a higher level of proficiency and positive attitudes, which can have a positive effect on their writing.

In short, learners may continue to exhibit errors in their writing for the following social reasons:

1. negative attitudes toward the target language
2. continued lack of progress in the L2
3. a wide social and psychological distance between them and the target culture, and,
4. a lack of integrative and instrumental motivation for learning.

### 1.9.2. Cognitive Factors

Academic writing is believed to be cognitively complex. Acquisition of academic vocabulary and discourse style is particularly difficult. According to cognitive theory, communicating orally or in writing is an active process of skill development and gradual elimination of errors as the learner internalizes the language. Indeed, acquisition is a product of the complex interaction of the linguistic environment and the learner's internal mechanisms. With practice, there is continual restructuring as learners shift these internal representations in order to achieve increasing degrees of mastery in L2 (McLaughlin, 1988).

One model that applies to both speaking and writing in a second language is Anderson's (1985) model of language production, which can be divided into three stages: *construction*, in which the writer plans what he/she is going to write by brainstorming, using a mind-map or outline; *transformation*, in which language rules are applied to transform intended meanings into the form of the message when the writer is composing or revising; and *execution*, which corresponds to the physical process of producing the text. The first two

stages have been described as" *Setting goals and searching memory for information, then using production systems to generate language in phrases or constituents*" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 42).

Writers vacillate between these processes as they actively develop the meaning they wish to express in writing. Anderson's learning theory supports teaching approaches that combine the development of language and content knowledge, practice in using this knowledge, and strategy training to encourage independent learning (Snow, 2001).

In structuring information, the writer uses various types of knowledge, including discourse knowledge, understanding of audience, and sociolinguistic rules (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Organization at both the sentence and the text level is also important for effective communication of meaning, and ultimately, for the quality of the written product (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987). For instance, coherence problems may be due to not knowing how to organize text or how to store the relevant information. The transformation stage involves converting information into meaningful sentences.

At this point, the writer translates or changes his/her plans into a mental representation of the goals, ideas, and organization developed in the construction stage. Revision is also part of this stage. As previously mentioned, revision is a cognitively demanding task for L2 learners because it not only involves task definition, evaluation, strategy selection, and modification of text in the writing plan (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996), but also the ability of students to analyze and evaluate the feedback they receive on their writing.

Due to the complex process of writing in a second language, learners often find it difficult to develop all aspects of the stages simultaneously. As a result, they selectively use only those aspects that are automatic or have already been proceduralized (O'Malley

&Chamot, 1990). In order to enhance or facilitate language production, students can develop particular learning strategies that isolate component mental processes. O'Malley and Chamot have differentiated strategies into three categories: metacognitive, such as planning the organization of written discourse or monitoring (that is, being aware of what one is doing and responding appropriately to the demands of a task); cognitive, such as transferring or using known linguistic information to facilitate a new learning task or using imagery for recalling and using new vocabulary, and social/affective strategies, which involve cooperating with peers, for example, in peer revision classes.

Learner strategies can be effective, but they need to be internalized so that they can be utilized in adverse learning situations. For example, if an environment is perceived to be stressful or threatening, for example, writing as part of a job interview process, or performing under timed test conditions, learners' affective states can influence cognition. Emotional influences along with cognitive factors can account for achievement and performance in L2, to a certain extent.

Schumann (1998) argues that affect may influence cognition through its role in framing a problem and in adopting processing strategies. He states that we very often use feelings as information: "*When faced with a situation about which we have to make a judgment we often ask ourselves how we feel about it . . . we may also employ feelings when time constraints and competing tasks limit our cognitive capacities*" (p. 247).

This outcome may affect the way second language students perform when they are under stress. Language transfer is another important cognitive factor related to writing error. Transfer is defined as the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired (Odlin, 1989).

The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms, and their over-use (Ellis, 1994). Behaviorist accounts claim that transfer is the cause of errors, whereas from a cognitive perspective, transfer is seen as a resource that the learner actively draws upon in inter-language development (Selinker, 1972). In other words, "*the L1 can have a direct effect on inter-language development by influencing the hypotheses that learners construct*" (Ellis, 1994, p. 342).

According to McLaughlin, transfer errors can occur because: Learners lack the necessary information in the second language or the attentional capacity to activate the appropriate second-language routine. But such an account says little about why certain linguistic forms transfer and others do not. (1988, p. 50).

Despite the fact that L1 transfer is no longer viewed as the only predictor or cause of error at the structural level (since it is difficult to distinguish empirically between instances of communication and language transfer in research studies), a writer's first language plays a complex and significant role in L2 acquisition. For example, when learners write under pressure, they may call upon systematic resources from their native language for the achievement and synthesis of meaning (Widdowson, 1990).

Research has also shown that language learners sometimes use their native language when generating ideas and attending to details (Friedlander, 1990). In addition, contrastive studies, which have focused on characteristics of L1 languages and cultures, have helped us predict rhetorical error in writing. These studies have been valuable in our understanding of L2 writing development. However, many feel that these studies have also led to reductive, essentializing generalizations about ways of writing and cultural stereotypes about students from certain linguistic backgrounds (Fox, 1994; Leki, 1997; Spack, 1997).

As a result, erroneous predictions about students' learning based on their L1 language and culture have occurred regardless of social factors, such as *"the contexts, and purpose of their learning to write, or their age, race, class, gender, education, and prior experience"*(Raimes, 1998, p. 143). In addition, learners are influenced by many global phenomena and are themselves continually changing with new experiences. In spite of these criticisms, though, an understanding of *"difference among epistemological rhetorical, and pedagogical traditions"*(Kern, 2000, p. 176) and the impact of language transfer can be illuminating for an understanding of why learners make certain structural and organizational errors.

Input and interaction also play important roles in the writing process, especially in classroom settings. Some studies have indicated that input, along with L1 transfer and communicative need may work together to shape inter-language (Ellis, 1994; Selinker, 1972). Research has focused on four broad areas: input frequency, the nature of comprehensible input, learner output in interaction, and the processes of collaborative discourse construction. Writers need to receive adequate L2 input in order to form new hypotheses about syntactic and rhetorical forms in the target language. If students are not exposed to native-like models of written texts, their errors in writing are more likely to persist. Errors abound in peer review classes or in computer-mediated exchanges where learners read and respond to each other's compositions. Indeed, in many of my own classes, inter-language talk or discourse is often the primary source of input for many learners.

However, if the interaction, oral or written, allows for adequate negotiation of meaning, peer responses can be very useful. We can see that writing in a second language is a complex process involving the ability to communicate in L2 (learner output) and the ability to construct a text in order to express one's ideas effectively in writing. Social and cognitive

factors and learner strategies help us in assessing the underlying reasons why L2 learners exhibit particular writing errors. For instance, the writing problems experienced by Spanish speakers living in the United States may be due to a multiplicity of factors, including the effects of transfer and interference from the Spanish language, and cultural norms (Plata, 1995). Spanish-speaking writers must undergo the task of cognitively exchanging the style of the Spanish language for that of English. For this transformation to happen, some students find that creating another persona, such as replacing their birth name with an English one, can help them to become more immersed in the target language and culture. In short, because learners are less familiar and less confident with structural elements of a new language, rhetorical and cultural conventions and even new uses of writing, writing in an L2 can have errors and be less effective than writing in L1 (Kern, 2000).

### **1.10. The Sources of Error in L2 Compositions**

There are several ways to think about error in writing compositions in light of what we know about second language acquisition and what we know about how texts, context and the writing process interact with one another. As mentioned, students writing in a second language generally produce texts that contain varying degrees of grammatical and rhetorical errors. In fact, depending on proficiency level, the more content-rich and creative the text, the greater the possibility there is for errors at the morpho-syntactic level. These kinds of errors are especially common among L2 writers who have a lot of ideas, but not enough language to express what they want to say in a comprehensible way. What we classify as an error, which is associated with learner competence, may actually be a mistake, or more specifically in an EAP context, a "derailment" related to learner performance (Shaughnessy, 1977). These "derailments" occur when students attempt to use the academic voice and make their sentences more intricate, especially when the task requires more complex ideas.

From behaviorist and mentalist perspectives of error, which have emphasized the product (the error itself) to more constructivist views, which focus on underlying process (why the error is made), researchers have attempted to understand the errors in writers' texts by hypothesizing their possible sources (Bartholomae, 1980; Hull, 1985). Although reading an error-filled text can be tiring and disconcerting, errors can help us identify the cognitive strategies that the learner is using to process information. According to Ellis (1985), it is through analyzing learner errors that we elevate "*the status of errors from undesirability to that of a guide to the inner working of the language learning process*" (p. 53).

Whether an error, mistake, or "derailment," awkward discourse can occur for a variety of reasons, some of which have already been mentioned. First of all, learners may translate from L1, or they may try out what they assume is a legitimate structure of the target language, although hindered by insufficient knowledge of correct usage. In the learning process, they often experience native language interference from developmental stages of inter-language or from nonstandard elements in spoken dialects (a common occurrence in students writing in their native language as well). They also tend to over-generalize the rules for stylistic features when acquiring new discourse structures.

In addition, learners are often unsure of what they want to express, which would cause them to make mistakes in any language. Finally, writers in L2 might lack familiarity with new rhetorical structures and the organization of ideas (Carson, 2001; Connor & Kaplan, 1987; Kutz, Groden, & Zamel, 1993; Raimes, 1987). L2 writing relates closely to native-language literacy and particular instructional contexts. Students may not be acquainted with English rhetoric, which can lead to writing that appears off topic or incoherent to many native English speakers. Rhetoric and writing are direct outcomes of sociocultural and political contexts; in other words, they are schematic representations of the writer's unique experiences

within a particular social milieu. For example, Chinese or Indonesian students may write in accordance with a set of rhetorical norms (such as the "eight-legged" essay) that differ from those of English (Cai, 1999; Matalene, 1985; Williams, 1989). Repeating a previous mistake, or backsliding, is a common occurrence in L2 writing. More important, though, is the issue of fossilization—when "*learner inter-language competence diverges in more or less permanent ways from the target language grammar*"(Odlin,1994,p.13).

All in all, we may say that fossilized errors can be problematic in writing because the errors become ingrained, like bad habits, in a learner's repertoire, and they reappear despite remediation and correction. They can be common among immigrants who have learned much of the L2 "on the street," where the emphasis is on fluency and not linguistic correctness. Errors in writing, fossilized or otherwise, can be glaring, especially to the reader who has had little experience interacting with L2 speakers and texts.

## **Conclusion**

Many approaches are adopted in teaching writing and they differ depending on teachers and teaching styles or learners and learning styles. This may lead us to say that writing a composition is a complex activity which involves more than simply putting sentences together in sequence like wagons in a train. Thus, it is not just learning things that is important. It is learning what to do with what you learn and learning why you learn things at all matters

## **CHAPTER TWO: THE STAGES OF THE WRITING PROCESS**

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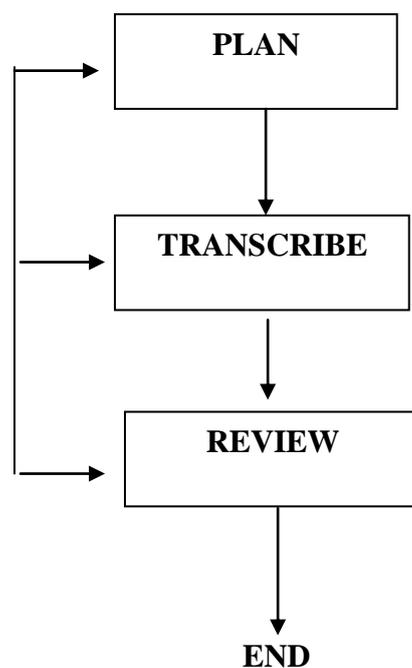
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## Introduction

Writing is a complex process. It allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. Writing encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection. Recently, more attention is paid to writers as they write, observing them, interviewing them, videotaping them,...etc. not just looking at the writing on the page. The composing process therefore focuses on the quantity not quality of writing. In doing so, more focus is given to the importance of usefulness of teaching the learners step by step writing approaches rather than emphasizing the final product.

### 2.1. The Stages of the Writing Process

When psychologists study the formulation of other solutions to complex problems, they typically identify three activities: planning the solution, carrying out the plan and reviewing the results to judge if they meet the criteria for a good solution. For writing we can schematize the process as in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: A Model of the Writing Process. Source: Nold, 1981, p. 68.**

The recursive arrows on the left of the diagram in Figure 4 remind us that planning, transcribing and reviewing (pre-writing, writing and rewriting) are not one-time processes. As their texts grow and change, writers plan, transcribe and review in irregular patterns. Perl (1979) seems to agree with this when she says: Composing does not occur in a straightforward, linear fashion. The process is one of accumulating discrete words or phrases down on the paper and then working from these bits to reflect upon structure, and then further develop what reasons to say. It can be thought of as a kind of "retrospective structuring"; movement forward occurs only after one has reached back, which in turn occurs only after one has some sense of where one wants to go. Both aspects, the reading back and the sensing forward, have a clarifying effect... Rereading or backward movement becomes a way of assessing whether or not the words on the page adequately capture the original sense intended. But constructing simultaneously involves discovery. Writers know more fully what they mean only after having written it. In this way the explicit written form serves as a window on the implicit sense with which one began. (Perl, 1979: 18).

From Perl's explanation above, the instantaneous moving back and forth during the writing process is clear. Minute by minute, perhaps second by second - or less at certain stages of the process - the writer may be doing the prewriting, writing and rewriting, looking back and looking forward and acting upon what is seen and heard during the backward sensing and forward sensing.

### **2.1.1. Prewriting**

Prewriting has been defined as all the activities (such as reading the topic, rehearsing, planning, trying out beginnings, making notes) that students engaged in before they wrote what was the first sentence of their first draft (Raimes 1985). According to Hayes, "... *rewriting or pre-composition is used to mean specifically any of the structured experiences which take place either before or during the writing process and which influence active*

*participation on the part of the student in thinking, writing in groups etc"* (1978: 86). While Murray (1982) prefers to call this stage of writing process rehearsing instead of prewriting: *"The term rehearsing, first used by my colleague Donald Graves (1978) after observation of children writing, is far more accurate than prewriting to describe activities which precede a completed draft"*. (Murray 1982: 4)

During this stage of the writing process the writer in the mind and on the page prepares himself / herself for writing before knowing for sure that there will be writing. There is a special awareness, a taking in of the writer's new material of information, before it is clear how it will be used. When it seems there will be writing, this absorption continues, but now there is time for experiments in meaning and form, for trying out voices, for beginning the process of play which is vital to making effective meaning. The writer welcomes the unexpected relationship between pieces of information from voices never before heard in the writer's head.

Rohman's (1965) pre-writing strategies serve *"to introduce students to the dynamics of creation"* (p. 107) by teaching them to experience a subject in a new way and to see writing as one important form of self-actualization. Rohman's method, based on the premise that the pre-writing stage is hidden in the mind, employs three approaches: the keeping of a daily journal, the practice of principles derived from religious meditation, and the use of the analogy as a mechanism for looking at an event in several different ways.

Prewriting usually takes about 85% of the writer's time (Murray 1980). It includes awareness of his world from which his subject is born. In prewriting, the writer focuses on that subject, spots an audience, and chooses a form which may carry his subject to his audience. Prewriting may include research and daydreaming, note-making and outlining, little-writing and lead writing (Murray 1980). The most effective way of using prewriting is to

guide students through each activity in the classroom rather than just lecturing or telling them about the activities.

Writing is basically a process of communicating something (content) on paper to an audience. If the writer has nothing to say, writing will not occur. Prewriting activities therefore provide students with something to say. According to D'Aoust, prewriting activities generate ideas; they encourage a free flow of thoughts and help students to discover both what they want to say and how to say it on paper. In other words, prewriting activities facilitate the planning for both the product and the process. (D'Aoust 1986: 7). Spack (1984: 656) also asserts that prewriting techniques teach students to write down their ideas quickly in new form, without undue concern about surface errors and form. This helps their fluency, as they are able to think and write at the same time, rather than think and then write.

According to Shaughnessy(1977), inexperienced or incompetent student-writers tend to slow down their pace of writing by insisting on a perfect essay from the outset. They try to *"put down exactly the right word, to put the right word into the right phrase, and to put the right phrase in the right sentence and so on"*. Such students tend to hinder their own fluency and give themselves what Flower (1981: 30) calls *"writer's block"* - that is, they get stuck at a point in the writing process and cannot go on. Most students who suffer from this problem can benefit from a prewriting therapy where they are required to generate materials, ideas, bits of texts, etc. to use in their writing later.

Rehearsing is an activity in prewriting according to Raimés (1985). *"One of the common activities, both while writing sentences and between writing sentences was rehearsing (voicing ideas on context and trying out possible ideas)"* (p. 243). Rehearsing appears to serve two different purposes, not indicated by the coding. Some writers rehearse to search for grammatically acceptable forms as evidenced by one of Raimés' students, Jose: *"They asked me, they ask me that I, no, they want, they asked me that they want to go, no, they*

*asked that, that if they can, they ask me that if, that if, I can, I could, if I could take them to 115 Street". (Raimes 1985: 243)*

Others talked out ideas, tried things out and tested on an audience words and phrases that were never put on paper. Another student of Raimes', Bowen, seemed to be regarding her (Raimes) as the listener/audience, if not as the reader, as he talked out his ideas when he was asked to compose aloud. He said, *"I just want to tell you about Chinese culture revolution"*. Then he wrote part of a sentence, *"When it was in the Chinese culture revolution"* and stopped for a kind of aside to the listener, a rehearsal of what was in his mind: *"In Chinese, the culture revolution, I went to countryside, because at that time there was no school, but not really ... "*. He laughed and went on, *"I just wanted to say that they didn't learn anything in school"*. This rehearsal of text, which explained fully what he meant, then somehow got reduced as it was translated into written composition. Bowen now left himself and many of the details. After his opening of *"When it was the Chinese cultural revolution"*, he continued by adding rather dryly: *"schools were closed and factories didn't produce"*. It was as if he saw the audience for the tape (he was asked to compose aloud on the tape) as having different requirements from the audience for the writing (Raimes 1985: 243).

The thinking, brainstorming and note-taking that is believed to precede actual composing took place even after the writing began, illustrating that *"planning is not a unitary stage, but a distinctive thinking process which writers use over and over again during composing"* (Flower and Hayes 1981: 375). Then, students who started out by creating an informal list of ideas or questions to consider may have found themselves totally discarding it once they undertook the writing itself. It seems that while some planning was necessary to help them think through the topic, they were quite willing to shift directions once they discovered an alternative, and more satisfying, solution (Zamel 1983).

### 2.1.2. Writing (Drafting)

Writing is the act of producing the first draft. Murray (1980) calls this stage of the writing process as drafting. For him drafting " *is the most accurate term for the central stage of the writing process, since it implies the tentative nature of our written experiments in meaning*" (1980: 5). The writer drafts a piece of writing to find out what it may have to say. The writing physically removes itself from the writer. Thus, it can be examined as something which may eventually stand on its own before a reader. This distancing is significant, for each draft must be an exercise in independence as well as discovery.

This stage is the fastest part of the process, and the most frightening, for it is the commitment. And the writing of this first draft - rough, unfinished- may take as little as one percent of the writer's time. According to White (1988), the students usually deal with writing the first draft with a sense of urgency and momentum, with little or no concern with accuracy and expression. The important thing seems to be to get the ideas on paper, with questions of organization and correction coming later.

In contrast, Zamel says that "*generally, students devoted the greatest proportion of time to the creation of their first drafts, during which they dealt with the substantial content... Subsequent drafts reflected a greater number of changes in vocabulary, syntax and spelling and therefore required less composing time*" (1983: 174). For this stage of the writing process, the students should not take a lot of time writing the first draft as what is important here is to write down the ideas on paper. Time should be devoted to the final draft because it is this draft that will be evaluated.

### 2.1.3. Rewriting (Revising)

Rewriting or revision, in Rohman's view (1965) is simply the repetition of writing; and according to Britton (1975) revision is simply the further growth of what is already there, the "preconceived" product. However, Sommers (1980) has redefined the term *revision* as a sequence of changes in a composition - changes which are initiated by cues and occur continually throughout the writing of a work. Revising is not a sub process in the same way as planning, transcribing and reviewing are; rather it is the retranscribing of the text already produced (Nold 1981).

Writers retranscribe because they have decided, after reviewing text or their plans, that portions of the text are not what they had intended or not what their readers need. But in order to retranscribe, writers must be able to generate a more acceptable solution. If they cannot, they will not change their text. This analysis of revising shows that revising strategies cannot be inferred from the text alone: writers indeed may want to revise, but not be able to because they lack promising solutions (Nold 1981).

In revising, writers add or delete elements of the text - letters, punctuation, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs- because they have evaluated them as faulty and can think of a good way to change them (Nold 1981). Evidence shows that writers usually deal with the first draft with a sense of urgency and momentum, with little or no concern with accuracy of expression (White 1988). If this is the case, then, writers must rewrite. In fact, Murray (1968) says that "*writing is rewriting*" while Maimon et. al. (1982) make it clear that "*successful papers are not written, they are rewritten*".

Murray (1978), Perl (1980) and others have noted, writing and rewriting is a process of discovery. This means that writers often start writing without knowing exactly what to say, and, as they write their preliminary drafts, they discover what it is they want to say. Then they go over their drafts and rewrite and edit them into words that more adequately express their

ideas (Chenoweth 1987). This is a natural and even inevitable part of the writing process. Although, rewriting is very important in the process of writing, student writers usually do not make good use of it. Often, poor writers write one draft with many good ideas poorly developed (Shaughnessy 1977) and then they are not shown how to explore these ideas further or given the opportunity to do it.

In addition, students often fail to understand that good writing does not flow out completely and polished. Smith (1984) calls this "*one of the best kept secrets at school*" (p.196). Professional writers may write and rewrite hundreds of times, yet students feel they are failures because they cannot produce perfect copy effortlessly at the first sitting. However, if instead of a paper on a new topic, a rewrite (which takes as much or more effort) is assigned, students can work on and improve a particular piece of writing which in turn boosts their confidence as writers by showing them that rewriting is not failure. They learn that they need to rewrite in order to develop and improve their writing (Chenoweth 1987).

Rewriting is an important step in composing, but some students do not know how to do it. For instance, Sommers (1980) found out that student writers saw revision as word based - as cleaning up vocabulary. She observed that students lacked strategies for handling the larger elements in revision, or reordering lines of reasoning or asking questions about their purposes and readers. They tended to view their compositions in a linear way as a series of parts to be assembled. Other studies have also highlighted differences in ways in which writers revise their compositions.

Unskilled writers tend to correct only surface errors in grammar and punctuation, or change their choice of words (Bridwell 1980, Faigley and Witte 1981) - some, such as Smith (1982), would call this "*editing*" and not "*rewriting*". More proficient writers do edit their papers, of course, but they also spend considerable time and effort working on the overall content to see what they want to say is said, and is said in a way their readers can understand

(Faigley and Witte 1981). The unskilled writers generally assume that what they have written makes sense and that there is really no need to add more explanation and detail, or rearrange ideas to make their paper better (Perl 1980, Beach 1976). In other words, they fail to consider the problems that readers might experience in understanding their text (Flower 1981).

Composition writing teachers who correct just those surface-level mistakes, without commenting on content as well, are reinforcing the students' tendency to focus on sentence-level problems. Recent research indicates that it is not necessary to correct the mistakes of grammar, spelling and punctuation if the intention of the teacher is to help students to write better. Studies such as Perl (1980), Pianko (1979) and Zamel (1983) suggest that one reason for this may be that correction of those errors does not directly address the writer's main problems which are more related to the way in which he or she accomplishes a given writing task.

Revising, like prewriting, occurs throughout the process and generally means composing anew. (Zamel 1983). While exploring their ideas and the form with which to express them, changes were most often global: sentences were deleted and added to clarify and make them more concrete; sentences were rewritten until they expressed the writer's intention more accurately; paragraphs or parts of paragraphs were shifted around when writers realized that they were related to ideas presented elsewhere in their texts; new paragraphs were formed as thoughts were developed and expanded.

In the case of one writer, after writing several pages, he discovered that one of the paragraphs on the third page would make a good introduction. In the case of another, entire pages of writing were eliminated once the student discovered what she really wanted to say (Zamel 1983). Revisions of this sort often took place during writing sessions that inevitably began with rereading what had been written during a previous session. It seems that the

intervention of time had given students the ability to distance themselves from their ideas and thus re-view their written work as if with the eyes of another reader.

While all of the writers attended to surface-level features and changes, the skilled writers seemed to be much less concerned with the features at the outset and addressed them primarily toward the end of the process. The least skilled writers, on the other hand, were distracted by local problems from the very beginning, changing words or phrases but rarely making changes that affected meaning.

### **2.1.3.1. Functions of Rewriting / Revision**

The functions of rewriting or revision which is the last stage in the composing process, can be divided into two: revision as repair and revision as reading.

#### **2.1.3.1.1. Revision as Repair**

Elsa Bartlett (1985) studied revision as repair for the purpose of examining the cognitive strategies of young writers. She found that the young writers were capable of correcting errors of referential ambiguity in others' texts but when these writers reviewed their own texts, they were "blind" to errors of correctness because they read with a focus on meaning. Ellen Nold (1981) makes the distinction between revising to fit conventions – matching the text against accepted rules of correctness - revising to fit intentions - matching the texts against goals defined in terms of meaning, audience and purpose.

When writers attend too frequently to rule-governed revisions (revising to fit conventions), their behavior might be characterized as premature editing (Rose 1984). In observation of blocked writers and unblocked writers, Mike Rose noted that the unblocked writers often avoided premature editing by, for example, circling a word with questionable spelling and returning to the larger writing task.

Cazden, Michaels and Tabor (1985) studied the spontaneous repairs of first-and second-grade children in oral narratives produced during classroom "*sharing time*".

Unlike earlier studies, which only characterized these spontaneous repairs as lexical replacements, Cazden's study classified a special type of repair called bracketing - insertion of a chunk of material into otherwise syntactically intact sentences. This additional, bracketed material demonstrated a rather sophisticated use of syntactic resources. Beyond this, however, the additional material was taken as evidence of the children's ability to make "*repairs for the listener at the level of organization of thematic content of the narrative as a whole*" (p. 7).

In a carefully designed study, one which focused on the nature, extent and quality of revisions made by 100 randomly selected seniors in high school, Bridwell (1980b) found that, given the opportunity, students make fairly extensive revisions. Overall, the students in Bridwell's study made revisions, or an average of about 60 per student, almost half of which were made on the first draft. Although the design of the study suggests revisions, it commands nothing other than recopying. The large number of revisions, then, stands in marked contrast to Emig's conclusion that "*students do not voluntarily revise school-sponsored writing*" (1971:3).

Most of the revisions (56 percent) were at the surface or lexical levels. Surface-level revisions included changes in mechanics such as spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Word-level changes included the addition, deletion or substitution of single words. Another 18 percent of the revisions had to do with changes at the phrase level. The remaining 19.61 percent of the revisions were at the sentence-level or the multi-sentence level, which includes additions, deletions and reordering of two or more consecutive sentences. However, no revisions appeared at the text level. The relative proportions of these revisions might be expected. The high incidence of lower-level revisions does not necessarily demonstrate a preoccupation with the trivial; there are simply many more opportunities for revision at those levels than at the sentence or multi-sentence levels.

Sommers (1980) studied the revising strategies of eight college freshmen and seven experienced adult writers. She examined four levels of change (word, phrase, sentence and theme) and four operations (deletion, substitution, edition and reordering). The greatest number of revisions by college students were at the word and phrase levels, with lexical deletions and substitutions being the most frequent operations. For the adult writers, however, the concentration of revisions was at the sentence level and addition was the major operation. Their revisions were distributed over all levels, suggesting that experienced writers perceive more alternatives than do younger writers. Addition appears as the major strategy in a number of studies. Kamler (1980) presents five drafts of a composition by seven-year-old pupil. The composition grows over two weeks from 57 words to 169, with 88 of the words coming in the third draft following a 30-minute individual conference with the teacher. In this piece of writing, all revisions are additions.

#### **2.1.3.1.2. Revision as Reading**

Continual rereading and rescanning in basic writers seems to inhibit evaluations of anything but the current grammatical, mechanical or lexical problems (Perl 1980), and yet when the text was removed during the "invisible writing" (information collected during the "think aloud protocol") experiences of Blau's (1983) graduate students, they claimed that the *"absence of visual feedback from the text they were producing actually sharpened their concentration ... enhanced their fluency, and yielded texts that were more rather than less cohesive"* (p. 298).

In Blau's "invisible writing" experienced students could not and did not revise. In a study conducted by Matsushashi and Gordon (1985), students who planned their revisions after rereading and listed ideas for revision on the blank pages of their papers were able to produce substantial revisions in the argument structure of the text, whereas those who revised while looking at their texts made an overwhelming percentage of surface corrections.

If the role of reading during the process of writing has been oversimplified, current reading theorists may be of some help. Matsuhashi and Gordon (1985) suggest that reading during the writing process and writing itself may involve similar mental processes. In both reading and writing, revisions occur if one has lost sight of *"the meaning of the potential under construction"* and if one *"wants to confirm or disconfirm the meaning network already created"* (p. 12).

The emphasis on a mental representation of a text is reiterated by Teun Van Dijk and Walter Kintsch (1987) in their definition of discourse processing (comprehension), *"a strategic process in which mental representation is constructed of the discourse in memory, using both external and internal types of information, with the goal of interpreting (understanding) the discourse"* (p.6). For discourse production, the task is the construction of a mental representation of a discourse plan which can, strategically, be executed with an end goal of a syntactically formatted, coherent text. Although comprehension and production are not simply inverse processes, they are related.

### **2.1.3.2. Methods of Facilitating Revision**

Simon (1981) states two limitations which apply to all sorts of cognitive activities, including writing and revising. First, it takes about five seconds to fix a chunk of information in short-term memory. Second, short-term memory can hold only a limited number of chunks. For inexperienced writers, it is these limitations coupled with inefficient and ineffective writing strategies that make success so difficult to achieve. Revision, for these writers, is a trap, not an opportunity (Shaunghnessy 1977). In order to study cognitive processes during revision, writing researchers such as Marlene Scardamalia and Carl Bereiter (1983) and Matsuhashi and Gordon (1985) have developed procedures to help the writer orchestrate his or her divided attention.

Although these studies diverge in many ways, they share the assumption that young and inexperienced writers do not revise effectively because, under the pressure of real-time processing, their attention is consumed by the low-level problems of generating and inscribing the text: Attention to one thing means neglect of another, and so one can never be sure that the child's failure to do something in writing indicates a lack of competence. It may merely reflect an inability to direct cognitive resources to that aspect of writing when it is needed. (Scardamalia and Bereiter 1983 : 68)

Using a simplified model of the revision process called CDO (Compare, Diagnose and Operate), Scardamalia and Bereiter arrived at a procedure which, they believed, could lift the burden of scheduling and allow the child to shift his or her attention to the revision process at the end of each sentence. Children in grades 4,6 and 8 after writing a sentence, engaged in the CDO process by first choosing an evaluation statement which suited that sentence (*compare*); secondly telling why that statement (*diagnose*) and thirdly, deciding what change to make in the existing sentence (*operate*).

This procedure, carried out often each sentence was written, was used for the "on line" group. Another group (the "evaluation" group) carried out the CDO process on each sentence only after the text had been completed. In both treatment groups, children in grades 4 and 6 produced compositions of the same length, although grade 8 compositions in the "on line" group were significantly shorter than in the "evaluation after" group. It may be that as the eighth-graders' ability to produce longer texts developed, the CDO process presented new scheduling difficulties by focusing evaluation to the exclusion of generation processes. In interviews following the study, students largely agreed that the CDO process helped them review their texts in ways they never could before. Although the students revised more than would normally be expected, the revision did not improve the quality of the texts. Further analyses, though, suggested that students were quite accurate in evaluating (*compare*) their

sentences, that is, in "*detecting mismatches between intended and actual text, when prompted to look for them*" (p. 92). They were unable, however, to correct the difficulty in the diagnose and operate stages.

Matsuhashi and Gordon (1985) designed a study to test the hypothesis that typically low-level revisions by college students resulted not so much from a lack of competence but from an inability to look beyond the local span of text to consider a mental representation of the text as a whole. Working with three groups of college students, Matsuhashi and Gordon asked the first group to reread and revise an essay they had written during the previous class. They asked the second group to "add five things" to an essay after rereading but while still looking at the text. The third group was asked, after rereading, to list five additions on the back of the essay and then to insert the additions into the text. This third group produced significantly more high-level additions to the text than did the second group, which, in turn, produced significantly more high-level additions to the text than did the "revise" group.

As the conclusion, Matsuhashi and Gordon state that: When the writer adds to the text while looking at it, to some extent he or she has been freed by the instruction to add (only one or many possible revision strategies). The presence of the text, though, can still distract the writer and interfere with attempts to focus on high-level revisions. When the writer plans additions to an unseen text, as in the third group, the plans are based on a mental representation of the text. The opportunity to plan-free from both the presence of the text and from the efforts of prose production - offers an incentive to work exclusively with the idea structure of the text. (Matsuhashi and Gordon 1985: 23 ).

Both of these studies developed techniques to facilitate revision based on the assumptions about cognitive processing during writing. Scardamalia and Bereiter's (1983) CDO procedure helped students focus attention, initially, on a wide range of possible

problems in the text, while Matsuhashi and Gordon (1985) shifted the writers' attention to only one revision strategy - addition.

## **2.2. The Features of the Writing Process**

### **2.2.1. Interaction**

Recent studies of interactive learning in the second language classroom have emphasized teacher-student and student-student discourse as a means of breaking the tradition of teacher-fronted one-way instruction. Although it has not been definitively shown that this variation in instructional method leads to faster or better learning, such activity appears to be superior in terms of the amount of talk produced, the degree of "negotiation of meaning" that takes place and the amount of comprehensible input obtained (Long and Porter 1985; Gas and Varovis 1985; Kramsch 1985; Montgomery and Einstein 1985; Porter 1986). To the degree that these are accepted as valuable aspects of language learning, it would appear that group work, pair activities and less rigidly structured classroom procedures ought to be considered as basic features of ESL and other language instruction.

Many people think that group work does not benefit writing students because writing is basically an individual activity especially during examinations where the students write individually without any discussion with either peers or teachers. However, according to Raimes (1983), group work in the classroom has been shown valuable for native speakers who are learning to write. Inexperienced writers are less fearful when a few of their peers read and comment on what they write, they like to see what their peers produce and they welcome the unthreatening exchange of ideas that happens in a small group. This group work is especially beneficial for the ESL learners, who need more time and opportunity to practice using the language with others. And according to Hawkins (1985), "*Working with groups is a mutual, enhancing environment for active, socially realistic learning*"(p.37).

Although group work has been proven to be advantageous to language learners, the teacher might justifiably feel that with groups of students talking to each other, away from the teacher's direct supervision, a little of the teacher's control of the class is sacrificed. To some extent, it probably is. But when control means that it is mostly the teacher who is speaking and asking questions, then, student participation and involvement will drop. The students, not the teacher, need the practice in language use.

Consider the following two situations:

1. The teacher assigns a topic, such as "My Favorite Sport" to the students, telling them how to go about doing it, explaining what the teacher wants in a piece of writing, and giving them thirty minutes to write the composition.
2. The teacher asks a question, such as "What is your favorite sport and why? " and asks the students to discuss this in the class in small groups of four or five students.

During the discussion, the teacher walks around the room, contributing to the group discussions, helping students who are stuck for particular words or phrases and asking leading questions to draw more silent students into discussion. One student in each group takes notes and keeps an account of the discussion and later reports to the whole class so that other students can comment and ask questions. While each group is reporting to the whole class, a student writes a summary of the main points on the board. Only then do the students write - for a student in another group as the reader. (Raimes, 1983: 19).

In the first writing situation, students listen to the teacher and then plunge into writing. They are entirely dependent upon their own resources, for both content and grammar, with no access to any resources of information. In the second situation, students begin by actually using - before they write - the content, vocabulary, idioms, grammar and sentence structures that they will need when they do write. They rehearse the topic, they get ideas from hearing

others, they make connections. When they finally sit down to write, the blank page is no longer quite so awesome.

Another group activity during the prewriting stage is *brainstorming*. Brainstorming lets students work together in the classroom in small groups to say as much as they can about a topic. The teacher does not have to monitor grammar or punctuation, except when the speaker cannot be understood, though the teacher will obviously be the resource person to whom students turn as they search for the right word or the right structure to express their ideas. Whatever the writing assignment is based on –a reading, picture, map, personal experience or an examination essay question - it can be preceded by student talk, specifically by a brainstorming activity, with students producing relevant vocabulary, making comments, asking questions and making associations as freely as they can in a short time. After brainstorming orally together, students can then do the same on paper, writing down as many ideas as they can without worrying about grammar, spelling, organization or the quality of the ideas. Then, they will have something to work with, instead of a blank page.

### **2.2.1.1. Peer Criticism**

Most teachers and administrators are now aware of the fact that peer-tutoring "*is a promising `new' way of applying principles of collaborative learning in organized programs of college instruction*" (Bruffee 1978 : 432). Of course only the organization is new, since wise teachers have always known that students and pupils can often teach each other things which resist assimilation through the direct instruction of a teacher. However, one question should be considered: Do peer tutors replace teachers?

According to Bruffee (1978), the answer to this question is no. In fact, peer tutoring tends to create more rewarding work - especially for teachers of introductory courses, and potentially for teachers of advanced courses as well. Peer tutoring supplements rather than replaces the formal classroom teaching that students unquestionably need. It is proven that

"most students also need informal, unstructured relations with knowledgeable, interested peers in order to profit most from formal instruction" (Bruffee 1978 : 432-433).

Simply the presence of a sympathetic peer to talk over academic problems seems to have some positive effect on students' work. According to Hawkins (1985), "*Perhaps peers make good critics not so much because one may know something the other doesn't, but because it's more fun to work through problems together with students your own age than to work in isolation under the direction of someone from a different generation*". (Hawkins 1985: 641).

Beck (1978) in her study at Nassau Community College, seems to agree with Hawkins when she states that: "*On the whole less self-confident, less verbal, less skilled and less motivated than most four-year college students, community college students have the most to gain from exchanging ideas with someone who is a peer and with whom they can make the most of the informal environment that a writing workshop affords. If beginning writers are to see writing as a real means of communicating, it seems logical that they begin with those who will be most understanding of their words and ideas and most supportive of their attempts to put them together*". (Beck, 1978: 439 ).

The educational and financial advantages of peer tutoring are clear. But perhaps of equal importance are the valuable lessons in human relations that tutors and tutees learn from each other. In the interchanges of the workshop they have the opportunity to get to know and understand people whom they might otherwise not meet or talk to. They learn the ways in which people can help one another and the sorts of attitudes that are conducive to the constructive exchange of information and ideas. One student-tutor in Beck's (1978) study remarked to her that she had learned more about people in one semester of tutoring than she had in any of her psychology or sociology courses. Also tutors can improve their own writing by helping someone else improve his or hers.

Peer tutoring also benefit the tutees. In fact, Beck (1978) showed that the overwhelming majority preferred student-tutors to faculty-tutors. A poll of classroom teachers indicated as much improvement in the writing of students tutored by peers as those tutored by faculty; several instructors noticed increased enthusiasm about writing in general in students of peer tutors (Beck 1978). This is not surprising because peers provide tutees with accessible models. Tutees can hope to emulate the skills of their peers, while those of their teachers sometimes seem hopelessly beyond them.

Furthermore, most students with writing problems have had little experience with writing as an authentic means of communicating their own thoughts and ideas. They seldom see writing as a means to clarify and objectify. Peer tutoring gives them a chance to relax and test their written communications on a reader who will respond immediately. And, too, a peer is likely to find the ideas and experiences of a tutee familiar, even to share them, and to allow plenty of latitude in both language and ideas. This sympathetic response helps new writers get started and encourages them to explore new forms of expression for their ideas.

#### **2.2.1.2. Peer Evaluation**

Peer evaluation involves peers who meet in small support groups to respond to each other in writing. The interpersonal skills needed for peer evaluation can also be developed at this time. A suggested procedure follows:

\* *First stage.* Students work in pairs on tasks that take fifteen to twenty minutes to complete. (These tasks do not have to be related to writing or even English). "*Work with someone you do not know*" and "*Work with someone you have not worked with before*" are criteria for selection of partners.

\* *Second stage.* Students work in groups of four on tasks of fifteen to twenty minutes. Groups change with each task. A group of students working in front of the rest of the class can be used to model and shape desired group behavior. Roles (recorder, discussion leader

etc.) may be assigned. When all students seem accepted in these groups, the class progresses to the next stage.

\* *Third stage.* The teacher assigns students to groups for sustained projects. Evaluation procedures may be used to focus on group dynamics and interpersonal skills.

\* *Fourth stage.* Students select their groups for sustained projects or supports.

\* Whenever necessary or appropriate, a class may return to a prior form of group work.

(Beaven 1977: 148)

During peer evaluation, teachers need to provide many opportunities for students to write immediately after the presentation of a stimulus like nonverbal movies, sensory awareness activities or interpersonal encounters.

#### **2.2.1.2.1. Advantages of Peer Evaluation**

Peer evaluation offers each student an opportunity to observe how his or her writing affects others. As trust and support grow in the small groups, students begin writing for peers, developing a sense of audience, becoming aware of their own voices and using their voices to produce certain effects in others (Beaven 1977). According to Silver (1978); "*Probably the single most important condition for teaching writing is the willingness on the part of the student writer to accept criticism and grow as a result of it. A consensus of peers is often more influential than a single opinion of a teacher*" (p. 435).

Research studies dealing with peer groups and evaluation of writing (e. g., Lagana 1972, Ford 1973) indicate that improvement in theme-writing ability and grammar usage, when small groups of students engage in peer evaluation, may equal or even exceed the improvement that occurs under evaluation procedures carried out by the teacher. Lagana, in particular, discovered that his experimental group improved more than the control group in organization, critical thinking and sentence revision; the control group showed greater

improvement in conventions. Ford (1973) found that the college freshmen in the experimental group showed significantly higher gains in both grammar and composition ability.

Peer evaluation also strengthens the interpersonal skills needed for collaboration and cooperation as students identify strong and weak passages and revise ineffectiveness, as they set goals for each other and as they encourage risk-taking behaviors in writing. When peers have regular opportunities to share their writing and to take part in evaluation procedures, they exercise power or control over decisions that affect their work. Furthermore, as the dynamics of small groups evolve, peers develop a sense of group inclusion, acceptance, support, trust, reality, testing and collaboration (Beaven 1977).

The educational value of group work, the personal-growth potential and the development of interpersonal skills make peer evaluation highly desirable for classroom use . Students seem to learn how to handle written language more effectively as they read what peers have written; peer models seem to be more efficacious than models from established writers. As peers collaborate to revise passages they engage in taxing work, motivating them to diagnose what is wrong, prescribe what is needed and then collectively struggle through revision procedures. Editing and revising become more palatable as group efforts and when everyone in the group is stuck, the "teachable comment" comes forth (Beaven 1977).

Another advantage is that the teacher is relieved of spending countless hours on grading papers. Interestingly, all the research studies on peer evaluation emphasize this point (Lagana 1972; Maize; Ford 1973; Pierson 1967; Sager 1973). Through the use of peer evaluation procedures, students are able to write more frequently and to receive more immediate feedback and teachers have more time for individualized instruction and for conferences with students.

Yet there are disadvantages to peer evaluation. Group processes take time, groups that function tend to spend half their time on process and half on task (Beaven 1977). If a curriculum has vast amounts of material to cover and if the teacher feels compelled to cover everything, frustration is bound to set in unless teachers and students want to spend time on group processes. Interpersonal skills take time to develop and many teachers may need the security of an in service course or a summer school course in group work before they will feel sufficiently competent to use group procedures (Beaven 1977).

Another problem that has emerged is that "*some teachers do not trust group processes*" (Beaven 1977: 152). In one school, teachers working with peer evaluation were first reading the papers, tallying the mistakes and developing class exercises to deal with errors. After the group work, teachers read the evaluations and papers (again!), discovering that some peers were correcting passages with no mistakes. So teachers were correcting the mis-corrections, spending an inordinate amount of time and becoming frustrated.

Because peers obviously lack the sophistication of the teacher, they will misperceive some passages, but these distortions can be looked at diagnostically, since they illuminate where the students are and what they think is good and bad, effective and ineffective, correct and incorrect. Students' misperceptions can help the teacher determine where to begin instruction. Moreover, a teacher must allow students to have freedom to make mistakes and to develop confidence in their own perceptions and decisions. If a teacher is able to facilitate such group work, then, peer evaluation has untapped potential for the improvement of student writing. If this is the case, then, peer evaluation should be used much more extensively.

### **2.2.2. Feedback**

Feedback is a fundamental element of a process approach to writing. It can be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision (Keh 1990). In other words, it is the comments, questions and suggestions a reader

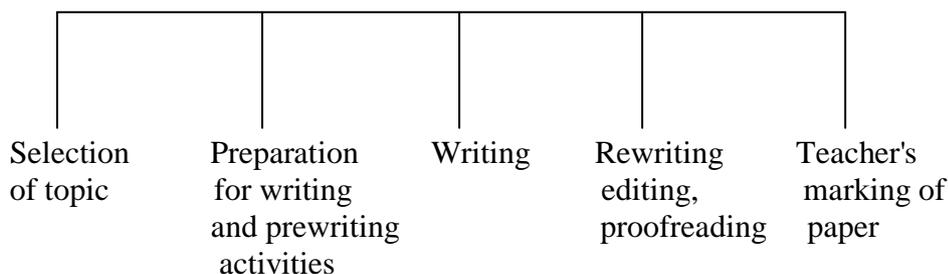
gives a writer to produce "*reader-base prose*" (Flower 1979) as opposed to writer-base prose. Through feedback, the writer learns where he or she has misled or confused the reader by not supplying enough information, illogical organization, lack of development of ideas or something like inappropriate word-choice. A review of literature on writing reveals three major areas of feedback as revision. These areas are: peer feedback, teachers' comments as feedback and conferences as feedback.

### 2.2.2.1..Peer Feedback

In literature on writing, peer feedback is referred to under many names for example peer response, peer editing, peer critiquing and peer evaluation. Each name connotes a particular slant to the feedback, mainly in terms of where along the process this feedback is given and the focus of the feedback. For example peer response may come earlier on in the process with a focus on content (organization of ideas, development with examples) and peer editing nearing the final stages of drafting with a focus on grammar, punctuation, etc. (Keh 1990).

### 2.2.2.2. Teacher Feedback

Responding to students' writing is very much part of the process of teaching writing. It is not just tacked onto the end of a teaching sequence, a last chore for teachers and a bore for the students. Rather, it is as important as devising materials and preparing lessons. More often than not, the sequence of classroom writing follows the pattern in Figure 5.



**Figure 5: Writing Process Sequence** ( Raimes 1983: 139.)

Most teachers of writing will agree that marking comments on students' papers causes the most frustration and usually takes the most time. Teachers worry whether the comments will be understood, produce the desired results or even be read. To avoid writing ineffective and inefficient comments, the first step is for the teacher to respond as a concerned reader to a writer - as a person, not a grammarian or grade-giver. Keh, for example, urges the teacher to communicate "... in a distinctly human voice, with sincere respect for the writer as a person and sincere interest in his improvement as a writer" (1970: 976).

Comments on students' papers that take the form of a paraphrase of the ideas expressed, praise, questions or suggestions are more productive than an end comment like only "Fair", "Good", or "Needs more work". What has been said of writers writing in their first language - "Noticing and praising whatever a student does well improves writing more than any kind of amount of correction of what he does badly" (Diederich 1974: 20) - applies to ESL students, too. So the teacher's first task should be to read the paper through once first before writing anything on it and then to note what the student has done well, from organizing ideas to using the apostrophe correctly (Raimes 1983).

Another recommendation is to limit comments according to fundamental problems, bearing in mind that students cannot pay attention to everything at once. This requires teacher to distinguish clearly between "higher order" (such as development of ideas, organization and overall focus of what they are writing) and "lower order" (surface, mechanical errors) concerns, not only when commenting on final draft, but also when giving written comments as part of the writing process (Keh 1990). According to Zamel "*teachers and students should be working on the problems of writing as they writ*" (1983: 182).

When students are incapable of generating lists or notes, which seemed to be the case for the least skilled writers classroom time needs to be devoted to brainstorming (either oral or written) and the development of prewriting activities. As students articulate their ideas, their

teacher, rather than imposing some predetermined order on these ideas, should be helping them to find this order by raising questions about the writer's intention and focusing on the discrepancies that exist between what the writer wanted to communicate and what is in fact communicated. As students come to understand the importance of this dialogue, both through one-to-one conferences and through classroom discussion centering on student writing, they can begin to serve as "teachers" for each other, either in pairs or small group collaboration and can then incorporate this teacher-reader voice into their very own interactions with their texts. It is in this way, and not through the post-hoc comments that appear on students papers, comments that tend to perpetuate the erroneous notion that writing is a matter of following a set of prescribed rules (Sommers 1982), that they are likely to develop a real sense of reader expectations.

Intervening throughout the process sets up a dynamic relationship which gives writers the opportunity to tell their readers what they mean to say before these writers are told what they ought to have done. Raimes (1983) seems to agree with this point when she mentions that "*the teacher as sympathetic reader and editor can intervene at various points in the process*" (p. 141). The stages of the writing process, then, will look like this:

1. Selection of topic by teacher and/or students.
2. Preparation for writing/prewriting activities.
3. Teacher read notes, lists, outlines, etc. and makes suggestions.
4. Student writes draft 1.
5. Student makes outline of draft 1.
6. Teacher and students read draft: add comments and suggestions about content.
7. Student writes draft 2.
8. Student reads draft 2 with guidelines or checklist: make changes.
9. Teacher reads draft 2: indicates good points and areas for improvement.

10. Student writes draft 3.
11. Student edits and proofreads.
12. Teacher evaluates progress from draft 1 to draft 3.
13. Teacher assigns follow-up tasks to help in weak areas.

It is through such a relationship that readers (teachers) can gain insight into the writers' (students') thoughts and discover that, although the text may appear illogical, it was in fact produced quite rationally but "followed misunderstood instruction, inappropriate principles or logical processes that did not work" (Murray 1982: 144). In the case of ESL writing instruction, for example, the outlines that students are asked to formulate or the models that they are asked to imitate in order to inhibit the transfer of certain cultural thought patterns, as is suggested by Kaplan (1967), may have little effect on writing since these approaches are based on predictions about students' performances, predictions that are hypothetical and consequently not necessarily accurate.

It is much more sensible and productive, therefore, to adopt an approach more akin to error analysis and to create syllabi (rather than one single syllabus) which are student-centred; by studying what it is the students do in their writing, the teachers can learn from them what they still need to be taught (Zamel 1983). All of this, of course, applies no less to language-related concerns. Through the interaction that is shared by writers and their readers, it is possible to discover the individual problems students have with reference to syntax, vocabulary and spelling. It is possible to find out which errors are the results of incorrectly formed rules about the language (Bartholomae 1980). One can even discover that errors may be the result of an ineffective monitor (Krashen 1982). For example, one might be able to determine that spelling errors may be the result of not "seeing" the words in the dictionary rather than a failure to have looked them up. This of course makes the typical exhortation to

the students to use the dictionary totally irrelevant and also makes the teachers aware of the need to teach specific strategies for dictionary use.

Responding to writing in this way is based on the assumptions that establishing the cause for error is necessary before prescribing corrective measures and that addressing individual needs, letting the students teach the teachers what they need to know, should form the basis of further instruction. Corder made this point about language learning and teaching: *“By examining the learner's own "built-in" syllabus, we may be able to allow the learner's innate strategies to dictate our practice and determine our syllabus; we may learn to adapt ourselves to his needs rather than impose upon him our preconceptions of how he ought to learn, what he ought to learn and when he ought to learn it”*. (Corder 1967 : 170).

Brumfit, too, critical of an "accuracy-based curriculum (which) is by definition a deficit curriculum for students, because it does not start from what the student does", has explained the importance of a "student-centered curriculum": *“A course which was based on what the student could do himself most naturally would simultaneously indicate to the teacher what his next moves should be, and to the student where he needed to adjust his intuitions and where, therefore, he required help most”*. (Brumfit; 1979: 188).

Such an approach is especially warranted when *“we are dealing with ESL students who are seemingly quite advanced by virtue of their class placement and their oral language skills but whose writing may reflect a different situation entirely”* (Zamel 1983: 183). As students work through a set of successive drafts, coming to appreciate the purposefulness of revision, they should learn from their teachers and fellow students that issues of content and meaning must be addressed first and that language is of concern only when the ideas to be communicated have been delineated. This is no easy matter for either ESL teachers or students to accept, given the fact that these students are still developing linguistic competency and that their teachers feel responsible for advancing this development.

However, it makes little sense to pinpoint errors in the first drafts, since these first papers may undergo substantial changes once they have been read and responded to (Sommers 1982). Furthermore, a premature focus on correctness and usage gives students the impression that language form, rather than how language functions, is what is important and may discourage them from making further serious attempts to communicate. As Brannon and Knoblauch say; *"If we preempt the writer's control by ignoring intended meanings in favor of formal and technical flaws, we also remove the incentive to write and the motivation to improve skills"* (1982: 165).

The most recent approaches to language instruction have underlined the fact that language learning can best be promoted when language is used purposefully and communicatively, when language accuracy serves linguistic fluency and is subordinate to it. As one proponent of such approaches, Widdowson insists that language teaching allow for the *"capacity for making sense, for negotiating meaning, for finding expression for new experience"* that creative use of language is not *"the sole prerogative of native speaker"* (1978: 212). The language learning process characterized in this way, as a process of making meaning, parallels exactly the process of composing. It is time for ESL teachers of composition to begin to see the relationship between these two processes and to recognize that meaning is created through language, even before the language is written down.

### **2.2.2.3. The Writing Conference as Feedback**

The individual conference between student and teacher, which occurs over a draft of the paper (Graves 1978; Murray 1978), is a widely recommended technique for teaching during the writing process. Conferences are thought by directors of freshmen composition programmes across the U. S. to be the most successful of their teaching programmes. In a national survey of exemplary teachers of writing at the elementary and secondary levels, conferences proved to be the only type of feedback during the writing process that the

teachers consistently agreed to be helpful. A survey of some of the students of these teachers at the secondary level showed that students found talking to their teacher during the writing process the best technique for helping them learn to write (Graves 1975). Carnicelli (1980) says that "*conferences are especially effective in a process approach because they occur when the student needs and appreciates help*" (1980: 102). He continues: "*If a student "can't think of anything to write about," a prewriting conference can help identify some promising subjects. If the student has found a decent subject but has written a dead-end draft, a conference can suggest new questions to ask, new possibilities to explore*". (1980: 102-103)

The pages of journals for teachers published by the National Council of Teachers of English contain an extensive literature on the writing conference. Practitioners of this technique describe the conference as a "*student-centered*" learning situation where "*a student discovers his own ideas*", where "more "real" teacher-student interaction" takes place (Murray 1978). These articles urge teachers to listen to students in order to teach them, to allow students to voice their own concerns about writing and to focus on the problems they encounter when they sit down to form their ideas into coherent prose.

Strong evidence suggests that conferences "work" so effectively as part of writing course because they allow more verbal interaction between teachers and individual students, more talk about each student's writing than is possible in the classroom where each teacher must manage a roomful of students. Graves (1983) singles out the student-teacher conference as a central interactive event in the development of young children's writing skills; writing conferences permit teachers to respond immediately to students' notions about what writing is and to help them adopt strategies to improve their skills.

The assumption in the literature on conferences, thus, is that teacher-student interaction contributes to student learning. Murray (1980) points out that when the teachers listen to students analyzing their own writing, students are learning to react to their own work. In

essence, the conference is a training ground for self-evaluative response. In the learning situation of the writing conference, then, the students' "roles" include analyzing and thinking about their writing as well as putting their thoughts into words. The teachers' "roles" include listening to the student, identifying composing problems, helping the students solve those problems, not just for the moment but the future as well and deciding how much higher the student can be encouraged to reach.

Vygotsky (1962) provides a theoretical framework to account more specifically for why this type of teacher-student interaction during the writing conference has such great teaching potential. He points out that although traditional approaches define, levels of development based on what children can do alone, such measures do not adequately describe children's mental capabilities to learn. He defines the "*zone of proximal development*" as "*the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving under adult guidance or collaboration with more capable peers*" (p. 86).

#### **2.2.2.3.1. A Rationale for the Conference Method**

There are many good reasons for using the conference method. Carnicelli (1980) has grouped them all together under five main headings:

**a.** Individualized instruction in writing is more effective than group instruction.

According to Carnicelli (1980) not one of the 1,800 students he studied found classes as useful as conferences. Some of the students put the matter bluntly. "*Without conferences, the course would be meaningless*". "*Conferences are helpful, but class is a waste of time*". Most students found at least some value in their classes, but even those who liked their classes they most found them less useful than the conferences. "*Although valuable information was disseminated during class, I learned about my writing in my biweekly conferences*".

The strictly psychological value of individual writing conferences was also apparent in the student comments. According to Carnicelli (1980) a number of students expressed deep insecurity about themselves as writers and appreciated the privacy of the conference.

**b.** The teacher can make a more effective response to the paper in an oral conference than in written comments. *"A teacher who reads papers at home and relies on written comment is working in a vacuum"* (Carnicelli 1980: 106) . If the task were simply to assign a grade, this practice would be sufficient; but, if the task is to help the student revise the paper, the teacher can benefit greatly from the student's actual presence.

A conference is far more effective than written comments as a way of communicating with students. It is possible for a teacher to make more comments in a conference than in an equal amount time spent in writing. It is easier and more efficient to talk about complex problems than it is to write about them. Written comments serve very well for correcting small points of grammar or style, but it is difficult to clarify a large problem of content or point of view without talking to the student.

### **2.3. Effective Writing Practices**

Many practices can be mentioned in the writing classes as suggested by Harris & Graham (2009)

**2.3.1. Writing Strategies:** Explicitly teach students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their written products. This may involve teaching general processes (e.g., brainstorming or editing) or more specific elements, such as steps for writing a persuasive essay. In either case, we recommend that teachers model the strategy, provide assistance as students practice using the strategy on their own, and allow for independent practice with the strategy once they have learned it.

**2.3.2. Summarizing Text:** Explicitly teach students procedures for summarizing what they read. Summarization allows students to practice concise, clear writing to convey an

accurate message of the main ideas in a text. Teaching summary writing can involve explicit strategies for producing effective summaries or gradual fading of models of a good summary as students become more proficient with the skill.

**2.3.3. Collaborative Writing:** Allow students to work together to plan, write, edit, and revise their writing. We recommend that teachers provide a structure for cooperative writing and explicit expectations for individual performance within their cooperative groups or partnerships. For example, if the class is working on using descriptive adjectives in their compositions, one student could be assigned to review another's writing. He or she could provide positive peer feedback, noting several instances of using descriptive vocabulary, and provide constructive feedback, identifying several sentences that could be enhanced with additional adjectives. After this, the students could switch roles and repeat the process.

**2.3.4. Goals:** Set specific goals for the writing assignments that students are to complete. The goals can be established by the teacher or created by the class themselves, with review from the teacher to ensure they are appropriate and attainable. Goals can include (but are not limited to) adding more ideas to a paper or including specific elements of a writing genre (e.g., in an opinion essay include at least three reasons supporting your belief). Setting specific product goals can foster motivation, and teachers can continue to motivate students by providing reinforcement when they reach their goals.

**2.3.5. Word Processing:** Allow students to use a computer for completing written tasks. With a computer, text can be added, deleted, and moved easily. Furthermore, students can access tools, such as spell check, to enhance their written compositions. As with any technology, teachers should provide guidance on proper use of the computer and any relevant software before students use the computer to compose independently.

**2.3.6. Sentence Combining:** Explicitly teach students to write more complex and sophisticated sentences. Sentence combining involves teacher modeling of how to combine two or more related sentences to create a more complex one. Students should be encouraged to apply the sentence construction skills as they write or revise.

**2.3.7. Process Writing:** Implement flexible, but practical classroom routines that provide students with extended opportunities for practicing the cycle of planning, writing, and reviewing their compositions. The process approach also involves: writing for authentic audiences, personal responsibility for written work, student-to-student interactions throughout the writing process, and self-evaluation of writing.

**2.3.8. Inquiry:** Set writing assignments that require use of inquiry skills. Successful inquiry activities include establishing a clear goal for writing (e.g., write a story about conflict in the playground), examination of concrete data using specific strategies (e.g., observation of students arguing in the playground and recording their reactions), and translation of what was learned into one or more compositions.

**2.3.9. Prewriting:** Engage students in activities prior to writing that help them produce and organize their ideas. Prewriting can involve tasks that encourage students to access what they already know, do research about a topic they are not familiar with, or arrange their ideas visually (e.g., graphic organizer) before writing.

**2.3.10. Models:** Provide students with good models of the type of writing they are expected to produce. Teachers should analyze the models with their class, encouraging students to imitate in their own writing the critical and effective elements shown in the models.

## 2.4. The Effective Teaching of Writing

Hillocks (1991) concluded from his meta-analysis of research studies that the most effective teaching of writing was what he called “*the environmental mode*”. Hillocks (1991) contrasts the “*environmental mode* with” *the natural process*” mode. He sees the traditional mode as assuming that knowledge can be imparted by the teacher to engagement in writing and the “*natural process*” mode as rejecting the use of models to teach the features of genres and relying instead on students finding their own structures and improving them through successive drafts.

Teachers of writing in the USA such as Atwell (1998) have moved towards greater explicitness in teaching discourse knowledge: Atwell (1998) has made much greater use of modeling writing and teaching specific features of written language through “*mini-lessons*”

Several studies which have focused on the differences between good and poor writers may give pointers to how to provide effective teaching of writing. Good writers have been found to have more discourse knowledge (Mc Cormick et el, 1992) and to be more proficient in spelling and punctuation which may reduce cognitive load and free up more resources for other aspects of composition (Kellogg , 1994) .

Good writing requires self regulation of the writing process (Harris and Graham 1992). Good writers reflect more during the process of writing. They plan and revise recursively (Hayes and Flower, 1986), monitor their writing (Beal, 1990) and consider their audience as well.

As Harris and Graham (2009) argued to help students become good writers teachers must “*Charge their focus from evaluating and correcting finished papers to helping students expand and elaborate qualitatively the stages of their composing processes; they must, in short, help their students become more reflective writers*” (p278)

Hayes' increased emphasis on the importance of reflection is mirrored in the greater attention paid to self regulation in recent studies of writing in both England (Wray, 1994) and the United States (Levy and Ramsdell, 1996). In the latter country the research of Harris and Graham (1996) into the role of strategy instruction and self- regulation seems to be amongst the most detailed and extensive of studies of the teaching of writing. They show how strategy instruction can be successfully integrated into process writing classrooms and how the development of self- regulation is an important aspect of strategy instruction.

## **2.5. Strategies to Achieve Proficiency in Writing EFL Compositions**

Most L2 learners' writing is judged according to criteria that are static and product-based. That teachers draw conclusions about intellectual ability on the basis of structural and grammatical problems has also been well documented (Sternglass, 1997; Zamel, 1998). Variability in writing, which is typical of a learner's interlanguage, is a concern when addressing proficiency issues. The definition of proficiency has consequences for L2 students; it affects their ability to complete writing tasks across the disciplines, cope with the demands of academic English, and receive recognition as well-informed, critical thinkers.

One problem in assessing language performance is that it must address the many factors related to the contexts in which language is used. According to Bialystok (1998), any definition of language proficiency is deeply entangled in theoretical attitude. On the one hand, there is the formalist approach, which attempts to explain language as code. According to this perspective, *"language proficiency is an ultimately unknowable abstraction that reflects the universal competence of native speakers"* (p. 502).

On the other hand, there is the functionalist approach, which explains proficiency in its relationship to communication in specific contexts. In this respect, it is *"the outcome of social interaction with a linguistic environment"* (p. 502). In conversation, often both parties assume

some common knowledge and take advantage of verbal and nonverbal communication; however, in written discourse, common knowledge cannot be assumed; therefore, the writer may need to provide more background information in order to communicate clearly.

Language requires a combination of formal structure, that is, a clear set of standards, and communicative application, which includes recognition of variations from the rules. Consequently, a proper definition of language proficiency would *"present identifiable standards against which to describe language skills of users in different contexts"* (Bialystok, 1998, p. 504).

A more complete conceptualization of language performance, then, acknowledges personal characteristics, topical or real-world knowledge, and affective schemata, among other factors related to the social and cultural context (Brown, 2000).

Alongside the cultural and curricular aspects of standardization, there is variability in the *process* of L2 learning. Learners vary in the ultimate level of proficiency they achieve, with many failing to reach target-language competence. This variation is often the result of individual learner differences in motivation and aptitude, in addition to the use of an assortment of strategies, such as inferencing and self-monitoring for obtaining input and for learning from it (Ellis, 1994; Krashen, 1982).

However, instead of setting the standard as a well-defined, functionally balanced system, and proficiency as the degree of deviation from this norm, with errors "marked, counted and statistically analyzed," Klein (1998) advocates acknowledging learner varieties. According to Klein, these are: *"Systems in their own right, error-free by definition and characterized by particular lexical repertoire and particular interaction of organizational principles"*(p. 538).

In fact, it may be more useful to think about proficiency as a process, one in which learners alternate in their use of linguistic forms according to the linguistic and situational contexts (Ellis, 1994). From a functionalist perspective, communicative competence in writing should also take into consideration learner variability and error within particular contexts. Nevertheless, for L2 writers, the greater the language proficiency (however defined), the better the writing quality. In fact, both language proficiency and composing abilities can, or perhaps should be, accounted for in evaluating L2 writing performance and instruction (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Valuable insights from research in second language acquisition and writing development can assist in developing instructional techniques linking the two processes--acquiring a second language and developing writing skills, especially for academic purposes. Both Flower (1994) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) have stressed the benefits of process approaches to writing instruction and the need for more knowledge-transforming tasks. Taking the concept of "knowledge transformation" further, Wells (2000) argues that writing approached in this way is also an opportunity for knowledge building, *"as the writer both tries to anticipate the likely response of the envisaged audience and carries on a dialogue with the text being composed"* (p. 77).

However, if students have not developed learning strategies to monitor their writing errors, and if they do not receive enough conceptual feedback at the discourse level, then the positive effects of the instruction may backfire. Instructional approaches that can be used effectively with L2 writers show us what is at stake for L2 instructors and students alike.

First of all, students may be able to communicate more effectively if they are exposed to models of not only standard paragraphs and essays, but also a variety of genres of writing, including flyers, magazine articles, letters, and so forth. By examining a variety of written

texts, students' awareness can be raised with regard to the way words, structures, and genre contribute to purposeful writing. They can also be made aware of different types of textual organization, which can in turn affect L2 students' composing processes (Swales, 1990; Raimes, 1991, 1998).

Models can also be used for text analysis, which can help L2 writers see how particular grammatical features are used in authentic discourse contexts. Depending on the learners' levels of proficiency and writing abilities, models can seem fairly formulaic, as in the knowledge-telling model of the five-paragraph essay. However, as the students progress, they need to be aware of a variety of forms that "serve the writer's purpose instead of the other way around" (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995, p. 548). Cazden (1992) advocates the practice of scripting and performing texts in order to sensitize students to the many voices in a reading and how they interact. In this way, models of the target language are reinforced.

In addition to the use of written models, Cumming (1995) also points out the benefits of cognitive modeling in writing instruction, which involves explicit demonstration of the strategies experienced writers use when planning, making decisions, and revising texts. He also advocates that ESL instructors make explicit use of thinking or procedural-facilitation prompts and student self-evaluation as the optimal mode of assessment. Both these approaches promote knowledge-transforming models of composing. Self-evaluation can be encouraged in student portfolios, self-review checklists, and teacher and peer responses. In addition, verbalizing the writing process step-by-step can be effective, as it affords both students and teachers the opportunity to consider writing dialogically.

However, convincing students to evaluate their own work requires additional instructional tools, and it may not be effective for all learners. Granted, Cummings refers to self-assessment as a component of one-to-one tutoring sessions, which in contrast to the

classroom context, are ideally *"more conducive environments for the textual, cognitive, and social dimensions of error identification to be integrated with individual students' composing processes and their immediate concerns about language, ideas, and texts"* (p. 393).

Unfortunately, many teachers have large classes; nonetheless, the use of specific prompts for cognitive modeling in different aspects of composing, including prompts for error identification, has proved to be valuable. Apprenticeship models of instruction, which developed out of Vygotsky's sociocultural theories of language and literacy, are also becoming more common. Proficient students who are also fairly skilled writers can benefit from this approach. They start with what they already know and can do, but their learning is extended into what Vygotsky termed the *"zone of proximal development"* through strategic instruction, collaborative construction of opportunities and active participation (Lantolf, 2000).

Apprenticeship models enable learners to utilize the new language as a tool in the process of becoming self-regulatory. Similar to Cumming's suggestions for fostering writing expertise, *"students are supported by a scaffold of prompts and explanations, by extensive modeling, by in-process support, and by reflection that connects strategic effort to outcomes"* (Flower, 1994, pp. 142-143).

Drawing on and revising student knowledge of genres, reflecting on strategies for approaching a variety of literary tasks, and cultivating a metalanguage for discussing texts are important components of socio-literate methods (Johns, 1995; p 12)

Students come to class both to improve their language proficiency and become more confident in their writing abilities. Writing practice can also present diagnostic feedback that helps learners improve their linguistic accuracy at every level of proficiency. Instruction should provide students with ample amounts of language input and instruction, as well as writing experience (preferably through the interweaving of writing and reading, referred to as

"*intertextuality*" (Blanton, 1999), and feedback to fulfill their goals. Overt classroom instruction through modeling, for instance, is only one part of the teaching process; providing students with feedback on their writing is the other.

Essentially, we need to consider factors related to language proficiency, second language acquisition, and writing skill development when giving feedback. Specifically, the effectiveness of feedback may depend on the level of students' motivation, their current language level, their cognitive style, the clarity of the feedback given, the way the feedback is used, and the attitudes of students toward their teacher and the class (Ferris, 1997; Goldstein, 2001; Omaggio Hadley, 1993). Classroom settings, course goals, and grading procedures and standards are also important (Leki, 1990). Systematically encouraging learners to reflect on what they want to write and then helping them to make an appropriate choice of language forms has pedagogic value.

We must be aware of the complexities involved in the revision process and respond to writing so that students can make modifications with confidence and competence. Ideally, learners should be encouraged to analyze and evaluate feedback themselves in order for it to be truly effective. Teacher commentary, student reactions to commentary and student revisions interact with each other in a formidable way. How teachers intervene in writing instruction, and how L2 writers react to the feedback influences the composing process. Should teachers stress early mastery of the mechanical aspects of writing, or should they urge their students to pay little attention to correctness, at least until after a first draft has been written? Again, process models of writing instruction allow students time to reflect and seek input as they reshape their plans, ideas, and language.

In classroom practice, the focus is on idea development, clarity, and coherence before identification and grammar correction. Ideally, instruction and response serve to motivate revisions, encourage learning, induce problem-solving and critical thinking, in addition to

further writing practice (Cumming, 1989; White, 1994; Zamel, 1987). Indeed, the process approach may be effective, but if writers' linguistic ability sets limits to what they can do conceptually or affects the writing process itself, then we need a combination of process instruction and attention to language development.

Focused error correction can be highly desirable, but problematic;. In addition, there are many contradictory findings. The initial impulse for many teachers when reading L2 student writing is to edit the work, that is, focus on the structural aspects so that the writing closer resembles target language discourse. Teachers can correct errors; code errors; locate errors, and indicate the number of errors. To its benefit, attention to errors *"provides the negative evidence students often need to reject or modify their hypotheses about how the target language is formed or functions"* (Larsen-Freeman, 1991, p. 293).

However, if this focus on error becomes the totality of the response, then language, discourse, and text are equated with structure. It is then assumed that the instructor has the authority to change the student's text and correct it (Rodby, 1992). In addition, some feel it may not be worth the instructor's time and effort to provide detailed feedback on sentence level grammar and syntax, since improvement can be gained by writing practice alone (Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986). Practice alone may improve fluency, but if errors are not pointed out and corrected, they can become ingrained or fossilized in student writing, as mentioned earlier. L1 research may advocate for focusing on conception and organization, and not on mechanical errors, except for a *"note reminding the student that the final copy needs to be edited"* (White, 1994, p. 109).

However, survey reports in L2 have indicated that students both attend to and appreciate their teachers' pointing out of grammar problems (Brice, 1995; Cohen, 1987; Ferris, 1995, 1997). In support of this claim, Fathman and Whalley (1990), from their research on feedback and revision in an ESL context, concluded that grammar and content

feedback, whether given separately or together, positively affect rewriting. However, grammatical feedback had more effect on error correction than content feedback had on the improvement of content. Grammatical and rhetorical feedback should be attentive to the writers' level of proficiency and degree of readiness (Ferris, 1995, Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996; Lee, 1997; Leki, 1991). Overly detailed responses may overwhelm L2 writers and discourage substantive revision, whereas minimal feedback may result in only surface modifications to the text. Furthermore, learners may be uncertain about what to do with various suggestions and how to incorporate them into their own revision processes. More research on the effectiveness of responses on revision should be examined. (See Sengupta (2000) for research on the effects of explicit teaching of revision strategies on L2 learners' writing proficiency and perceptions about writing).

## **2.6. Grammar and Proficient Writing Compositions**

### **2.6.1. Definition of Grammar**

The field of grammar has been divided and subdivided in many ways. Usually, when students and teachers think of grammar, they think of the rules which govern written and spoken language. Patterson (1999) described this field as *applied grammar*, which makes sense, in that, speakers and writers intend to apply the grammar to their tasks. Within that field of grammar, there are both *descriptive* and *prescriptive* grammars. Patterson explained that prescriptive grammar is the rules that direct written and spoken language. These rules were further subdivided by Vavra (1996) into rules of *usage* and *syntax*. Usage includes rules about concepts like *double negatives* and *slang words*.

Syntax encompasses rules of sentence structure and its component parts.

Grammar teaching in the primary and secondary levels consists primarily of these syntax rules, usually accompanied by any the favorite usage rules of any individual teacher. Therefore, the grammar teaching and learning that are primarily described in this review will

be the prescriptive rules of syntax and usage. Also, this type of grammar has been referred to as traditional grammar or school grammar.

### **2.6.2. Grammar and Writing Compositions**

Teaching students how to write is a means to more fully engage them in literacy learning. However, this was not always the case. Fifty years ago, writing was taught via the technical aspects of proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions. Grammar instruction, or essentially “how the English language works,” was thought to be essential to learning how to write and therefore, a principal focus in teaching writing (Hillocks, 1987). Eventually, this rote approach came under increasing skepticism because it failed to engage and inspire student learning (Hicks, 1993; Hillocks, 1986).

Since then, research has helped identify more effective ways to improve the quality of writing. An early review of the literature found that teaching and studying grammar had no effect on the quality of one’s writing (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, & Schoer, 1963). This conclusion was further supported by a carefully designed three year study in New Zealand. The study examined the effects of exposing randomly assigned students to intensive grammar instruction taking up the major part of the day compared to a control group of other students who did not have the treatment ( Elley, Barham, Lamb, & Wyllie 1976). At the conclusion of the study, researchers found no statistically significant differences in writing quality between the grammar-focused treatment groups and the no-grammar treatment groups.

Further support of these findings emerged in an exhaustive research review by Hillocks (1987). After reviewing thousands of studies, the author concluded that studying grammar does not increase writing quality. He argues that these findings are not unexpected because, although knowledge of grammar is important to proper writing, the way that content is produced is not dependent upon correct grammar, but is more of an intuitive process. Furthermore, grammar is corrected, changed and accounted for during the editing or

proofreading stages of the writing process, two stages believed to have little or no influence on the content or style of writing (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996). Subsequent research shows that skilled writers focus more on content and organization, whereas less experienced writers are more concerned with writing mechanics such as spelling or diction (Hillocks, 1986).

### 2.6.3. Integration of Grammar and Writing

The new dominant practice for grammar instruction has been to integrate grammar into the practice of writing. As the method used to teach writing changed, the focus on *error-free writing* shifted as well. Knoblach and Brannon (1984, as cited in Broz, 2001) were the first to describe this shift. They explained that, in the old model for teaching writing, the emphasis was on *correctness*, which led to *fluency*, which resulted in *clarity*. In the new pattern for writing, it was concluded that fluency could be achieved through multiple drafts of writing, leading to clarity, which would then be edited for correctness.

This design is the common *writing process approach* used today:

*prewriting, drafting, revising, editing*. Using mini-lessons, writing conferences with small groups and individuals, and other methods, teachers have used practices from research on this method to integrate grammar into writing activities (Patterson, 2001; Weaver, 1996).

Noguchi (1991, as cited in Patterson, 2001) was one of the first theorists to break with the anti-grammarians side of the grammar debate. While he agreed that direct instruction in traditional grammar was ineffective, nevertheless, he asserted that grammar was an important part of writing style. He claimed that certain basic grammar should be emphasized in order to increase writing style and complement the other two components of writing: *content* and *organization*. As Shuman (1991) noted: “*Working from this base, Noguchi established grammatical priorities*” (p. 82). Noguchi prioritized the 20 most common grammatical errors and claimed that they could easily be addressed in most English classrooms through small

presentations with reinforcement. Thus, the use of this compact system makes the prospect of teaching grammar a little less formidable to primary and secondary language arts teachers.

In support of the research of Noguchi (1991, as cited in Holden, 1994), Holden studied two groups of college freshman in introductory writing courses. The students in the control group learned traditional grammar through direct instruction, while the students in the treatment group were taught through the use of the writing process approach. Both groups of students were administered the same pretests and posttests, which consisted of basic prescriptive grammar questions in a multiple choice format.

While the students in the treatment group had a lower average score on the pretest, the same students at the end of the class showed a notably higher average score than the control group. Furthermore, the students in the treatment group attempted more questions on average than the students in the control group in the posttest. Holden concluded that, not only might the process approach to writing and grammar be more effective but, also it may give students more confidence in their own knowledge of grammar (Hillocks, 1986; Noguchi, 1991; both cited in Holden).

Weaver (1996) advanced a similar argument to Noguchi (1991) and Holden (1994) through her book, *Teaching Grammar in Context*, and an accompanying article in *English Journal*. She continued the argument of Noguchi, and agreed that some features of grammar need to be taught to help students produce good writing. Weaver stated that: “*What all students need, however, is guidance in understanding and applying those aspects of grammar that are most relevant to writing*” (p. 16).

She followed this argument with the note that not all grammar lessons are appropriate for all students at the same time. Individual lessons should be given to students at the point of need and should be used only in context with what the student had written. She termed these lessons *incidental lessons*, to be used during writing conferences or as mini-lessons.

The goal of the studies conducted by Weaver was to determine the best way to teach grammar so that it would be used by students in their writing. Clearly, her research was conducted to support the work of Noguchi and Holden. While Ehrenworth (2003) believes that grammar can be taught within writing and the writing workshop, she made an important distinction that about which teachers should make note. Often, teachers are encouraged to make use of student writing to show grammatical or mechanical errors (Vavra, 1996).

Ehrenworth strongly opposed this activity, and questioned: “*Who wants to learn by having someone hold up a piece of their writing and say what’s wrong with it?*” (p. 91).

Instead, she advocated for the use of student writing to begin a conversation between students and teachers about language and grammar. Traditional grammatical errors such as fragment sentences occur regularly in great literature, and students should have the opportunity to play with language in the same way. To continue with the example, teachers can talk about purposeful fragment sentences, or determine which ones students made by mistake, and how these sentences are the same or different.

Additionally, Ehrenworth used *mentor texts* and encouraged students to mimic the text with a subject from their journals about which they had written already. In this way, students created powerful sentences and discussed the way that writers used interesting conventions, such as parentheses or dialect, from a point of inquiry. A very different integrated approach was investigated by Duckart (1995). Her motivation was simple: “[*Teachers*] have a responsibility for ensuring that the way our students present information does not undermine the information they present” (p. 3).

Her examination included many aspects of an integrated approach: authentic purpose, collaboration, and incorporation of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Duckart gave her college students, working in groups, the assignment of teaching a *mechanics mini-lesson* to the rest of their classmates. She modeled the mini-lesson process for them,

brainstormed topics with her students, provided them with resources, and encouraged them to be creative and interesting in their presentations. The results were, as expected: the students internalized what they learned by teaching the lessons, and they recognized that grammar was not secret knowledge under the control of teachers. Use of this approach not only taught the grammar needed to help students, but integrated the areas of language arts and made more meaningful connections for all.

Several suggestions were recommended by Dunn and Lindblom (2003) about the revitalization of grammar in authentic and purposeful ways. These integrated strategies included:

- a. *Build and Make Use of a Grammar-Controversy Archive*** that is used by and contributed to by both students and teachers.
- b. *Hold Public Grammar Debates*** that combines speaking, writing, and listening with a real audience and purpose can be a powerful way to have students see the importance of grammar.
- c. *Assign Descriptive Grammar Studies*** so that students can see that grammar is not just one set of rules used by people in power, but that different grammars are used for different situations.

The use of all of these activities achieve the goal of integrating grammar and help students to internalize the importance of grammar. Also, Dunn and Lindblom (2003) asserted that students would begin to see that grammar is not just a boring set of rules, but a subject that is alive and constantly changing. The authors argued that these grammar strategies and others would not only reestablish the importance of grammar in the classroom, but would also invigorate writing, speaking, listening, and reading in the classroom.

Other researchers have promoted the study of grammar within the larger context of word study combined with writing.

Vavra (1996) suggested that students and teachers need to look at grammar below the sentence level, and perhaps start with a phrase or clause.

He encouraged the use of student writing for analysis. Additionally, he cautioned teachers that they did not have all the right answers. Students became engrossed in the problem, particularly when the teacher did not know the answer absolutely. Also, he suggested that teachers and students can study clauses, independent and subordinate, in a few interesting ways. For example, he asked his students to analyze a piece of their writing for number of words per clause. He explained to them that the number of words per clause would indicate a *syntactic maturity* level for each student. Vavra reported that: “*Students can be fascinated if grammar is used to show them how their brain works and why some of their sentences don’t*” (p. 35).

A number of grammar researchers have taken the integration of grammar into language arts study even farther. Invernizzi, Abouzeid, and Bloodgood (1997) recommended the inclusion of syntax study as part of a larger word study that could be done with words found in literature and student writing. With the use of word study techniques that the authors created, students sorted words into *same/different* groups. Words were classified according to “*spelling, meaning, and use patterns in order to understand how spelling represents a word’s meaning and grammatical function*” (Invernizzi et al., p. 185).

The authors used an upper elementary unit on the Civil War to describe their methods. The unit was full of rich vocabulary, as well as the vernacular of the literature setting. Students sorted words by spelling, in this case ( *er* ), *or*, and ( *ar* ) suffix patterns, and then hypothesized about what the pattern meant in each word and what part(s) of speech the suffix created. Next, they used the word sorts to write, and in one case, used adjectives from the books studied to create a poem. This rich interplay of language has “*word-conscious*

*teachers link word study to literature; provide a flexible sequence that includes instruction in grammar, literary analysis, and writing; and provide hands-on, repeated practice” (p. 190).*

This study was the one of a few which dealt with grammar on a word-level basis.

Another researcher who encouraged use of literature for integrated grammar study was Kane (1997), who argued that sentences from books provide quality texts with which to study grammar. The use of valuable literature can provide a springboard to discussions about language and, eventually, about grammar. Kane further contended that grammatically sound language has a lyrical beauty that children naturally notice and want to replicate in their own writing. This desire produces a natural curiosity about grammar that may motivate students to learn about a subject that may have been presented before as a series of notes and boring, unrelated exercises. Finally, it has been concluded that grammar needs to be an engaging process for the student.

Hutchinson, McCavitt, Rude, and Vallow (2002) completed an intervention study with the use of a packaged grammar program that engaged different learning styles and promoted activity termed, the Shurley Method. The results from this study showed that grammar achievement improved from pretest to posttest, as well as overall enjoyment of grammar and knowledge of its importance. However, it should be noted that, in this study, the assessment of transference to writing and speaking was conducted by self-assessment on the part of the student and a post intervention parent survey.

Nevertheless, Nunan (2005) and her work on brain research and grammar development supported this type of intervention. She instructed teachers to approach stylistic grammar lessons with a novel introduction and to use lessons that appeal to different learning styles and use emotion, such as laughter. Also, she indicated that grammar techniques need to be repeated in different ways and multiple times to produce a desired effect.

Nunan wrote: *“Awareness of grammatical technique in a variety of contexts wears that particular brain pathway a little more deeply, making the writing tool easier to retrieve the next time the writer wishes to accomplish that specific stylistic purpose” (p. 74).*

Certainly, best practices in teaching and learning such as these should be taught in every subject, including grammar.

According to Hyland (2003: 122), teachers can provide students with *“the linguistic ... resources they need to express themselves at the point they need them: when they are beginning to draft.”*

He writes: *“Teachers should guard against the real danger that their language support will just present grammar as an end itself, rather than as a resource for making meanings. The grammar we teach and the ways that we teach it need to be clearly related to the kinds of writing students are expected to do in their target contexts. Language tasks should have the goal of contributing to the writer’s ultimate independent production of a well-written target genre and so should closely relate to that genre” (ibid.).*

## **2.6.4. Writing Proficiency and the Tapestry Approach**

### **2.6.4.1. Definition of the Tapestry Approach**

The Tapestry Approach is a learning approach which has purpose to make students become more active in language learning by giving material matched to the skills, abilities, goals, backgrounds and interest of students. The materials are arranged well so students are attracted to follow the learning process. It is a flexible approach because the material can be arranged and recycled when it does not match with students’ needs and goals anymore.

### **2.6.4.2. The Components of the Tapestry Approach**

One of the important components of this approach is the teacher who plays the role of informer decision-maker, monitor, facilitator, provider and counselor. The teacher also has these characteristics:

\* He knows his students' needs and students' language development.

\* Professionalism that is the teacher teaches well and determine appropriate teaching methods to match students' needs. This approach encourages communicative task-based learning centered upon themes.

#### 2.6.4.3. Writing Proficiency in the Tapestry Approach

To reach writing proficiency, according to Scarcella and Oxford (1992), the learner should have four abilities (competencies) that interact altogether.

\* **Grammatical Competence:** It involves being competent in using the grammar, vocabulary, and the mechanics of the language. Many learners are not able to express their ideas correctly, if they don't have such a competence. Thus, Grammar is a vital factor in reaching writing proficiency, and in convincing the readers.

\* **Sociolinguistic Competence:** It enables the learners (writers) to vary their types of writing, style and themes, regarding many variables, such as the topic, genre, audience (to whom the writing piece is directed), and the purpose (aims of writing). Sociolinguistic competence contributes in the self-confidence of the writer as he sees himself able to direct his writing (discourse) to all social categories (milieu).

\* **Discourse Competence:** It is the ability to organize the texts and the writing pieces cohesively and coherently. There are five linguistic devices that writers use to compose in a cohesive way. Those devices indicate a semantic link between the different elements in the text. They are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

\* **Strategic Competence:** It enables writers to acquire different strategies to extend their writing pieces (texts) effectively and correctly. There are some strategies used, for example, at the start of writing a text, like: brainstorming, or modifying suggestions. Thus, the writer feels able and free to use any writing plan, just to achieve his purpose behind such writing.

We can thus say that these competencies interact to create a good reliable piece of writing. Often, the writer focuses or exaggerates in using one competence over the others, of course, depending on the nature of writing. This is clearly shown in (APPENDIX 01)

## **Conclusion**

Composing process necessitates lack of control rather than emphasizing the need to write correctly. To help students become good writers, teachers should change their focus from evaluating and correcting finished papers to helping students expand and elaborate qualitatively the stages of their composing processes; they must, in short, help their students become more reflective and proficient writers. In doing so, they require experiences that help make the meaning and importance of written communication transparent. Good writing instruction then required active involvement and engagement to ensure the joy, pleasure, and the value of writing.



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

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## Introduction

It is obvious that we need some methodology without which the objective we aim to achieve would become impossible.

According to Mouton & Marais (1996), the research methodology focuses on the manner in which the research was planned, structured and executed in order to comply with scientific criteria. For Leedy (1993), research methodology forms an integral part of any research that is undertaken. Methodology therefore assists in explaining the nature of the data, and highlights the methods employed that will lead to the generation of appropriate conclusions through applicable data processing.

Johnson (1994:172) identifies the following “*stages of activity which must be worked through in carrying out and completing an investigation*”.

1. Establishing the focus of the study
2. Identifying the specific objectives of the study
3. Selecting the research method
4. Arranging research access
5. Developing the research instrument
6. Collecting the data
7. Pulling out of the investigative phase
8. Ordering the data
9. Analyzing the data
10. Writing up
11. Enabling dissemination

Prior to presenting the rationale for the research design and associated methods adopted within this study, this chapter first outlines the overall approach adopted. The research questions are then revisited the implications for research design highlighted and links

drawn with the conceptual foundations for this study. This includes an examination of the specific ontological and epistemological perspectives underlying this particular investigation and a brief discussion of the various research traditions related to language skills in general and writing compositions in particular, in order to place this study in context with existing work. An outline of the overall stages in the research design is then presented.

This is followed by a detailed description of the participants in the study, a comprehensive review of the data collection process and an examination of the methods of data analysis used to elicit the findings presented in chapter four, five and six. The present chapter closes with a discussion of possible limitations to the approach chosen, presentation of the proposed standards to use in evaluating research of the kind adopted in this study and touches on relevant trustworthiness and ethical issues.

Within the scope of the present study, the methodological concept is that of a combination of two approaches: the heuristic and the descriptive one. First, we have used a heuristic approach since we do not know enough about the phenomenon of teaching grammar through writing compositions and we want to discover more about it. That's to say, the heuristic approach describes complex events and attitudes in detail and in depth; specially, it can take the form of a description of an interview or of written responses such as questionnaires. Second, a descriptive approach has been adopted aiming at obtaining both qualitative and quantitative data as well as collecting facts and study relationships existing between them using scientific techniques, i .e. Statistics

In terms of research methodology, two methods, namely qualitative and quantitative, can be employed. Depending on the nature of the study, the researcher may use either, or both of these methods. For the purposes of this study, a combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods was applied. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative methods are complementary and can be presented along a continuum since it is not adequate to use a

single type of measurement. In this respect, Bell (1987:4) said: “*qualitative researchers draw on quantitative techniques, and vice-versa*”. According to Crotty (1998:216), the research method can be either qualitative, quantitative, or both, regardless of the type of research that is engaged in. The author further emphasizes that “*as researchers, we have to devise for ourselves a research process that serves our purpose best, one that helps us more than any other to answer our research question*”.

In order to quickly familiarize the reader with the overall design, the coming section presents a snapshot of the study approach and a brief description of the participants. The aim here is to provide context for ensuing discussion regarding issues such as the conceptual foundation for the study, methodology, instrument development, pilot testing and data collection and analysis.

This study utilized a modified exploratory single site case study approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data; however the research focus was on the in-depth exploration of the qualitative data. The case was made up of groups of second year EFL students at the English Department at Setif University.

### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design is defined as a plan or blue print according to which data is collected to investigate the research hypothesis or question in the most economical manner (Huysamen (1993) in De Vos & Fouche, 1998:76), Thyer (1993:94) defines a research design as “*being a blueprint or detailed plan for higher research studies to be conducted*”. Mouton (1996:107) adds to this by defining research design as being “*a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem*”. This includes the owner of the research, the selection and design of a particular method, the participants and considerations of reliability and validity.

The particular design type chosen is the “descriptor” of the manner in which the study is developed and gives an indication of the way the research findings will be presented to others (Henning et al., 2004:32).

### **3.1.1 Case Study Design**

#### **3.1.1.1 Grounds for Usage**

As mentioned earlier, in the current research, a case study research design was considered useful as it was envisioned to lead to detailed insights, discoveries, and interpretations about the teaching of grammar through the context of writing compositions.

Many qualitative researchers are committed to a case-based, insider’s perspective of a phenomenon. This position directs their attention to the specifics of a particular case (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:10). Case studies provide a comprehensive examination of a single example and in so doing they deliver a unique illustration of real people in real situations (Cohen et al., 2000:181). Case-based research leads to detailed data about the phenomenon being studied; no matter what particular research methods have been used (Henning et al., 2004:32-33). A case study is particularly useful when one is trying to provide a wealth of details and a nuanced view of participants’ experiences in a particular context, especially, when the research rests on the premise that the research participants’ perceptions cannot be understood by theory alone, as it does for this research.

Yin (2003:13-14) refers to the case study as “*an empirical inquiry that allows for investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used*”. Case studies are thus suited to situations in which it is impossible to separate a phenomenon’s variables from their context. In the case of my research, the perceptions of different participants were envisaged to learn more and better meet the needs of students within the context of learning English grammar through writing

compositions. A case study design is well suited to explore the extent to which grammar is important in improving students' writing and teachers' centrality in helping professionals design specific needs based materials.

Burns (1990:366) listed six reasons for utilizing case studies:

1. As case studies tend to generate rich data that may suggest themes for broader inquiries, they are valuable as preliminaries to major investigations.
2. Since case studies “*have the aim of probing deeply and analyzing intensively*” the intricate details of the phenomena under study, and then generalizations may be possible.
3. Anecdotal evidence that is generated within case studies can illustrate general findings.
4. Case studies may serve to refute generalizations.
5. A case study approach is preferred when germane behaviors cannot be manipulated.
6. A case study may be the optimum description of a unique historical event.

MacLeods (2001:131) associated a number of advantages with qualitative methods:

- It makes it easier for new research to get started.
- It demystifies qualitative research, and thus encourages more people to use qualitative methods.
- Researchers are more able to be flexible in return to the challenges arising from the engagement with a topic.
- It makes explicit the skills, personal qualities and support structures necessary for effective qualitative work.

- Researchers are forced to think about and justify, everything they do – it will not be possible to claim validity and rigor merely through following a predetermined package procedure.
- Qualitative research will be required to become familiar with the overarching philosophical and political factors that shape methodological choices.

### **3.1.1.2. Strengths and Challenges of Case Studies**

#### **3.1.1.2.1. Strengths**

The specific strengths of case studies are that:

- They provide illustrations of effects of phenomena in real-life contexts,
- They allow for the presentation of research in a more publicly accessible format that is capable of serving multiple audiences and
- Contribute to the learning processes of others who can use it to aid in their understanding of the issue that is illustrated.( Hayes,2000,140)

#### **3.1.1.2.2. Challenges**

Some challenges are posed by the use of case studies.

- Case studies can be complex in that they involve large amounts of data. This can become a downfall in that any attempts to summarize them can result in the leaving out of data through a process of subjective bias by the researcher.
- Additionally, it is argued that the biggest downfall of the case study is that it is impossible to generalize from the results (Hayes, 2000:140-141).

The next section provides some methodological as well as literature-based commentary to reveal how these challenges are approached for this research.

### 3.1.1.3. Researcher's Challenges

In addressing the central criticism of a case design as not being generalizable, Hayes (2000) counteracts that “*case studies are deliberately idiographic, that is to say, the purpose is never to identify general laws pertaining to all but rather to chart and provide an in-depth illustration of unique aspects*” (p.140-141). As well as sharing the argument of Hayes (2000), I share the ideas of Cohen et al. (2000), and Bryman (2004) in terms of the generalizability of this research.

Cohen (2000) argues that formal generalization via quantitative measures is just one way in which knowledge can be accumulated. He maintains that even if knowledge cannot be formally generalized this does not mean that an exploratory descriptive case study cannot contribute to the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or in a society.

The selected data collection and analyses methods in this study are thought to have aided in circumventing the challenge posed by the researcher's own bias in selecting relevant data and interpreting this data. Ensuring more involvement of participants in the data analysis process may have allowed them to monitor the researcher's analysis and choice of most pertinent data and, hence, allowed for monitoring of the influence of the researcher's subjectivity. This was by means of the creation of opportunities to reflect on my initial analysis and to elaborate on their points of view in light of this. This was initiated via a multiple phase data collection and analysis that was not solely researcher directed.

Ultimately, the achievement of rigor in the study was considered the central means to address the validity and dependability of the research especially in terms of the influence of the researcher's personal influence on the research as a whole. The rigor of the study will now be discussed in detail.

#### 3.1.1.4. Rigor

Taylor (2001) maintains that academic analysis must involve a more systematic investigation. She points out that this criterion for the evaluation of research is sometimes referred to as rigor. She further proposes that there are different views for how rigor should be attained. “*Rigor can be correlated to the depth of detail present in both the data and the analysis that is presented. It can additionally be aligned to the explication of the process of analysis that is provided*” (320-321). She argues for the possibility of retaining a modified form of the criteria for evaluation associated with quantitative research undertakings for studies that are predominantly qualitative in nature. She believes that validity can be redefined in terms of “good practice”.

To achieve rigor in qualitative research, Northcutt & McCoy (2004:38) recommend data collection and analysis methods that are public and non-idiosyncratic and that do not depend on the nature of the codes themselves. Requiring the participants to create affinities and to indicate the relationships between affinities was envisioned to attain this. It also served as a member-checking strategy because it was used as a means of consequent contact with the participants in the study to check whether they were in agreement as to the findings of the study. Member checking, as such, can also be referred to as “*respondent validation*” (Taylor, 2001:321-322).

Respondent validation was also used within the interview process as topics were confirmed, rephrased and probed to gain access to the holistic and subtle meanings of the participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2000). The aim of respondent validation was to seek corroboration of the account that the researcher arrived at. The researcher also sought correspondence between his findings and the perspectives and experiences of the participants involved in the research (Bryman, 2004).

### 3.1.2. Single-Site Study

This research is a single-site study based on the second year EFL students at Setif University where I work.

A few considerations led to the choice of a single-site for the study:

- The researcher is an insider to the institution where the research is conducted.
- Fewer samples studied in depth tend to generate more useful data in a qualitative study as opposed to larger samples, which can only be studied superficially.
- Financial and time constraints were also taken into consideration. With a single-site, less travel was required, which reduced both the time and financial resources required.
- Ease of access to participants was also considered.

### 3.1.3. Explorative Research Design

Polit & Hungler (1995:11) suggest that “*explorative research be done in order to investigate the dimensions in which a phenomenon manifests itself*”. In the first and second phases of the study focus was placed on an exploratory research design. Neuman (2003) indicates that an exploratory design is employed when the study topic is either new, or when relatively little has been written about it, as is the case with the focus of this particular study. According to Rubin & Babbie (2001:92), the exploratory design is linked to “*the purpose of the study, with the main aim to explore a topic and to provide a certain level of familiarity with it*”.

Explorative research is done for the following reasons:

- To satisfy the researcher’s curiosity;
- To have better understanding of the phenomena;

- To test the feasibility of more extensive research; and
- To develop methods to be employed in the subsequent research.

### **3.1.4. Descriptive Research Design**

The exploratory design in this study was further employed in order to explore the needs of respondents with the aim to direct the study towards a descriptive design. The main purpose of the study remains descriptive in nature and this was fully implemented in the third, qualitative phase of the study. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) validate the intention of the researcher when stating that a descriptive research design will be utilized when the researcher is interested in determining the opinion of a group of people towards a particular issue at a particular time. Neuman (2003:21-22) views the descriptive design as representing “*a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship*”.

### **3.1.5. Interpretive Research Design**

Interpretive research attempts to interpret and understand the meaning-perspectives of the participants, i.e., teachers and students in the classroom, in the search for patterns of meanings-in-action and for building up new theories (Patton, 1990). In this study, qualitative data (*interviews*) and some quantitative data (*questionnaires*) were analyzed and interpreted using the interpretive research methods.

This research aimed at exploring the way writing teachers teach grammar in the context of writing compositions and how can this be applied to improve future writings. Besides the explorative nature of the research it also adopted an interpretative research approach (Erickson, 1986, 1998) with a case-based design (Yin, 1994).

### 3.1.6. Quantitative and Qualitative Research Paradigms

#### 3.1.6.1. Quantitative Research

According to Leedy (1993), quantitative research pertains to cold research that manipulates and controls variables. For Mouton & Marais (1996), the quantitative approach displays the following characteristics:

- It displays a higher level of formalization and control,
- The range is defined in a more exact manner,
- It is relatively close to physical science.

Quantitative research employs numbers (statistics) in order to describe the characteristics of the unit of analysis. The research describes variables and the relationship between these variables. Theoretical explanations and concepts are essential in the planning of the research design, since it represents the basis of variables and its interdependency (Neuman, 2003).

De Vos et al. (2002:79) define quantitative research as “*an enquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures*”.

The researcher needs to consider the differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches, and to decide upon the applicability of either one of the approaches, or a combination of the two. In this regard, De Vos et al. (2002:81) conclude that there is general agreement amongst most authors that human science in reality employs both qualitative and quantitative methodology – “*sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously*”.

### 3.1.6.2. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research focuses on the qualitative aspects of human nature in order to describe, explain, predict and control behavior. According to Rubin & Babbie (2001), the qualitative method pursues a deeper understanding of the human experience, especially when observations and theories cannot easily be reduced to numbers.

The method of qualitative research is inductive as opposed to deductive. Rubin & Babbie (Ibid.), indicate that inductive research involves the developments of generalizations from specific observations. A quantitative approach therefore enables the researcher to observe subtle events that may be difficult to measure through other methods.

The qualitative research paradigm is founded on the following assumptions:

- Humans are complex and experience life in individual ways,
- Truth is subjective and depends on the context,
- The researcher can investigate life experiences and perceptions of other people by observing them or communicating with them,
- The researcher is an instrument of the research and cannot be entirely objective; bias is acknowledged and reflexivity is used,
- A valid sample can be obtained if the researcher selects informants who are living the experience under study and continues with data collection until data saturation occurs
- Qualitative research involves being with people in their normal environment
- Qualitative research involves description of human experience derived from analysis of data (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 1998:255-257).

For the purposes of this study, I intend to examine whether grammar is integrated during the revising, editing, and proofreading phases of the writing process. In addition to various strategies that WT can employ to help students see grammatical concepts as language choices

that can enhance their writing purpose. This level of understanding was regarded as attainable through the qualitative method and its subsequent inductive process.

### 3.1.6.3. Methodology Adopted

The methodology chosen to address the research questions as mentioned earlier was predominantly quantitative in nature. However, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods was used, which is commonly referred to as *triangulation* or *multi-method*. Triangulation was chosen because the researcher was not convinced either a qualitative or a quantitative approach would sufficiently answer the research questions. While a predominantly quantitative research framework was chosen for the study, the researcher also chose to include a qualitative aspect to confirm the quantitative findings and to provide deeper understanding and meaning using a triangulated approach. Differences between quantitative and qualitative researches are displayed below:

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tends to produce quantitative data.</li> <li>• Uses large samples.</li> <li>• Data is highly specific and precise.</li> <li>• The location is artificial.</li> <li>• Reliability is high</li> <li>• Validity is low</li> <li>• Generalizes from sample to population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tends to produce qualitative data.</li> <li>• Uses small samples.</li> <li>• Data is rich and subjective.</li> <li>• The location is natural.</li> <li>• Reliability is low.</li> <li>• Validity is high.</li> <li>• Generalizes from one setting to another.</li> </ul>

**Table 2:** Distinction between Qualitative and Quantitative Research. Hussey (1997:54)

### **3.1.6.4. Triangulation**

Triangulation is the term used when elements of a project are studied from two or more angles (Thurmond, 2001). The research design or parts of the design is approached from a variety of perspectives, usually an effort to increase the power of or to validate research outcomes (Roberts & Taylor, 1998). The research design then gives a multidimensional perspective of the phenomena studied (Thurmond, Op-cit) and the findings should bear more confirmation and strength to the outcomes (Morse, 1994). Triangulation can be simultaneous, completed in one study, or sequential, and is accomplished over a series of studies (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 1998; Morse, 1994).

When considering the research questions the researcher had difficulty in selecting a single method that would answer all the research questions in a comprehensive manner. A triangulation methodological approach was chosen because the participants' perceptions, attitudes and behaviors could be studied from a multidimensional perspective. The quantitative perspective allowed for the study to reach all the participants of the research, (namely 400 students and 10 writing teachers), allowing a broad range of data to be collected, and the qualitative perspective enabled some of the participants to provide richer descriptions of their perceptions, attitudes and behaviors(40 students and 10writing teachers).

The following section briefly describes different approaches to triangulation studies as well as the barriers to and facilitators of triangulation.

#### **3.1.6.4.1. Modes of Triangulation**

The literature describes five main ways to employ triangulation. Some studies use only one method, while others use two or more types of triangulation (Burns & Grove, 1997). The five types of triangulation are data source, investigator, methodological, theoretical, and analysis triangulation (Thurmond, 2001).

## **i. Methodological Triangulation**

Roberts and Taylor (1998) describe methodological triangulation as using more than one research method within one study. It may be within either the qualitative or quantitative perspective, or between methodologies, using both a qualitative and quantitative method in the one study. Terms used to describe methodological triangulation include “*multi-method*” (Tolson, Smith & Knight, 1999) and “*mixed method*” (Creswell, 2003). It is thought that methodological triangulation provides richer data by the possibility of exposing information that may have remained undiscovered if one method had been used (Polit & Hungler, 1995).

The methods of conducting methodological triangulation are numerous, but in all instances the most challenging aspect is relating the data so that the research does not end up being two studies within one (Foss & Ellefsen, 2002). Often the researcher will have a particular stance towards one method; however this does not lend itself to methodological triangulation (Coyle, 2000). Successful triangulation requires reflexivity between the two methods, not leaning towards one or the other (Foss & Ellefsen, 2002). Then the two research paradigms can work together to add more understanding of the phenomenon under study.

## **ii. Data Source Triangulation**

Thurmond (2001) suggests that if data source is varied then weight or believability could be added to the study, as it will reveal atypical data, and likewise similar data.

Thurmond (Ibid.) describes three types of data source triangulation. These are to do with:

- The time the data was collected.
- The place or the setting.
- From whom the data was collected.

While others discuss yet other ways of data source triangulation. This includes the study of a phenomenon from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives and also the

varying data sources within the methodologies of qualitative and quantitative perspectives (Bechtel, Davidhizar, & Bunting, 2000).

### **iii. Investigator Triangulation**

According to Roberts & Taylor (1998) investigator triangulation occurs when two or more expert researchers with different skills work with the data. One researcher may be skilled at interviewing, while another is expert at observational data collection, and another may be expert at coding data. Also there may be two or more experts in one particular methodology and, especially if there has been no prior collaboration, their similar findings will lend confirmation and credibility to the findings (Thurmond, 2001). Bechtel et al. (2000) also discuss how researchers from different backgrounds are useful in analyzing complex and emotionally charged concepts, citing that more thorough understanding may be gained if different perspectives are considered. Participants in research can also be part of this investigator triangulation and if participants review the findings and agree that they reflect what they were saying, then this will add validity and can help counteract assumptions and bias. (Bechtel et al. *ibid.*).

### **iv. Theoretical Triangulation**

Theoretical triangulation refers to the use of different theories within the theoretical or conceptual framework (Roberts & Taylor, 1998), which may be used to either test a theory or to generate a theory (Shih, 1998). Shih (*Ibid.*) describes her use of theoretical triangulation using both multiple theories to guide her study and then also to generate a theory.

### **v. Analysis Triangulation**

Analysis triangulation refers to the analysis of a single set of data from two or more perspectives or techniques in an effort to enhance confidence in the findings (Bechtel, Davidhizar & Bunting, 2000).

### 3.1.6.4.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Triangulation

The literature reports a variety of reasons where triangulation is of benefit to a study as well as some shortcomings to be aware of. The following two paragraphs will discuss some of the major reasons, and these were considered when deciding on the current study design.

#### i. Advantages of Triangulation

The use of triangulation in some studies can be beneficial where a single method would be inadequate (Burns & Grove, 1997). Triangulation can often give a more complete understanding of the phenomenon, increasing confidence in the results and overcoming investigator bias (Roberts & Taylor, 1998). Additionally, the use of investigator triangulation can allow for expert analysis of data that may not occur with one investigator, as few researchers are adept at more than one type of analysis (Creswell, 2003). The completeness, and deeper, and more multifaceted understanding of the phenomenon is implied with triangulation, thus it “*confirms and thus strengthens the argument*” according to Morse (1994:289).

#### ii. Disadvantages of Using Triangulation

Triangulation can cause confusion for a researcher when used simultaneously, according to LoBiondo-Woods & Haber (1998). Some reasons for this could include the large amount of data that is generated and investigator bias towards one particular method (Creswell, 2003). Furthermore, Morse (1994) and others have a misguided notion that triangulation will further validate the findings just because similar results are found (Shih, 1998) Creswell explains this is not always the case because an inadequacy from one approach does not always offset these failings. According to Creswell (2003) and others (Begley, 1996; Betchel, Davidhizar & Bunting, 2000; Shih, 1998; Tolson, Smith & Knight, 1999) the primary theory or method should always be rigorous enough to sustain the study with the added method adding strength by confirmation and adding more completeness to the data.

### 3.1.6.4.3. Triangulation Adopted

To meet the research objectives of the current study, methodological triangulation was achieved through:

#### i. “Mixed-method” Approach:

##### a. Stage One: Quantitative Approach

##### b. Stage Two: Qualitative Approach

These two methods were used in an effort to provide a complementary view of what is actually happening in the world of teaching writing compositions. In developing the research proposal, the researcher believed that neither a qualitative nor a quantitative method in isolation would describe what was happening.

Investigations regarding various methodologies did not give the researcher enough confidence that any would adequately answer the problem. The primary reason for selecting a mixed methods approach for the current study was that the researcher believed that a richer and comprehensive understanding of the situation required a multifaceted approach.

#### ii. Data Gathering Instruments Triangulation

##### a. Stage One: Quantitative Study

###### -Questionnaires:

\* Number of Students (400)

\* Written Expression Teachers (10)

##### b. Stage Two: Qualitative Study

###### - Individual Semi-structured Interviews:

\* 40 Students,

\* 10 Written Expression Teachers

### c. Stage Three: Observation

\*Writing Class (40 students)

\*Written Expression Teacher (1)

### iii. Data Source Triangulation

The researcher tried to diversify the sources of information by including two different groups of participants:

**a. Major Research Participants:** The researcher used 40 students as main research subjects.

**b. Subsidiary Research Participants:** The Researcher used 10 teachers as secondary research subjects.

In developing the research proposal, and the research instruments the researcher believed that diversifying the data sources would provide the opportunity to develop broad general knowledge together with deeper insight into particular participants' needs to achieve better writing.

### iv. Identifying Target Population

The targeted population consists of second year EFL students of the English Department at Setif University. They represent a total number of four hundred students (400). And Written Expression Teachers are ten (10) in all.

#### a. Collection of Data

##### - Questionnaires for Teachers and Students

There are other different means of collecting data which are famous (Cohen and Manion, 1980; Bell 1987, Nunan, 1992; Genesee and Upshur, 1996) for collecting quick

information. Some techniques have been used as regard the quantitative and qualitative perspective that our research inclines towards such as questionnaires and interviews to specify and describe naturally the teaching of writing via grammar.

In this research, we have designed two questionnaires: one for teachers to know about their strategies to improve writing compositions via grammar; and one for learners in order to know information about the effective ways used to achieve better writing. The questions included in the questionnaires are a mixture of closed and open –ended items. We opted for this procedure because of two purposes: that is, we could obtain qualitative and quantitative data from both types of questions.

### **\*Students Questionnaires: Description and Administration**

The students questionnaires were handed out to the four hundred (400) students enrolled in the English department at Setif University. All the concerned students have given back the questionnaires answered.

Before distributing the questionnaires, the students were told that they should answer the questions individually and not collectively since the questionnaire requires the personal views of the students. In addition, students were explained the aim of the questionnaire to make sure that they understood all the questions stated and answered all of them appropriately. The questionnaires were anonymous and students were told that they had to respond frankly to all questions. The students questionnaires are designed to gather general information about the students themselves, their level of study, their sex and their views about teaching writing compositions with the reference to grammatical competence.

The questionnaire is composed of thirty three (33) questions and divided into three sections. It consists of a mixture of closed questions which require from the student to answer by “yes” or “no” or pick out the right answer from a number of options, and open questions, which require from them to give full answers or to express an opinion.

- **Section One: General Information(Q1 and 2)**

In this section, the students are asked to specify their age range (q1), which may help us to determine whether old and young students have the same views and strategies about writing compositions correctly. As far as gender is concerned, we expected to have different strategies from male and female students.

- **Section Two: Developing Writing Composition (Questions 3to 16)**

In this section, the students are asked whether they like writing (Q3) and write essays (Q4) then how often they write compositions; once per week, twice, or more (Q5). In question six, students are asked how they spend Written Expression session, and how they respond to the points made about the format of the essay (Q7). After that, they are asked if their WE Teachers help them to write essays (Q8). If yes, they are required to say how, whether by giving a brief review of some syntactic and grammatical points, or by giving a list of choices, related to the topic, or by providing evaluative FB (Q9). In question ten, they need to tell the kind of writing they like most: free writing, guided or semi-guided writing or all of them if possible then justify their choice.

Moreover; in (Q11) students are asked to give their opinion whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied in writing essays. In question twelve, students are asked about their needs for writing the next essay: whether they need help with; the structure, the content, the mechanics or organization. If students could use a response partner, they are required to say if such a partner helps: by listening while the other is reading aloud; putting remarks on his/her essay; discussing together the content and the form of the essay (Q13).

In (Q14) students are required to say what they are learning by doing the essay, for this question, they had many choices. They could reply by reaching grammar competence, develop a well organized way of thinking, creating their own style, or assessing and reinforcing their acquired knowledge in other courses. After that, students are asked about

their attitude towards correction whether they like to be corrected by their teacher, peers, or by themselves (Q15) and if they prefer TFB, how do they benefit from it (Q16).

- **Section Three: “The Grammatical Structure” (Q17-33)**

In this section , the students are required to say when they are writing whether they think about the structure or shape of it, or they tend to keep writing until they have developed their ideas to the full (Q17). Here many choices are given to students and they have to tick one choice. In doing a piece of writing, they just keep writing, or think about structure during writing, or refer to plan.

In Q18, students are asked how often do they make a plan for their composition writing without being told to do so: whether always, sometimes, occasionally, or never. And how often do their teachers of writing tell them to make a plan first (Q19). In addition to that, they are asked to say what helped them to create the structure of any piece of writing. They could tick the appropriate answer among a variety of choices (Q20).

Furthermore in (Q21), students are supposed to identify the difficulties that face them when writing compositions, whether they are spelling problems, grammatical categories, constructing sentences, the use of transitions, or punctuation marks.

Students are further asked in (Q22) to justify why should they write compositions. They have to choose 3 reasons because: writing reinforces the grammatical structures, or writing helps them to learn vocabulary, or it consolidates their prior practiced language, or it helps them develop the skills of communicating in writing, or they need it for some specific purposes as to record, review, note talking... etc. In Q23, students are required to explain the extent to which they benefit from writing essays, whether they will use it in future writing for different purposes, take tests and exams, keep journals and diaries, make portfolios, do research and projects, or apply for a job or scholarship. After they have done apiece of

writing, are they encouraged to think about how they have done it, i.e. to reflect on their writing (Q24).

Moreover students are asked whether their writing teachers focus on the process or the product of writing (Q25). And how do they feel, by the end of the year, about writing compositions with correct grammar. They are asked to say whether grammar has really helped them to learn more to write essays (Q26). More importantly, students are questioned about the strategies being adopted by their writing teachers while writing compositions (Q27). And whether they regard them useful (Q28).

In Q29, students are asked whether there is interaction between them and their teachers during the writing process or not and then say whether it is helpful or not and if yes, they should explain how (Q30). What do they expect from their writing teachers to say about their draft (Q31). Students are finally asked about their evaluation to their own experience in writing, whether they find it successful, unsuccessful or complicated (Q32). This question ends by asking students to suggest some ways to improve writing via grammar (Q33). (See Appendix 2)

### **\*Teachers Questionnaires: Description and Administration**

Teachers may have different ways of drawing students' attention towards writing compositions with particular reference to grammatical competence. A questionnaire was devised to investigate the strategies used by writing teachers to teach composition writing and help their students to improve their writing through grammar practice. The teacher questionnaires were handed out to the ten (10) Written Expression teachers at the English department of Setif University, who are actually teaching composition writing to second year students. All the teachers returned the questionnaire.

Before distributing the questionnaires, the teachers were told that they could answer them immediately or keep them for a few days and take their time to complete them. All the

teachers were explained the questions and the purpose of the questionnaire. Two weeks later, the questionnaires were collected. The teacher questionnaire was designed to gather general information about the teachers, their experience, qualification, and the way they teach writing compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness.

The questionnaire is composed of thirty (30) questions and divided into three sections. It contains a mixture of two types of questions: *closed questions*, which require the teacher to answer by “**yes**” or “**no**” or to pick out the appropriate answer from a number of options and *open questions* to give personal answers. Thus, both types of questions are equally important, i.e. while responses to closed questions are easier to analyze, more useful information is often obtained from open questions. In this respect, Nunan(1992) states: “*It is also likely that responses to open questions will more accurately reflect what the respondent wants to say.*” (p143).

- **Section One: “General Information”**

In this section, the teachers are asked whether they are part-time or full- time writing teachers(Q1) as well as the number of years they have been teaching writing(Q2) and about their qualifications (Licence, Magister or Doctorate) (Q3).

- **Section Two: Developing Writing Compositions (Q4 to Q14)**

In this section, teachers are required to say how they respond to the points made about the format of the essay writing (Q4). They also need to say what strategies they use while teaching composition writing (Q5) and if they find them useful or not (Q6). In question seven, they are asked if interaction is present between them and their students during the writing process.

Question eight illustrates how do teachers measure their students’ writing development, and how far students have explicit understanding of writing (Q9). Teachers are also asked about their views about developing good writing, so they have a choice between four elements

(Q10). In Q11, teachers are asked how they help or encourage their students to write more and more essays. They have a number of choices to tick the appropriate answer. In Q12, they are required to say how their students can reach composition writing proficiency.

Teachers are further asked about the type of approach that they follow in teaching writing compositions, whether it is a product, process, genre, or eclectic approach. (Q13). Again, they are questioned about feedback provision and its' importance in teaching writing composition (Q14).

- **Section Three: Grammar Competence (Q15 to Q30)**

In this section, the teachers are asked about the importance of grammar in writing (Q15) and whether grammar practice improves writing or not. If yes, they are required to tell how (Q16). In question seventeen, they are questioned whether they provide students with feedback on their writing. If yes, they should identify the common writing problems that they notice in students' writing compositions such as: grammar mistakes, mechanics, poor content, poor organization of ideas, or poor vocabulary (Q18).

For question nineteen, teachers need to say whether their students require writing multiple drafts. If yes, they should illustrate on which draft they usually provide FB; on the first draft, the second, the final draft or may be all of them together (Q20). After that, in Q21, they are asked about their views about FB whether it is used by students to improve their composition writing. They also need to tell why they regard some errors as more important to correct than others (Q22). And the most serious type of errors they correct (Q23) as well as they need to justify why they notice more errors than they actually correct (Q24). Teachers are further questioned about which errors they correct first whether spelling, syntactic, lexical or coherence (Q25) and illustrate the different techniques they use for correcting students' writing compositions (Q26).

In questions (27, 28, 29), teachers are asked about their believes: whether they think their students take into consideration TFB to make progress in writing compositions and how (Q27). And how they can describe their attitude towards written errors in teaching composition writing (Q28). In Q29, they are required to say whether they are satisfied with their own way of teaching composition writing. Finally, they may add extra information that they think can help teachers deal with teaching composition writing with particular reference to grammatical competence. (See Appendix 3)

### **\*Interviews with Students and Teachers**

The distinctive research technique that is the interview is used in conjunction with other methods in research such as questionnaires. Each one completes the other. It is therefore, very helpful in the way that we can be able to use the data from the interview to approve or reject what is being investigated.

The interview has a major advantage that is adaptability as Bell (1987) believes. In using interviews in addition to questionnaires, we have followed up ideas, observed responses as well as investigated motives and teachers as well as students feelings and views, which are very difficult to be present in the questionnaires. In support to Bell view, Seale (1998) gave importance to interview. This research tool proved to be beneficial in generating information on students' actions, motives, beliefs and experiences (Seal, 1998).

The questions included in the interview are a mixture of three types:

Fixed alternative items; open –ended items; and scale items.

- 1- *Fixed alternative items*, where the alternatives are given by the researcher, e.g. can writing be taught?

a- Yes

b- No

- 2- *Open-ended items*, where the answers are provided by the respondents, e.g. to what extent the teaching of composition with reference to grammar is important?

3- *Scale items*, where the choice is sorted out from a set of alternatives that are graded.

Interviews are time-consuming and it is very difficult to interview all second year students who are numerous. Thus, a sample of representatives is needed. So we divided the students into groups, forty in each group. The total number of the groups we have is ten(10) groups. Then, we chose four representatives for each group to be interviewed. So, I audio-recorded forty (40) interviews with students of second year at the English department of Setif University, among four hundred (400)

Concerning the teachers, the same sample who were given questionnaires are being interviewed, i.e. ten written expression teachers. Concerning the time taken for interviewing is likely to last in 15 or 20 minutes not more as Genesee and Upshur (1996) agree on. The interview took place in the subjects' usual classroom. We were sitting side -by- side not face to face with interviewees to make the interview more cooperative. In support, walker (1985) as cited in Nunan (1992) said: "*Sitting side -by- side can often result in a more productive interview than sitting face -to- face (sitting side -by- side can convey the Message that the interaction is meant to be cooperative rather than confrontational*" .(p152).

We decided to interview the students in small groups so that they would feel less inhibited than if they had been on their own and also that their thinking might be stimulated by the points made by other members of the group. At this stage in the research we were looking for possible directions to follow rather than being concerned with issues of one student's opinions influencing another, but we were still keen that students provided the kind of particularity in their reasons and examples that had the ring of truth about it. As we noted above, strong arguments have been put forward about the weaknesses of the data derived from general questionnaires in composition research.

Concerning the way how to record thy data, we have chosen the tape recording which is the obvious choice for us to collect data which is objective, naturalistic and can be

reanalyzed after the event as agreed by Nunan(1992). Although the participants knew that the interview was being recorded, the technical setup was arranged as unobtrusively as possible. Hidden behind a colleague folders, the tape recorder was placed on a chair next to the observer to be operated discreetly. We decided to use interviews so we could explore issues in greater depth than questionnaires would allow. As Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) point out, a respondent's answers can be followed up to obtain more information and gain clarification.

The tendency of students to provide the answers they think a teacher wants (rather than what they really believe) is well known (Black, 1999). Thus students writers give a performance rather than report what they have done when describe how they have gone about writing compositions. Greene and Higgins (1994) point out they may perform more when they want to impress the researcher.

We decided that our best safeguard against student's performing would be to ask them for reasons for their thinking and for particular examples of general points. Asking students to reflect on concrete examples of writing rather than writing in general is, of course, more likely to yield more detailed information. Thus, obtaining reasons and examples was not difficult in the interview as the students were able to make detailed reference to their writing practice as opposed to questionnaires. In the latter students didn't answer all the questions especially those referring to personal views, i.e. open questions.

In sum, the questionnaires and the interviews are commonly used techniques of data collection. Though they differ in some points, they do complement each other. In other words, the interview differs from the questionnaire in the way that the former involves the gathering of data through verbal interaction between persons; whereas the latter required from the respondent to record his responses to the questions.

Despite the fact that interviews may face a problem of subjectivity on the part of the interviewer, interviews are good means for collecting data. They have advantages as well as

disadvantages as the other means of research methods. One advantage, for example, is that it allows for greater depth than with other methods. Another advantage is concerned with the rate of return that is good in interviews and poor in questionnaires. But still there exist complementarities between interviews and questionnaires.

Through this method of gathering information, our aim is to obtain answers to the same questions. This is to help us describe and compare the students and teachers responses.

( For more clarification, see Appendix 4 & 5)

- **Observation**

Observation plays a central role in practice teaching. We had to negotiate access with classroom teachers of Written Expression for lesson observations. We were given copies of the students' time table to attend the Written Expression lessons about composition writing. This meant being in various lessons as students were taught the subject of writing compositions. We asked for permission to observe lessons in writing compositions. We explained the purpose of my research to the writing teacher. A few teachers welcomed me and others denied me access to their lessons.

Moreover, even among those who welcomed me some tended to see me as “**critic**” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 64) and sought my assessment of their lesson; whereas others acted as research facilitator and provided me with advice on the conduct of my research. We showed an interest in students' learning abilities to develop their writing through grammar. We wanted first to gain student's trust. The latter was very important for me since we felt like an outsider.

We reflected on the advice that in an effort to get to the source of my data, we would of necessity have “*to tolerate situations, actions and people which one disapproves or that one finds distasteful or shocking.*” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 72).

Furthermore, we need to be well prepared before observing one particular classroom. We could have the opportunity to observe the writing teacher and his students in particular settings as well as to review recordings of one way of teaching writing compositions to EFL learners. The nature and purpose of observation, however, differs according to who participates in the observation process. For example, in observing Written Expression teachers' class, my focus will be on how the teacher teaches grammar through writing compositions, on such things as how the writing teacher creates a positive atmosphere for learning, on the strategies and procedure used by the teacher, on the way the teacher gives instructions and explanations, and how he/ she gives feedback to learners on different drafts. The focus then will be on how the teacher carried out different aspects of the lesson.

### **-The Nature of Classroom Observation**

Although it is an important component of teaching practice, the nature and limitations of observation need to be kept in mind. Teaching is a complex and dynamic activity, and during a lesson many things occur simultaneously, so it is not possible to observe all of them. Forty students in a class may be responding to the lesson in many different ways. Some may be finding the lesson stimulating and may have a clear sense of what the purposes of writing compositions are and how they are supposed to carry them out. Others may find some of the writing tasks insufficiently challenging or motivating and may be paying minimal attention to the teacher or the lesson. And at the same time the teacher may be struggling mentally to maintain the flow of the lesson and may have realized that he/she set the lesson up in a non productive way. None of these aspects of the lesson are directly observable. And even if aspects of classroom behavior are observable- such as the amount of talking students engage in when completing an activity- We may not be able to tell whether this is an indication of confusion or of interest.

For all these reasons, the information that we can gain during an observation always needs to be clarified through conversation and discussion in order to understand the meaning of what we really observed. This is what we actually did when we observed the writing teacher and the different strategies that she adopted in teaching compositions in relation to grammar to second year students at the English department of Setif University.

At the same time, the presence of an observer in the classroom sometimes influences the nature of the lesson, making the lesson untypical of the teacher's usual style of teaching. The teacher may feel that the observer is not only there to assist him in developing his writing skills, but also to evaluate how well he is doing. To avoid such thoughts, we discussed the matter with the teacher before our observation to clarify our position as a teacher researcher and to make him aware of the points that we need in our research. For more clarification, see (Appendix 6)

## **Conclusion**

It is of capital importance by way of concluding this section by saying that whichever method of information gathering is selected, the aim is to obtain answers to the same questions from a large number of individuals to enable the researcher not only to describe but also to compare, to relate one characteristic to another and to demonstrate that certain features exist in certain categories.

Still, these are just hints on the theoretical background which will best be clarified when we come to practice, i.e. when analyzing the data being gathered in the following chapters.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF TEACHERS**

### **QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS**

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## Introduction

In this chapter we have attempted to analyze and discuss the data gathered from teachers and students' questionnaires and interviews respectively. Through this, we have tried to see if Written Expression teachers teach grammar in the context of writing compositions, and to what extent does grammar contribute in improving writing compositions. On the other hand, we have tried to see the students' views and strategies used to improve their writing. Teachers may use different strategies while teaching compositions referring back to grammatical competence. A questionnaire was devised to investigate this issue.

### 4.1. Analysis of Teachers Questionnaires

#### 4.1.1. General Information on the Teachers

All the teachers teach Written Expression (WE) to second year students. We narrowed down the focus only on second year WE Teachers(WETs) because it may be considered as a fertile area full of grammatical error correction strategies and we want to deal with composition writing in particular in order to examine the way WETs teach grammatical concepts through writing compositions.

**Q1:** Are you a- Part time teacher

b- Full –time teacher?

**Q2:** What is your teaching experience?

**Q3:** What are your qualifications?

Teachers	Teachers' Position / Experience / Qualifications						
	a.a.a	b.b.b	b.c.b.	a.f.a.	b.f.c.	b.e.b.	a.d.a.
WET1	X						
WET2		X					
WET3			X				
WET4				X			
WET5					X		
WET6						X	
WET7	X						
WET8							X
WET9	X						
WET10		X					
<b>Total : 10</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

**Table 03:** Teachers' Position/ Experience/ Qualifications

This table sums up three questions (Q3, 4 and 5). Subjects, here, are asked to state their position as full-time or part-time teachers as well as to how many years they have been teaching WE. In addition, we need to have an idea about their qualifications (Licence, Magister, or Doctorate). Three part-time teachers have an experience of 0-4 years and obtained a Licence degree (WET1, WET7 and WET9 who are represented by "a.a.a"). Two teachers are full-time teachers (WET2 and WET10 who have the symbol of "b.b.b"), their experience is between 4 and 8 years and have a Magister degree. Another full-time teacher has 8-12 years of experience and Magister degree (WET3 whose symbol is "b.c.b"). It is also noticed that there is one part-time teacher, who has over twenty years experience with Licence degree (WET4 who is classified under "a.f.a"). Another full-time teacher, over 20 years experience with a Magister degree (WET5 with the symbol "b.f.b").

Moreover, we are left with two WE teachers: a full-time teacher, with 16-20 years experience and a Magister degree (WET6 whose response was “b.e.b”); and a part-time teacher, with 12-16 years experience and Licence degree (WT8 whose response was “a.d.a”).

**(End note 1)**

Thus, WE teachers have different positions and different teaching experience with different qualifications as table one (01) shows. But beyond such a difference, we want to analyze the rest of the questions in the questionnaire and examine teachers’ response according to these three main aspects to see if those teachers who have more experience have different attitudes from those with little experience.

#### **4.1.2. Developing Writing Composition**

To develop writing compositions is a long and difficult process. WETs are asked different questions about the format of the essay, the strategies they used to teach writing compositions and the different steps they used to help their students’ writing development.

- **Q4:** How do you respond to the points made about the format of the essay?

Different responses have been recorded and WETs agreed that first of all they took into consideration the overall format of the essay including the organization of paragraphs, then paying attention to punctuation, words forming and then vocabulary and grammatical structures. Some other teachers referred to guidance and simplifying things for their students to learn better.

- **Q5:** What strategies do you use while teaching writing compositions?

As far as this question is concerned, we found that WETs used various strategies starting with sentence formation, paragraph structuring, grammar well- formedness, vocabulary and lexical correctness, spelling and finally coherence. In this respect, WET1 said: *“I ask students to write spontaneously and I provide with the necessary language structures that may help them in the writing process”*

To comment on this question, we may say that all WETs, whatever their position, experience or qualifications, agree that strategies such as writing conference, partnership writing, peer response groups and grammar mini-lessons are all valuable methods for teaching writing compositions.

- **Q6:** Do you find them useful?

	Yes	No	Total
Number of TTs	10	/	10
%	100%	/	100%

**Table 04:** The Usefulness of Strategies in Teaching Writing Compositions

A glance at the table shows that all the WETs (100%) agree on the great importance of such strategies while teaching writing compositions. They are useful especially when they are presented as a revising strategy. The latter may lead students (SS) to combine their ideas in more fluid and sophisticated ways and through this strategy, students may improve their writing compositions. This may lead us to one fact that there is interaction between the teacher and students during the writing process as the following question may illustrate.

- **Q7:** Is there interaction between you and students during the writing process?

	Interaction between T and SS		Total
	Yes	No	
Number of Teachers	10	/	10
%	100%	/	100%

**Table 05:** Interaction between WET and SS in the Writing Process

In the table above, we notice that all WETs agree that they interact with their SS during the writing process.

To achieve success in writing compositions, SS require to feel at ease and interact with their teachers. Interaction then determines what is meaningful and relevant for SS at any particular

stage. All of them agreed on the presence of interaction with their students which is really basic and lead to better understanding.

Question eight aims at determining the way how WTs measure their students' writing development. It can be through taking part in class if it is an individual work but if it is a group we can see it through the group work. It can also be measured on the basis of grammar, unity of ideas and coherence in the single paragraph. In this respect, WET 4 believed: *“The measurements depend on the criteria that he/she has taught and whether students follow or not; if they follow them it is meant that they are progressing”*.

One more teacher (WET 7) added : *“By comparing their drafts used or collected right from the beginning of the year in a form of portfolio just in case there is a progress, I make sure that my strategies were of utility; if not I have to change them by others more effective”*.

As far as question nine (09) is concerned, WETs were asked how far do SS have explicit understanding of the process of writing and improve their writing?

Different responses were collected from different WETs. Some (WET1, WET4) agree that SS understand some techniques and used them to develop their writing and enhance them to be creative. Whereas WET9 expressed his opinion saying: *“I believe that the process of writing is almost always implicit and SS just cannot be aware of how process takes place. The Process is unconsciously happening”*.

Another WET10 added: *“They usually know the skeleton (i.e. how to organize the essay) but lack information and content”*

We can further say that in order to reach this stage, WETs should go step by step and help their SS by whatever means to achieve improvement in their composition writing.

- **Q10:** Do you believe that good writing develops when
  - a- Writers reflect on their own creation and how can they develop it.

- b-** Students can use their abilities to reflect on themselves as learners to improve their work.
- c-** Students need to use themselves as developing writers.
- d-** Reflection on the process of writing helps writers develop.

WE Teachers	When good writing develops							
	a		b		c		D	
WET1	X							
WET2			X					
WET3							X	
WET4					X			
WET5	X							
WET6					X			
WET7							X	
WET8	X							
WET9							X	
WET10							X	
%	2	20%	2	20%	2	20%	4	40%

**Table 06:** How Good Writing Develops

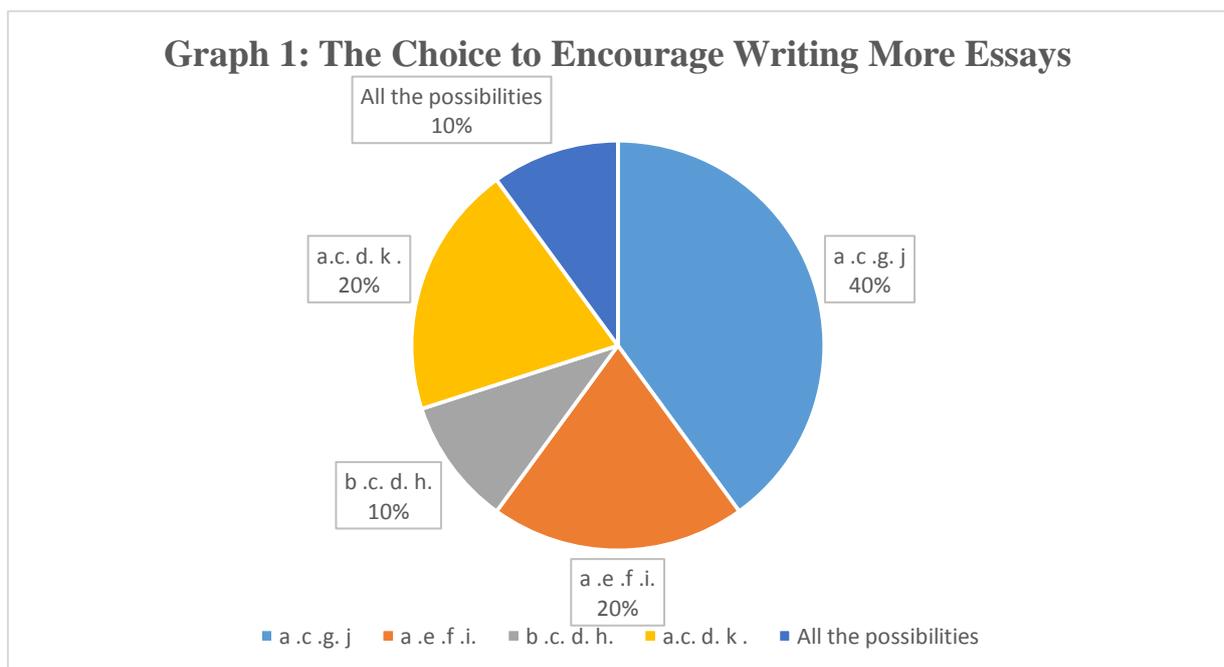
With this question (Q10), we sought to determine teachers' views (opinions) about how good writing can be developed. We have recorded different answers. We notice that four respondents out of ten teachers (i.e.40%) put a cross in “d” column, which implies that the majority think that good writing develops when reflection on the process of writing helps writers develop. This may take place when certain steps are followed when writing a composition. These steps are: (1) **Drafting** (first and second draft) ; (2) **revising** (adding,

deleting, modifying and rearranging ideas), and finally (3) **editing** ( attending to vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics).

- **Q11:** How do you encourage / help your students to write more essays?

WE Teachers	1 <sup>st</sup> Choice		2 <sup>nd</sup>		3 <sup>rd</sup>		4 <sup>th</sup>		5 <sup>th</sup>		
	a .c .g. j		a .e .f .i.		b .c. d. h.		a.c. d. k .		All the possibilities		
WET1	X										
WET2					X						
WET3			X								
WET4	X										
WET5							X				
WET6									X		
WET7	X										
WET8			X								
WET9	X										
WET10							X				
Total 10	100%	04	40%	2	20%	01	10%	02	20%	01	10%

**Table 07:** The Choice to Encourage Writing More Essays



In this question, WETs are kindly invited to choose more than one answer from choice “a” to “K”, according to their views. What we notice in table (05) is that the majority of WETs, which represent (40%), encourage their SS to write more and more essays by many ways as by giving a brief review of some syntactic and grammatical points (sentence types, verbs, agreement ...); by giving clear instructions; and providing models of writing; as well as respecting scaffolding in doing tasks such as: matching, reordering sentences and paragraphs and finding the odd one (a c g j).

Then, in the second place, WET3 and WET8 expressed their choices to write more essays by supplying worksheets and providing evaluative Feedback(FB) and then affording a variety of texts and topics (a e f i).

Moreover some other teachers ‘WET5 and WET10) have different views on the choices being given to help SS write more essays. To encourage SS, they may use warming up by brainstorming ideas (i.e. collecting relevant ideas to the topic); then giving clear instruction in addition to presenting a list of choices of words, idioms and proverbs related to the topic; and finally by encouraging collaborative writing such as writing workshops. Such an order is displayed in Table five(05) as “a c d k”.

However, WET6 has responded differently than the other teachers and uses all the possibilities stated in order to encourage students write more essays. Thus, there is no single choice to follow and teachers need to use many ways to guarantee students’ writing improvement. The more they write essays the more they develop. In short, we can say that teachers’ motivation should be present all the time.

In question twelve (12), teachers are asked about how can their students reach composition proficiency. This may be achieved through much practice and trials such as: matching, reordering sentences or using some cues to help them develop their composition as well as keeping following grammatical rules and teachers’ instructions. In this respect, WET4

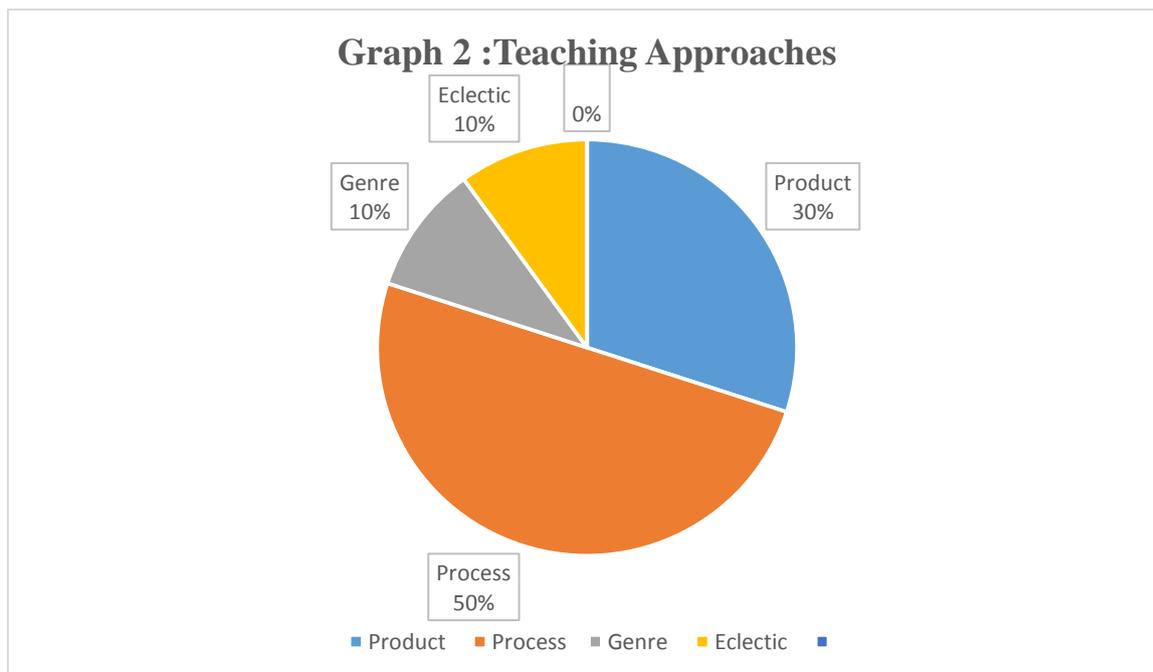
added: *“To my way of thinking, the best way of being good writers is to write. Constant writing and drafting help learners to develop and enrich their writing skill and proficiency. Without forgetting the skill of reading. The latter also helps so much”.*

Thus, good writers are always good readers.

- **Q13:** What type of approach do you follow in teaching writing compositions?

Teachers		Teaching Approaches							
		Product		Process		Genre		Eclectic	
WET1				X					
WET2					X				
WET3		X							
WET4				X					
WET5		X							
WET6				X					
WET7						X			
WET8								X	
WET9				X					
WET10		X							
Total 10	100%	3	30%	5	50%	01	10%	1	10%

**Table 08:** Teaching Approaches



Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority has admitted that they use *process approach*. The latter developed as a reaction to the confines of the *product approach*. The process approach enables students to clearly decide about their own writing «*by means of discussion, tasks, drafting, feedback, and informed choices (thereby) encouraging students to be responsible for making improvement themselves*”. As Jordan (1997:168) has stated. Moreover, the process approach makes the SS more creative, imaginative, purposeful, interested in writing on different topics, and personal in their writing.

In addition to one important fact, within the task, students are given considerable freedom.

- **Q14:** How is Feedback provision important in teaching writing compositions?

Different responses are recorded and all the writing teachers agree to give a big role to FB which proved to be fruitful and helped SS to write better through correcting their mistakes and developing views about writing. In this respect, WET2 said: “*Feedback is so important since it draws students’ attention to their errors and so this will help not to repeat them again*”. According to Chaudron (1988), FB is “*An inevitable constituent of classroom interaction, for no matter what the teacher does, learners derive information about their behavior from the teachers’ reaction, or lack of one, to their behavior.*” (p133)

In agreement with Chaudron, Ur (1996) wrote: *“In the context of teaching in general, feedback is the information given to the learner about his performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving his performance”*. (p. 242)

When proposing a FB strategy, Reesor, (2002) aimed at assuring that SS would take into account their Teacher FB(TFB) to improve their writing as well as investing teachers’ time and thought in the FB to be provided. Such FB strategy could be a workable and effective tool for TT to use in order to achieve effective FB and help SS to be aware about their mistakes and this can improve their writing.

### 4.1.3. Grammatical Competence

Teachers, here, are asked about the importance of grammar in writing and whether grammar practice improves writing or not. If the answer is “yes”, teachers are required to say “how”? (Q15, Q16).

	Grammar and Writing		Total 10(100%)
	Yes	No	
Q15	10	/	100%
Q16	10	/	100%

**Table 09:** The Importance of Grammar in Writing

A glance at the table above shows that all the WETs, i.e.100% responded by “yes” answer to the questions “15” and “16”.

Concerning how grammar practice improves writing, different teachers expressed their views about that point. WET1 said: *“ In the fact that; if there are a lot of mistakes, the essay will be ruined unpolished writing. But, with more grammar practice will lead to better writing”*.

In addition, WET5 added: *“Grammatical well-formedness is an essential part of the writing process in addition to lexis and coherence, correct grammar stands for a correct meaning. The latter is highly important for the reader”*.

Thus, to show that grammar practice improves writing, we have for example, in narrating and biographies, the use of the simple past is necessary. Therefore, writing grammatical correct sentences will help construct longer sentences (compound and complex) and hence will develop the student's ability in composing paragraphs and writing compositions.

Moreover, we can say that the most beneficial way of helping SS improve their command of grammar in writing is to use SS' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. It is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety and usage in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills. As students revise and edit their writing.

Teachers can provide grammar instruction that guides SS in their attempts to identify and correct problems in sentence structure and usage. For example, a teacher who sees that many SS are writing sentences containing misplaced modifiers can present a mini-lesson on this concept, using examples from student writing. The teacher can have SS edit their own and one another's drafts for this problem. Integrating grammar instruction into the revising and editing process helps SS make immediate applications, thus allowing them to see the relevance of grammar to their own writing.

- **Q17:** To what aspects of writing does grammar contribute?

This question acts as a complement to the preceding one (Q16).

It is well known that writing is a complex and challenging activity for many SS, that's why TT should focus on the grammatical concepts that are essential for the clear communication of meaning. Research conducted by Hillocks, (1986) shows that grammar instruction that is separate from writing instruction does not improve SS' writing competence. Through detailed studies of SS' writing, Shaughnessy (1977) concludes that the best grammar instruction is that which gives the greatest return for the least investment of time. Shaughnessy advocates four

important grammatical concepts: the sentence, inflection, tense, and agreement. She recommends that TT encourage SS to examine grammatical errors in their own writing. What is noticed here is that all WETs agree on the fact that SS need their teacher guidance in applying some grammatical concepts in the context of writing. This goes with Weavers' (1998) view who proposes a similar approach to teaching grammar in the context of writing. She writes: "*What all SS need is "guidance" in understanding and applying those aspects of grammar that are most relevant to writing*".

All WETs (100%) proposed four grammatical concepts that enable writers to show improvement in sentence revision, style, and editing.

- 1- Teaching concepts on subject, verb, sentence, clause, phrase and related concepts for editing.
- 2- Teaching style through sentence combining and sentence generating.
- 3- Teaching sentence sense through the manipulation of syntactic elements.
- 4- Teaching punctuation and mechanics for clarity and style.

On the whole, WETs should not teach all grammatical concepts to all SS; TT should prioritize and provide instruction on the grammatical elements that most affect their SS' ability to write effectively.

Question eighteen (Q18) acts as a support to the preceding one (Q17) in which teachers are asked about how sentence combining improves writing compositions?

Different responses were collected from different WETs.

Some WETs (WET2, WET5, WET9) agree that sentence combining is the strategy of joining short sentences into longer, more complex sentences. As SS engage in sentence - combining activities, they can learn how to vary sentence structure in order to change meaning and style. WET2 said: "*The use of sentence combining is an effective method for improving students' writing in general and essays in particular. The value of sentence combining is most evident*

as SS recognize the effect of sentence variety (beginnings, lengths, complexities) in their own writing” .

In this respect, Hillocks and Smith (1991) states that: “Sentence combining practice provides writers with systematic knowledge of syntactic possibilities, the access to which allows them to sort through alternatives in their heads as well as on paper and to choose those which are most apt.” (p150).Some others (WET7and WET10) show that sentence combining is more effective than free writing in enhancing the quality of student writing. Therefore, systematic practice in sentence combining can increase students’ Knowledge of syntactic structures as well as improve the quality of their sentences, particularly when stylistic effects are discussed as well.

By participating in written sentence combining activities, SS better understand the ways in which sentence structure, usage and punctuation affect meaning. When presented as a revising strategy, sentence- combining activities help SS indentify short, choppy sentences in their own writing, leading them to combine their ideas in more fluid and sophisticated ways. As students generate more complex sentences from shorter ones, they discover how the management of phrases and clauses, for example, affects meaning and its impact on their readers.

- **Q19:** Do you provide your SS with FB on their composition writing?

	Written Teachers Response		Total
	Yes	No	
Number of Teachers	10	/	10
%	100%	/	100%

**Table 10:** The Use of FB on Composition Writing

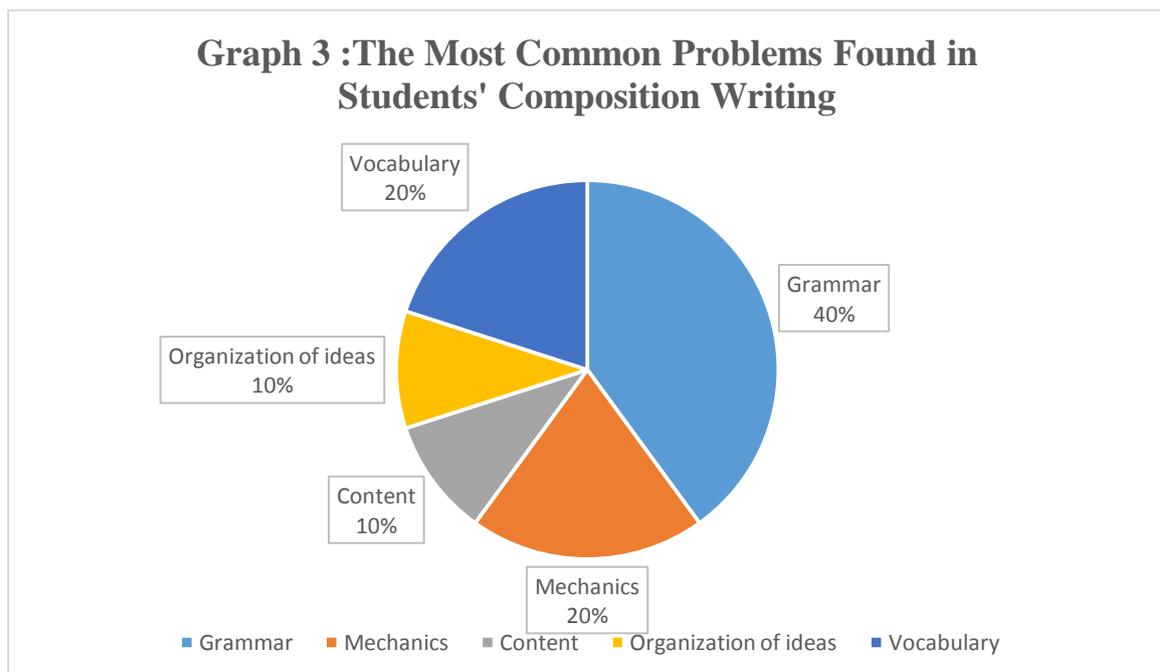
It is worth noting that all written Expression teachers ( i.e.100%) provide their SS with FB on their composition writing .Teachers need to provide their different learners with the

appropriate Kind of FB, that would meet their needs and interests in order for them to use it in future improvement. In this respect, Keh (1990) responded towards FB provision saying: “Written FB is an input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision.” (p.294)

- **Q20:** What are the most common writing problems you noticed in your students’ writing compositions?

	Common Writing problems					Total
	Grammar	Mechanics	Content	Organization of ideas	Vocabulary	
WETS	4	2	1	1	2	10
%	40%	20%	10%	10%	20%	100%

**Table 11:** The Most Common Problems Found in SS’ Composition Writing



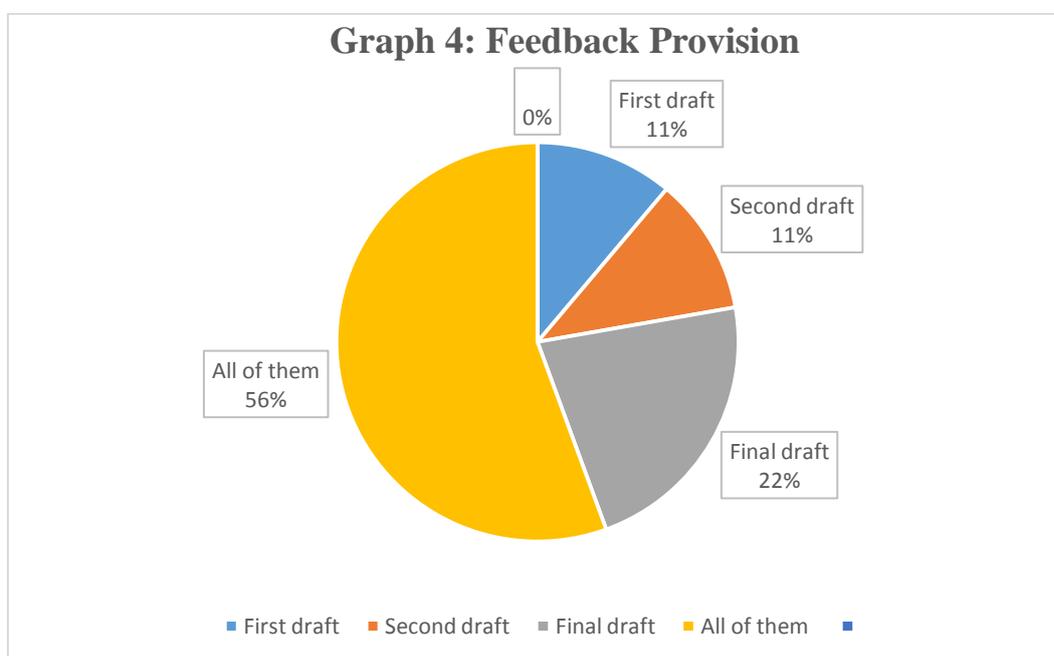
After considering WETs’ responses towards the use of FB on writing compositions, teachers are also asked about the most common writing problems that they noticed in their SS’

writing compositions. As the table above shows, the majority of TT are faced with grammatical problems that represented (40%) followed then by mechanics and vocabulary (20%), moving to poor organization of ideas and content (10%) at last. This may be a logical move from the simplest to the most complex elements of writing. In order to reach a master piece of writing and perfect composition, we should avoid grammatical mistakes first and enrich our knowledge of vocabulary and then focus on how to organize ideas in order to achieve by the end good content.

Furthermore, WETs in (Q21 and 22) are asked whether they require their SS to write multiple drafts in writing about a particular topic or not. The response is “yes” by all the WETs. Then, since the response is positive, they are further asked on which of the drafts they usually provide FB whether on the first draft, the second draft, the final draft, or all of them.

	First draft	Second draft	Final draft	All of them	Total
WETs	2	1	2	5	10
%	20%	10%	20%	50%	100%

**Table 12: Feedback Provision**



We have recorded 50% of WETs who indicated that they used FB on all the drafts. This may lead us to say that the majority of WETs are interested to follow their students and how they would develop in their composition writing a bit by bit. So, there is continuity and they really seek to see their SS as better future writers. The first draft is a rough draft which includes brainstorming students' ideas that can be later or revised with their peers and discussed with the teacher. After that, the students are required to write a second draft. The latter is used to promote clarity in SS' mind. The teacher here discusses any problem that may face his SS to write correctly. So, he/she encourages them in the writing process. The main focus is for the SS to check spelling, mechanics, grammatical errors and sentence combining that may affect their composition writing. The final draft is the last stage in which SS write the final proper draft with correct grammar. Thus, things develop one after another never at once.

- **Q23:** Do you think your FB affects revision and improves your students' writing?

	TFB improves SS writing			Total
	yes	No	don't know	
WETS	08	01	01	10
%	8%	10%	10%	100%

**Table13:** Improving Composition Writing through TFB

With this question, we sought to determine TT' views (opinions) about whether their SS revise and improve their writing using their TFB. We have recorded different answers. We notice that 08 respondents out of 10 WETs (80%) put a cross in "yes" column, which implies that the majority think that their FB is successful since SS are progressing. This can be noticed through avoiding the same type of errors made in earlier papers, as WET<sub>7</sub> believes: "*This is mentioned through their future work since they tried to avoid the same sort of errors done previously*". WET<sub>8</sub> keeps on providing the same justification "*By putting*

*students to a test in the forthcoming exam or composition writing; we notice students' answers improving gradually. We feel it."*

For clarification, WET7 added: *"It is the remedial work or the tasks that follow the remedial work which make me recognize that students really profited from my feedback and understood the area of errors and corrected them, i.e. they avoided the same type of errors made before."* However, when interviewing teachers, WET8 stated: *"It is the students' problem; if they want to make progress, they must be attentive and receive my feedback even if it is negative."*

However, sometimes we find that there is no way for SS to make any progress since they keep on making the same sort of errors in their writing. For instance, WET3 noted that his SS do not take into consideration his FB and stated: *"Most errors, for which they have received feedback, come over again and again."* This may lead us to believe that SS' progress depends on their readiness, motivation, seriousness and willingness to learn. That is to say, those who are attentive and want to learn through mistakes, will avoid them after receiving TFB, but those who are not interested in progress any more still repeat the same error despite the fact of being corrected many times. This may be one possible interpretation.

In so far as this view is concerned, TT may not stop at this end. They may search for the real problems which make the student repeats each time the same type of error, he may be able to understand if there are problems related to transfer, or fossilization concepts and then can help his SS to overcome such hurdles in their learning. This would pave the way for encouraging learners instead of punishment all the time if an error is noticed. Some other TT do not care at all about their SS' progress, claiming that time is not enough, in addition to the huge number of students in each class which make the task of following each one of them impossible but difficult somehow. Therefore, WET1 and WET9 replied that they did not know if their SS take into account their FB or not to make progress. Thus, WET9 said: *"I*

*cannot follow every student since I teach a great number of students, so it is impossible to know whether they take into consideration my feedback.”*

In sum, we can notice students’ progress in writing through processing the work and establishing a continuous evaluative relation or through organizing cooperating learning sessions. It can help self-evaluation. A logical result then is that some SS avoid errors they did in earlier papers, others keep on making the same errors. But SS should not be blamed for not progressing any more. It is due to the teacher to understand where the problem lies and may try to find solutions and new ways for error treatment taking into account the psychological aspect of students.

**\*Q24:** Do you correct every error that occurs in your student’s composition writing?

	Written Teachers’ Response		Total
	Yes	No	
Number	02	08	10
%	20 %	80 %	100 %

**Table 14:** Ways of Correcting Students’ Written Papers

A glance at the table shows that the overwhelming majority of TT, i.e. 80 % do not correct every error that occurs in their SS’ papers. But we have recorded a minority of respondents who agree on correcting every single error which may occur in SS’ papers. Adopting the technique of over correction has many negative effects and may impact on SS’ confidence and motivation for further learning. Therefore, over correction may develop something like a barrier between TT and SS and may create hatred towards both the teacher and the module.

Closely related to this, WET9 wrote: *“Over correcting means incriminating the learner. This hinders the learning and makes the learner develop defensive strategies towards learning.”* That is why the majority of TTs are comprehensible and take into account

their SS' psychology while providing FB. This is clearly noticed in table 13 above, as well as in the interviews since TT do not correct every error that occurs in SS' papers. This may be because they do not want to demoralize their SS and make them feel as if they did nothing and by this way, they affect and deprive them from future improvement in writing and learning as a whole process. In this respect, when TTs were interviewed, the same responses as those found in the questionnaire were recorded. WET3 said: *“There are generally too many mistakes and I cannot correct them all. Thus, I take into account the content.”*

Another teacher (WET5) stated: *“I mostly focus on meaning and the messages to be conveyed through the piece of writing.”* On the same line WET5 added: *“I do not correct every error in order not to demoralize students. So, I only correct the key words that may hinder understanding.”*

On the whole, we can say that the correction of SS' errors depends on TT' choice, and we can see that TT choose to correct only what is besides the conveyance of the message taking into account their SS' psychology, achievement, and future learning.

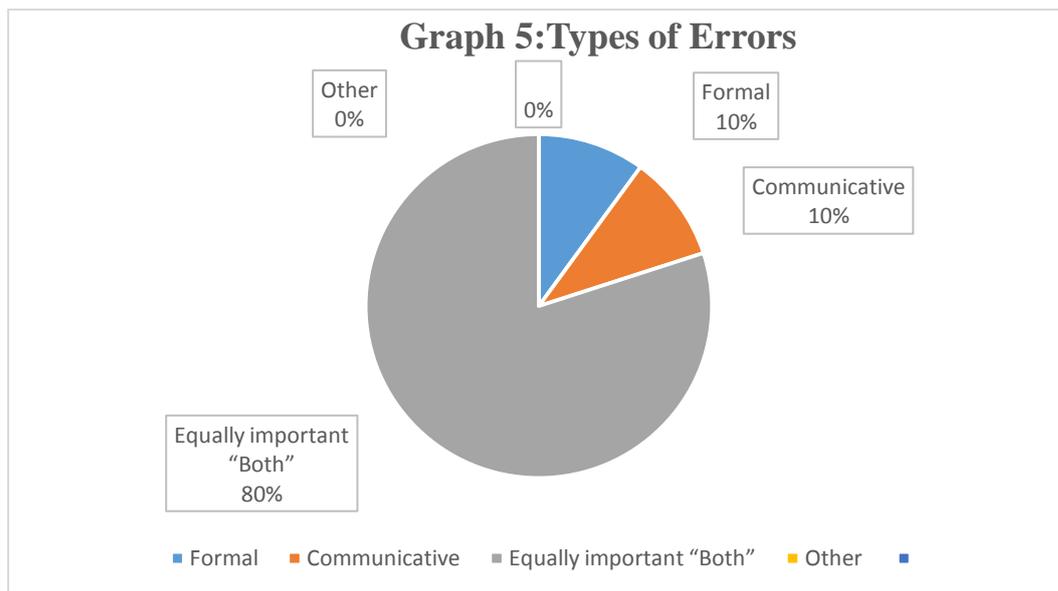
To this extent, we are in agreement with TT' responses when interviewed, since WET9 said: *“I do not correct every single error, I just focus on the objectives of each type.”*

In agreement, WET3 stated: *“I try to do so, but at last I find my self correcting only those errors of gravity. In addition, it is better not to do so since this would chock learners.”*

**Q25:** Which type of errors do you correct and which one do you think is most serious?

	Type of errors corrected						
	Formal		Communicative		Equally important “Both”	Other	Total
WETS	WET6		WET7		WET1 WET2 WET3 WET4 WET5 WET8 WET9 WET10	/	10
%	01	10%	01	10%	08	80%	100%

**Table 15:** Types of Errors



As far as this question is concerned, we may say that some errors are more important to treat than others. Teachers explain that some errors may distort the meaning of a sentence or a paragraph while others do not. In this case, more attention towards errors that affect communication is needed. Thus, all depends on the gravity of errors and their impact the teaching /learning process. In this respect, WET9 said: *“When we make errors on things that we have not learnt yet is not like to do errors on things we have learnt.”*

Question seven aims at determining the type of errors teachers correct. The response was that the majority of TT, ( i.e. eight out of ten), gave equal importance to the treatment of both types, formal as well as communicative errors. By formal errors, we mean those related to grammar, lexis, and punctuation, whereas communicative errors are those related to meaning, coherence and unity. WET2 said: *“All these errors seriously affect meaning.”*

However, only one teacher(WET7) was in favor of correcting only communicative errors which hinder communication since incoherent thoughts are difficult to understand and thus to correct. Hand in hand with the previous question goes the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) one. The aim is to see the difference between what TT really correct and what they think about the most serious errors to be corrected, i.e. this question expresses an opinion about what type they think is most serious. The result was that the majority of TT (six teachers out of ten)

responded in favor that the two types should be corrected altogether because they both contribute to effective communication. Supporting this view, WET3 wrote: *“Both types, formal and communicative errors, are serious because I believe they are two sides of the same coin.”* Closely related to this view, WET4 said: *“Both combine to form language”* and WET8 argued that both types are serious because *“The content depends on the form and the form, if not correct, affects the content.”*

However, three other TT (WET1, WET7 and WET10) argued in favour of communicative errors which are considered as more serious and thus should be corrected first since they may hinder communication, not as formal errors which may change only the structure of the sentence but meaning is kept and can be understood. Thus, an urgent treatment of communicative errors is required because: *“If the errors have to deal with communication, the message cannot be conveyed and that’s why communication errors should be corrected first.”* as WET7 commented.

In sharp contrast, one teacher (WET6) focuses on formal errors rather than another type. May be he considers grammar as more serious than other aspects and that is why he justifies his choice by saying: *“I believe that grammar is the heart of language in addition to vocabulary and the mechanics of writing”*. Thus, different attitudes towards the errors to be corrected are mentioned and the results obtained from question eight (08) show no difference from question seven, except for WET6 and WET7 who have a different attitude towards the most serious errors to be corrected. This is due to their freedom of choice, since what they really practise does not reflect their thoughts, i.e. they think of something but when it comes to practice, they do not do it, e.g. in practice, they correct both types of errors, but if they had a choice to choose between those types, WET6 would choose to focus on formal errors; while WET7 would only deal with those that may affect communication.

On the whole, through what has been mentioned, one may say language should not embody only grammatical uses, but also functional and communicative needs.

- **Q26:** Do you think that teachers notice more errors than they actually correct?

	Yes	No
<b>Number of Teachers</b>	10	/
<b>%</b>	100 %	/

**Table 16:** Teachers Notice More Errors than they Actually Correct

This question acts as a complement to the preceding one (Q25). Not surprisingly, all the WETs agree that more errors are noticed than corrected. Meanwhile, they have not the same opinion on the importance of errors made or the same justification. This may be due to the fact that such TT are really understanding since they do not want to affect their SS by correcting all the errors, but rather by inciting or inviting them gently and in a subtle way that may encourage and motivate rather than discourage and demoralize. Thus, WET9 justified his choice about why TT notice more errors than they correct saying: *“I avoid over-correction in order not to intimidate the learner and not to make him feel that I bear more on errors than on the general work and his achievement.”* Another teacher (WET7) supported this view claimed: *“Sometimes, we take into account the student psychological factors which may affect his future learning or participation when numerous errors are noticed in his paper.”*

Moreover, some TT may justify such an attitude of noticing more errors than correction by the time lapses or the priorities given to particular subjects, as well as teacher’s fatigue and their impossibility to correct every thing. Some TT as WET2, WET4, WET6, WET8 and WET10 supported this view. Accordingly, WET2 said: *“Sometimes, teachers concentrate just on important errors and neglect those which do not affect meaning. When a*

paper is full of errors, it is of course impossible to correct them all.” Likewise, WET4 argued that “It is painful and rather impossible to correct all the errors that occur in students’ writing.” WET8 added: “This is simply because teachers focus only on certain mistakes and neglect others and this is because of time lapse and subject field priorities.”

Thus, results in Q9 are not different from Q8, except for WET6 and WET7 who have changed their attitudes towards the most serious errors to be corrected. It seems that what they practise is not quite similar to what they think. For example, they correct both types of errors, but if they have a choice, WET6 would correct formal errors whereas WET7 would deal only with those that may affect communication.

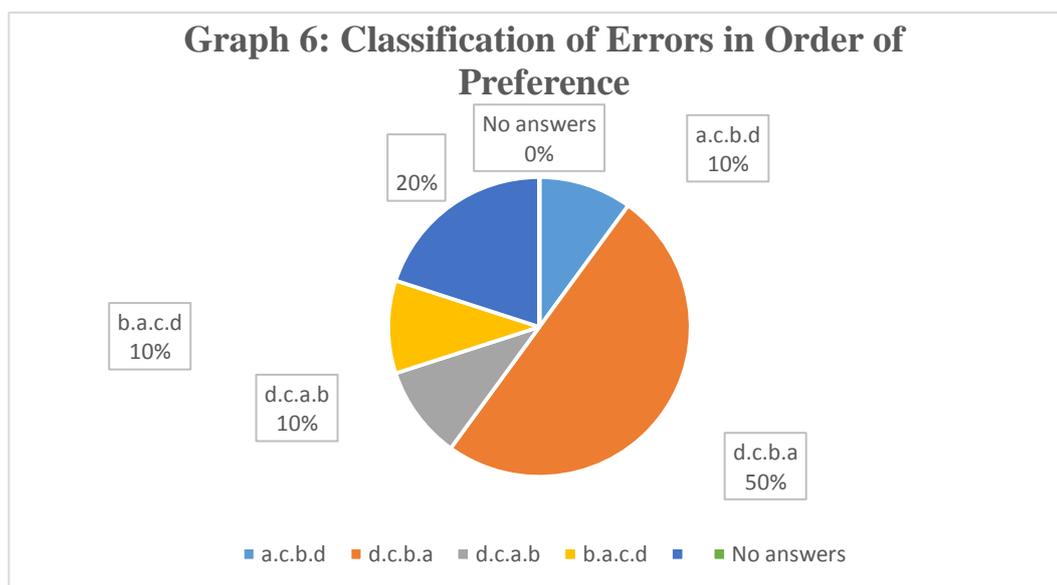
On the whole, we may say that too much correction will kill SS’ motivation to write.

**Q27:** Which errors do you correct first? Rank the following from “1” to “4” in order of preference.

Teachers	1 <sup>st</sup> choice		2 <sup>nd</sup>		3 <sup>rd</sup>		4 <sup>th</sup>		No answers	
	a.c.b.d		d.c.b.a		d.c.a.b		b.a.c.d			
WET1	X									
WET2									X	
WET3			X							
WET4					X					
WET5			X							
WET6							X			
WET7			X							
WET8			X							
WET9									X	
WET10			X							
<b>Total:10</b>	01	<b>10%</b>	05	<b>50%</b>	01	<b>10%</b>	01	<b>10%</b>	02	<b>20%</b>

**Table 17:** Classification of Errors in Order of Preference

By a, b, c, d, we mean: a/spelling, b/syntax, c/lexical, d/coherence errors



After considering the views on the issue of whether or not to correct every single error that occurs in SS' papers, teachers are now asked about which errors they prefer to correct first. They are kindly invited to order the list given from choice "a" to "d", according to their preferences. What we notice in Table 16 is that the majority of TT prefer to correct first these errors related to content which may affect communication and understanding of some ideas, such as coherence errors. Then, in the second place come lexical errors followed by syntactic errors and at last spelling mistakes. Such an order is displayed in Table 20 as «d.c.b.a». ( see **End note 2)**

However, the other TT(the minority) have different views on the order of error types. One preferred to start the correction by those of spelling , lexical and syntactic followed at last by coherence. This may be a logical move from the simplest to the most complex elements of writing. Another one preferred to start with coherence errors and then deal with the other types. So, what is clear here is that five TT among ten agree on starting the correction with coherence errors. This can explain the important role that communicative errors play; if an error deals with only spelling or syntax, this does not matter. But what matters most is that the message is conveyed in a clear manner. We are then led to say that "*global errors*" that hinder communication should be corrected first then "*local errors*" related to grammar,

spelling etc. as pointed out by Klassen (1991): *“I suggest that for a first draft global errors be corrected, and local errors on the second.”* ( p .10 )

What is further noticed in Table 16 is that two TT did not respond to this question and did not order the items according to their preferences. They had no answer. This can be explained by the fact that they just corrected what they found at the same time, may be, they corrected all types of errors at once while reading the SS' compositions with no previous idea of what to correct first and what to correct after. To this extent, WET2 said: *“I correct them as they occur in the SS papers.”* In agreement with WET2, WET9 further explained: *“I have no preference, I correct them all together.”*In short, we can say that TT notice more errors than they correct and tend to correct more semantic errors than linguistic ones.

- **Q28:** What are the different techniques that you use for correcting SS writing essays?

It is worth noting that WETs vary in their correction, which can be done adopting various techniques such as: circling, underlining, questioning and commenting, giving examples and writing of samples on the board and treat them together.

In addition, when TTs were interviewed, they clearly explained which errors are circled, underlined or crossed. As the interview shows, all the TT agree on the fact that they underline grammatical structures, coherence and cohesion errors, circle spelling mistakes, and cross the wrong information or put it between brackets.

In addition to such techniques, WETs specify the type of errors being circled or underlined in order to help students know their errors and correct them by themselves. In this respect, WET1 stated: *“I use symbols because I intend to make the student deduce the type of error himself.”* So, symbols are very helpful. Accordingly, Harmer (1998) insisted on the clarity of TFB by stating: *“The best activity in the world is a waste of time if the students don't understand what it is they are supposed to do “. (p.4)*

**Q29:** How would you describe your attitude towards SS’ writing errors and how would you describe your attitude towards the teaching of composition writing?

Errors have always been considered as a central issue in classroom research. Teachers regarded errors a positive sign of learning and an important factor that gives learners an opportunity to discover the language. In this respect, WET2 said: *“My attitude towards student’s written errors may help them discover the target language rules, and provide me with evidence about the amount of information learnt or the manner they have learnt a FL”*.

WET6 further added: *“Errors are necessary, inevitable and a positive part of the learning process that takes place before learners correct the grammatical rules which are completely internalized. So I tolerate errors especially the less serious ones”*.

Moreover, SS’s errors have a great role of interaction. This takes us a step further where error treatment can be carried out by TT’ s correction, self- correction or peer-correction, which are methods being used to provide SS with FB on written errors in their composition writing. WET9 said: *“ When SS repeat the errors more than once, it is frustrating but when they learn from the errors being made through peer- correction, I get proud because they can develop their composition writing by avoiding such errors”* .

However, one different view is mentioned by WET10. He said: *“Writing compositions is a difficult task and the teaching of writing in general is a complex process. I find it difficult as well as task challenging, especially that my students’ thinking is in their mother tongue. I really hate that.”*

- **Q30:** Are you satisfied with your own way of teaching compositions?

	Yes	No	don’t know	Total
WETS	08	/	02	10
%	80%	/	20%	100%

**Table 18:** Teachers Feelings about Teaching Composition Writing

An examination of this question reveals that two respondents out of ten (i.e.20%) do not know whether they are satisfied or not with their current way of teaching composition writing . May be because they can not solve all the problems that appear in the classroom, as WET7 said: *“It is true that I can not solve all the problems that appear but I seem to solve more problems in my own way than in other ways that I tried and found stressing and discouraging”*.

Having the same response, WET9 said: *“I do not know whether my feedback is of help to my students, so I can not say a word on it. Besides this, I think that it is up to learners to judge. I have never discussed this point with them, so I do not know whether they like my feedback or not.”*

Here, the teacher may negotiate with the students to know more about what they really like and affect them. This aims at reaching a point where the decision is made about whether to continue adopting such a methodology or can improve and adopt it according to SS’ interests, needs and attention.

Another category of respondents has admitted that they are satisfied with their own way of treating SS’ written errors. They represented 80%, i.e. eight teachers out of ten. This may be proved through SS’ improvement and achievement as WET1 said: *«Because my way of treating errors proved to be fruitful and helped students to do better.»*

He added: *«Because I noticed that who has the will to improve, he will progress, especially if he is motivated.»* In agreement with this view, WET6 commented: *«I am always doing my best to suit every one and encourage rather than discourage. Any way, if there is another method which I feel helpful, I will adopt it for future improvement concerning my attitudes. »*

Furthermore, in interviewing TT, WET6 declared: *«I am satisfied since there is no grumbling from the students as well as I could create a workable atmosphere in the class*

*and made my students interact and motivate each other. In addition, each one wants to reach the other who is better than him.»*

- **Q31:** What do you suggest in so far as the teaching of composition writing with particular reference to grammatical competence?

Many views have been recorded as for as the teaching of grammar through writing is concerned. One teacher, WET3 suggested to have more practice about writing compositions. He said: *“Having a good mastery of grammar will help students a lot to write good compositions.”* Having the same response, WET8 said: *“I don’t favour teaching grammatical structures separately, grammar should be included within the process of writing, i.e. compulsory component of writing.”*

Thus, we can conclude that writing composition should be based on grammar because only when SS acquire grammatical rules, then they will not make grammatical errors, therefore they can achieve better writing. In addition, WET5 should be sensitive to individual SS’ readiness to learn and apply grammatical concepts in their composition writing.

Furthermore, WT4 proposed **“guided practice”**. The latter provides *“a crucial bridge between the teacher’s presentation of new grammar structure and students’ application of the new structure in communicative situations”*. As celce -Marcia and Hilles, 1988, 27) stated.

Most SS then need many opportunities for controlled practice of a new grammar pattern before they can use it communicatively in writing. We can thus say that the overall goal of **“Guided practice”** is to help SS build fluency with the target language, that is; to begin using the structure without hesitancy or translation in their composition writing.

#### **4.2. Analysis of Teachers Interviews**

For further clarification, it might be a good case in point to add interviews in addition to questionnaires as a continuing attempt to understand more about the teaching of composition writing with reference to grammar. To this extent, we are in line with Cohen and

Manion's (1981) view which states: "*An interview can be conducted at an appropriate speed whereas questionnaires are often filled in hurriedly.*" (p.254)

So, we can gain further information through interviewing TT and not relying only on questionnaires. This is in order to avoid doubts rising from self-completion questionnaires.

Sharing the same point of view, Bell (1987) declared: "*The interview can yield rich material and can often put flesh on the bones of questionnaire responses*". (p.70). Adopting this view, we asked WETs other questions not included in the self-completion questionnaires. Question four states: "Can writing be taught? And how? WETs agree on the fact that writing can be taught referring to rules and showing SS the organization of a paragraph or of composition writing.

However, writing will be a difficult skill to teach when SS write without thinking as well as putting into practice what has been dealt with in lectures. In question five, WETs are asked about the way how they teach composition writing. Here, all of them agree on the use of a variety of techniques. The latter calls for providing a positive, encouraging and collaborative workshop environment within which SS, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing processes.

Moreover, question six asks TT about the reason why SS should write compositions. As WET2 said: "*Writing is a complex skill that should be given more care, especially that it is the practice of the other skills, i.e. we use what we know as speaking, listening and reading into writing*". A further teacher, WET4 added that "*Students should write to express their views and apply all what they know to communicate effectively their ideas with the other people.*" Thus, through writing compositions, SS can exchange different ideas with each other and help the learning process to perform punctually.

Concerning the seventh question, WETs are asked how writing helps SS develop the skills of communicating. WET8 said: "*In fact, students can communicate with others through*

*reading what they have written such as for example when dealing with dialogue completion. The student can play roles through asking another one”.*

A further WET10 added: *“Students have the opportunity to use the target grammar as they listen, speak, read and write about real, meaningful topics in their lives. Many activities are therefore conducted in pairs, or in small groups to encourage communication which involves much more language than just grammar.”*

We can thus say, the teacher’s role in communicative practice is mainly a facilitator or manager performing some tasks as: Modeling the activity, setting up the groups, and providing a process for students to “report back”.

The last step is essential in communicative writing because it builds in individual accountability. *“When students know they will be reporting back on the task, they are less apt to digress”* as noted by WET3. Mechanisms for reporting back include grids for individual note taking, written summaries or having one student in a group report on the group’s work at the end of writing.

Dealing with writing compositions, another important question (Q8) is raised.

Why do some groups of SS seem to benefit from their TT and enjoy writing more than others? Many responses have been recorded. Among them, WET1 who said: *“I think teachers should take into account the affective factors of our students since this will create more positive effects on students’ future attitudes towards writing”.*

A further response by WET4 was mentioned. It acts as a continuity of the previous response. He said : *“Some teachers tend to forget that students too are human beings with likes and dislikes, moods, moments of tiredness and emotions such as: mind anxiety, fearing punishments which affect writing achievement.”*

This may lead us to say that there is a lack of motivation. The latter may drive to success or failure. In this context, Brown, H. D (1994) said: *“probably the most frequently*

*used catch all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task”.* (p.125). It is regarded as an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that incites one to perform a particular action. Teachers can encourage motivation and desirable behavior in SS using a variety of strategies in writing compositions .In addition to the fact that if SS like their teacher , they will learn and like his/her module and if not , they neglect all and hate learning as a whole.

The next section of the interview questions deals with the importance of the grammatical structure in writing compositions.

All the WETs agree that grammar is somehow difficult, but if SS find “**guidance**”, nothing will be difficult and therefore can be effective writers. They need to learn how to apply their know ledge of grammatical concepts in writing compositions. By connecting their know ledge of grammar to writing, TT can demystify abstract grammatical terminology, so SS can write with greater competence and confidence.

Grammar is therefore very necessary for writing. So, we can not ignore it. It is **competence** (the ability to understand and produce language fluently) and writing is **performance** (practical) based. Performance then depends on competence. we cannot write any piece of writing without referring back to grammatical rules as well as we cannot have grammatical knowledge in vacuum, i .e without practicing it in real situations. Thus, each affects the other and there is a complementarity relationship between the too. They are like the two sides of the same coin. Writing without caring about grammar is like a boat without a sea.

In order to have a good piece of writing, many areas should be focused and grammar is the first because if there are many grammatical mistakes within the composition writing, the whole idea of the composition will be collapsed. In addition to grammar, there should be

strong ideas and a good use of vocabulary. So, the composition should contain correct grammatical structures, very well organized ideas, clear, clean and legible.

Furthermore, all WETs agree on the fact that grammar practice improves writing. WET1 said: *“Grammar instruction is most naturally integrated during the revising, editing and proofreading phases of the writing process”*.

We can say that after SS have written their first drafts and feel comfortable with the ideas and organization of their writing, TT use various strategies to help their SS see grammatical concepts as language choices that can enhance their writing purpose. So SS can see their area of weakness and correct their errors in the next draft. As WET5 said: *“Through practising grammar a great deal, students will succeed in writing a paragraph or a composition in which they avoid grammatical errors.”*

As a support to the previous question, WETs are further required to identify the strategies they use to teach grammar in the context of writing. Grammar is integrated during the different stages of the writing process such as the revising, editing, and proofreading phases. WETs agree that they use various strategies to help their SS see grammatical concepts that may affect their composition writing. To help SS revise boring, monotonous sentences, TT ask SS to **read** their writing **aloud** to partners. So, **“reading aloud”** is one important strategy that can help both the partner and the writer to recognize when, for example, too many sentences begin with **“It is”** or **“there are”**. Both the partner and the writer can discuss ways to vary the sentence beginnings. The next strategy is **“revision”**. After the writer (students) revises the sentences, the partner can read the sentences aloud. Then both can discuss the effectiveness of the revision. Another strategy can be adopted by WETs is **“presenting mini- lesson”** for instance, TT can help SS edit from passive to active voice by presenting a mini-lesson. In editing groups, SS could exchange papers and look for verbs that often signal the passive voice, such as **“was”** and **“been”**.

Moreover, WETs help their SS become better proofreaders through peer editing groups. Based on the writing abilities of their SS, WETs can assign different proofreading tasks to specific individuals in each group. In this respect, WET3 said: “*One student in the group might proofread for spelling errors, another student for agreement errors, another student for fragments, and another one for punctuation errors.*”

In relation to the same point, WET5 added: “*As students develop increasing skill in proofreading, they become responsible for more proofreading areas*”. We can thus say, collaborating with classmates in peer editing groups help SS improve their own grammar skills as well as understand the importance of grammar as a tool for effective communication. As TT integrate grammar instruction with writing instruction, they should use the grammar terms that make sense to the SS.

By incorporating grammar terms naturally into the processes of revising, editing, and proofreading, TT should help SS understand and apply grammar purposefully to their own writing. Therefore, strategies such as writing conferences, partnership writing, grammar mini-lessons, and peer response groups are all valuable methods for integrating grammar into writing instruction.

The next question of the interview (Q17) asks teachers to identify if grammar must be applied to texts written by students or other writers and if it would not take away time from writing practice. WE teachers agree on the point that grammar should be involved in our writing. In writing practice, the teacher is not going to explain grammar lessons, because “*it is writing session not grammar session*” as WET6 said, but just and briefly reminds students about some grammatical rules. For instance, when asking students to tell a story, he reminds them to use the past tense.

Moreover, question eighteen (Q18) asks teachers whether they agree that one major error in writing, even for native speakers is “*run on sentences and sentence fragment*” which

when made cause unintelligible writing. WET7 said : *“I am quite in agreement with this point”*. In fact, when students have to write a paragraph, they list all the ideas they have in mind without really thinking of the structure of the sentence. The result can be that the paragraph doesn't always correspond to the subject because sometimes what they write is away from the point.

Furthermore, when interviewing teachers (In the last question of the interview (Q19), many views and suggestions are welcomed concerning the possible ways that can be used to create in SS the desire to write compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness. Among them, we have recorded that of WET2, who claims: *“Written Expression skill is a trouble and students don't like it because it includes many aspects as: grammar, lexis, syntax... that should be mastered. Teachers then, of Written Expression, are advised to minimize the grammatical correctness and encourage SS to write more and more if it is necessary to correct their errors, let their peers do”*

Another respondent, WE T10 added: *“I always advise my students to write short stories, diaries and short paragraphs (at home) without caring too much about grammatical correctness. What is more important is not to write and keep to the content which should be relevant to the subject. Of course, this doesn't mean that we neglect the grammatical rules. But first, we encourage SS to write and then remind them to refer to some grammatical rules and let them correct their own mistakes. By this way SS can improve their writing and this is what every teacher wants to achieve by the end”*.

## • Conclusion

To conclude, we are in agreement with Rodriguez's (2009) view about teaching. In order to help learners improve their grammatical accuracy, instructors should embed explicit focus on form within the context of meaningful learning activities and tasks that give learners ample opportunities for practice.



## **CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS**

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## Introduction

As the teacher questionnaire aims at eliciting information on how Written Expression Teachers teach writing compositions and how they integrate grammar in the context of writing, it is also of a great value to see how students benefit from their teacher FB to improve their writing compositions through a questionnaire and interviews.

### 5.1. Analysis of Students Questionnaires

#### 5.1.1. General Information on the Students

Our sample of SS includes 400 respondents. The aim behind having chosen second year students among other levels is that it is only at this stage where SS can produce a piece of writing especially that they deal with the paragraph and the composition.

**\*Q1:** What is your age?

Years	18+	25+	30+	Total
Number	360	24	16	400
%	90%	06%	04%	100%

**Table19:** Age Range

A glance at this table reveals that there are three age groups. We have a minority of 30+ years of age. It represented 04% (16 students), and in the second place 25+ years of age which represented (06%), i.e. 24 students out of 400. Whereas the majority are more than 18 years of age. They represented 90% (360 out of 400 students).

It is worth noting that all subjects are expected to have different responses towards the teaching of composition writing, and one factor among others that would help us in our analysis of students' responses is their "age". The aim is therefore to see if young people do think and respond in the same way as those who are more than 30 years old.

**\*Q2:** What is your sex?

Sex	Male	Female	Total
Number of SS	80	320	400
%	20%	80%	100%

**Table20:** Gender

As we can see, female students out number male students . We recorded eighty (80) male students out of four hundred (400), i.e. 20%; whereas the rest is female, that is 320 (i.e.80%). What matters then is not the sex, this adds nothing except to the issue of motivation and attitudes, since we expect them to have different reactions towards the ways their WE Teachers teach them grammar through writing practice.

### 5.1.2. Developing Writing Composition

**\*Q3:** Do you like writing?

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Number of SS</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>400</i>
<i>%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>

**Table 21:** Students’ Feelings about Writing

Results, here, show that the majority of respondents (75%) have opted for a “**yes**” answer. Only25% have declared that they don’t like writing. This may explain the fact that writing is a complex task that involves many other skills as well as it is time consuming and depends on the way WE teachers teach it. If the teacher is skillful and knows how to vary the tasks in the classroom, that may encourage students to act and interact with each other, students will like the teacher and like the module of writing.

When interviewing SS, some of them preferred to use the word “**boring**” when asked about their feeling about writing and about their WE teacher’s behavior. However, they seemed to use this word in several rather different ways. Sometimes, it seemed to mean

*tedious* or not interesting, but at other times the students seemed to use it in a more general way to express disapproval. For some writers as woods (1990) has identified boredom as a key issue for students' vocabulary, which was used when they didn't understand the content of the lesson, when they didn't enjoy a task of writing. The term **boring** has also been used to convey students' perception of inappropriate teacher behavior. Furthermore, we recognized another important fact in relation to Gender. It is found that the majority of those who do not like writing compositions are males whereas females responded positively towards writing.

In question four and five of the questionnaire, students are asked whether they write essays or not. If yes, how much essays they write per month. All the students agree that they write essays but concerning the number of the essays they write per month, different responses have been recorded as shown in the table below.

	Writing essays			Total
	Once a month	Twice a month	Other	
Number of SS	320	47	33	400
%	80%	11.75%	08.25%	100%

**Table 22:** The Number of Essays Written per Month

Yet again, we have notice that the majority of students (80%) indicated that they write essays once a month which may not be regarded as sufficient enough because to write better, students need more and more practice whether in the class or at home. The teacher's main role here is to guide or direct students in their first attempts and encourage them to write . The second category of students (11.75% ) write twice a month which still not enough and further writing practice is advised. The more we write the more we improve our vocabulary and grammar.

Examination of the last category reveals that 33 students (i.e.08.25%) do not write essays only in case they are obliged, as it is the case of exams, or a home work. We notice that those students do not like writing and that's why, they do not improve and therefore an urgent treatment of such cases should be done.

Students are further asked how they spend the written expression session.(Q6)

Different responses have been recorded as far as this question is concerned. Some students benefit from writing sessions, by taking notes, brainstorming, free writing, asking questions for clarification, listening to their classmates' essays, discussing different topics with the T, exchanging ideas between peers, applying the grammatical structures being studied during the course and learning from the errors made to improve future writing. Among them, one respondent said:” *The Written Expression session is 80% Joyful. I always follow my T carefully in order to understand and clarify any information about writing*”. Another respondent S35 added; “*We spend it in writing essays, taking into account all the grammatical points being studied during the course*” S107 added: “*I benefit from it, because it teaches me how to write correctly without errors, so I avoid grammatical mistakes in the next essay writings*”. In addition, S187 said: “*We spend it in reading our essays and discussing as well as correcting our mistakes and getting information about the style, the techniques of writing, having more instruction about how to make good outlines*”.

Accordingly, we may say that SS are always learning, so they need to be advised all the time by the T who guides them, and won't let them falling in the same mistake a second time. It is therefore basic in learning foreign languages. If we don't make errors and correct them how can we learn? This may lead us to another issue about whether SS like to be corrected by their Tor by peers or group. Closely related to this, S 221 Said: “*I feel motivated in the WE session especially when doing the writing composition in group. The latter enables me to see more writing from other views*”.

Contrary to the preceding category of students, different negative responses have been noticed. Since they do not like writing so they spend the session with a great difficulty. In this respect, S311 said: *“It is very boring. I spend it with difficulty because I hate this module because of the teacher himself.”* In the same line, S95 added: *“WET is a little bit so boring because I feel less motivated to write especially that our teacher doesn’t follow us, doesn’t correct our compositions in the class, so we don’t benefit from such module at all. It is really lost.”* (See end note 2)

Another respondent S 83 raised another issue that has to deal with sex variation. He said: *“Our WET doesn’t correct our essays honestly, but by feelings and emotions especially with girls. So we boys feel always neglected.”* And S43 agreed on the fact that *“their WET corrects SS’ errors in their draft writing but depending on students’ faces. A soft correction and guidance is provided to female and a little importance is given to male students”*.

Unfortunately, it is not advisable to be a teacher who applies discrimination in class. However, a good T is the one who is smart enough, Keeping his SS always active and motivated to write more and more, as well as treating them all alike in order to avoid such a hatred attitude on the part of the student.

The next question of the questionnaire (Q07) asks students about their response to the points made about the format of the essay. It is noticed that the majority of students respond positively towards the points made about the format of the essay and this is due to the teacher to remind students about. The essay should include an introduction, development of the topic, and a conclusion. Student 23 said: *“I respond in a positive way because from such points that I will develop my future composition writings by avoiding errors”*. Another student (S13) added: *“I follow such points made by my teacher because I really want to reach better writing of essays both correct in form and content.”*

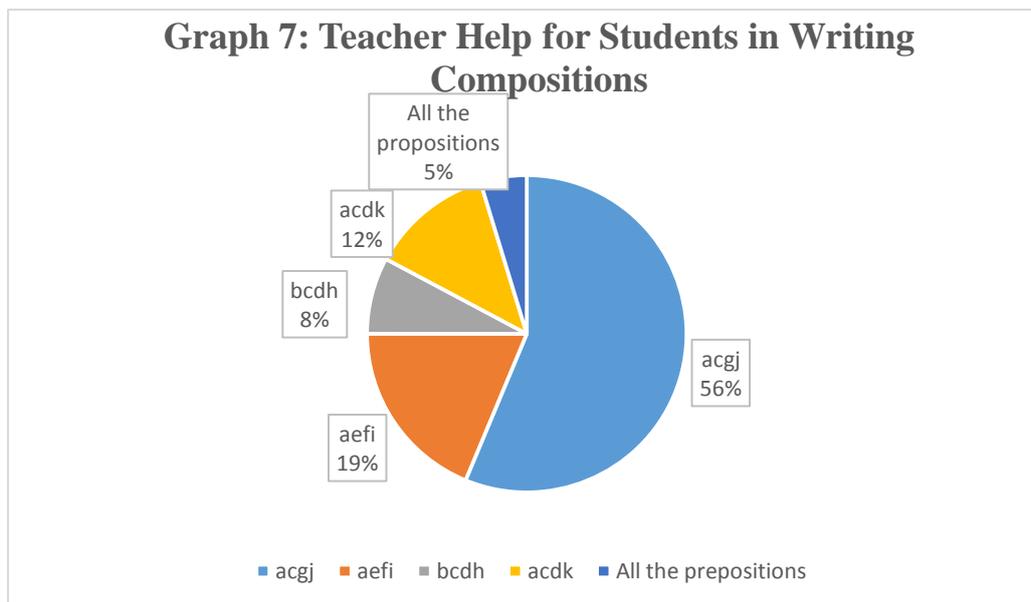
In addition, S19 added: *“I always accept the comments of my teacher or peers since they help me to improve my writing. Thus, I respond in a good way and I’m happy not to repeat what the teacher commented once and I do my best to avoid the errors mentioned in the previous works.”* We can thus say that real eyes realize real lies. So, by knowing the format we organize our composition writing through and avoid the errors that have been made before.

In question eight and nine (Q8, Q9) of the questionnaire students are required to say whether their WE teacher helps them to write essays or not, if yes; they should tell how. They have a number of choices in which they can tick one or more answers. Yet again, the majority of students (80%), i.e.320 students responded by **“yes”** answer which means that their WE teachers help them to write compositions whereas a minority that represents 20% (i.e.80 students) ignored their T help. So they responded by **“no”** answer.

Concerning those who agree that they receive help from their T to write compositions and which represent 80% of respondents are further given a list of choices in which they are allowed to choose more than one response. Such choices are about how their WE teachers help them in writing compositions. (See the table below).

Students	1 <sup>st</sup> choice	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
	Acgj	Aefi	Bcdh	acdk	All the propositions
320	180	60	25	40	15
%	56.25	18.75	07.81	12.5	04.68

**Table 23: Teachers’ Help for Students in Writing Compositions**



A glance at the table above shows that the overwhelming majority of students which represents (56.25%) agree that their WE teachers help them to write their compositions adopting ways as: giving a brief review of some syntactic and grammatical points (including sentence types, verbs, agreement...); by giving clear instructions; and providing models of writing as well as respecting scaffolding in doing tasks such as: matching, reordering sentences and paragraphs and finding the odd one (Such an order is displayed in table 21 as “acgj”).

Then, in the second place, students represent (18.75%) expressed their choices to write more essays by supplying worksheets and providing evaluative FB and then affording a variety of texts and topics. This is displayed as “aefi”. Moreover, other choices are given to students to encourage them to write as using warming up by brainstorming ideas (i.e. collecting relevant ideas to the topic); then giving clear instruction in addition to presenting a list of choices of words, idioms and proverbs related to the topic; and finally by encouraging collaborative writing such as writing workshops. Such category represents (12.5%) and it is displayed as “acdk”.

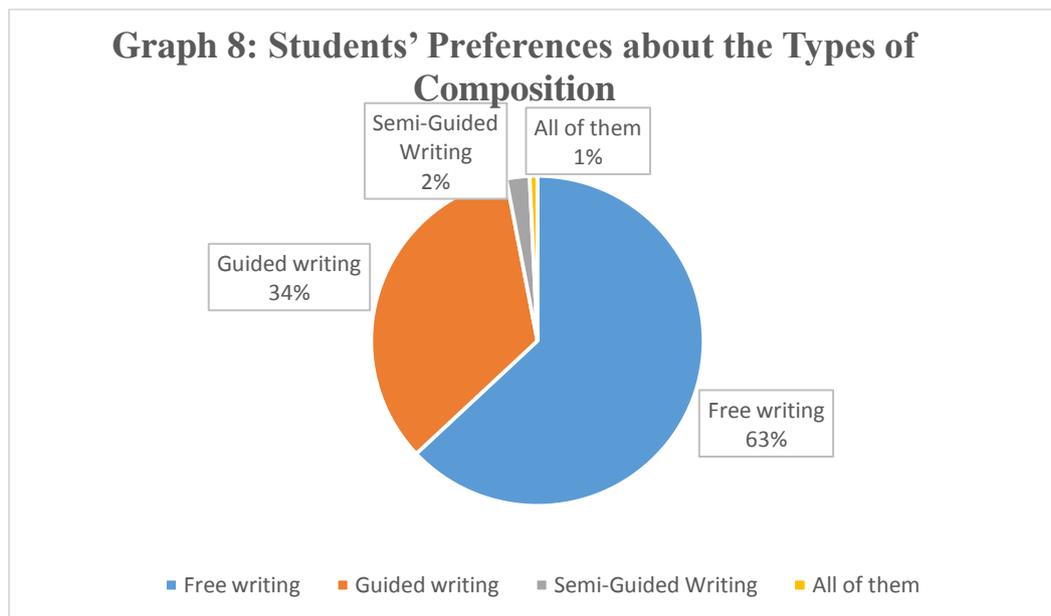
However, only (07.81%) who expressed their choice “bcdh”. This means that their WE teachers help them to write compositions through warming up by brainstorming ideas;

giving clear instructions and a list of choices related to the topic, and finally encouraging collaborative writing. Furthermore, the last category represents (04.68%). Such category of students responded differently. That is, all the propositions proposed are used in order to help in writing compositions. We can thus say that students need their teacher help and encouragement to write more compositions. They need to follow certain instructions that clarify their thought and some models to apply in their writing practices. So, the teacher's role, here, is very important as a facilitator, a guide, and a motivator towards better writing.

**\*Q10:** Do you like: Free writing/Guided writing/Semi Guided writing and why?

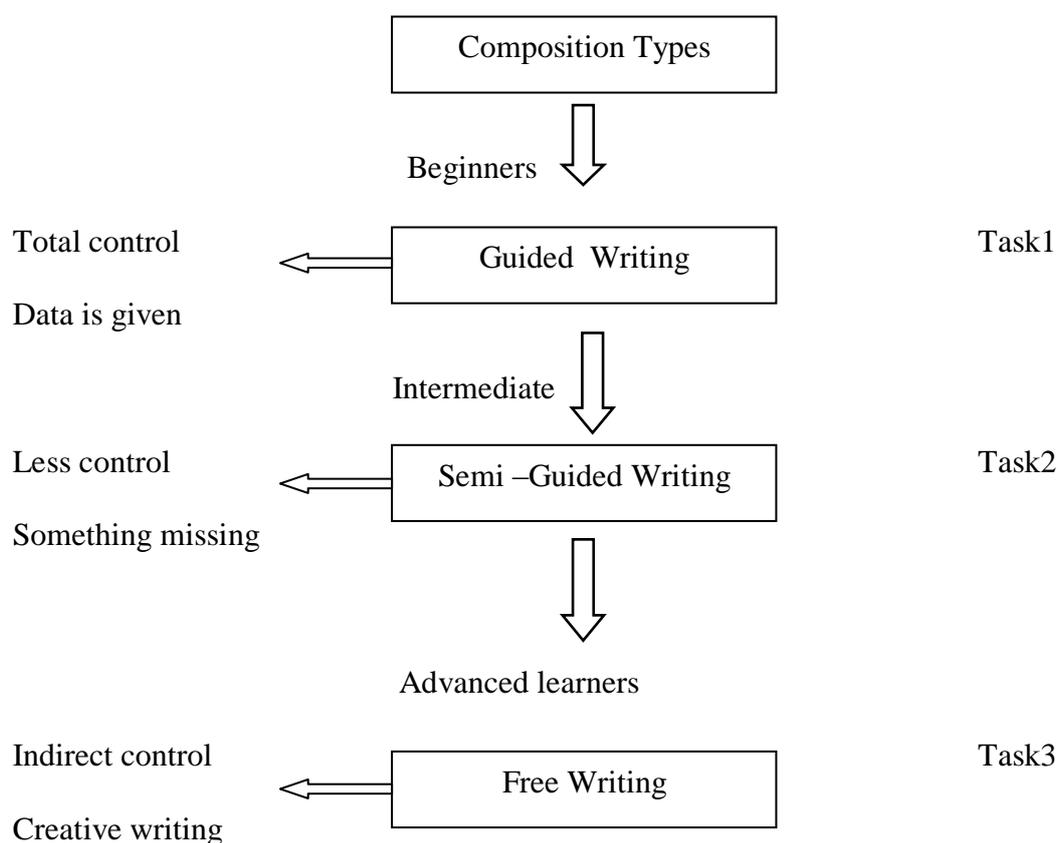
Number of SS	Free writing	Guided writing	Semi-Guided Writing	All of them
400	252	136	09	03
100%	63%	34%	2.25%	0.75%

**Table 24:** Students' Preferences about the Types of Composition



This table reveals that the majority of students (63%) like Free writing and (34%) of them prefer guided writing and (2.25%) like semi- guided writing. In addition, a simple minority which represents (0.75%) like all the types of writing. Accordingly, we can say that there are three types of composition: “*Guided writing*”, “*Semi –guided*” and “*Free writing*”.

The first stage is generally used with beginners; the second with intermediate; and the third one is used with advanced learners. These types of composition are illustrated below in figure



**Figure7:** The Types of Composition

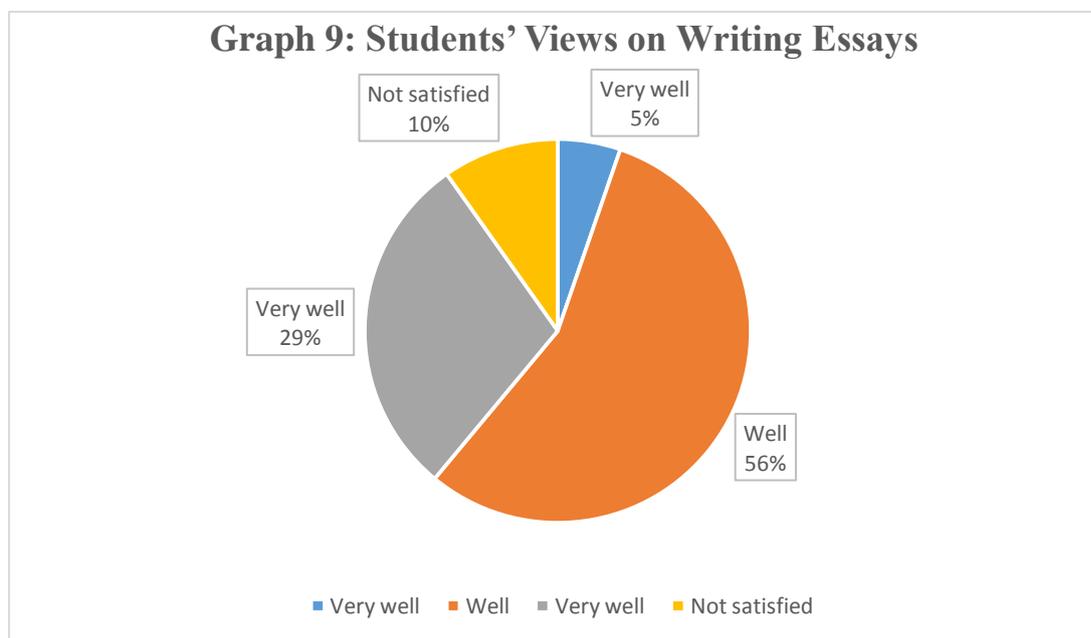
This may lead us to say that the teacher’s role is very important in the first stage as he guides his students by giving them, for example, vocabulary and explain to them how they connect or make relations (i.e. every thing is taken from the data given by the teacher). This is less graded in the second stage, where the teacher gives his students vocabulary and new words then asks them to make connections by themselves. In the third stage “*Free writing*”, the teacher gives his students only the main idea right from the beginning then asks them to develop it on their own. Here, students feel responsible for choosing the appropriate vocabulary in the right place with the right connection. Thus, free writing includes students’ creativity.

Students prefer free writing because there is an indirect control and they feel free to write and express their views in a comfortable situation. As an example, the student may be asked to narrate what they know about “*the Indians’ life*”. The teacher, here, wants to control the students’ knowledge about the simple past tense that is connected with narration. So, there is a move from controlling narration to reach the story of the Indians.

**\*Q 11:** How do you think you are doing on your essay?

Number of SS	Very well	Well	Acceptable	Not satisfied
400	21	223	117	39
100%	05.25%	55.75%	29.25%	09.75%

**Table 25:** Students’ Views on Writing Essays



Students are invited to say how they feel about their essay writing. They have four choices: very well, well, acceptable and not satisfied. The majority (55.75%) has indicated that they are doing “*Well*” on writing essays. It means that they are motivated to follow their teachers’ instructions and use their teacher FB on all the stages of writing to develop their composition writing. Such category seems satisfied. The second category of students

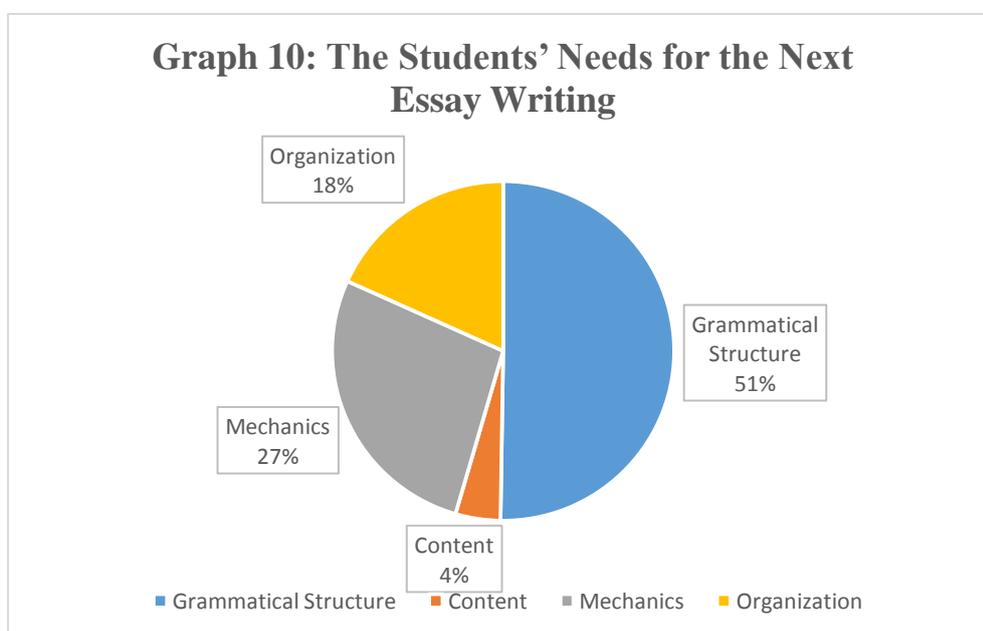
represents (29.25%) who accept the way they are doing on essay writing. A minority (05.25%) has indicated that they are doing “*Very well*” in writing essays. So, this proves that they are satisfied about their teachers’ ways of teaching them composition writing. The result is that they benefit from their T FB and apply it to write very well essays.

However, a fourth category of 39students (i.e. 09.75%) feel *dissatisfied* about the way they are dealing with essay writing. May be because they don’t like writing, they don’t like their teacher, there is no interaction between them and their teachers in the class, i.e. such category of students is not motivated to write. That’s why; they do not find any improvement in writing compositions.

**\*Q12:** What do you need to do when you write the next essay? Do you need help with: a- Grammatical Structure, b-Content, c- Mechanics, d- Organization?

Students	Grammatical Structure	content	Mechanics	Organization
400	201	17	109	73
100%	50.25%	04.25%	27.25%	18.25%

**Table 26:** The Students’ Needs for the Next Essay Writing



In answer to the above question, the majority of students (50.25%) has admitted that their major focus is on the structure of the composition writing. For writing the next essay, students need to know a lot about the grammatical structure and lexis to write a correct and good composition. During the writing stages (drafting, revising and editing) , students benefit a lot from their T FB on grammatical structures that may hinder the meaning of the essay. So, they learn from the grammatical errors that they have done in the previous drafts, and by the end they find themselves able to correct their errors and avoid seeing them in their next writings.

In addition to the structure, students need help with *mechanics* that are very necessary in any piece of writing because they may affect meaning. The second category of students (27.25%) feels the need to mechanics. This may be because students want to reach a rich and correct style. However, the techniques of writing such as punctuation, capitalization, spelling...etc, are not enough to convey a message unless meaning is clear and logical organizations of ideas are natural and systematic. Thus, (18.25%) of students feels the need to deal with organization to improve in their next essay writings. Contrary to the previous categories, a minority of 17 respondents (i.e.0.4.25%) has admitted that they need to be helped with content to improve the next writing of essays.

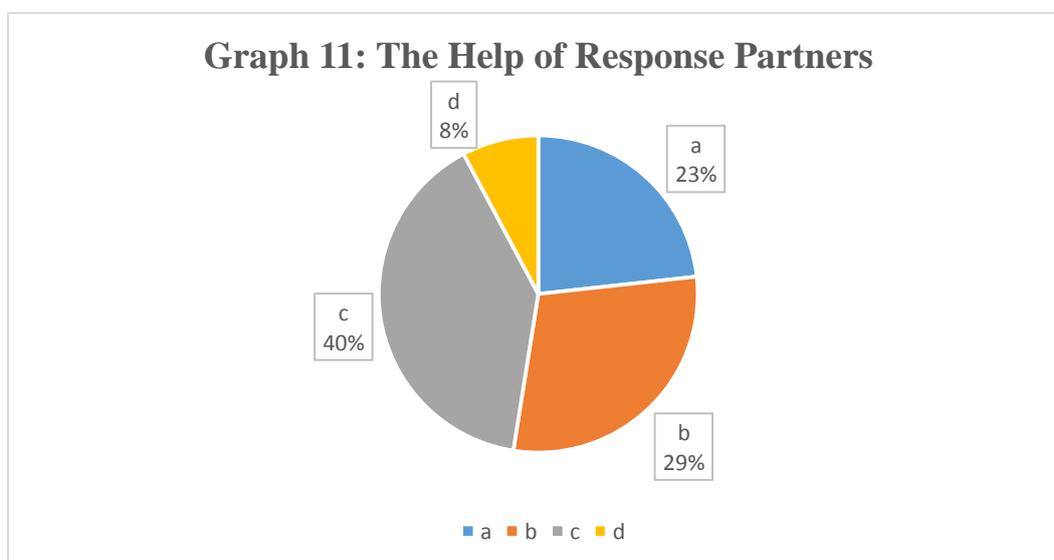
On the whole, we may say that students feel the need to be helped with as for as the structure, mechanics and organization of ideas are concerned. May be because they are basic in learning any language, and may be because this type of errors is widely spread among students. In this respect, student “S2” said: “*Simply, because grammar and lexis are the basis of learning any language, and by time students will take care of communication or content errors.*” Another student, S13 said: “*Because by this process, teachers will help us more and more to improve our English, especially in terms of grammar, spelling and punctuation.*”

However, a little importance is given to content may be because it is very personal, i.e. every one has his own way to express his ideas.

Question thirteen (Q13) asks students if they could use a response partner, how such a partner would help.

SS	a	b	c	D
400	93	117	159	31
100%	23.25%	29.25%	39.75%	07.75%

**Table 27: The Help of Response Partners**



The majority of students (39.75%) has admitted that a response partner may help in discussing together the content and the form of the essay. Through such discussion that students may recognize their areas of weaknesses and correct them to reach better composition writing. A second category of students represent (29.25%) think that a response partner may help when putting remarks on their essays to make them aware about the errors committed and which need to be cured. In addition to that, ninety three (93) students (i.e.23.25%) agree that they need a response partner just to listen to them when reading aloud their essays. This strategy may help students revise boring, monotonous sentences. Such

strategy helps both the partner and the student writer to recognize when, for example, too many sentences begin with “*It is*” or “*There are*”.

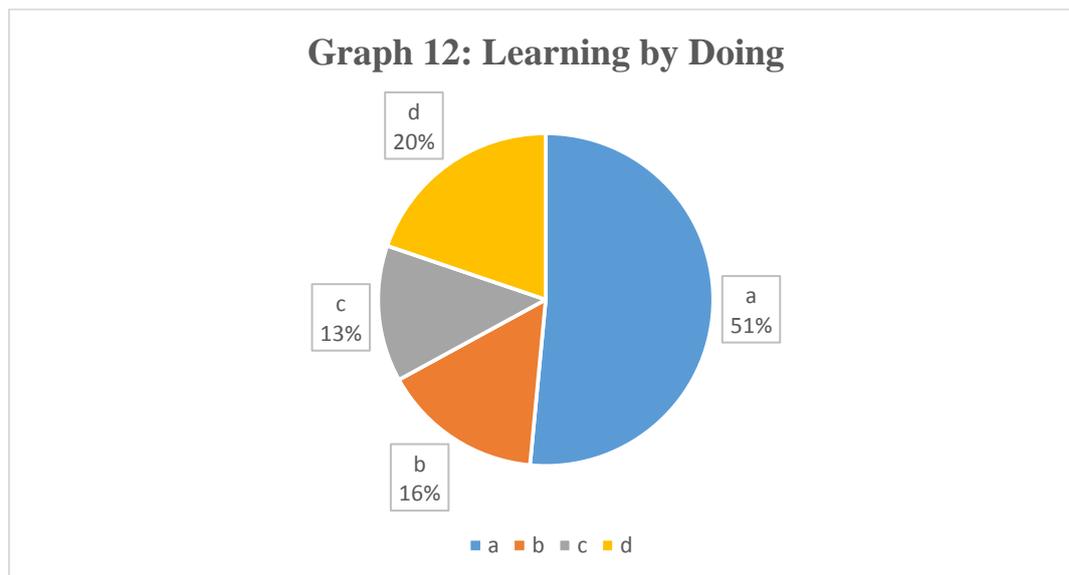
Both the partner and the writer can discuss ways to vary the sentence beginnings.

After the student revises the sentences, the partner can read the sentences aloud. Then both can discuss the effectiveness of the revision. The fourth category represents a simple minority (07.75%) of students who believe that a response partner can help in modifying some parts of the essay.

**\*Q14:** What are you learning by doing the essay?

Number of SS	a	b	c	D
400	206	62	53	79
100%	51.50%	15.50%	13.25%	19.75%

**Table 28:** Learning by Doing



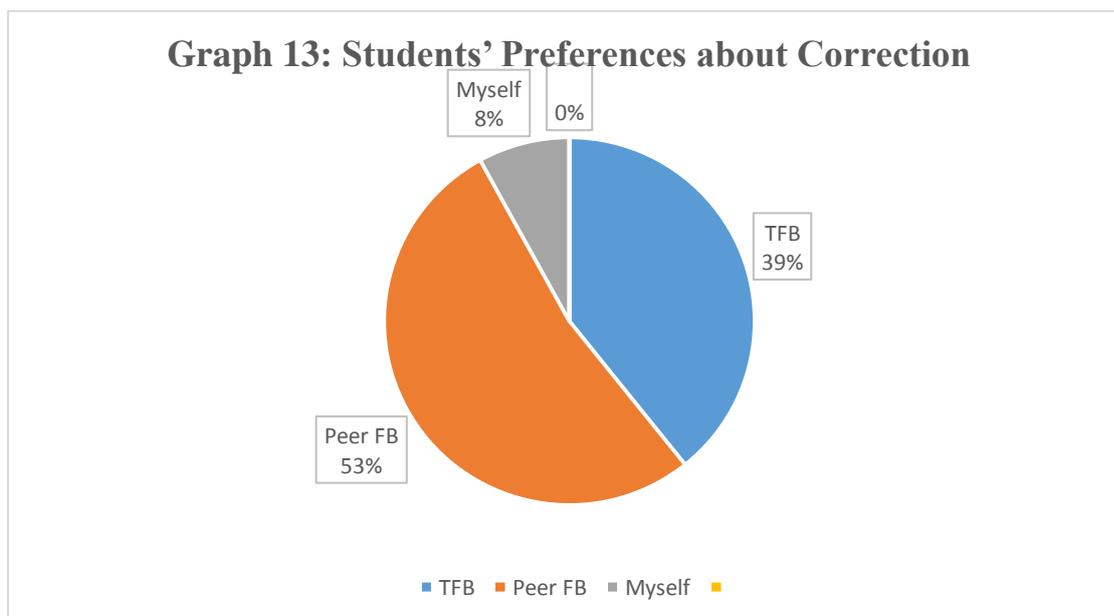
In this question, students are given many choices to answer the question raised above. The majority of students (51.50%) agree that they are learning by doing the essay how to reach grammar competence. The latter means knowledge of lexis, morphology, syntax and phonology. It is more effective to apply punctuation, sentence variety, and *usage* when writing compositions. Therefore, practice provides a crucial bridge between the teacher’s

presentation of a new grammar structure and students' application of the new structure in doing their essays. The second category of students (19.75%) is not very far from the point discussed above. They learn by doing the essay how to assess and reinforce their acquired knowledge in other courses. Following the third category of students (15.50%) , they believe that through learning by doing the essay, they can develop a well organized way of thinking . At last, comes the fourth category (13.25%). Students agree that they can create their own style in learning by doing the essay. All in all, This goes with the Chinese proverb which says: “ *I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.* ” Thus, things can be understood through practice. i.e. “learning by doing principle”.

**\*Q15:** Do you like to be corrected by: your teacher/Peer/ yourself?

/	TFB	Peer FB	Myself	Total
Number of SS	157	211	32	400
%	39.25%	52.75%	08%	100%

**Table 29:** Students' Preferences about Correction



Yet again, we have recorded different responses by students as far as the preferable FB they like to be provided by. As it is noticed the majority of students (52.75%) prefer *peer FB* whereas (39.25%) of students like to be corrected by their teachers, so they prefer *teacher FB*. And a simple minority which represents (08%) chooses *self correction*. The latter is an indirect method where the teacher provides students with some guidelines on their composition writing that will give them an opportunity to learn from their written errors by themselves. In self correction, teachers attract their students' attention to the errors they made and students attempt to correct them on their own.

Concerning TFB, we mean that students benefit from the opportunity of comments from their teachers on their performance. It is an important element in classroom interaction. This goes with the saying of Tsui (1995) which explains the fact that classroom exchanges consist of three parts: “ *An initiation from the teacher, a response from student, followed by a feedback from the teacher...*” (p. 42).

One significant finding from this question (Q15) indicates that peer FB dominates. Peer FB takes place when SS provide FB to their fellow students. So, they benefit more from peer FB rather than TFB. This can be done to help each other by checking on each other's efforts.

**\*Q16:** Do you benefit from your TFB to make your own progress?

/	Yes	No	Total
Number of SS	360	40	400
%	90%	10%	100%

**Table 30:** Using TFB to Make Progress

A glance at the table above reveals that the majority (90%) has admitted that they benefit from their TFB. For those who have given “**no**” answer, this may be due to their uncertainty about benefiting from their TFB to improve their composition writing. It depends

on the teacher whether he follows his students' writing a step by step or just cares about the final product. In this respect, S2 said: *“My teacher does not guide us, he asks us to write a composition and when we finish, he looks rapidly at its content. He evaluates the final work”*. Another student (S59) commented: *“I do not benefit from my TFB because he is always discouraging. She does not take things seriously. She took my composition and read it for the whole class to make them laugh at me. Can you tell me how can I progress to write better?”* .

This is, in fact, neither advisable nor practical in teaching since what matters most is how to make students realize their area of weaknesses and the way to avoid them softly, not using sarcasm or intimidation. WE teachers should provide their SS with FB during all the stages of writing (drafting, revising and finally editing) including both form and content. If there is guidance from one stage to another, students surely will progress in their composition writing.

### 5.1.3. The Grammatical Structure

**\*Q17:** When you are doing a piece of writing, do you think about the structure or shape of it, refer to plan, or do you tend to keep writing until you have developed your ideas to the full?

Students	a-Keep writing	b-Think about the structure during writing	c- refer to plan
400	05	192	203
100%	01.25%	48%	50.75%

**Table 31:** Doing a Piece of Writing

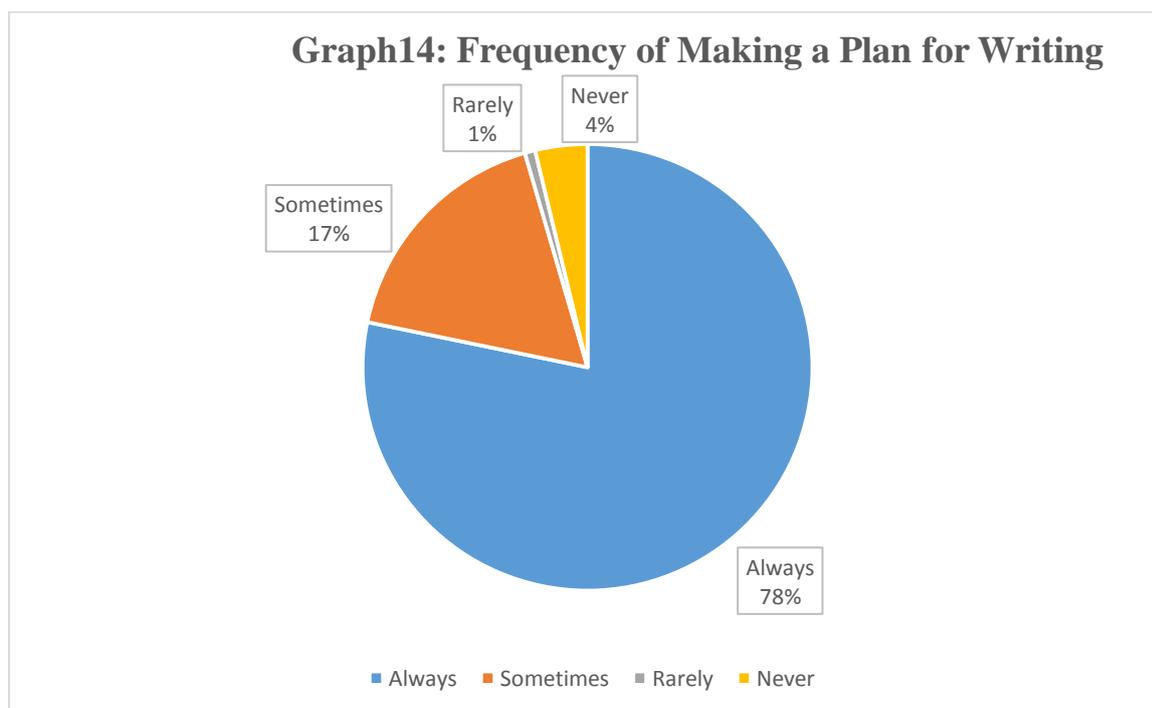
A glance at this table shows that the majority of students (50.75%) refer to plan when they are doing a piece of writing in order to guide their thoughts about one particular point. Planning is therefore an important step that helps us to write compositions. It is a systematic process of developing students' ideas and giving them shape. As the first stage in the writing process, planning is a series of strategies designed to find and formulate information in writing compositions.

The second category of students that represents (48%) agree that they think about the structure during writing. As we cannot deny the importance of the structure during writing, it is necessary to be dealt with after making a plan for the essay. So both are important in writing essays. However, only a minority of students represent (01.25%) who are keeping writing when they are doing a piece of writing until they develop their ideas to the full. But this isn't advisable because we can find ourselves writing trivial things or be far from the topic including undesirable details not like when we follow certain plan to develop our topic.

Question eighteen (Q18) asks students when they have a piece of writing to do whether they make a plan without being told to do so.

Number of students	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
400	313	69	03	15
100%	78,25%	17,25%	0,75%	03,75%

**Table 32:** Frequency of Making a Plan for Writing



Here students are asked how often they make a plan before writing. They can choose options to vary along a continuum ranging from “*always*” to “*never*”. Undoubtedly, students differ in their attitudes towards planning for a piece of writing without being told to do so.

The above table reveals that (78, 25%) of students choose “*always*”. One respondent, student 201, said: “*I always make a plan for my composition writing; I need to list some ideas and main headings that may guide me later when I start writing about one particular subject*”. Another student, S53, added: “*Within the plan, I select a topic that will enable me to say something interesting about what I know well. Then I limit the topic being chosen so*

that I can develop it adequately and specifically.” Another student, S13 said: “Within planning for composition writing, I use many strategies to find and formulate information that I follow later on when start writing.” Sixty nine ( i. e 17, 25%) other respondents have opted for the second option “*sometimes*”. It may depend on the time, their psychological state or the topic itself whether it is motivating or not. Moreover, a minority that represents (0, 75%) have opted for the third option “*rarely*”. So they rarely make a plan. They seem to be less motivated to write.

However, fifteen students out of four hundred (i.e.03, 75%) said that they never make a plan for their writings without being told to do so. These students seem not interested in writing at all. They will make a plan only if they are obliged by the teacher to do as certain contexts, for example, in exams.

The next question (Q19) acts as a complement to the preceding one (Q18). Students are further asked how often their WE Teachers tell them to make a plan first. They can choose options to vary along a continuum ranging from “*always*” to “*never*”. One significant finding is that students agree with “*always*” option. All of them indicate that their teachers always ask them to make a plan first. The following table illustrates that point.

Number of students	Always	Sometimes	rarely	Never
400	400	//	//	//
100%	100%	//	//	//

**Table 33:** Teachers’ Emphasis on Making a Plan for Writing

It is worth noting that “*planning*” is very significant in writing compositions. Its’ importance has been clearly mentioned through the analysis of the last three questions (Q17, Q18; Q19).

### **Planning:**

Planning is a systematic process of developing your ideas and giving them shape. As the first stage in the writing process, planning is a series of strategies designed to find and formulate information in writing.

In planning for a piece of writing, the following steps may be followed.

### **Choosing an Appropriate Subject and Limit it Properly.**

Students should be sure to select a topic that will enable them to say something interesting about what they know well. Then limit the topic they choose so that they can develop it adequately and specifically.

-A subject is appropriate if:

- It appeals to SS, or if they can develop an interest in it as they work on it.
- It is acceptable to the intended reader.

-A subject is properly limited if:

- Students know enough about it or can learn enough in a reasonable period.
- The topic is not too broad to treat in the time or space at their command.

### **Purpose:**

Before making a final decision regarding the specific topic, SS should consider their purpose in writing the composition. Purpose is the overall design that governs what writers do in their writing. Writers who have determined their purpose know what kind of information they need, how they want to organize and develop it, and why they think it is important. In effect, purpose directs and controls all the decisions writers make. It is both the *what* and the *how* of that process. Finding a purpose to guide SS through the writing process is the purpose of the writing process.

### **-The Central Idea:**

After deciding upon the purpose, students will find it helpful to set down in a single sentence, the central or controlling idea for their paper. In fact, if in the beginning they can set down a central idea containing logically arranged main points, they will already have the main headings of their outline. If SS do not give the main points in their central idea, they may later wish to reword it in order to show its close relationship to the items in their outline. In dealing with some subjects, they may need to list their ideas and then find and consider more evidence before they can decide upon an appropriate central idea. If not determined in the process of limiting the subject, the central idea should be written out before the outline is completed and then used to test the contents of the outline.

### **- Developing a Working Plan or an Outline before Writing:**

The outline is the blueprint of the composition. The student writer follows his outline carefully so that he may arrange his ideas effectively. But blueprints can be changed and improved, and so can outlines. The writer should make the outline his helping tool; he should not become its slave. He should keep the outline a growing, developing plan which he will not hesitate to change at any stage of his composition whenever he hits upon a way to improve it. He will naturally try to perfect his outline before he starts to write.

\*Steps in the preparation of an outline:

#### 1-Jotting down of ideas on the topic:

Keeping the purpose of the composition firmly in mind, the student should not hesitate to jot down a long list of ideas; and he should jot them down rapidly, without much concern for the proper order. When he begins to classify his ideas, he will find it easy to reject needless ones; he may find also that he needs to supplement his knowledge by further observation or reading.

#### 2- Grouping of the listed items under a few main headings:

After some thought, the writer may limit his subject further by omitting some of the items listed.

3- Make sure that the outline covers the subject, that it treats everything promised in the title.

4- Make sure that the parts of the outline are logically arranged:

- Group related ideas
- Arrange the parts in a natural, logical order
- Do not allow headings to overlap
- Do not coordinate any heading that should be subordinated, do not subordinate any heading that should be coordinated
- Do not allow any single heading or subheading to stand anywhere in the outline.

5- Check the outline for the formal details of notation and indentation and parallel structure.

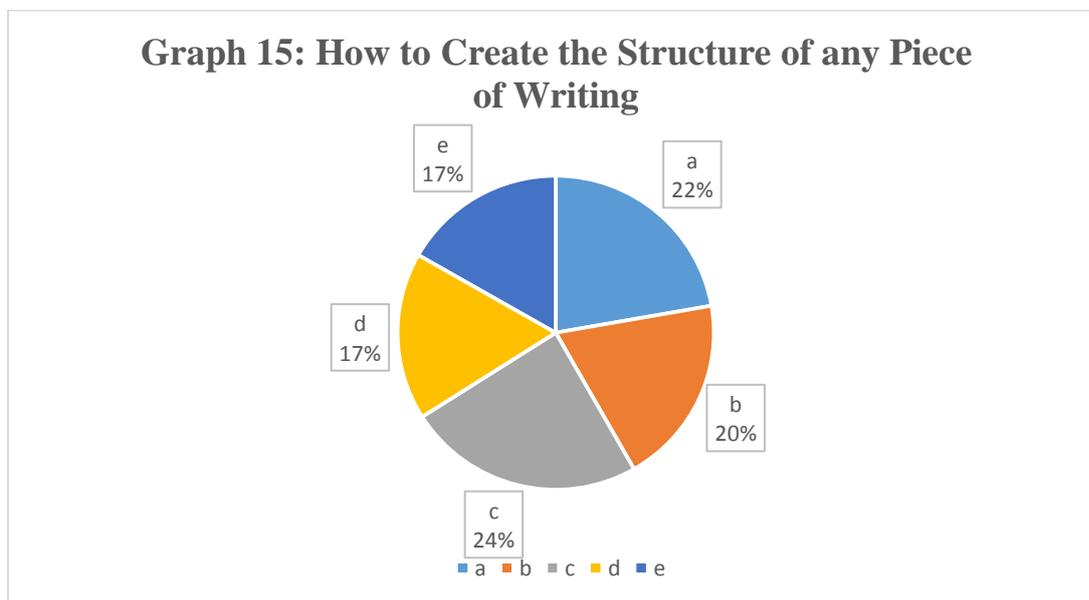
6- Get ready to write the first draft.

**\*Q20:** Think of a piece of writing which you have done that has structure or shape that pleases you. What helped you to create the structure or shape?

- a- Clear description of the required structure by the teacher.
- b- Class or group discussion of the required structure.
- c- Making a plan of the structure.
- d- Feedback from peer (s) on first draft.
- e- Feedback from Teacher on first draft.
- f- Please specify any other

Students	a	b	c	d	E
400	89	78	97	69	67
100%	22.25%	19.5%	24.25%	17.25%	16.75%

**Table 34:** How to Create the Structure of any Piece of Writing

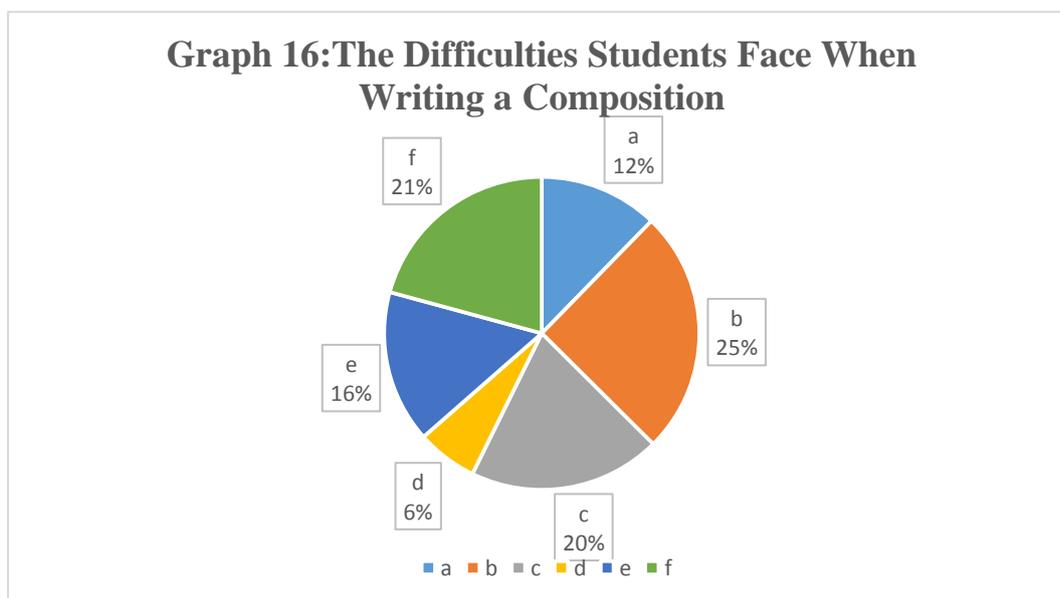


As this table shows, students react differently to the question being raised above (Q20). Different answers have been recorded in relation to what helped students to create the structure of composition writing. The majority of students (24.25%) agree that making a plan of the structure is what help them to create the structure of the composition. Again, planning is chosen by students as a way to success in writing. In addition to planning, some other students (22.25%) refer to clear description of the required structure by the teacher. Others (19.5%) believe that the class or group discussion of the required structure help them a lot to create the structure of the composition. Whereas sixty nine (17.25%) of students said that it is due to peer FB on their first draft; and (16.75%) of them benefited from Teacher FB on their first draft.

**\*Q21:** What difficulties do you face when you write a composition?

Students	a	b	c	d	e	F
400	49	101	79	25	63	83
100%	12.25%	25.25%	19.75%	6.25%	15.75%	20.75%

**Table 35:** The Difficulties Students Face When Writing a Composition



In this question, students are asked to tell which kind of difficulty they face when they write composition. Forty nine students ( 25. 25%) opted for the second choice which means, they have problems with “*grammatical categories*” such as: Tense, voice, aspect and mood. These concepts are very basic when writing an essay, in addition to the use of modifiers as: adjectives and adverbs which represent 20.75% as shown in the table above. Moreover, 19.75% of students’ difficulties in writing are related with constructing sentences, word order, inclusion of phrases, sentence types and sentence combining that can be used to form larger units as the paragraph or the composition writing.

The next difficulty that students are faced with is about *punctuation* marks and *capitalization*. It represents (15.75%). A further difficulty as students claimed (12.25%) is concerned with the use of *spelling* rules followed by the misuse of transitions that are used to

join sentences and paragraphs expressing different meanings. This is represented by 6.25% as stated in the table above. On the whole, we may say that all those difficulties affect both the form and the meaning of the composition writing. That's why we should solve them as much as possible by using whatever strategy such as peer revising, or present them through mini-lessons. By these ways, students may develop and improve their writing in a perfect way.

**\* Q 22: Why should you write compositions?**

For this question, students are asked to justify why they should write composition. They are given five choices in which they are told to choose only the most important three reasons.

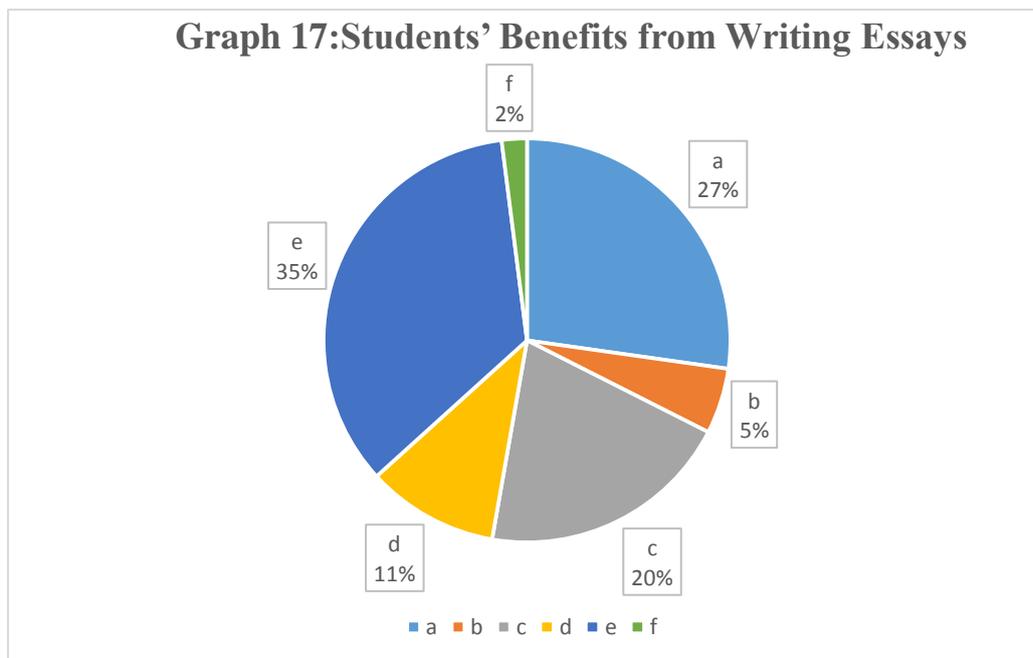
All the students agree that they write because:

- Writing reinforces the grammatical structures.
- Writing helps them to learn vocabulary.
- It helps them develop the skills of communicating in writing.

**\* Q 23: To what extent do you benefit from writing essays?**

Students	a	b	C	D	e	F
400	109	21	81	42	139	08
100%	27.25%	5.25%	20.25%	10.5%	34.75%	02%

**Table 36: Students' Benefits from Writing Essays.**



This table shows that the majority of students (34.75 %) has admitted that they benefit from essay writing by doing research and projects. Some others (27.25%) used it in future writing for different purposes. Whereas other students (20.25%) benefited from writing essays in keeping journals and diaries 10.5% of students used it in making portfolios. The fifth category of students that represent (5.25%) use it for taking tests and pass exams and the last (02%) of students claim that they benefit from essay writing in applying for a job or scholarship .

Such variety of choices lead us to say that SS benefit from writing compositions and used them in different fields to satisfy their needs. We can not say one is more beneficial than the other since all depends on the purpose of the student. After students have done any piece of writing , a further question ( Q 24 ) is asked about whether students are encouraged to think about how they have done it or not. In other words, do students reflect on their writing?

Students	Yes	No
400	322	78
100%	80.5%	19.5%

**Table 37: Students' Reflection on their Writing**

A Glance at the table above reveals that the overwhelming majority of students which represent (80.5% ) are encouraged to think about how they have done their composition. So they have time to reflect on their writing and by this way, they can understand things deeply and may discover their errors by their own and solve them rapidly. However, a minority of students (19.5% ) said " no " .They are not encouraged to think about how they have done any piece of writing . This kind of students lacks motivation and interest in writing compositions.

\* **Q 25:** Does your teacher allow you to think not about the task of writing (i.e. product), but about how you have done it ( i. e. process) ?

Students	Product	Process
400	82	318
100%	20.5%	79.5%

**Table 38:** Students' Use of the Process in Writing Compositions

It is worth noting that the majority of students (79.5% ) agree that their WE teachers allow them to think about how they have done a piece of writing, i.e. through the process, whereas a simple minority (20.5% ) believe that their WETs allow them to think about the final essay , i.e. product . We can thus say that, the process approach is widely used by WE teachers rather than the product approach. The process approach developed as a reaction to the confines of the production Approach. The process approach enables students to clearly decide about their own writing by means of discussion, tasks, drafting, feedback which encourage students to make improvement in their composition themselves.

\* **Q 26:** By the end of the year, do you feel that you have learnt more about writing compositions and that grammar has helped you to learn more to write essays?

Students	Yes	No
400	360	40
100%	90%	10%

**Table 39:** The Help of Grammar in Writing Essays

Yet again , we have recorded (90% ) of students who feel that they have learnt more about writing compositions and that grammar has helped them to learn more to write essays. On the contrary, a simple minority which represent (10% ) of students responded by “No”. The most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar in writing is to use students’ writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts .We can thus say that it is more effective to teach grammar in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills. So grammar is integrated within writing. In other words, integrating grammar instruction into the revising and editing process helps students make immediate applications, thus allowing them to see the relevance of grammar to their own writing. Furthermore, grammar instruction that is separate from writing instruction doesn’t improve students’ writing competence.

**\* Q 27:** What strategies does your teacher adopt while teaching writing compositions?

Different responses have been recorded concerning the strategies adopted by WE teachers while teaching writing compositions. Some students said that their WE teachers use brainstorming, evaluative FB, providing models of writing that help them very much in their next writings. One respondent said: *“She teaches us how to write, she starts by brainstorming as the first step and then moves to other steps till we reach the last one. She obliges us to design a plan for the essay, then she orders us to write a composition following our plans as well as applying all what we learnt, then we read aloud and she corrects us”*.

A further student added: *“Our teacher starts by giving us a group of topics, then she gives us time to think about them and choose one topic and develop it. First of all we make a plan then we write the first draft, she passes around and corrects us then we write a second draft and a final draft. After that we read and discuss it with our mates”*. Closely related to this, one student said: *“Our WET gives us clear instructions, samples of writing an introduction and a conclusion, gives us home works and correct them in the class together*

with our peers to benefit from the correction of some mistakes. She also supports and supplies worksheets and makes groups where we discuss our topics”.

Through all these responses , we recognize that WE teachers vary their strategies while teaching writing compositions . They use brainstorming, and all the stages of the writing process (drafting, revising and editing). They also apply one important strategy which is “reading aloud”. The latter proved to be very helpful for students to recognize their grammatical, syntactic and spelling mistakes so they correct them and avoid them in future writings.

Concerning the following question (Q 28), it acts as a complement to the previous one (Q27). Students are asked whether they find such strategies useful or not.

Students	Yes	No
400	400	/
100%	100%	/

**Table 40:** The Importance of Teacher Strategies in Teaching Composition

It is worth noting that all students find their teacher strategies very useful in teaching compositions. This explains the fact that they benefit from them to correct their errors and may reach improvement in writing compositions especially that there is interaction between them. This leads us to raise the question: Is there interaction between you and the teacher during the writing process? (Q 29) and is it helpful? (Q 30).

Students	Yes	No
400	400	/
100%	100%	/

**Table 41:** The Interaction between the S and T during the Writing Process

Yet again, the table above shows that all the students agree that there is interaction between them and their teachers during the writing process. This is proved through their writing development passing by different stages of the writing process (drafting, revising and

editing). Thus, we notice interaction through continuity between the T and SS during the writing process, where SS are always involved in writing composition, receive feedback and apply such feedback to make writing improvement. This may lead us to recognize how much such interaction is helpful for writing development and students may avoid all the errors being made in their earlier writings. Thus, interaction opens the door for better writing achievement.

**\* Q 31:** What are you expecting that your teacher will say about your draft?

Students	Don't know	Probably , a few ideas to help me	Watch spelling and punctuation
400	40	149	211
100%	10%	37.25%	52.75%

**Table 42:** Students' Expectation about their Draft.

A glance at this table reveals that the majority of students that represent (52.75% ) expect that their WETs focus more on spelling and punctuation in their drafts. These are the basics of writing. The first thing that students should be aware of is related to those techniques of writing. Some other students (37.25% ) expect their WE teachers to say few ideas that may help students improve their composition writing. However, a simple minority represent (10%) of students opted for "don't know" option. This, may be due to lack of interest and motivation in writing.

**\* Q 32:** How would you evaluate your experience in writing?

Students	Successful	Unsuccessful	Complicated
400	320	40	40
100%	80%	10%	10%

**Table 43:** Evaluating Students' Experience in Writing.

The majority of students (80% ) opted for "successful" and (10% ) claimed that their experience is " Unsuccessful " and " Complicated " as is the task of the writing skill. Those students who react positively and evaluate their experience in writing as successful seem to

benefit a lot from their T FB or P FB as well as from their WE Teachers' different strategies that motivate them to write better and better. Those students are interested in writing either for personal or academic purposes. They like writing and they write regularly. That's why they succeed in improving their composing writing.

As far as the last question of the questionnaire (Q 33) is concerned, students are invited to suggest some ideas that can be used by their WE Teachers to help them improve writing via grammar. Different suggestions have been recorded. One student, S2, suggests: « *In order to improve writing , I suggest to read more books and novels or even short stories to enrich our vocabulary and to have knowledge about the given topic and write an essay about it .Concerning grammar in writing , I suggest more practice about sentence combining, punctuation, tenses, the use of adjectives, adverbs , agreement » . A further student (S 15) added: « *I suggest a lot of practice on writing processes and grammatical structures following teacher's instructions. » On the same line, S 27 said: «*I suggest to write more and more essays in order to learn grammar rules very well as well as learning from our mistakes in many written takes. »***

#### **5.4. Analysis of Students Interviews**

More students encourage grammar to be focused in writing compositions. In this respect, S 95 suggested: « *Grammar is something really needed in writing because what we write is going to be understood if we use correct grammar, i.e. tenses, sentence structures, vocabulary ... etc. However if we don't use the right tense or structure, the context will be negatively affected. » Closely related to this, S 218 added: « *Grammar is very important in writing because writing is a combination of sentences. So, it will be of a greater value to master grammar and apply it in writing context correctly and therefore can achieve coherence as well as cohesion. »**

Other students asked for providing more FB since it is very helpful in reaching writing development. Among them, S 59 who suggested that: « *When writing essays, our teacher should correct our mistakes so that we will avoid them in future writing and develop. He should provide us with opportunities to develop our writing such as: by asking us to do many researches or essays writing twice or more per week.* » Accordingly, the response of student 321, acts as complementary to the previous one . He / She said: « *I suggest that the WET should give us every time some essays and provide us with FB on the mistakes being done as well as about the transitions from one step to another. He should not give us only the topic subject and asks us to write without guiding us. Thus, we need to apply grammatical rules but our teacher should provide us FB about them to know whether we are in the correct way or the wrong way.* »

Moreover, student S 92 said that: « *Grammar is the basis of our writing since writing is just the practical side of grammar rules. So I suggest to prepare mini-lessons about grammar rules that will be applied during the writing sessions later on.* » In relation to the point, S201 added: « *Grammar should not be excluded and all what we write is a combination of grammatical sentences and if we don't master grammar we can't write correctly. So, I think grammar should be focused and can be mastered through more practice.* » Furthermore, student 303 suggests: « *Increasing the number of grammar and writing sessions because one hour and a half per week is not sufficient to master all the necessary knowledge about grammar, and can't apply and practice all what have been dealt with in one session. So, there is a huge amount of knowledge in few hours.* »

On the whole, we may say that students' suggestions are very important and should be taken into account by WE teachers to satisfy their students' needs. Students need to train themselves in writing so they should have opportunities for that. They also need to their teachers' encouragement to read more books, novels, articles, short stories .... etc. Such tools

enrich students' vocabulary. Students further claim to increase the number of grammar and writing sessions because one hour and a half for each session is really not sufficient to master all the necessary concepts concerned. In addition, students need more practice about sentence combining, tenses, transitions ...etc. within writing compositions.

Another important fact is focused by students, which is teacher "*guidance*". So, here, students need to mention how they develop their composition writing through the different stages of the process of writing that they pass through. Teacher guidance is very useful to help students correct their errors made in each stage. Thus, there should be a continuity between all the stages (drafting, revising and editing) to see if students develop their essay writing or not. All in all, we suggest to use students' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. This way we are helping our students to improve their command of grammar in writing. Therefore, it is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety, and usage in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills.

As students revise and edit their writing, teachers can provide grammar instruction that guides students in their attempts to identify and correct problems in sentence structure and usage. For instance, a teacher who sees that many students are writing sentences containing misplaced modifiers can present a mini-lesson on this concept, using examples from students' writing. The teacher can have students edit their own and one another's drafts for this problem. Integrating grammar instruction into the revising and editing process helps students make immediate applications, thus allowing them to see the relevance of grammar to their own writing.

For further clarification, it might be a good case in point to add interviews in addition to questionnaires as a continuing attempt to understand more about the integration of grammar in teaching composition writing. Following this, we asked students other questions not included in the questionnaire. Question One (Q1) states: Do you like writing?

The majority of students (35 out of 40 ) say " **Yes** " and (5 out of 40 ) respond by " No " answer. For those who said "**yes** " they like writing, they justified their choices differently. S1 said: *« I like writing because it gives me the ability of expressing my point of view in addition to the fact that I find writing more easy than speaking.»* Another respondent, S5, added: *«Because I can improve my level through writing by expressing my ideas and way of thinking. Moreover, it helps me to improve my vocabulary and express my feeling. »*

A further respondent, S3, agrees that writing *« expresses our silent ideas into words. so that, we can read them in a new way, and give them the chance to be read by other people.»* In relation, S9 clarifies this point by saying: *«writing allows us to practise the different rules we learn in grammar and enrich our vocabulary. »*

However, for those who said "**No**" (5 students) they do not like writing as (S14) said: *«Because I feel that I'm not qualified to write .So, writing makes me embarrassed and less confident. »* A further respondent, S31, added: *« when I write I feel bored and all the ideas in my mind escape»*. In relation to the same point, S 20, claims that he does not like writing because: *« It is difficult to find ideas and organize them correctly. »*

We can thus say that those students who like writing, they are motivated to write even if they make mistakes and do not have any problem when receiving FB (from their TTs or classmates). This category of students may develop their writing compositions as soon as possible. Whereas those who do not like writing, feel embarrassed and less confident are less motivated. WE Teachers may do their best to overcome such problem. Students from this kind can not develop their writing and thus fail in their learning as a whole.

In the second question of the interview, students are asked to tell if writing can be taught and how. It is worth noting that all the students (40 students) agree with the fact that writing can be taught, but how? Many responses have been recorded. Student 7 said: *«By teaching the techniques and strategies of writing, teaching grammar, vocabulary, spelling*

*and following teachers' instructions.* » Another student, S2, said: « *Writing is a difficult skill and it can be taught by giving instructions to students on the different steps of writing compositions*». In relation, S 16 added: «*By motivating students to learn rules of grammar and apply them in their writing to improve compositions.* »

On the whole, we may add that the writing skill is a complex one. It is not a gift but a matter of practising some grammatical rules as far as the format, the structure of sentences and paragraphs are concerned. One more fact can be added, we do not teach writing itself but we teach the process of writing and let students edit and revise their essays.

Moreover, what teachers can do? Simply, they should provide the students with the appropriate materials such as: Making exercises, teaching the rules of grammar and combine sentences as well as give clear instructions that will help students to write.

Question three (Q3) of the interview asks students why should they write compositions? One student ( S8 ) said: « *To develop our skills in writing and in grammar and learn more vocabulary.* » Another respondent, S25, added: « *To improve my style of writing and learn how to write in an academic way. In addition to learn some grammatical rules which are applied in writing.* » In relation to the same point, S 23, explains: «*We should write compositions in order to generate ideas and develop our ability to think and write.* »

We can further comment that students write compositions for many benefits such as to enrich their ideas and accomplish a set of goals. May be, in the future, it will help them to write a rapport, request application, business letters ....etc. In addition to the main goal which is to improve their composition writing including grammatical structures.

Furthermore, question four ( Q 4) has to deal with the strategies used by students to write compositions. Many answers have been received from the interview. Respondent, S 4, said: « *By following some steps as: choosing a topic, outline, the first draft, the second draft*». Another respondent, S12, explains: «*By collecting ideas to write an introduction, development*

and a conclusion. » In relation, student S 37 added: *“To use free writing: move from general to specific”*. In addition, S29 said: *« First I think about ideas (pre-writing stage); then I prepare an outline that will guide me to express my ideas; and finally I write the first draft. The latter can be corrected by my teacher focusing much more on vocabulary, grammar mistakes .After that I write the second draft and the final draft. »*

On the same line of thought, S 24 , claims: *«Pre-writing ( brainstorming ) ,the first draft , revising , editing , and using appropriate transitions to link between the ideas as well as check cohesion .»*

In short, we may say that students design an outline first, followed by the stages of the writing process (drafting / revising / editing) later on. During the writing stages, students should be conscious about capitalization, punctuation, spelling, coherence and transitional words that help them to write the final draft.

*Question five: How does your WE Teacher teach you grammar in composition writing?*

Students reacted differently to this question. All of them agree that grammar took place in their writing compositions. This is the most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar in writing. In this sense, S 33 said: *« My teacher of writing teaches us grammar in composition writing by trying to give us some grammatical rules and how to apply them in writing compositions. »* Supporting this view, S 17 added:

*« When we write our WE teacher focuses much more on tenses especially when we deal with narration, we should use the simple past. »* Another respondent, S 20 commented: *« Our WE teacher corrects our grammatical errors and gives us examples as well as guides us to the suitable tense according to our topics. She further checks the subject /verb agreement, the tense of the verb and the use of appropriate punctuation. »* Student 8 further explained: *«The WE teacher organizes mini-lessons about grammatical points or errors that are commonly used e.g. modifiers. »* This lead us to say that integrating grammar instruction into the writing

process especially the revising and editing processes helps students to make immediate applications, thus allowing them to see the relevance of grammar to their own writing.

Moreover, question six (Q 6) asks students to identify what factors they think can affect their writing development. Different factors have been noticed in relation to this question. The principal factor that affects students' writing development is due to the lack of motivation. In this sense, S10 said: « *If the teacher motivates me, I like work better. I would like my teacher to give me suggested topics and some guidelines to be followed as well as corrects me when I make grammatical errors.* » Supporting this view, S11 said: « *When the teacher does not play his role or when he provides evaluative negative affective Feedback.* »

Another respondent, S17 claimed: « *What affects the writing development is the irregular writing because we write just when we are asked to do and do not take it as a habit and a continuous action. So we write few essays with restricted information, less reading, less practice, lack of vocabulary. All these factors affect our writing development.* »

In addition, S28 added: « *Stress and time are two important factors that may affect our writing.* ».

Results show that many factors can affect students' writing development. Among them, we have found: stress and time, irregular writing, less practice, lack of motivation and teacher *feedback* if it is negative affective. The latter hurts the students' sensibilities, and that's why they lose confidence and lack motivation and interest, which may result in the regression of students' composition writing.

To this extent, we personally think that words have magic, i.e. if we praise a student by providing him with positive FB, he will be encouraged to carry on the task of writing .e.g. I may say to the student: « *I am sure you can do better.* » Thus, we may believe that if FB should be negative, it should be stated implicitly in order not to hurt the student. This is

sometimes beneficial since it can really create challenge and make the students' willingness to do his best next time to prove that he is good enough and can improve his writing.

In question seven of the interview, students are supposed to answer why they think some students seem to benefit from their teachers and enjoy writing more than others. We have recorded different answers. One respondent, S2, said: « *Because they are in well communication with the teacher and their ability to write is better than others. So their level is high in grammar, vocabulary and writing. They are well cultivated and they rely on themselves to correct their errors.* » In this sense, S40 added: « *For some students, writing is their hobby so students have specific goals they want to achieve. When you like something, you do your best to reach it and develop it.* »

Another respondent, S35, further added: « *Because some students are more interested in writing than others. They have a strong will to write and they practise more than the others. So they are motivated to learn how to write. However, there are some other students who lack interest in writing. They are less motivated to write because they are “shy” to read their compositions aloud. This kind of learners is called “introvert learners”* ». Moreover, S14 said: « *It is a matter of motivation. Those students who benefit from their teachers and enjoy writing more than others are highly motivated to write compositions. So there is “intrinsic motivation”* ».

So far, we have noticed that some students benefit from their teachers and enjoy writing more than others. This may refer to many factors such as motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic), the students' personality (introvert Vs extrovert learners) in addition to practice. All these together may foster or hinder the writing development.

Concerning the eighth question, students are asked about the importance of grammar in teaching writing. Among the answers that have been collected, student 3 said: « *Grammar plays a big role in writing compositions. Without grammatical rules the content will be*

*destroyed. So, when you write in a good and correct grammatical way, you can reach more effectiveness of writing compositions in a short period of time.* » In relation to this point, S5 added: « *Without grammar, I can't find my words and I can't make a link between them. It really helps me in the organization of my composition writing.* » Thus, we can say that grammar is extremely important in writing compositions because we can not write perfectly without referring to correct grammatical rules that bind our writing. Moreover, writing without respecting grammar is like building in a vacuum without using bricks. We can not read a composition that is full of grammatical mistakes. We can, therefore, say that grammar and writing are unseparable since it is basic to writing.

The following question deals with the strategies used by WE Teachers to teach composition writing. The common strategies that teachers adopt are: presenting mini- lessons; asking students to read aloud what they have written; and peer proof reading (review, editing). These strategies may be of a great value and help students learn grammatical structures within the writing task. And thus, their writing compositions improve.

Furthermore, questions ten and eleven (Q10, Q11) are quite related. Students are asked to explain competence and performance in relation to grammar and writing. And then say whether performance always reflects competence and how. One respondent, S10, said:

« *Writing is the application of grammar; and performance is the application of competence. We can not write any piece of writing without caring about grammar.* » In this sense, S3 added: « *Grammar is the abstract rules which are systematic and stable (never change), whereas writing is performance because we can improve it only through practice. We need a lot of skills to make it better, and grammar is one important part among those skills.* »

We can say that grammar and writing are two sides of the same coin. Having a theoretical knowledge about rules is “*Competence*” and using what we know into practice to

write compositions, this is “*Performance*”. Thus, performance relies on competence as it is the case with grammar in which writing relies on grammar.

Concerning whether performance always reflects competence, the majority of students agree that performance reflects competence. In this context, student 8 said: “*To be a good performer requires from you to have competence in producing and understanding the language.*” Another respondent, S5, added: “*Performance interprets competence in a concrete way. They are like Saussure’ dichotomy: langue and parole*”.

Therefore, there is a strong relationship between competence and performance because by improving our competence through practice and knowing more rules, we can give a good performance. So performance is the reflection of our competence. Thus, performance is like a mirror to the person’s competence, like it is the case of “*exams*”. However, it is not always true that performance always reflect competence because sometimes we have ideas but we don’t find a way to express those thoughts.

Dealing with the importance of grammar in writing, Students are further interviewed (Q12) about what makes a good piece of writing and how the teaching of grammar can enhance its qualities. We have collected many answers. One of them, S11 said: « *In order to have a good piece of writing, you should have good background knowledge, good grammar rules and a good range of ideas. Grammar is, therefore, the core of writing. It helps us to write correctly without mistakes to reach good writing.* » Another respondent, S40, added: “ *What makes a good piece of writing is following strategies in revising and editing our piece of writing. Then read it several times to correct the grammatical errors found there*”.

Referring to this question, we can add that good ideas and good language are two characteristics of a good piece of writing. In addition to the use of: correct grammar, punctuation and vocabulary.

Concerning question thirteen, students are asked whether grammar practice improves writing. We have recorded various responses. It is worth noting that all students agree that grammar practice improves writing. In this sense, S38 said: « *Writing is based on grammar and if there is no grammar there will be no good writing. So we apply grammar rules in writing.*» Another respondent, S36, said: «*It helps to reduce grammar mistakes and participates in the coherence and cohesion of any piece of writing.*» In addition, S 12 added: « *By practising grammar we make less mistakes and thus can improve our composition writing.* »

We can thus say that the more we practise the more our writing will be improved. Grammar helps in improving the structure and organization of our writing. Therefore, the overall goal of practice is to help students build fluency with the target structure. So, they can use it without hesitancy. Moreover, practice provides a crucial bridge between the teacher's presentation of a new grammar structure and students' application of the new structure in writing compositions.

Moreover, in question fourteen ( Q 14 ) of the interview, students are asked to tell the most common problems that they noticed in their writings. A variety of answers were collected as far as this question is concerned. Among those problems, students identified grammatical as the major problem they are faced with when writing a composition. The second problem has to deal with mechanics such as punctuation and capitalization. The third one being about poor vocabulary. And last poor organization of ideas as well as poor content. Thus, students need more practice to overcome such problems .Through practice, things may be clarified.

In question fifteen (Q 15), students are asked whether they benefit from their teacher FB and how. The majority of students benefit from their T FB. In this respect, S9 said: « *We*

*learn a lot from the mistakes we have done in our writing. Thanks to TFB, we can exchange ideas in a positive way and be able to know new things.* » Another respondent, S30, added:

*« Teacher FB is effective in revising my writing and correcting my mistakes and by this way we can reach writing proficiency. »* In addition, S29 added: *« He gives me some comments that help me to understand the area of mistakes to avoid them in the future writings to improve better and better. »*

However, only a small minority of students claim that they do not benefit from their TFB. This may depend on the type of FB provided, i.e. negative affective. Our purpose then is how to make students realize their errors and the way to avoid them softly without hurting them. The latter may affect students' personality and attitudes. It may lead then to such a division between "introvert" and "extrovert" learners. Introvert learners may be discouraged, feel lost, demoralized and thus stop progressing in writing any further, whereas extrovert learners can use their own methods to prove to their teachers the opposite view that they have formed about them. In this respect, S28 said: *«I do not benefit from TFB, because it is discouraging, but this does not mean that I stop my learning process. So, I have my own research and the desire to challenge my teachers' comments that are negative and step by step I will develop my composition writing. »*

In Questions sixteen and seventeen (Q 16 & Q 17) students are asked whether when writing about a particular topic, they need to write multiple drafts. If yes, on which of the drafts students usually receive FB. Students agree that they need to write multiple drafts in order to improve their writing. Concerning which of the drafts they receive more FB. They claim that the first draft had the lion's share in correcting errors. They further need to receive FB on all the drafts (first, intermediate and final drafts). If there is continuity on the part of the teacher towards his students, different processes of writing, students therefore can improve their writing gradually.

Furthermore, students are asked(Q 18 & Q 19) about the importance of FB in teaching writing, in general, and whether it helps to improve students' future writings. One respondent, S 61, said: « *TFB is very important, it gives us the suitable techniques that can be used in writing by learning how to avoid repeating mistakes of different types in future writings.* » A further respondent, S 3, said: « *She gives us new strategies, new rules and help us to organize our ideas during the whole process of writing.* » In addition, S9 said: « *TFB can motivate the students to improve their composition writing by correcting the mistakes they have done and learn from them to write correct and perfect composition in the future.* » Moreover, students improve their future writings and take their TFB into account. In this context, S14 said: « *He advises us and we benefit from his teaching experience and vocabulary and writing techniques to improve our composition writing.* »

A further respondent, S 4, said: « *By showing us the weak points and how to resolve them to correct our mistakes by ourselves next time and will never repeat them.* » Moreover, student 26 added: « *TFB helps us to improve our future writings through following his instructions about both form and content.* »

In the last question of the interview, students are invited to suggest what WE teachers can do to motivate students write more and more compositions with the minimum care of grammar correction.

Many suggestions have been proposed by students and we hope WE teachers will take them into account in the future for students' writing improvement. In this context, S3, said: « *The teacher can suggest some motivating topics, creates a good atmosphere for work, and discuss ideas together in the class either in pairs or in groups to exchange ideas between each other and benefit from each other's FB.* » Another respondent, S34, added: « *I suggest my WET will give us a lot of home works and provide us with FB and time to correct them in order to show us our mistakes of different kinds (grammar, vocabulary, punctuation....etc).* »

A further respondent, S8 added: « *I suggest students write more than once or twice per week about topics that interest them. So they feel some freedom about what they want as: their own lives, their problems, wishes, needs, sport, education, love ...etc.* »

## **Conclusion**

All in all, we can ask teachers to encourage more writings of compositions without caring too much about mistakes because they can correct them in an encouraging way without demoralizing students. Thus, students learn from the mistakes that they have done. So, the teacher should not exaggerate in focusing on grammar correctness forgetting about the generation of the ideas in the composition writing.

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## Introduction

Observation plays a central role in practice teaching. Calkins, (1986) regarded it as central to good teaching of writing. Observation is therefore part of the business of teaching and effective teachers draw on observation to inform their teaching. (Cooper and Mc Intyre, 1996).

### 6.1. Observing Written Expression Teacher's Class

It often begins with a series of observations of teacher's class. These observations give a chance to the teacher to familiarize himself with such things as the course materials he is using, the teaching methods and strategies he uses, how he/she interacts with students, how the learners respond and interact with the teacher and among themselves, and the kind of language they understand and produce. These observations may help the teacher to prepare himself for some of issues and problems that he may have to face while teaching the class.

We can see what methods and strategies the teacher employs and decide if we are able to use these when we come to teach the class. We can also learn more about the learners (e.g. their interests, motivation, and learning styles and strategies). As Gaies (1991) has pointed out, *"What we see , when we observe teachers and learners in action, is not the mechanical application of methods and techniques, but rather a reflection of how teachers have interpreted these things."*(p.14)

### 6.2. The Focus of the Observation

If observation is to serve a useful purpose it needs to be carefully planned. The purpose of the observation is to collect information that we can later use during a follow-up discussion with the teacher. Before we observed the writing teacher's class we had a pre-observation meeting to decide on the focus for my observation. We suggested aspects of the class that we would like to learn more about, such as how the writing teacher teaches grammar

via composition writing. Normally we should focus on only one or two aspects of the lesson since we can not focus on too many things at the same time.

The following are things we can observe:

### **6.2.1. Lesson Structure**

- The way the lesson opens, develops, and closes.
- The writing task that follows the lesson.
- The links and transitions between paragraphs.

### **6.2.2. Classroom Management Strategies**

- Setting up groups.
- Maintaining order.
- Time management.
- Seating arrangements.

### **6.2.3. Types of Teaching Tasks**

- Whole –class activities
- Pair and group tasks
- Individual tasks

### **6.2.4. Teaching Strategies**

- Presenting tasks
- Organizing practice
- Teaching techniques

### **6.2.5. Teacher's Use of Language**

- Use of instructional language
- Use of questions
- Feedback techniques

- Explanation of vocabulary and grammar

### **6.2.6. Students' Use of Language**

- Use of language in group work
- Use of the mother tongue during class
- Problems with grammar
- Problems with punctuation

### **6.2.7. Student Interaction**

- Time on task
- Questioning behaviors
- Student -to- student work

## **6.3. Lesson Observation**

During lesson observations, we sat in the back of the classroom where we were able to sit without obstructing students. Classroom observation, it seemed, was a rare occurrence, and at first, students appeared to stare questioningly at me. However, we avoided eye contact with the teacher and students until we were certain that they had grown accustomed to seeing me in the classroom. This behavior confirmed the assumption that as the researcher becomes a more familiar presence “*The participants are less likely to behave uncharacteristically*”. (Walford, 2008:9)

Thus, once students had discovered that we cast a blind eye or maintained deaf ears and failed to report them they began to relax in my presence. Observation notes took the form of brief jotting. We made general classroom observations on the main teaching procedures of writing compositions through grammar and how students responded to different aspects of teaching. We also noted interesting developments, or situations occurring in the class in terms of teacher- student relations and student-student relations, feedback on grammatical mistakes that occurred in students' compositions writing.

When we started to observe the writing teacher, we watched the class in general and how she started the class and went through the various writing steps to write compositions as she had planned, we had a copy of her lesson plan. Then after the class she told me that she was happy that all her students were participating, learning from their peers and correct their grammar mistakes by themselves. What really struck me was how she was able to get all her students involved and motivated to write more compositions especially it was a big class of forty (40) students and it was fast moving, so we wondered how she took it all in.

We also observed that the writing teacher gave clear, precise, and brief instructions to the class about the importance of using correct grammar to improve the students' future writings. This is an important skill as it avoids miscommunication and misunderstanding between the teacher and students in class.

## **6.4. Observation Procedures**

In order to make effective use of observation, we should know how to make a record of the information we have collected. The following procedures are used.

### **6.4.1. Checklists**

A checklist contains a list of different features of a lesson, which we complete while observing a lesson. Checklists provide a clear focus for observation, however they can only be used for certain aspects of a lesson.

### **6.4.2. Seating Charts**

Seating charts showing the arrangement of desks in the classroom as well as the position the teacher normally teaches from.

### **6.4.3. Field Notes**

These consist of brief descriptions in note form of key events that occurred throughout the lesson as a whole.

#### **6.4.4. Narrative Summary**

A narrative summary is a written summary of the lesson that tries to capture the main things that happened during the course of it, such as how the lesson opened, the tasks that occurred, the steps of writing compositions. The account should contain as much information as possible but should not contain any evaluation of the lesson.

Teaching grammar through writing is a strategy many WETs have found successful. Among many WETs, we attended writing lessons with a very well experienced and brilliant teacher who taught written expression to second year students (a class made of 40 students), at the English Department of Setif. She shared her steps in teaching writing as well as grammar process to her students and illustrated its effectiveness in developing written compositions with a minimum care of grammatical mistakes. Through the writing sample provided in this study, we were able to observe the writing development of students' compositions.

#### **6.5. Background of Students**

The teacher stresses the use of effective English to her students who are very accepting and respectful to others. They are attentive and like their written expression teacher very much for providing them stability in the classroom and rewarding her students for their achievements. So, she could create a very nice atmosphere for working collaboratively since she formed a positive relationship with her students.

#### **6.6. Teaching Grammar through Writing**

In searching for the best way to teach grammar to students is from writing. The WET, we observed, created a classroom environment and curriculum that promoted the enjoyment of writing as a whole. She used some techniques that were a collaboration of ideas from other colleagues and books. But the crafting and modeling were hers and she used them with students she taught. Such techniques have been tested in her classroom with her students.

The text that was used in her classroom for English was filled with drill and practice lessons and short models of how to write narrative, descriptive, explanatory, and persuasive paragraphs as well as compositions. The composition can be developed by cause and effect, comparison and contrast, by examples...etc.

### **6.6.1. Teaching Nouns and Verbs**

The written expression teacher taught nouns and verbs through writing the narrative paper. She taught adjectives and adverbs through writing the descriptive paper. The students were taught the definition of the noun and completed some drill and practice lessons to give them exposure to the use of the noun. Then, the students were asked to write down all the nouns that they heard as the teacher read a story from a book. The first method covered the visual learners and the second method covered the auditory learners. However, the real learning took place when the students applied what they had learned in grammar to develop their composition writing.

The students were given some writing compositions during the second semester because in the first, they are required to deal with the paragraph. One example of the narrative prompt follows: *“You will write a friendly letter to another student in your English class. In this letter, you will tell an event in your life that you will never forget. The letter is to be at least three paragraphs long and at least one full page”*.

The prompts that were selected for this group all relate to the theme of the students' experiences and have a clear connection with the students' lives. Such connection in the writing helped too much the students to communicate their world to the written expression teacher on the one hand, and to other students on the other hand. The assignment of this prompt included grammatical elements that have been studied previously by the students and students then applied that knowledge to that letter.

### **6.7. Beginning the Writing Process**

First of all, the WT explained the stages of the writing process as follows

## The Writing Process

### Stages of writing

#### Before writing

(brainstorm & discuss to generate ideas; select a topic, decide the purpose and audience; organize your ideas).

#### Make a Draft

(Write a 1<sup>st</sup> draft , not perfect or final, will contain mistakes, do not worry about small details ...just write!)

#### REVISE

(Consider content, focus and organize your ideas and then improve what you wrote, make it clearer, change words & information)

#### EDIT

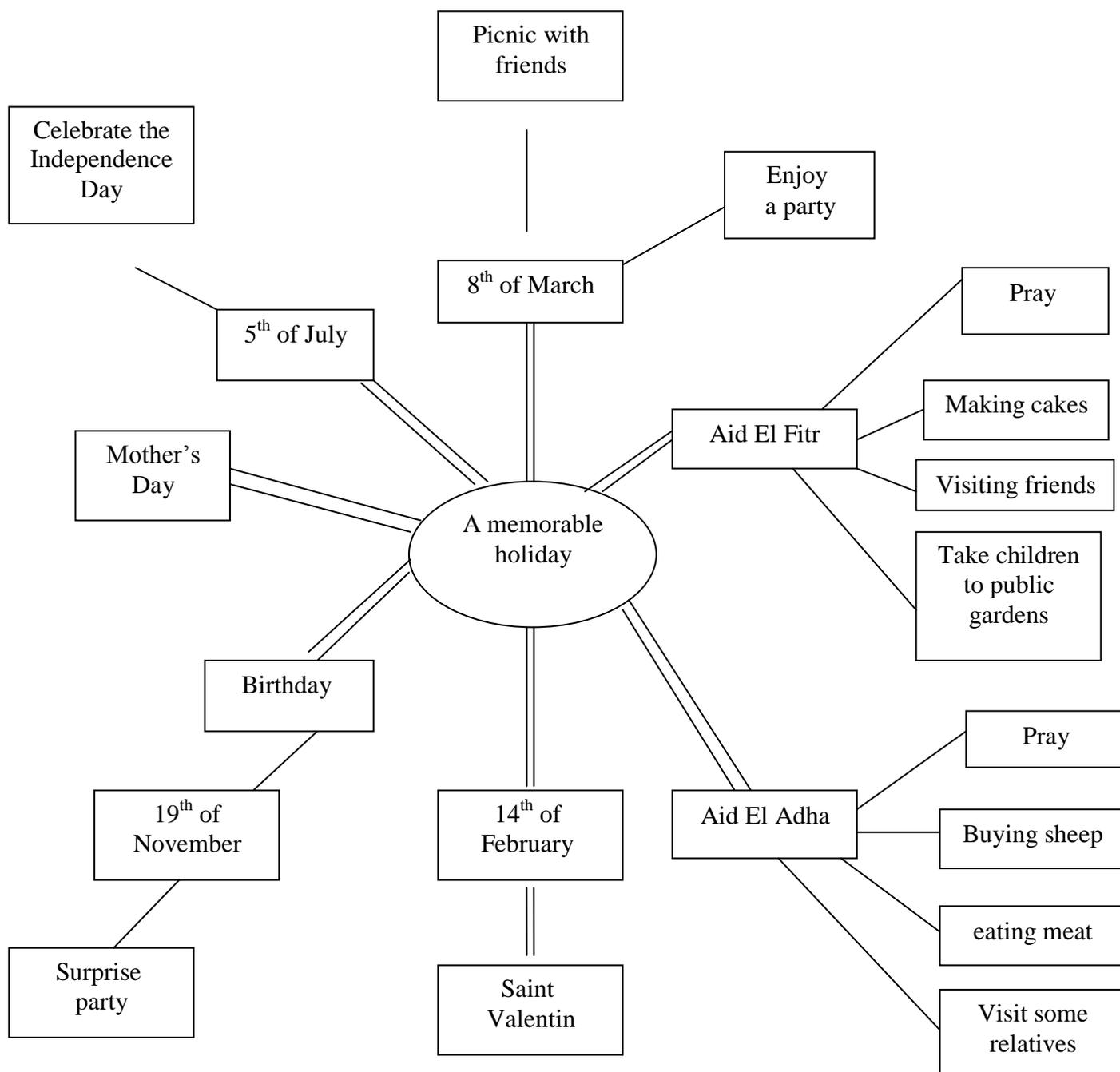
(“The details” –correct and improve spelling, punctuation, grammar, clarity of text; add or take away information, fix mistakes)

#### PUBLISH

(Write a final draft, presenting to public, determine *how* your work will be presented, make it look good!)

**Figure 8:** Stages of Writing

As we observed in the classroom, the writing process started with the students' brainstorming or clustering their ideas. These are the most important pre-writing strategies. By brainstorming, we mean to let students' ideas flow without judging them; whereas clustering (or mapping) is regarded by the written expression teacher as an excellent technique, especially that the group of students being observed used it so much. Students placed their general subject in a circle in the middle of a blank sheet of paper and then began to draw other lines or circles that radiate from the original subject which is about "*a memorable holiday*". (See Figure 9 below).



**Figure 9:** The Students' Use of *Clustering* as an Important Pre -Writing Strategy

## 6.7.1. Stages of Writing

### 6.7.1.1. Pre Writing Strategies

In addition to brainstorming and clustering, there are other pre-writing strategies that students may use. After they decide on a topic, they can begin exploring what they want to say about the topic and how they will say it. There are various techniques to explore ideas about different topics and the different ways to approach their writing. Here are some strategies that students use to develop their topics in addition to brainstorming and clustering.

**\*Free Writing:** Write down students' thoughts as they come to them.

**\*Asking Questions:** Make a list of questions about their topics.

**\*Journaling:** Write their thoughts in a journal.

**\*Listing:** Make a list of ideas about a topic.

#### 6.7.1.1.1. The Importance of Pre-Writing Strategies

Pre writing is the most effective way to guide students through each activity in the classroom rather than just lecturing or telling them about the activities. Writing is basically a process of communicating something (content) on paper to an audience. If the writer has nothing to say, writing will not occur. Pre- writing activities therefore provide students with something to say. According to D'Aoust (1986): *“Pre writing activities generate ideas; they encourage a free flow of thoughts and help students to discover both what they want to say and how to say it on paper. In other words, pre-writing activities facilitate the planning for both the product and the process.”* (p. 7)

While observing the classroom, students started with clustering their ideas on a “*memorable holiday*”. Then they wrote an introduction, the development, and a conclusion. Under each title, they wrote four sample sentences that they would use in each paragraph. For example, in the introduction, they wrote a sentence on the time, the place, and the situation in which narration took place.

After choosing a topic and an outline, students are ready to start writing their compositions. They know what they want to say and they have a clear idea of how they would like to say it. So what is next? The next step after pre-writing strategies is “*Drafting*”. The latter means writing a rough form of the essay, i.e. the first version of writing. It won’t be perfect and it won’t be final. It’s time to really focus on the main ideas students want to get across in their compositions. As they draft, they do not need to worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Such mechanical parts will have to be refined in later stage (revision and editing).

Students have to write more than one draft because the first draft is usually considered a rough one. It certainly will not be the best draft. As students become better drafters or writers, they will find that they are more efficient and productive than they used to be. And thus, each draft will be an improvement over the previous one.

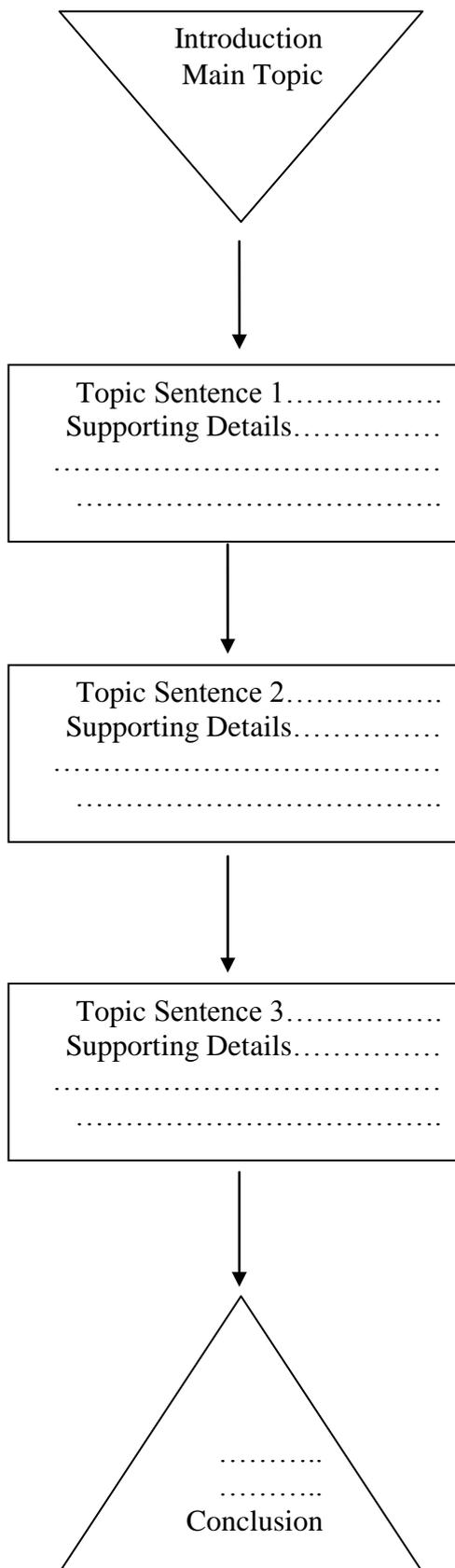
#### **6.7.1.2. Drafting Strategies**

Such strategies are used when writing a composition.

- i- **Paragraphs usually begin with a topic sentence:** The topic sentence tells the reader (i.e. the teacher) the main idea of the paragraph. It doesn’t have to come first. And it might not even be stated explicitly in the paragraph. But all the sentences in the paragraph should relate to one main idea.
- ii- **Coherent paragraphs flow from sentence to sentence.** This means that the sentences are linked to each other logically. The sentences are organized in a paragraph according to the type of the composition: whether it is chronological, developed by cause and effect, or comparison and contrast.
- iii- **Good paragraphs include details that support the main idea.** Supporting details including examples, facts, quotations that back up the paragraph’s main idea.

There are many ways to begin drafting composition writing into paragraphs. One way is to translate the main points of the outline into topic sentences, and then develop each topic sentence into a paragraph.

The written expression teacher gave the following graph organizer to her students to follow when writing compositions.



**Figure10:** The Organization of Composition Writing

### 6.7.1.3. Modeling

After writing compositions on a memorable holiday, the written expression teacher modeled a rough draft of the narrative on the overhead using her own experience. She used a sad story which she experienced in her wedding (See Appendix 7). The students could relate to the story. The written expression teacher found that the modal story or model paper that teachers used had a major impact on the stories that their students would write. When the written expression teacher used a story that she had written from her life, students were also more apt to write a true story about their lives and to write it with enthusiasm.

Moreover, the written expression teacher also used to show her students how to use transitional sentences in their writing. The teacher brought an abstract concept into reality for students. When she saw that their paragraphs were not “*glued*” together, students knew that they needed a transitional sentence. Even if they did not call it a transitional sentence, they liked to call it the “*glue*” sentence. The students took part in that process as a whole, offering suggestions on how to create the transition sentences in written papers. Such process requires practice with the students, but the introduction of those sentences took place there, and the revising of them would take place in the later steps.

Accordingly, the written expression teacher provided her students with some advice. She said: “Here are some good habits to start as you draft:

- Use your outline as a guide. As you write, go back to your outline. It will help you stay focused and organized.
- Keep a copy of each draft you write. Do not throw away some thing that you need later to correct your grammar mistakes and improve your writing.”

#### **6.7.1.4. Revising Strategy**

Sometimes, it is helpful to have others read our compositions, e.g. peers or classmates. They can tell us if we are getting their points across as well as give their general impression of the essay.

##### **6.7.1.4.1. Using Peer Revision**

When the students finished with their rough drafts, they picked a peer reviser. Then the written expression teacher provided them with a detailed worksheet that led them through the revision process. The questions on the worksheets covered the details that would be graded on the focus correction sheet. The students exchanged rough drafts, and the talking began! (For more clarification, see Appendix 8)

The students loved to read each other's papers and spent two sessions finishing the worksheets and talking with their peer revisers. The written expression teacher's job was not over. She needed to see that the students remained on task, which was a hard thing to do. The written expression teacher directed the conversations of the students, through modeling and through implementation. Encouraging the students to see such a step as "*a way to help his friend get a better grade*", seemed to be a great motivational technique.

The fourth step was the students' reflecting upon the comments made by the peer reviser on their written papers. Such step was very important because if the student did not complete the task of writing, the teacher would need to refocus the student. Therefore, the written expression teacher read the comments made by the peer revisers and visited the groups as they were discussing the revisions. After the discussion, the students went back to their seats and began a second rough draft.

#### **6.7.1.5. Writing a Second Draft**

The second rough draft was to promote clarity in students' mind. The teacher used to visit each student at his table and discussed any problems they might be having and encouraged them in the writing process. Among those problems, as I observed, are related to: content, structure and Mechanics.

**\*Content:** What the essay says

**\*Structure:** How sentences are structured and combined

**\*Mechanics:** How the essay is written – Spelling, grammar, punctuation and usage.

The main focus of that step was for students to check spelling, mechanics, grammatical errors and sentence combining that affected their written compositions. The students were therefore encouraged to use their grammar knowledge and refer back to certain grammatical concepts to correct their written compositions. The teacher also used that time to check the students' second draft with all the students.

At this stage, the written expression teacher collected the commonly used mistakes as far as the structure is concerned. She presented them through a mini-lesson in the next session. The latter dealt with words and phrases used to connect between ideas within composition writing. For more illustration, see table 44 below. In addition to a list of words that can help students to connect ideas together (See Appendix 9, table 45)

<b>Chronological Order</b>	<b>Cause and Effect</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	<b>Contrast</b>	<b>Order of Degree</b>	<b>Spatial Order</b>
First, second, third, and so on	So	Similarly	On the other hand	Most importantly	Next to
Then	Thus	Just as	Unlike	Foremost	Beside
Next	Therefore	Like	But	Moreover	Under
Before	As a result	Likewise	Although	Furthermore	Below
After	Because	In the same way	Instead	In addition	In front of
Later	Hence		Yet	First, second, third, and so on	Near
During	Consequently		Still		Above
When	Accordingly		On the contrary		Beyond
Until			In contrast		To the right
While			However		To the left
Meanwhile			Rather		In between
Since then					
Finally					
Lastly					
Eventually					

**Table 44: Words and Phrases Used in Each Type of Organization of Compositions**

### 6.7.1.6. Editing Strategy

After brainstorming, first draft, modeling, revising, second draft, students are close to the end. The next step, as we observed, included students' *proofreading* their second drafts. They were encouraged to use a student or a teacher to reread their written compositions for clarity, correct grammar, and correct mechanics. The written expression teacher provides his students with a checklist that would help them to proofread their written composition. (See Appendix 10, table 46).

The last stage is the *final draft* (i.e. editing), in which the students wrote the final proper draft with correct grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. In writing compositions, students' presentation including grammar, punctuation, and usage can affect the content. If the essay is hard to understand, others will have problems to read what is written. That's why it is important to edit the essays for proper spelling, grammar, punctuation and usage. Thus, both content and structure are needed for better writing.

In editing, we learn how to evaluate students' papers for their content and structure. Students need some time to evaluate what they have written to make sure that their composition writing says what they meant to say. The teacher used a *focus correction sheet* to evaluate students' papers. The most specific part of the focus correction sheet was the grammar and mechanics. She wrote down the actual mistake in the paper and wrote the correction next to it. That was for the students to see the areas in which they were having the most trouble. From that point the application started.

#### **6.7.1.6.1. Applying Grammar to Writing**

The teacher conferences with each student. The discussion involved students' strengths and weaknesses, the students' creativity and imagination, and the students' application of grammar. Each student kept a record of frequently grammatical mistakes, misspelled words...etc in a note book or an extra sheet. During those discussions, the students realized their potential in writing and their achievement in writing compositions.

The teacher reinforced such learning through tables that summarized different areas of weaknesses that were found in students' papers about spelling, punctuation, grammar, usage...etc and their correction.

The process took about three weeks' time, but the learning that took place would last for years.

### 6.7.1.6.2. Using Correct Grammar

Grammar refers to how sentences are written. Like spelling, poor grammar can doom very good essay. It gives the reader (Teacher or peers) a bad impression. Teachers usually penalize papers or essays that contain poor grammar. So, it is very important to know what good grammar is and to use it properly when writing compositions.

The sentence is therefore basic in writing paragraphs or compositions. A complete sentence is one that has a subject ( a doer) and a verb (an action). Because we can think so much faster than we can write, sometimes we write incomplete sentences or long sentences that run on and on. Such two grammar problems were present in students' compositions and as such should be avoided.

- 1- **Sentence Fragments:** incomplete sentences that lack either a subject or a verb or both.
- 2- **Run-on-Sentences:** Two or more sentences that are written as one sentence.

### 6.7.1.6.3. Spelling Correctly

Spelling does make a difference. In evaluating students' composition writing, the written expression teacher may take off some points for misspelled words. More importantly, spelling affects the way the teacher or peers perceive the message. For example, a student who consistently misspells words does not seem very careful, and the teacher might start to wonder how carefully the student checked the other facts in his composition writing.

One way to help the student correct his spelling mistakes by himself is to refer back to his dictionary and by such a way, he can memorize the correct spelling of that word in order not to misspell it in the next essay writings. (This is clearly shown in Appendix 11).

The following is a list of words provided by the WET that are often confused and help students avoid some common spelling mistakes.

<p><i>Already</i> means “<i>previously.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. I had already eaten dinner</p>	<p><i>All ready</i> means “<i>completely ready or everyone is ready.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. Let me know when you are all ready.</p>
<p><i>Altogether</i> means “<i>entirely.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. Mother doesn’t altogether approve of my fiancé.</p>	<p><i>All together</i> means “<i>everyone in the same place.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. The family was all together last Friday</p>
<p><i>Everyday</i> means “<i>ordinary or usual.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. Soon we were back to our everyday routine</p>	<p><i>Every day</i> means “<i>each day.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. I walk my dog Rox every day.</p>
<p><i>Complement</i> means “<i>to complete or make perfect.</i>”</p> <p>*Mary and Philip complement one another well</p>	<p><i>Compliment</i> means “<i>to say something nice about something.</i>”</p> <p>*Philip complimented Mary on her new dress</p>
<p><i>Its</i> means “<i>belonging to it</i>”</p> <p>England is proud of its heritage</p>	<p><i>It’s</i> means “<i>it is.</i>”</p> <p>It’s raining outside.</p>
<p>A <i>desert</i> is “<i>a very dry region.</i>”</p>	<p>A <i>dessert</i> is “<i>a sweet end to a meal.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. We had ice cream for dessert.</p>
<p><i>Lead</i> means “<i>to guide or go first.</i>”</p> <p>We want a president who can lead us to victory.</p> <p><i>Lead</i> also is the name of a metal</p> <p>The pipes in the building were made of lead</p>	<p><i>Led</i> means “<i>guided, directed, or to have gone first.</i>”</p> <p>It is the past tense of the verb <i>to lead.</i></p> <p>He led us to victory.</p>
<p><i>Loose</i> means “<i>free.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. My dog got loose and ran into the street.</p>	<p><i>Lose</i> means “<i>to misplace.</i>”</p> <p>e.g. Try not to lose your money this time.</p>
<p><i>Miner</i> means “<i>someone who works in a mine.</i>”</p> <p>A miner’s job can be very dangerous.</p>	<p><i>Minor</i> is “<i>someone who is underage or less important.</i>”</p>

	e.g. We do not sell cigarettes to minors.
<i>Peace</i> means “ <i>tranquility or calm.</i> ” e.g. Peace is always better than war.	<i>Piece</i> means a “ <i>part.</i> ” e.g. She cut the paper into several pieces
<i>Personal</i> means “ <i>individual.</i> ” e.g. You might not want to discuss your personal problems at work.	<i>Personnel</i> means “ <i>employees.</i> ” e.g. The personnel at my company are mostly young and enthusiastic.
<i>Principal</i> means “ <i>head of a school or important.</i> ” e.g. The boys were sent to the principal’s office.	<i>Principle</i> means “ <i>a rule.</i> ” e.g. I don’t lend money to friends as a matter of principle.
<i>Quiet</i> means “ <i>still or silent.</i> ” e.g. Please be quiet so I can hear the movie	<i>Quite</i> means “ <i>very or completely.</i> ” e.g. We are quite happy with Maya’s new school.
<i>Weak</i> means “ <i>not strong.</i> ” e.g. They served very weak tea at the reception	<i>Week</i> means “ <i>a period of seven days.</i> ” e.g. Let’s meet in two weeks.
<i>Who’s</i> means “ <i>who is or who has.</i> ” e.g. Who’s knocking on the door?	<i>Whose</i> means “ <i>belonging to who.</i> ” e.g. Whose paper is this?
<i>You’re</i> means “ <i>you are.</i> ” e.g. You’re my best friend.	<i>Your</i> means “ <i>belonging to you.</i> ” e.g. Did you leave your coat at home?

**Table 48:** Words that are often Confused

#### 6.7.1.6.4. Using Correct Punctuation

Although it may sometimes seem trivial, punctuation can really make a difference in what compositions say. The following are some tips on when to use different punctuation marks in writing compositions:

- \* Separate the two sentences with a semicolon.

e.g. You do not need to worry about me; I can take care of myself.

- \* Change one of the two sentences into a dependent clause.

e.g. You do not need to worry about me because I can take care of myself.

<b>Your Purpose Is To:</b>	<b>Use This Punctuation:</b>	<b>Example:</b>
end a sentence	<b>period</b> [.]	Use a period to end a sentence.
connect complete sentences	<b>semicolon</b> [;] or a <b>comma</b> [,] <i>and</i> a <b>conjunction</b> [and, or, nor, for, so, but, yet]	A semi-colon can connect two sentences; it is an excellent way to show that two ideas are related.
connect items in a list	<b>comma</b> [,] but if one or more items in that list already has a comma, use a <b>semicolon</b> [;]	The table was overturned, the mattress was torn apart, and the dresser drawers were strewn all over the floor.  The teacher is explaining the lesson; the student is talking to his friend.
Introduce a quotation or Explanation	<b>colon</b> [:] or <b>comma</b> [,]	Colons have three functions: introducing long lists, introducing quotations, and introducing explanations.  He said, “This simply won’t do.”
Indicate a quotation	<b>quotation marks</b> [“ ”]	To be or not to be?” is one of the most famous lines from <i>Hamlet</i> .
Indicate a question	<b>question mark</b> [?]	Do you like writing?
connect two words that work together	<b>hyphen</b> [-]	brother-in-law, well-known author  narrow-minded
separate a word or phrase for	<b>dash</b> [—]	I never lie—never.

emphasis		
separate a word or phrase that is relevant but not essential information	<b>parenthesis</b> [( )]	There is an exception to every rule (including this one).
show possession or contraction	<b>apostrophe</b> [']	That's Jame's car.

**Table 49: The Importance of Punctuation Marks in Writing Compositions**

### 6.7.1.6.5. Capitalizing the Right Words

Here are some basic guidelines proposed by the WET for capitalizing words.

- **Capitalize the first word of a sentence:** A sentence always begins with a capital letter.
- **Capitalize “I”** (including I’m, I’ve, I’d, and other contractions with I, e.g. when **I** started my thesis, **I** thought **I’d** never finish it.
- **Capitalize the first word in a quotation** that is a complete sentence.
- **Capitalize all the words of titles, books, movies, songs:** e.g. A farewell to Arms/ The old Man and the Sea.
- **Capitalize proper nouns and proper adjectives:** e.g. some examples are listed below.

<b>PROPER NOUNS AND PROPER ADJECTIVES</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
People’s names	Ammar, Samra, Fatiha, Loubna
Names of places	New York City, North America, Himalaya Mountains, Central Park, Empire State Building, Lincoln Memorial.
Names of businesses organizations, and other institutions	House of Representatives, National Geographic Society.
Names of historical events	Civil War, American Revolution/WWI/WWII/Cold war .

Things you find on a calendar	Monday, June, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Mother’s Day
Names of nationalities, races? and religions	French, Canadian, English , Arabic, Islam, Christianity
People’s titles	Dean, President, Chief, Aunt, Cousin, Doctor , professor.

**Table 50: Capitalizing the Right Words**

### 6.7.1.6.6. Using Words Correctly

This is known as *usage* problems. That is, how to use words correctly. The following is a list of examples collected from students’ compositions. The written expression teacher thought to present them in a mini-lesson represented as the following.

**Accept** means “to receive”

**Except** means “to leave out or exclude”

*Examples:*

I accept your apology.

I can meet with you any day except Fridays.

**Adapt** means “to change so one fits in better”

**Adopt** means “to make something one’s own”

*Examples:*

When our trip to the zoo was suddenly cancelled, we adapted our plans.

We adopted the stray dog.

**Affect** means “to influence”

**Effect** as a verb means “to make happen”

**Effect** as a noun means “the result of something”

*Examples:*

Don't let your neighbor's business affect you.

The court effected a mandatory waiting period.

The effects of the explosion were apparent.

**Bad** is an adjective. It should be used to modify nouns and pronouns.

**Badly** is an adverb. It should be used to modify verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

**Examples:**

I feel bad about what happened.

We had a really bad day.

Our band played badly last night.

**Discover** means "to find something that already existed but was not known"

**Invent** means "to make something new that didn't exist before"

**Examples:**

The scientists discovered a new species of cave salamander.

Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin.

**Emigrate** means "to leave one's country to live somewhere else"

**Immigrate** means "to come to a new country to live"

**Examples:**

The political unrest caused many people to emigrate to new countries.

John's family immigrated to the United States three generations ago.

**Fewer** is used before plural nouns

**Less** is used before nouns that do not have a plural form. Do not use *less* in front of plural nouns.

**Examples:**

Incorrect: I have less days to prepare for the exam than I thought I had.

Correct: I have fewer days to prepare for the exam than I thought I had.

Correct: I have less money than I did before Christmas.

**Imply** means “to suggest something that isn’t said explicitly”

**Infer** means “to deduce”

*Examples:*

John implied at dinner that he might want to see other girls.

I inferred from our dinner conversation that John might break up with me soon.

**Lie** means “to recline”

**Lay** means “to put”

These verbs have similar past forms, so we sometimes confuse them.

*Examples:*

You should lie down if you feel sick.

She wasn’t feeling well, so she lay down for an hour.

She had just lain down when the guests arrived.

She had just laid the baby down when the guests arrived.

I left my homework laying on the dining room table.

**Persecute** means “to attack”

**Prosecute** means “to bring legal action against”

*Examples:*

Those who do not agree with the current political regime are persecuted daily.

It’s our store policy to prosecute those who shoplift.

**Rise** means “to go up”

**Raise** means “to move something up”

These verbs have similar past forms, so we sometimes confuse them. The following chart outlines their forms.

Verb	Present participle	Past	Past Participle
to rise	(is) rising	rose	(have) risen
to raise	(is) raising	raised	(have) raised

**Examples:**

The stock market has risen three days in a row now.

The post office has raised stamp prices twice in the past two years.

**Sit** means “to rest or get into a sitting position”

**Set** means “to put or place”

**Examples:**

Please sit down and rest a moment before leaving.

Please set those heavy books down and take a rest.

**Than** is a conjunction

**Then** is an adverb and means “at that time or next”

**Examples:**

I am taller than Lynda.

We then sat down to a good meal.

Concerning how to learn new vocabulary, the written expression teacher further gave a sample to her students to follow. (This is shown in Appendix 12)

All in all, when editing composition writing, students should make sure that their spelling, Grammar, punctuation, capitalization and words are used correctly in their writings.

As a conclusion to our observation, we recognized that the dialogue that took place between the teacher and the peer reviser revealed to the student more than a drill and answer grammar lesson would ever reveal. Therefore, the writing process provided application of grammatical structures for students. Some students' compositions (the fifth) are used as a sample in our observation including the stages of the writing process. (this is found in Appendix 13)

## **Conclusion**

At the end, we can say that the combination of many techniques call for providing a positive, encouraging and collaborative workshop environment within which students with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing processes. The teacher's role is to help students develop viable strategies for *getting started* (finding topics, generating ideas, and information, focusing and planning structure and procedure), for *drafting* (encouraging multiple drafts), for *revising* (adding, deleting, modifying and rearranging ideas), and for *editing* (attending to vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics).

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

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## 7.1. Pedagogical Implications

The following are pedagogical implications drawn from the present study, along with some recommendations and suggestions. The latter might guide future research and should be understood as merely suggestive in nature.

The results obtained, from the analysis of teaching grammar through writing and the FB provided to students on their written grammatical errors, from teachers and students questionnaires and interviews as well as observation, have shown that there are many factors which influence learning and its outcomes. The majority of students agree on the significant role that the teacher can play when teaching writing compositions, either to create a desire to learn and write successfully, i.e. have positive attitudes towards learning, or hinder learning capacities.

Therefore, there is a need for creating positive attitudes towards learning in general and writing compositions in particular. But how can we achieve this? This may be achieved through adopting certain strategies that would provide for learners' achievement and success in learning and give them more self confidence and willingness to write, hence, more motivation. In this respect, S10 said: *“If the teacher motivates me, I will work better. I would like my teacher to give me suggested topics and some guidelines to be followed as well as to correct when I make grammatical errors”*.

Another student, S11 said: *“When the T does not play his role or when he provides evaluative negative affective FB.”*

In addition, S17 claimed: *“What affects the writing development is the irregular writing because we write just when we are asked to do and do not take it as a habit and a continuous action. So, we write few essays with restricted information, less reading, less practice, lack of vocabulary. All these factors affect our writing development”*.

A further student, S28 added: “*Stress and time are two important factors that may affect our writing*”.

Results show that many factors can affect students’ writing development. Among them, we have found stress and time, irregular writing, lack of motivation, less practice and TFB if it is negative affective. The latter hurts the students’ sensibilities, and that’s why they loose confidence and lack motivation and interest, which may result in the regression of students’ composition writing.

One implication arising from this research is that the writing teachers should devote more time to practise on writing compositions. The majority of students (80%) write compositions once per month and this is not enough, they need more practice in order improve their writings.

Another implication arising from research, related to FB, is that writing teachers should take into consideration their students’ personalities before deciding on what type of FB to be used. In this respect, WE T8 said: “*It is the students’ problem, if they want to make progress they must be attentive and receive my feedback even if it is negative.*”

From this, we can infer that the teacher does not care about students’ psychology and personalities despite the fact that psychology, pedagogy and sociology have a great influence on teachers and students’ FL. They have brought about tremendous innovations and changes so as TVFB can be closely related to the development of the learners’ abilities .

Psychologists, sociologists and pedagogists advocate that teaching follows the ways the learners learn: their needs, preferred learning styles, personality and affective factors. To focus on the learner, that is simply to subordinate teaching to learning, the teacher should, therefore, subordinate his/her teaching behavior to support learning taking into account students’ differences in terms of personalities. A further dimension to the increased focus

on the learner is provided by a growth of interest in the whole learner and his complexity as an individual. (Stern 1983).

### **7.1.1. What the Teacher Should Care About**

There are some very interesting information the teacher should know about learners while treating errors and providing FB on composition writing.

#### **7.1.1.1. Psychology and Learning**

Psychology has everywhere its word to say. It helps to reveal the hidden nature of learners, identify individual differences and guide the choice of procedures and pedagogical methods. Stern (1983) claims: *“Psychology directs our attention to the individual person as a language user and as a language learner, since language teaching is concerned with the acquisition by individual of a dual command, its theory is bound to operate with dual psychological concepts of language use and language learning.”*

#### **7.1.1.2. Personality and Psychology**

Teachers, while providing students with written FB on the errors they have made, should know about personality and the relevance of personality variables to language learning. Moreover, learners’ personality may affect the roles they play. Dealing with students’ personalities, it goes without saying that certain traits may be helpful or detrimental to success in language learning. That is, some learners are more successful than others partly thanks to their personality potential, and we have two categories of personalities: introvert and extrovert learners. Van Els(1984).

##### **7.1.1.2.1. Extrovert Learners**

Naimen et al (1978) reported some studies and projects, which related certain dimensions of extroversion to success in language learning. Extrovert learners are sociable which is relevant to language learning. They (ibid) argue that more sociable learners are more likely to participate and to interact in class. Taron et al (1989) claim that they feel less

inhibited and take risks which are related to over achievement and success. Ellis (1985) therefore concludes that those types of learners will get greater input; 90% of our subjects showed that they benefited from their teacher FB, whether positive or negative, to make progress in their writing compositions.

#### 7.1.1.2.2. Introvert Learners

Introvert learners are shy, inhibited and risk avoiding learners. They are not open to learning. Littlewood (1991) claims: *“They need a learning atmosphere where they feel secured and valued as individuals and where their sensitivity is respected and understood. They fear making errors and are keeping silence or reticent.”*

From this research, we noticed that 20% of students are male students; they are not satisfied by their T FB. They always feel neglected by their WE Teacher. They may feel hesitant to carry on or improve their writing. So, they lack confidence in themselves which means a real handicap in making the way to writing compositions.

Moreover, if we ask why one study method is appropriate for student “A” but not for student “B”? The answer would be, because each student brings a unique personality to the classroom. So, each one should be treated differently from the other depending on students’ type of personality.

Thus, effective teaching requires more than straightforward teaching methods, teachers need to know their students’ personalities as well as their teaching styles or verbal comments to a particular classroom and to individual students. In addition to personality differences, another implication may be drawn from this research is related with the affective side of learners which play a dominant role in determining and predicting FL learning success and achievement. In the sense, WE teachers neglected students’ affective sides.

### 7.1.1.3. Affective Elements

Affective elements can certainly play a great role in influencing the ongoing language learning experience. What is noticed in this research is that there is a mismatch between teachers and students' responses. In the sense that teachers assume that they do not over correct students' errors, since correcting every single error means incriminating the learner and that they provide them with positive FB only. In this respect, WET9 said: *"I avoid over correction in order not to intimidate the learner and not to make him feel that I bear more on errors than on the general work and his achievement."... " I do the correction intelligently without 'affecting' them because the student may feel frustrated."*

However, some students (10%) reacted in an opposed way by assuring that their WE teachers correct all the errors found on students' papers. In addition, they found that TFB is negative affective most of the time, if not all the time. Accordingly, student "07" said: *"No positive comment at all, the teacher does not care about our sensation and feelings. Therefore, our success or failure are the same thing for him."* Another student, S59 commented: *"I don't benefit from my TFB because she is always discouraging. She doesn't take things seriously. She took my composition and read it for the whole class to make them laugh at me. Can you tell me how can I progress to write better compositions?"*. This is, in fact, not advisable nor practical in teaching since what matters most is how to make SS realize their area of weaknesses and the way to avoid them softly, not using sarcasm or intimidation.

Moreover, to achieve a successful learning, students require to feel at ease with their teachers. Affective factors then determine what is meaningful and relevant for the students at any particular stage. This may lead us to emphasize the importance of working and giving FB with both feelings and intellect at the same time. Therefore, the teacher should know the different emotions and feelings towards the subject under-study. Thus, language teaching / learning is better performed in an affectional field rather than being a merely intellectual one.

#### 7.1.1.4. Learners' Emotions and Feelings

One tends to forget that learners too are human beings with likes and dislikes, moods, moments of tiredness and emotions such as: mind anxiety, fearing punishment which affect learning achievement. All the emotions may cause to learners' loss of self-esteem and self confidence, which are claimed to have a great impact on learning achievement. Thus, our WE teachers should take into account such affective factors and comment positively on their students' written errors. If it is so, this would create more positive effects on students' future attitudes towards writing and learning in general. (Harmer,1998)

#### 7.1.1.5. Anxiety as a Hindrance to Learning

Language anxiety is the fear that an individual feels when using a FL in which he lacks proficiency. Such a case of anxiety may be developed as a result of repeated negative experiences with TFB on the FL, which affect future achievement. This case of anxiety is found in our research where 10% of students agreed that their WE teachers blame them all the time for making errors. In relation, student "08", when being interviewed said: *"My teacher makes me feel shame when I make errors; he read my composition aloud to make my friends laugh at me, and that is why I feel weak and I lost my confidence in my self a day after day, so I have decided not to try any more."* Such an attitude may hurt students' sensibility and the student will be inhibited to learn and carry on.

Therefore, anxiety negatively affects students' motivation to learn from the errors made. So, high level anxiety may decrease motivation and low level anxiety may increase motivation. Efforts should be made to lower levels of anxiety in the classroom. This can be achieved only if teachers attempt to create a positive, relaxed atmosphere with a less authoritative attitude towards their students.

On the whole, we may say that the teacher is held responsible for ridding his students of their inhibitions partly by focusing less on form and more on meaning. Then, if FB should

be negative, it should be stated implicitly in order not to affect the learner. This is a sure and effective way of lowering students' affective filter and thus inviting more students for more improvement in their future writings.

Another implication found in research is related to "Sex" of the student which is regarded as a determining factor for receiving different types of FB. In the sense that female students received more soft comments and less strong correction than male students who were neglected. Such an attitude, in fact, resulted in incrimination and discouragement instead of motivation which would help the students to act more and more and progress in their future learning.

#### **7.1.1.6. Motivation**

Motivation was defined by Brown (1994) as: "*Probably the most frequently used catch all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task.*"(p.152) It is regarded as an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that incites one to perform a particular action. Teachers can encourage motivation and desirable behavior in students using a variety of strategies including positive reinforcement. (Williams and Burden:1997)

However, in this research, a further implication found which is related to the absence of motivational factors that would help SS to achieve success in learning through the grammatical errors made in their compositions. This may lead us to answer the question: why do some students seem to enjoy writing and write more than others? Simply because those who do not like writing they are not motivated. They lack interest in topics, and lack their teacher "*guidance*".

Students need to mention how they develop their composition writing through the different stages of the writing process that they pass through. *Teacher guidance* is very helpful for SS to correct their errors made in each stage. Thus, there should be a continuity

between all the stages (drafting, revising and editing) to see if SS develop their essay writing or not.

Furthermore, teachers' aim is not to encourage errors rather encourage learners to go on learning. In this respect, Hahn (1987) claims: “ *The teacher's aim was not, of course, to encourage errors per se but to encourage the students to test hypotheses and deal profitably with the errors that occurred.*” (p11). Moreover, motivation, attitudes, needs and interests all help to achieve success or failure in writing achievement and which were, unfortunately, absent in our classes.

### **i. Motivation and Attitudes**

Among the most potent influences on motivation are: Anxiety, attitudes, etc. when students have positive attitudes towards teachers, they typically experience higher levels of academic achievement. In this sense, we can say that attitudes and motivation have usually been lumped together into a cluster of factors which were held jointly responsible for relative success or failure in learning. We can observe this in our research, when teachers used negative affective comments; students were demoralized, and felt weak.

We can further argue that attitudes are directly related to motivation, which in turn is directly related to FL learning. So, motivation arouses, sustains and integrates behavior. (Stern, 1983). In other words, attitudes should be viewed as motivational supports and not as factors which have a direct effect on learning. In this respect, Gardner and Mac Intyre (1993) suggest that attitudes are among the important attributes along with integrativeness and instrumental orientation that play a significant role in supporting motivation. It plays an important role in supporting motivation and in achieving successful learning. They (1993) argued that: “*Language attitudes are shown as having a causal influence on motivation (...). The point is, that motivation needs an affective basis to be maintained, and it seems reasonable to argue that attitudes serve this function.*” (p. 9).

We can easily notice that attitudes towards TFB need to be changed in a positive way. Non-motivated students hold negative attitudes towards their TFB and WE module as a whole. But these attitudes can be changed positively if students are helped to be more active in the classroom. This would be possible if teachers use with students positive, non affective FB that would further encourage rather than demotivate them. So, one can see that affective (*attitudes*) and cognitive (*motivation*) factors operate in a reciprocal fashion in that one calls for the presence of the other.

Thus, TFB should be presented in an encouraging, i.e. favorable way that the students have the most favorable attitudes possible towards the FL in general and writing in particular and can have another chance of success in learning through errors. In addition to attitudes, motivation is also linked with students' needs which play a major role in determining the area of error correction.

## **ii. Motivation and Needs**

An individual is motivated to learn when he feels a need to achieve a certain objective which is to learn and acquire the writing skills appropriately. More importantly, a learner is motivated when these needs are met since motivation is a notion oriented towards a specific need. It is to be assimilated to motivation. Accordingly, Littlewood(1991) claims that motivation is related to the notion of need and learning objective. Therefore, a useful division of students' needs were made by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) into “*necessities* (what the learner has to know to function effectively), *lacks* (what the learner knows and does not know already), and *wants* (what the learners think they need).” (cited in Nation : 2000,5).

In the present study, we can easily notice that our WE teachers do not take into account students' needs when teaching them composition writing and providing them with FB demotivating their students, especially that individual motives to carry any task are based on underlying needs. Since we are dealing with individuals in the learning process

only psychological motives are to be considered. They consist of higher needs of approval, identity, self esteem etc. They are influenced by learning factors. Following Lynch's (1996) view, teachers "*Should try to make feedback relevant to the specific task, as well as to the general needs of the students.*"(p.120)

He (ibid) further added: "*It also reminds the teacher to think about overall success on a task and not just about how correct the language was.*" (p.120-1 ).

### **iii. Motivation and Effort**

The motivated individual is the one who wants to achieve a particular goal, e.g. success and devotes considerable effort to achieve such a goal. Thus, motivation can be defined as devoting effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning / teaching in addition to favorable attitudes towards learning.

As we know, without well defined need or objective in mind, learners can not make effort. This goes with what Gardner et al (1978) have stated. They(1978) said: "*The concept of motivation is viewed as involving effort to achieve the goal of 'learning the language', wants and desires to achieve this end, and favorable attitudes toward second language learning.*" (p. 182).

However, students will not achieve success in their writing with no errors without teacher motivation, even if they have desire and make efforts to reach such a goal.

But, in this research, we find that there are some extroverted learners who challenge demotivating teachers' attitudes. In this respect, student "08" when being interviewed said: "*I accept my teacher feedback whether it is positive or negative, if it is negative then, I try to do my best and devote more efforts to prove to my teacher that I can reach success by the end without his motivation.*"

This may go with what Harmer (1998) said: *“Teachers are not, however, ultimately responsible for their students’ motivation. They can only encourage by word and deed. Real motivation comes from within each individual.”*(p.8)

#### **iv. Motivation and Interest**

It is clear that those who are highly motivated do better than those who lack motivation and interest in the subject. However, if students are not interested in the subject, it is the teacher’s duty to provoke his students’ interests in such a subject through motivation. Therefore, Harmer (1998) said: *“One of the main tasks for teachers is to provoke interest and involvement in the subject even when students are not initially interested in it.”*(p.8)

It is then by teachers’ attitudes, humor and seriousness that they may influence their students as Harmer (1998) claimed: *“It is by their own behavior and enthusiasm that they may inspire.”*(p.8)

On the whole, we can say that a learner is concerned with cognitive and affective elements; motivation, attitude and personality, which influence success in FL classrooms. Cognitive factors are not the only ones at work but a combination with affective ones. So, individuals also differ with regard to the extent of their action depending on the rate of their interests and motivation which are central in our research. It is important here to stress the fact that learning occurs only on a motivational basis which may increase students’ interest in learning even they make errors and thus achieving success. This lead us to say that interest is a pre-requisite for true learning.

Anyway, every body agrees that motivation is a motor factor in learning. Therefore, teachers should dig into the motivational forces, if at all that foster learning. According to interest and motivation, they go on parallel lines, and then maximized learning becomes productive.

On the whole, dealing with composition writing and the way how teachers should provide students with FB, we may stress the importance of centering language teaching and FB on the students' personalities, needs, motivation, interests and attitudes towards writing and TFB. Accordingly, teaching and learning should be adapted to all these factors in addition to one further fact that is, whatever teacher feedback would be and whatever the efficiency of the method being applied, the student will not learn from his errors unless he wants to learn, and consequently, he should be put at the center of the teaching / learning process .

The teacher should play his role as a motivator through creating a desire to learn even from negative FB. This is one way of providing students with an external motivation without which their interest in learning and correcting their errors would fade.

Through our analysis, we saw that motivation is present in students but it is not stimulated or sustained on the part of their WE teachers. So, how can teachers be aware of their students' motivation? There are a number of pedagogical strategies teachers can adhere to for the sake of sustaining the students' motivation and interest. They can achieve this by using effective FB, not affective FB which would hurt the student and affects future writing achievement. In other words, TFB should remain relevant to students' needs and interests. Students therefore need to be aware about their area of weaknesses (i.e. errors) and how they should correct these errors for better achievement. We can finally say that both teachers and students are important parts that may or may not contribute to the success of language learning in general and writing compositions in particular, in the sense that each has some roles to play otherwise failure would result .

## 7.2. Role of the Teacher

Teachers' role is organizing classroom writing and providing effective FB on students' written activities by identifying the area of grammatical errors and giving opportunity to notice these errors and think about their correction themselves. Students therefore need to be positively encouraged and when they do not do well, they need to be guided and their attention to be drawn to the errors already made. This does not mean that teachers should correct every single error for overt correction is ineffective. It may actually impede students' progress as research has shown it. The aim is therefore to secure the learner, make inhibition less strong and correction more effective as well as beneficial.

Moreover, the teacher should not regard the making of errors as a sin since through errors that we best learn things. Accordingly, Hofstadter and Dennett (1981: 89) as quoted in Hahn (1987:11) agreed that: *"Mistake making is a sign of high intelligence."* Therefore, *"To require perfection at once is the great imperfection of most teaching and thinking about teaching."* Says Gattegno (1963 : 31) as quoted in Hahn (1987 : 9). So, it is not fair if teachers base FB only on students' weaknesses (i.e. error) because this would raise students' affective filter and therefore hatred would result towards both, the teacher and the writing skill in general. Furthermore, Ancker(2000:23) said: *"We need to shift our students' focus, and our own, to the positive aspects of errors. An error, or self- correction of a mistake, indicates what the learner can do in the target language. It is intellectually dishonest and counterproductive to ignore our students' success and exaggerate the seriousness of errors and mistakes."*

In addition, it is worth noting that writing a composition is a complex activity which involves more than *"Simply putting sentences together in sequence like wagons in a train."* (Lynch: 1996; 139) The matter, therefore, is how to convey a message effectively. Thus, teachers, while deciding to provide students with FB, should not emphasize grammar as the

central part in their treatment of errors rather take the content into account. Dealing with the latter, TFB can be either positive or negative. What is focused then is that if such comments should be negative, they should be implicitly stated, otherwise the student would be hurtled and thus would be deprived from future achievement success.

At any rate, every body may agree that motivation is a motor factor in learning whatsoever. What is required from teachers, then is to dig into the motivational forces that determine language behavior and foster learning (Richards,1996; Grabe and Kaplan, 1996) . In this respect, Edge (1989:20) claimed: *“When we teachers decide to correct our students, we have to be sure that we are using correction positively to support learning.”*(cited in Ancker: 2000: 20).Accordingly, Harmer (1998) further added: *“Good teachers care more about their students’ learning than they do about their own teaching.”*(p.3)Therefore, a good language teacher is not a one who has a good mastery of the foreign language; but someone whose teaching matches students’ personality.

More importantly, the teacher is the only responsible for the success or failure in learning achievement, students also participate as a necessary part who can shape their learning. In relation, Harmer (1998) said: *“Teachers are not, however, ultimately responsible for their students’ motivation. They can only encourage by word and deed. Real motivation comes from within each individual.”*(p.8)Therefore, the competent teacher on duty should offer help and advice to students and students are then responsible for their own learning. Thus, learning is: *“A partnership between teachers and students.”* (Harmer 1998:9) In the sense that the effective FB should attract a lot of students as well as both teachers and students, i.e. those who provide or receive FB, should be satisfied by it. In addition, it should result in a lot of learning.

### 7.3. Role of the Learner

Concerning students' roles, it seems they differ: some of them are more engaged with the process of learning. Teachers may not notice this. Therefore, successful students possess some characteristics such as: intelligence, attention, willingness to experiment (some successful language learners are extroverts), willingness to think about how to learn more appropriately, and willingness to accept teacher correction, i.e. FB. In this respect, Harmer (1998) claimed: *“Good learners are prepared to be corrected if it helps them. They are keen to get feedback from the teacher and act upon what they are told. But this only works where teachers are able to offer constructive criticism rather than castigating them for being wrong.”*(p.10)... *“Giving feedback involves praising students for things they do well, and offering them the ability to do things better where they were less successful. It involves teachers in judging their students' responses to correction so that they can act accordingly.”*(p.10)

Thus, if students have these good qualities, then it is the teacher's job to encourage students by advising and guiding them correctly toward best methods of study which help them for future achievement. So it is not the FB itself which leads to better writing. Students need guidance and explicit instruction in how to use the written FB provided effectively.

### 7.4. The Role of Grammar in EFL Writing

It is important to teach grammar. The latter has been regarded as a set of rules (the “S” of the third person singular/ “Subject- Verb agreement”/ “Adjectives go before nouns”) to be memorized. Nowadays, grammar is still taught and tested this way and all over the world. *“The problem with knowledge transmission approach to grammar is that for most students it leads to limited language Acquisition. Most of us are familiar with the phenomenon of students who know the rules of grammar but who are nonetheless unable to ask for simple directions”*. (Lynn Savage 2010, p2)

Thus, there is a gap mentioned between knowledge of grammar and its successful application.

Grammar is therefore a skill to be taught. It examines 3 roles in EFL education.

- Grammar as an enabling skill.
- Grammar as a motivator.
- Grammar as a means to self- sufficiency

Writing Teachers should examine all those roles.

#### **7.4.1. Grammar as an Enabling Skill:**

Lynn Savage (2010) said: *“Though a skill in its own right, grammar can also be regarded as a necessary “master” skill that enables competence to develop in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When grammar is incorrect or misunderstood in any of these areas, communication may be disrupted”*. (p 02)

#### **7.4.2. Grammar as a Motivator :**

Learning a language needs to learn grammar very well. Many students are motivated to learn grammar as well as many teachers are strongly motivated to teach it. When our SS express a desire to learn grammar, most teachers naturally respond by trying to provide what SS want. In addition, many of us as teachers have learned foreign languages via grammar- based methodologies.

#### **7.4.3. Grammar as a Means to Self-Sufficiency:**

Most EFL students expect teachers to correct their grammar errors, but a more practical goal is for students to learn to correct their own mistakes. Grammar instruction assists English learners in becoming aware of a structure and then continuing to notice it in subsequent encounters. Once students have internalized the structure through repeated exposure, (i.e. many drafts) they can use this knowledge to monitor their own language use. The ability to self-correct is particularly desirable for students to be able to communicate accurately in writing for personal or educational goals.

The ability to self correct leads to self sufficiency. Regardless of their proficiency level or goals, almost all students can benefit from learning English grammar to make improvement in writing compositions.

### **7.5. Students' Proficiency**

The results revealed that students joint university with a low proficiency level in most English language skills irrespective of their mark in the Baccalaureate exam in general and English language in particular. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to expose SS to models of the target genre before they start their planning and constructing essays. Moreover, it is important for teachers to charge their roles in the writing class from teachers to co- writers and readers to help students with their low proficiency level in English.

### **7.6. Materials and Resources**

It may be possible for essay writing teachers to choose SS teaching/ learning materials with caution. In other words, materials could be varied and derived from SS interests in a way that will engage SS in what they learn. Therefore, I suggest replacing the teacher centered topics with a variety of topics from SS' choice or interest. SS could be given the chance to search for and read about their preferred genres of writing before starting to plan their essays. This could be achieved through browsing the internet, reading magazines, newspaper articles or chapters from books.

Using the internet will help SS increase their schemata about the topic. Discussing and analyzing the models of the target genre with their classmates and their teachers will also be aware of the different features required when writing. Once this is done, they can plan their topics of writing easily and smoothly. In addition to planning, encouraging SS to write creatively and imaginatively is also important. This will help them get away from the traditional writing topics that could be “**boring**” and denominating and trigger their imaginative and critical talents that need to be explored simultaneously.

It is also recommended that SS read about their chosen topics before they start planning for their essays. Reading is also encouraged in the drafting stage through peer-reviewing: this will increase students' knowledge about other topics. Finally in the post-writing stage, critical reading is also encouraged through reading each other's writing compositions and commenting anonymously on their classmate's written essays not to upset them as SS might take it personally. *“When content and form are familiar, reading and writing are relatively easy. But when one or the other (or both) are unfamiliar, efficiency, effectiveness, and success are problematic”*. (Reid, a, 1993, p63 ).

### **7.6.1. Peer Revising**

Peer revising is another important recommendation when writing compositions as it overcomes many of the psychological problems students encounter when writing. Peer FB is helpful for SS, as they received opinions from their classmates to elaborate on, and this collaboration helped them look at their essays differently and lessen their writing anxiety.

### **7.7. Teachers' Professional Development**

University TTs are in need of better preparation to meet their SS' needs. This preparation could take the form of instruction for faculty meetings that allow TTs to talk and exchange their best teaching practices and a range of teaching strategies. Once the quality of teaching is improved, the quality of SS's learning opportunities will improve as well.

Teachers' knowledge of their SS, teaching context and practices, assessment, and FB practices constitutes a major element in teachers' professional identities. If these various aspects of teachers' knowledge are investigated, the continuum of ongoing professional progress will be achieved.

- The time should be well organized, carefully structured, and purposefully directed.

- Promoting collaborative exchange help TTs to work together, reflect on their practices, exchange ideas, and share strategies. This collaboration should be structured and purposeful, working according to clear goals for improving student writing.

## 7.8. The Context

The context in which learning takes place is vital to the development of SS' learning processes. The socio-cultural challenges seem to affect SS' learning of essay writing negatively. Our study attempts to give some recommendation to address many of these challenges. e. g. providing SS with models of the composition written by previous SS, helps increase their self confidence. Allowing SS to choose their own topics overcomes the problem of being constrained by topics imposed by TTs and may prove more motivating.

Composition writing teachers should resist some changes. They need to follow new ways to develop writing compositions not always following one way that they have been teaching for several years.

Essay writing teachers need to be professionally and methodologically qualified. They are likely to need some methodology courses in which they learn how to teach writing compositions and how to use grammatical concepts in the writing sessions.

As explained previously, this research seeks to check whether the writing teachers are aware of the stages which are essential for the application of process writing. The observation of the writing teacher reported before proves that she is aware of those stages including grammar in improving writing compositions. Whereas the other writing teachers are not aware of such stages as the results obtained from questionnaires and interviews revealed, (50% adopted product approach) and if they happen to apply some of the process writing stages, this is performed unconsciously.

Definitely, writing teachers need to be made aware of this through some recommendations reported below:

- W Teachers should organize SS in small groups to overcome the problem of crowded classes.
- W Teachers should make their expectations explicit through clear grammatical rules and consistent procedures taught and reinforced.
- Teachers should mix up groups with learners of different abilities, in order for SS to exchange ideas and benefit from their peers correction.
- Teachers should also assign a participation mark to motivate the SS to cooperate and write the best compositions. Praising individual contributions within group members is also appreciated.
- Leadership should also be praised as well as decision –making.
- Writing teachers should remember that they must decide to teach “**fewer**” grammatical concept in a “**different**” way. Embed them “**within**” the writing process, use multiple “**mentor models**”, and allow for multiple individual and group “**practice and discussion**”.
- W Teachers should have students use the new grammatical structures in their own drafts when writing compositions.
- They should provide a checklist for students to include the sentence structure in their final revision or in the editing stage.
- They should plan for peer feedback/ or teacher FB and when the need arises, they should re-teach the grammatical concept using mini- lessons or mentor samples.

### 7.9. Some Suggestions for Teachers

It will be of a greater value for writing teachers to:

- Embed grammar in writing lessons in ways that link the grammatical feature to the writing task.

- Encourage discussion, experimentation, choice, and decision making rather than suggesting “**Correct**” ways to write.
- Focus on grammar as a creative tool that opens up a repertoire of possibilities, not grammar as a monitor that regulates accuracy and conformity.
- Make grammar instruction dynamic.
- Ground writing in social issues important to students.
- Practice and play with revision techniques.
- Help students ask questions about their writing.
- Require written response to peers’ writing.
- TTS should remember that SS’ competence in grammar is acquired gradually, and errors are inevitable components of learning the language.
- To help the student relieve his anxieties, the teacher can encourage him to continue the experimentation and risk taking and include more than one draft in the writing process.
- Keeping the writing process in mind, guide the SS through each stage of writing focusing on a specific component of their writing (planning, drafting, revising), and only when SS are satisfied with the content and organization of their writing, comment on sentence structure and give them choice to correct by themselves .
- Engage students in writing, writing, and more writing.
- Use strategies to keep SS on task, motivated and productive.
- Effective TTs are trained in presentation skills, questioning, and FB. These features of effective teaching greatly enhance students’ learning.
- Effective TTs demonstrate effective learning strategies for SS to use. TTs can help SS become more efficient learners.

- Effective TTs respond to differences among SS. At times, teaching methods and curriculum must be adapted to match SS' abilities and needs.

### 7.10. Some Suggestions for Students

A composition writing can have many purposes, but the basic structure is the same no matter what. You may be writing an essay to argue for a particular point of view to explain the steps necessary to complete a task. Either way, your composition will have the same basic format. If you follow a few simple steps, you will find that essay almost writes itself. You will be responsible for supplying ideas only, which are the important part of the essay any way.

*“Don't let the thought of putting pen to paper daunt you”*

These simple steps will guide you through the composition writing process:

- Decide on your topic.
- Prepare an outline or diagram of your ideas.
- Write the main points in the first draft.
- Write the second draft after revising it.
- Write the final version (i.e. editing).

A further important fact has to deal with “readers”. The latter is among the basics of composition writing. Don't ever forget your “readers”! (Teacher or peers ). Thinking about them, as you write, will help you choose your ideas, organize your information effectively, and select the best terminology.

- ❖ *Readers don't like to be bored.* Grab your reader's attention and fight to keep it.
- ❖ *Readers hate confusion and disorder.* Try to make your writing clear and direct.
- ❖ *Readers want to think and learn.*
- ❖ *Readers want to see what you see, feel what you feel.*

## ❖ Limitations of the Study

The field of second language classroom research is mainly based on observation of what goes on in the classroom or on analyzing class activities systematically. The observation must be consistent and thus reliable. But, when dealing with human beings as subjects it is hard to tell about the reliability and truths coming out from their analysis.

Usually researchers are concerned with the generalizability of their claims which requires a great deal of validity. As far as our work is concerned, it is hard to judge its reliability and validity for its findings cannot be generalized upon other works. Whatever the results, this work remains effective in a case similar to that we have studied. Still, the method and analysis by adopting questionnaires, interviews, and observation would be useful and efficient in other classes and levels.

The size of the subjects was limited to one university promotion consisting of 40 out of 400 learners. For this reason and if we want more generalizable findings, we may need other studies with a larger number of subjects to confirm or disconfirm the tentative findings found in this study.

The data analyzed has been collected from observing a group of forty students. We may need to carry out an investigation with a greater number of students. For the time being, the results remain restricted to this particular group of Algerian second year university students with the specificities of their setting. It should be pointed out that the complexity of the phenomena under investigation (learning, teaching, FB) does not allow findings to pretend to attain any generalizability.

This study relies on the teaching of writing strategies and their use by second year teachers in addition to the FB provided at each stage within the process of writing.

Integrating the teaching of writing with other content courses may be difficult to put it into application because some teachers may see it as trespassing on their territories and may feel

threatened. It may take a lot of time and effort explaining and convincing both the administration and the other course teachers of the benefits of such changes.

### ❖ **Directions for Further Research**

This study has brought to light some issues related to the process of writing, the role of grammar in improving writing compositions, teacher feedback and peer revision, which should deserve interest for future research. It would be interesting to find out what strategies could be more beneficial to give the effective FB. It should be interesting to use students' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. This way we are helping our students to improve their command of grammar in writing.

Moreover, teaching creative essay writing to student teachers of English is another suggested study. This study is highly recommended as today's student teachers of English are the future teachers of tomorrow who should be able to direct and guide their students to write creatively in different topics. This study is expected to shed light on the different teaching techniques and strategies that could be used to develop students' composition writing.

Another issue that is worth investigating is writing teachers' FB practices. More specifically, future research can specifically address teachers FB strategies and measure its effect on students' motivation, self esteem and quality of their writing. Moreover, examining students' active role in FB practices such as self assessment and peer review is also an important area of investigation.

Finally, future research can investigate the feasibility of alternative FB modes such as audio- feedback and electronic FB on improving students' performance in writing compositions.

One of the greatest hope for the researcher lies in the "students". The latter keen on learning always know which are the classes they learn most in and which are the most useful

ones; So if the teacher is able to get her /his message through to the learners then perhaps that may encourage other teachers to follow like wise or at least to think and question the ways in which they teach their courses. The administration can also help by being more involved in the changes and more supportive of the developments that are proving successful and popular with learners.

All in all, we can conclude that experienced writers may talk about “inspiration” or “good luck” in writing, but in fact they do not depend on such mysterious forces. Effective writing then emerges from effective decision making, and effective decisions are made when writers focus on the constants in every writing situation: their subject, audience and purpose.

## Conclusion

In the present study, we have examined the way written expression teachers teach grammar in composition writing and the extent to which EFL students apply such grammatical knowledge in improving their composition writing. Our aim was to find out a model for teaching writing strategies to EFL students and the factors that may affect their writing development.

This study is designed to help students to apply the planning, writing the first drafts, second draft and revising strategies independently, effectively, and thoughtfully. We raised five questions in our research aiming at clarifying- (1) Why some groups of EFL learners seem to benefit from their writing teachers and enjoy writing compositions more than others and what factors may affect EFL learners' writing development?

(2) How can EFL learners reach composition writing proficiency? (3) How do writing teachers teach grammar in composition writing classrooms? (4) How can writing teachers create in EFL learners the desire to write compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness? (5) What are the strategies used by writing teachers to teach grammar in the context of writing compositions?

The obtained results revealed insightful information on the teaching of compositions with reference to grammar and the factors that may affect students' writing improvement. First, one result is related to the affective elements of learners which should be taken into account by written expression teachers. If it is so, this will create more positive effects on students' future attitudes towards composition writing in particular.

Some teachers tend to forget that students are human beings with likes and dislikes, moods, moments of tiredness and emotions such as: mind, anxiety, fearing punishment which affect writing development. This may actually impede learner's progress since students will

be demotivated to write. This goes with the fact that students are not just bottles to fill up, teachers should take into consideration their psychology, i.e. they treat each student accordingly taking care of his personality (introvert/extrovert), motivation, needs and interests. These may drive to success or failure. Therefore written expression teachers can encourage motivation and desirable behavior in students using a variety of strategies in writing compositions. In addition to the fact that if students like their teacher, they will learn and like his/her module, and if not, they neglect all and hate writing and learning as a whole.

Concerning how can students reach composition proficiency, this may be achieved through more practice and trials such as: matching, reordering sentences and combining them or using some cues to help them develop their composition writing, as keeping following grammatical rules and teachers' instructions. In this respect, WET4 said: "*The best way of being good writers is to write.*" Thus, constant writing and drafting help learners to develop and enrich their writing skill and proficiency as well without forgetting the skill of "*reading*". The latter is very significant since good writers are always good readers.

Unfortunately, our students could not reach such a level of proficiency. This is due to the problem of time since the majority of students (80%) agree that they write a composition only once per month. This is really insufficient. In addition to the problem of time, students claimed that they should learn writing more than one session per week. They need more practice to improve their writing. This goes with the Chinese proverb which says: "*I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.*" The emphasis here is on learning by doing, i.e. practice.

More importantly Graham and Harris (2009: p 21) said: "*There is no royal road to learning*". That is to say, things can not be learned quickly and easily. They require both time and effort. This is the case for learning the planning, writing, and revising strategies. One day

is not enough to their mastery. Rather instruction must be carefully crafted so that students not only gain control over their use of the strategy but come to value it as well.

As far as how written expression teachers teach grammar in composition writing classrooms, we found that writing grammatical correct sentences would help construct longer sentences (compound and complex) and hence could develop the students' ability in composing paragraphs and long essays. We further observed that the most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar in writing is to use students' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. It is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety, and usage in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills.

As students revise and edit their writing, teachers can provide grammar instruction that guides students in their attempts to identify and correct problems in sentence structure and usage. For example, a teacher who sees that many students are writing sentences containing misplaced modifiers can present a mini -lesson on this concept, using examples from student's writings. The written expression teacher can have students edit their own and one another's drafts for this problem. Integrating grammar instruction into the revising and editing process helps students make immediate applications, thus allowing them to see the relevance of grammar to their own writing. We can thus say, grammar instruction that is separate from writing instruction does not improve students' writing competence.

Furthermore, written expression teachers proposed one possible way that can be used to create in their students the desire to write compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness. They claimed that the Written Expression skill is a trouble and students do not like it because it includes many aspects: as grammar, lexis, syntax... that should be mastered. As shown in the present research, writing teachers asked their students to write short stories, diaries and short paragraphs at home without caring too much about grammatical correctness.

This is one way .So is important is to write and keep to the content which should be relevant to the subject. Of course, this does not mean that we neglect the grammatical rules. But first, we encourage our students to write and then remind them to refer to some grammatical rules and let them correct their own mistakes.

Thus, written expression teachers can minimize the grammatical correctness and encourage their students to write more and more compositions and if it is necessary to correct their errors, they can let their peers do. It would be more effective. By this way, students can improve their writing and this is what every teacher wants to achieve by the end.

Moreover, to teach grammar in the context of writing, students need *guidance* in understanding and applying those aspects of grammar that are most relevant to writing such as: (1) Teaching *concepts* on subject, verb, sentence, clause, phrase, and related concepts for editing.

(2) Teaching *style* through sentence combining and sentence generation.

(3) Teaching *sentence sense* through the manipulation of syntactic elements and (4) teaching *punctuation* and *mechanics* for clarity and style.

Teachers then should prioritize and provide instruction on the grammatical elements that most affect their students' ability to write effectively, rather than to teach all grammatical concepts at once to all students.

As a support to the previous point, another result was achieved which required to identify the strategies used by writing teachers to teach grammar in the context of writing compositions. Grammar is integrated during the different stages of the writing process such as the revising, editing, and proofreading phases. WE teacher, as I observed in the classroom, agrees to use various strategies to help students see grammatical concepts that may affect their composition writing. To help students revise boring, monotonous sentences, the writing teacher asked students to read their compositions aloud to peers.

The next strategy is *revision*. After the student revises the sentences, the partner can read the sentences aloud, then both can discuss the effectiveness of the revision. Another strategy being adopted by the writing teacher is *presenting mini-lesson*. For instance, teachers can help students edit from passive voice to active voice by presenting a mini-lesson. In editing groups, students could exchange papers and look for verbs that often signal the passive voice, such as “*was*” and “*been*”.

Moreover, WE teacher helped students become better *proofreaders* through peer editing groups. Based on the writing abilities of students, writing teachers can assign different proofreading tasks to specific individuals in each group. That is to say, one student in the group might proofread for spelling errors, another student for agreement errors...etc. We can thus say, collaborating with classmates in peer editing groups help students improve their own grammar skills as well as understand the importance of grammar as a tool for effective communication.

Finally, we can say that our writing teachers, in the Algerian context are called for more practice in the classroom. It is now time to get into the classroom, use a variety of strategies and different types of feedback for both teachers and students to reach effective teaching/ learning in the long term.

To conclude, we hope that the present study has shed light on the teaching of compositions writing with reference to grammatical competence to second year students at the English Department of Setif University, and offered a realistic, well reasoned account of what foreign language writing teachers should follow to help their students improve their composition writing. We also hope that further studies will be carried out to back up the findings of the present research for the sake of improving the teaching of writing at the University.

## ENDNOTES

**Note (1) : Questionnaire: (Question 3, 4 and 5).**

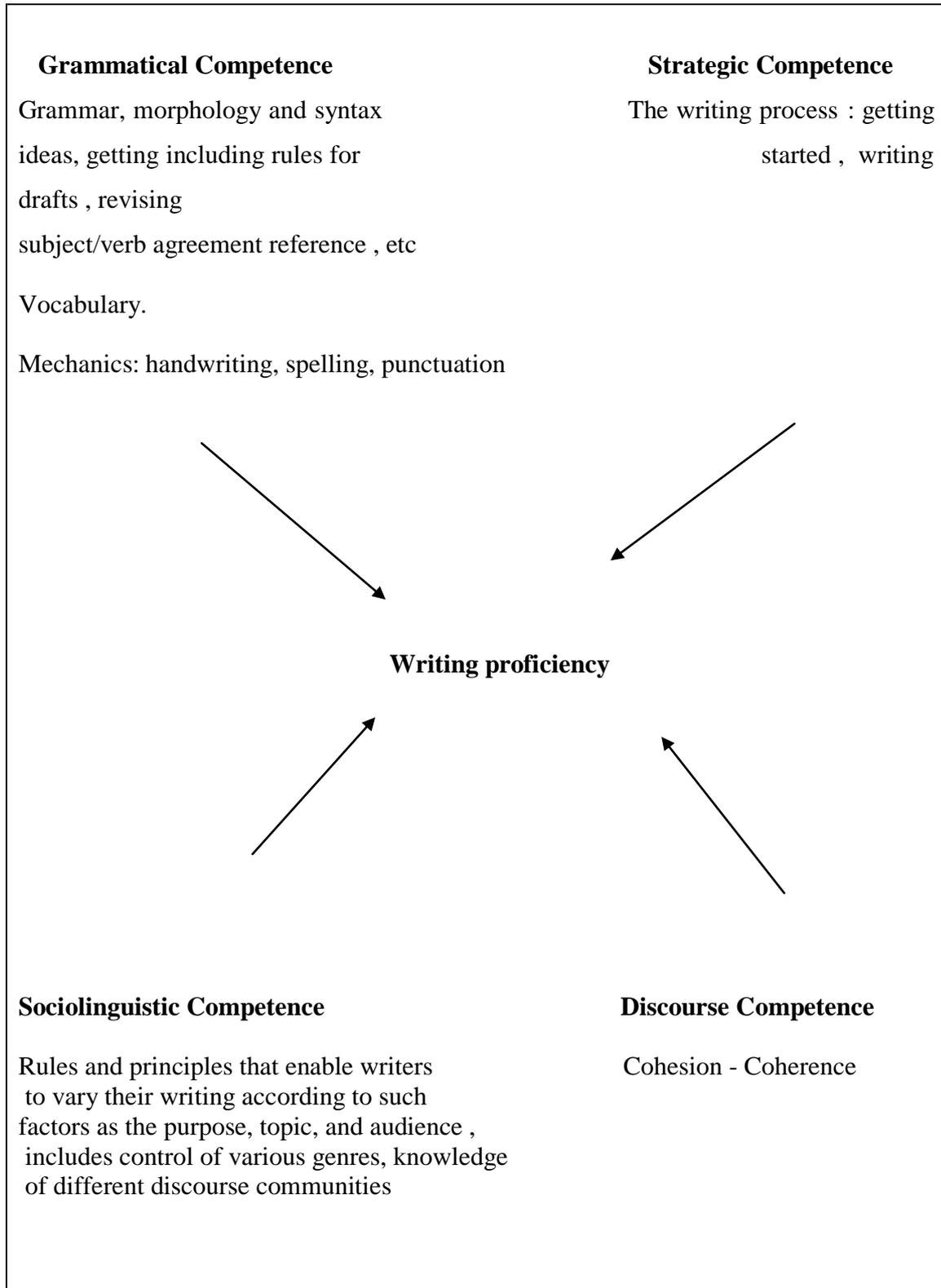
- **a.a.a**(Part- time teacher , **0-4** years' experience, Licence) → **WET1, WET7, WET9.**
- **b.b.b**(Full-time teacher, **4-8** years' experience, Magister)→ **WET2, WET10.**
- **b.c.b**(Full-time teacher , **8-12** years' experience, Magister) → **WET3.**
- **a.f.a**(Part-time teacher , over **20** years' experience, License)→ **WET4.**
- **b.f.b** (Full-time teacher , over **20** years' experience, Magister)→ **WET5.**
- **b.e.b**(Full-time teacher , **16-20** years' experience, Magister) → **WET6.**
- **a.d.a** (Part-time teacher , **12-16** years' experience, License) → **WET8**

**Note (2):** I, myself, had an experience when I was a student at the university (**3<sup>rd</sup> year student**) when I presented an exposé and my teacher corrected it and wrote: **“a master piece”**. Her feedback really gave me confidence on myself and I still remember it.



# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX 1



**Figure 6:** Abilities Underlying Writing Proficiency. (Scarcella and Oxford, 1992: 18)

## APPENDIX 2

### STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Students

I am presently conducting a doctorate research on the teaching of writing composition with particular reference to grammatical competence at the English Department of Setif University. I would be very grateful if you could answer this questionnaire as truthfully as possible. Please, put a tick in the appropriate box or give an answer wherever necessary.

Thank you very much for cooperating.

#### \* Section One : General Information

1. Age range

a- 18 + .....

b- 25 + .....

c- 30 + .....

2. Gender

a- Male .....

b- Female .....

#### \* Section Two: Developing Writing Composition

3. Do you like writing?

a- Yes.....

b- No.....

4-Do you write essays?

a- Yes .....

b- No .....

5- How much essays do you write per Week /Month ?

a- Once .....

b- Twice .....

c- Other ( please, specify ).....

6 – How do you spend theWritten Expression session ?

.....  
.....

7- How do you respond to the points made about the format of the essay?

.....  
.....

8- Does your teacher help you to write your essay?

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

9- How does your teacher help you to write composition ?

a- By giving a brief review of some syntactic and grammatical points (sentence types, verbs, agreement).....

b- Warming up brainstorming ideas (i.e. collecting relevant ideas to the topic).....

c- By giving clear instructions .....

d- By giving a list of choices (words, idioms, proverbs) related to the topic .....

e- By supplying worksheets.....

f- By providing Evaluative Feedback sometimes (error correction) .....

g- By providing models of writing .....

h- By encouraging collaborative writing (writing workshops).....

i- By affording a variety of texts and topics .....

j- By respecting scaffolding in doing tasks such as :

Matching/reordering sentences and paragraphs and finding the odd one.....

k- By providing reading material support .....

10- Do you like ?

a- Free-Writing.....

b- Guided-Writing.....

c- Semi Guided-Writing.....

d- All of them.....

- Why?

.....  
.....

11- How do you think you are doing on your essay?

a- Verry well... ..

b- Well.....

c- Acceptable.....

d- Not satisfied.....

12- What do you need to do when you write the next essay? Do you need help with

a- Grammatical Structure.....

b- Content .....

c- Mechanics.....

d- Organization.....

13- If you could use a response partner, how would such a partner help ?

a- Just listening when I'm reading aloud.....

b- Putting remarks on my essay .....

c- Discussing together the content and the form of the essay.....

d- Modifying some parts of the essay.....

14- What are you learning by doing the essay?

a- Reaching Grammar competence.....

b- Develop a well organized way of thinking.....

c- Creating my own style .....

d- Assessing and reinforcing my acquired knowledge in the other courses  
.....

15- Do you like to be corrected by your

a- Teacher.....

b- Peer .....

c- Yourself.....

16 – Do you benefit from your Teacher Feedback ( TFB) to make your own progress ?

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

**\* Section Three: Grammatical Competence**

17 –When you are doing a piece of writing , do you think about the structure or shape of it , or do you tend to keep writing until you have developed your ideas to full or refer to a plan ?

a- Just keep writing.....

b- Think about structure during writing .....

c- Refer to plan.....

18 –when you have a piece of writing to do, do you make a plan without being told to do so?

Please, tick the most appropriate answer

a- Always.....

b- Sometimes.....

- c- Rarely.....
- d- Never.....

19 –How often do teacher of writing tell you to make a plan first?

- a- Always.....
- b- Sometimes.....
- c- Rarely.....
- d- Never.....

20- Think of a piece of writing which you have done that has structure or shape that pleases you, what helped you to create the structure or shape?

- a- Clear description of the required structure by the teacher.....
- b- Class or group discussion of the required structure.....
- c- Making a plan of the structure.....
- d- Feedback from peer(s) on first draft.....
- e- Feedback from Teacher on first draft.....
- f- Please,specifyanyother.....

21- What difficulties do you face when you write a composition?

- a- The use of spelling.....
- b- Grammatical categories ( Tense, Voice, Aspect and Mood ).....
- c- Constructing sentences, word order, inclusion of phrases, sentence types and sentence combining).....
- d- The use of transitions.....
- e- Punctuation marks and capitalization .....
- f- The use of modifiers ( adjectives and adverbs ).....

22 – Why should you write composition? (Choose the three most important reasons)

- a- Writing reinforces grammatical structures.....

b- Writing helps me to learn vocabulary .....

c- Writing consolidates my prior practised language orally or in writing  
.....

d- I need it for some specific purposes ( record , review , note-taking).....

23 –To what extent do you benefit from writing essay?

a- By using it in future writing for different purposes.....

b- Taking tests and exams .....

c- Keeping journals and diaries.....

d- Making portfolios.....

e- Doing research and projects.....

f- Applying for a job or scholarship .....

24 –After you have done a piece of work, are you encouraged to think about how you have done it? (i.e. to reflect on your writing)

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

25 – Does your teacher allow you to think not about the task of writing (i.e. product ),but about how you have done it ( i.e. process) ?

a- Product .....

b- Process .....

26 –By the end of the year, do you feel that you have learnt more about writing and that grammar has helped you to learn more to write essays?

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

27 –What strategies does your writing teacher adopt while teaching writing compositions?

.....  
.....

28 – Do you find them useful?

- a- Yes.....
- b- No .....

29 – Is there interaction between you and the teacher during the writing process?

- a- Yes.....
- b- No .....

30 – Is it helpful?

- a- Yes.....
- b- No .....

- How?

.....  
.....  
.....

31 – What are you expecting that your teacher will say about your draft?

- a- Don't know.....
- b- Probably, a few ideas to help me .....
- c- Watch spelling and punctuation.....
- d- Other (please,specify) .....

32- How would you evaluate your experience in writing compositions?

- a- Successful.....
- b- Unsuccessful.....
- c- Complicated.....

33- What do you suggest as far as improving writing via Grammar?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

-Thank you -

## APPENDIX 3

### TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teachers

I am presently conducting a doctorate research on the teaching of writing compositions with particular reference to grammatical competence at the English Department of Setif University. I would be very grateful if you could answer this questionnaire as truthfully as possible. Please, put a tick in the appropriate box or give an answer wherever necessary.

Thank you very much for cooperating.

#### **\*Section One: General Information**

1. Are you: a - part-time teacher .....   
                  b - full-time teacher .....
2. What is your teaching experience ?
  - a- 0 – 4 years.....
  - b- 4 – 8 years.....
  - c- 8 – 12 years.....
  - d- 12 – 16 years.....
  - e- 16 – 20 years.....
  - f- Over 20 years.....
3. What are your qualifications?
  - a- Licence .....
  - b- Magister .....
  - c- Doctorate.....

**\*Section Two: Developing Writing Composition**

4-How do you respond to the points made about the format of the essay ?

.....

5- What strategies do you use while teaching writing composition?

.....

6 – Do you find them useful?

- Yes .....

- No .....

7- Is there interaction between you and students during the writing process?

- Yes .....

-No .....

8- How do you measure your students' writing development?

.....  
.....  
.....

9- How far do students have explicit understanding of process of writing and improving their writing?.....

.....  
.....

10- Do you believe that good writing develops when?

a- Writers reflect on their own creation and how can they develop it  
.....

b- Students can use their abilities to reflect on themselves as learners to improve their work .....

c- Students need to use developing writers .....

d- Reflection on the process of writing helps writers develop.....

11- How do you encourage / help your students to write more essays? You can choose more than one answer.

a- By giving a brief review of some syntactic and grammatical points ( sentence types, verbs, agreement ).....

b- Warming up by brainstorming ideas ( i.e. collecting relevant ideas to the topic) .....

c- By giving clear instructions .....

d- By giving a list of choices of words, idioms, and proverbs related to the topic .....

e- By supplying work sheets.....

f- By providing Evaluative Feedback sometimes ( i.e. correction of mistakes ) .....

g- By providing models of writing .....

h- By encouraging collaborative writing (writing workshops).....

i- By affording a variety of texts and topics .....

j- Respecting scaffolding in doing tasks such as :

matching / reordering sentences and paragraphs and finding the odd one.....

k- Providing reading material support .....

12- How can students reach composition writing proficiency?

.....  
.....

13- What type of approach do you follow in teaching writing compositions?

- e- Product Approach.....
- f- Process Approach.....
- g- Genre Approach.....
- h- Eclectic Approach.....

14-How is Feedback provision important in teaching writing compositions?

.....  
.....  
.....

**\*Section Three: Grammar Competence**

15- Is Grammar important in writing?

- Yes .....
- No .....

16 - Does Grammar practice improve writing ?

- Yes .....
- No.....

- How?

.....  
.....

17 – To what aspect of writing does Grammar contribute?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

18 – How does sentence combining improve writing compositions?

.....  
.....

19 – Do you provide your students with Feedback on their writings?

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

20 – What are the most common writing problems you noticed in your students' writing compositions?

a- Grammmistakes.....

b- Mechanics.....

c- Poor content .....

d- Poor organization of ideas.....

e- Poor vocabulary.....

21 – In writing about a particular topic, do you require your students to write multiple drafts?

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

22 – If yes, on which of the drafts do you usually provide Feedback?

g- First draft.....

h- Second draft.....

i- Final draft.....

j- All of them.....

23 – Do you think FB affects revision and improves your students' writing?

a- Yes.....

b- No .....

24 – Do you correct every error that occurs in your students’ composition writing?

.....  
.....

25 – Which type of errors do you correct? And which one do you think is most serious?

- c- Formal errors (grammatical, lexical, punctuation) .....
- d- Communication errors (related to meaning, coherence, unity).....
- e- Both are equally important .....
- f- Other (pleasespecify...).....

26 – Do you think that teachers notice more errors than they actually correct?

- c- Yes.....
- d- No .....

- Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

27 – Which errors do you correct first? Rank the following from “1” to “4” in order of preference?

- a- Spelling.....
- b- Syntactic.....
- c- Lexical .....
- d- Coherence .....

28 – What are the different techniques that you use for correcting students’ writing activities?

.....  
.....  
.....

29 – How would you describe your attitude towards students’ writing errors and how would you describe your attitude towards the teaching of writing compositions?

.....  
.....  
.....

30 – Are you satisfied with your own way of teaching compositions?

- c- Yes.....
- d- No .....
- e- Don’t know .....

31 – What do you suggest in so far as the teaching of composition writing with particular reference to grammatical competence?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

-Thank you -

## APPENDIX 4

### INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENTS

The following is a structured interview on the teaching of writing compositions with particular reference to grammatical competence at the English Department of Setif University.

Would you be so kind as to answer the following questions?

1. Do you like writing? Yes  No

Why?

.....

.....

.....

2. Can writing be taught? Yes  No

How

?

.....

.....

.....

3. Why should you write compositions?

.....

.....

.....

4. What strategies do you use to write compositions?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. How does your written Expression teacher teach your grammar in composition writing classrooms?

.....  
.....  
.....

6- What factors do you think can affect your writing development?

.....  
.....  
.....

7- Why do you think some students seem to benefit from their teachers and enjoy writing more than others?

.....  
.....  
.....

8- To what extent the teaching of composition with reference to grammar is important?

.....  
.....  
.....

9- What strategies does your WE teacher adopt while teaching writing?

- a- Ask students to read aloud what they have written.
- b- Mini lessons.
- c- Peer proofreading ( review , editing.... ) .
- d- Others,( please specify ) .

10- Grammar is competence;writing is performance based. Would you explain?

.....

.....

.....

11- Does performance always reflect competence? Yes  No

How?

.....

.....

.....

12-What makes a good piece of writing? and how the teaching of grammar can enhance its qualities?

.....

.....

.....

13- Does grammar practice improve writing? Yes No

How?

.....

.....

.....

14- What are the most common problems you noticed in your composition writings?

- a- Grammar
- b- Mechanics
- c- Poor content
- d- Poor organization of ideas

e- Poor vocabulary

15- Do you benefit from teacher Feedback? Yes  No

How?

.....

.....

.....

16- In writing about a particular topic, do you need to write multiple drafts? Yes  No

17- If yes, on which of the draft do you usually receive FB?

- a- First draft
- b- Intermediate
- c- Final draft
- d- All of them

18- How is teacher FB provision important in teaching writing?

.....

.....

.....

19- Does teacher FB help you improve your future writing?

Yes  No

How?

.....

.....

.....

.....

20- What can WE teachers do to motivate students write more and more compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank You

## APPENDIX 5

### INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

The following is a structured interview on the teaching of writing compositions with particular reference to grammatical competence at the English Department of Setif University.

Would you be so kind as to answer the following questions?

#### A- General Information

1- Do you teach written Expression? Yes  No

2- If no, have you ever taught written Expression before? Yes  No

3- If yes, how long have you been teaching Written Expression?

.....

#### B- Developing Writing Composition

4- Can writing be taught? Yes  No

How?

.....

.....

.....

5- How do you teach composition writing?

.....

.....

.....

6- Why should students write compositions?

.....

.....

.....

7- Does writing help students develop the skills of communicating in writing? Yes  No   
How?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

8- Why do some groups of students seem to benefit from their teachers and enjoy writing more others?

.....  
.....  
.....

9- How can students reach composition writing proficiency?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

10- What factors can affect students' written compositions?

.....  
.....  
.....

11- What strategies do you use when teaching writing?

a-Ask students to read aloud what they have written.

b-Mini- lessons.

c- Peer proofreading (review, editing...)

d-Others, ( please specify...)

### C- The Grammatical Structure

12- Is Grammar difficult? Yes  No

Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

13- Grammar is competence; writing is performance based. What do you think?

.....  
.....  
.....

14- Does performance always reflect competence? Yes  No

Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

15-What makes a good piece of writing and how the teaching of grammar can enhance its qualities?

.....  
.....  
.....

16- Does grammar practice improve writing? Yes  No

Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

17- Grammar must be applied to texts written by students or other writers so it wouldn't take away time from writing practice .What do you think?

.....  
.....  
.....

18- Do you agree that one major error in writing, even for native speakers is" run on sentences and sentence fragment" which when made cause unintelligible writing ?

Yes  No

Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

19- How can you create in your students the desire to write compositions with the minimum care of grammar correctness?

.....  
.....  
.....

Thank You

## APPENDIX 6

### Teacher Observation Form:

#### Key Indicators of Successful Writing Compositions in Classrooms

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Observation \_\_\_\_\_

- Mini-lessons take place in the classroom.
- Teacher is explicit about what students will learn and how it will help them as writers.
- Routines for writing compositions are clear and structured.
- Planning and other stages of the writing process are used punctually.
- Students spend the majority of writing sessions' time in writing compositions.
- Writing teacher confers with students. Conferences are instructive, usually focusing on one teaching point.
- The writing teacher focuses on group work, peer correction, workshops...etc.
- The writing workshop ends with a brief share. The share is used to reinforce teaching points, celebrate student work, or share new learning.
- Students use TFB or PFB in improving their future composition writing.

#### **Mini-Lesson Structure: Effective mini-lessons follow a clear structure. When observing a mini-lesson listen for the following.**

**Inform:**

Students should be told what they will be learning and how it will help them as writers. What was the teaching?

---

---

---

**Present:**

Teachers should present the lesson in a concise and direct way. Was the information presented in the form of modeling, compiling a class chart or web, teacher or student demonstration, use of literature, or other?

---

---

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**Engage:**

Before the mini-lesson ends, students should be asked to participate. This will give the students the opportunity to practice the teaching before they go off to work independently. Engagement can take the form of questioning, talking to a peer, rereading chart or writing. How did the teacher engage the students?

**Reiterate:**

---

---

At the conclusion of the lesson, the teacher will want to reinforce what was taught and how it will affect the work students do today and in the future.

---

---

## APPENDIX 7

### A Story Experienced by the Writing Teacher

This may not have been the happy ending. My family and anyone invited to my wedding experienced very bad moments.

The trouble began the night before the scheduled wedding day. My family learned that no one knew where my brother and his family were. We worry about them.

That night, we learned that my brother's family had a tragic car crash that killed my nephew, and my brother was paralyzed from the waist down and was unable to walk. This freak accident had ruin my wedding day.

Everyone loved my nephew. I will never forget him and think about him every day. When someone dies in an accident, it is so hard to deal with. I never experienced this before.

I still think of that day, burial, life with him and especially things we did not get to share. I had many regrets, but I believe I have finally come to terms with his death.

## APPENDIX 8

Worksheet Provided by Writing Teacher

Consider the following questions

### When Writing

1. Is my **introduction**, relevant, interesting and attention- catching?
2. Have I written using **paragraphs**?
3. Have I written using **sentences** of different types?
4. Have I used appropriate **verb tenses**?
5. Am I writing from a clear **point of view**?
6. Have I kept **on topic** and not wandered?
7. Have I included interesting **comparisons**?
8. Are my ideas expressed in a clear and interesting **language**? Have I avoided the use of **slang** words?
9. Do my **sentences flow**, or are they **too long/short**?
10. Is there any unnecessary **repetition** of words or ideas?
11. Are my thoughts and ideas organized in a **logical sequence**? Can the reader easily follow and understand what I am trying to say?
12. Have I **proofread** my work and corrected any **spelling** and **punctuation errors**?
13. Have I written an effective and interesting **conclusion**?
14. Is my work **polished** and ready for public presentation?

## APPENDIX 9

<b>When you want to</b>	<b>Try these words or phrases</b>
Give an example	For example For instance In fact That is In other words In particular First, second, third, and so on Specifically
Add a thought	And In addition Also Furthermore Besides Again What's more In this way
Emphasize a thought	Indeed In fact As a matter of fact Certainly As you can see Clearly
Give credit to another point of view	Although Despite Though Even though Granted Of course To be sure
Sum up a series of ideas	In short In brief

**Table 45: A list of Words that are Used to Connect Ideas Together**

## APPENDIX 10

The following checklist will help you *proofread* your written work. When done, ask a classmate or a teacher to proofread it again.

Proof-reader

Things to check for: (tick or cross) 1 2

1. The <i>title</i> is correctly <i>spelled</i> and <i>underlined</i>		
2. Written work is <i>legible</i> and <i>well spaced</i> .		
3. Each sentence is a <i>complete thought</i>		
4. <i>Spelling errors</i> are <i>underlined</i> (circled) and <i>corrected</i> .		
5. The following were used <i>correctly</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>commas</b></li> <li>• <b>Periods</b></li> <li>• <b>Quotation marks</b></li> <li>• <b>apostrophes</b></li> </ul>		
6. <i>Capitalized</i> name of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* places and people</li> <li>• <b>first letter in a sentence</b></li> <li>• months, days, and holidays</li> <li>• important “title” words</li> </ul>		
7. Written <i>ideas</i> are <b>easy to understand</b>		
8. Text was written using <i>paragraphs</i>		

**Table 46:** A Checklist Used to Proofread Written Compositions

## APPENDIX 11MY MISPELLED WORDS LIST

Place each **misspelled** word in the **left** column. **Find** the correct spelling.

Place the **correctly spelled** word in the **right** column

THE WAY I SPELLED IT	CORRECT SPELLING
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	
21.	
22.	
23.	
24.	

**Table 47:** My Misspelled Words List

## APPENDIX 12

### How to learn New Vocabulary

One of the best ways of **improving** your **vocabulary** is by looking up the **meanings** of new and unfamiliar words. In the space below, record each **new word** and its most common **dictionary meaning** and **sentence** use.

#### MY NEW WORDS

My New Word	Dictionary Definition	Sentence Use
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

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## Résumé

La présente recherche vise d'une part à décrire la situation des enseignants aux universités algériennes, en découvrant les méthodes qu'ils adoptent lors l'enseignement de l'expression écrite en anglais comme langue étrangère chez les apprenants, en revenant aux compétences syntaxiques et quelques facteurs qui peuvent affecter le processus de l'écrit en anglais comme langue étrangère. La vitalité des apprenants de l'anglais comme langue étrangère dans une situation académique dépend sur leurs capacités de bien écrire, car l'enseignant évalue ses étudiants sur la base de l'expression écrite. En outre, les étudiants qui acquièrent des compétences fortes de l'écrit, montrent une grande amélioration, alors que ceux qui n'acquièrent pas ces compétences, leur performance demeure lente. La présente recherche vise également à comprendre comment enseigner l'expression écrite et comment les enseignants facilitent le processus de l'écrit basant sur une grammaire correcte. Nous avons observé, analysé et commenté les différentes stratégies d'enseignement de la grammaire dans le contexte de l'écrit adoptées par l'université de Sétif. La grammaire est une compétence à enseigner pour vérifier trois rôles dans l'enseignement de l'anglais comme une langue étrangère. Premièrement, comme une compétence permettant à développer la compétence de l'écrit. Deuxièmement, comme un motivant lorsque les étudiants expriment leur désir d'apprendre la grammaire, les enseignant répondent en fournissant tout ce que l'étudiant veut. Ainsi, les étudiants ainsi que les enseignants seront motivés. Et troisièmement, la grammaire peut être un moyen de l'autosuffisance, i.e. les instructions de la grammaire aident les étudiant à devenir plus conscients de la structure et de corriger leurs erreurs par eux-mêmes. La capacité de l'autocorrection mène à l'autosuffisance de l'étudiant. Sans tenir en compte le niveau de la compétence ou les objectifs, ainsi, la plus part des étudiants peut bénéficier de l'apprentissage de la grammaire anglaise.

*Mot clés* : enseignement, expression écrite, syntaxe, compétence, écrit, grammaire, stratégie.

## ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث من جهة إلى وصف وضعية بعض أساتذة الجامعات الجزائرية، باستكشاف الطرق التي يعتمدونها في تدريسهم الإنشاء في الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى المتعلمين بالرجوع إلى المهارات النحوية وبعض العوامل التي قد تؤثر في عملية الكتابة بالانكليزية كلغة أجنبية. وتتوقف حيوية متعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية في وضعية أكاديمية على قدراتهم في الكتابة جيّداً، لأنّ الأستاذ يقيّم طلبته على أساس التعبير الكتابي. علاوة على ذلك، فالطلّبة الذين يكتسبون مهارات كتابية متينة، يظهرون تحسّناً كبيراً، بينما أولئك الذين لا يكتسبون هذه المهارات، يبقى أدائهم بطيئاً. كذلك، يهدف هذا البحث إلى تفهّم كيفية تدريس الإنشاء وكيفية تسهيل الأساتذة عملية الكتابة اعتماداً على نحو سليم. وقد لاحظنا استراتيجيات مختلفة في تدريس النحو في سياق الكتابة، معتمدة بجامعة سطيف، وقمنا بتحليلها والتعليق عليها. والنحو مهارة تُدرّس لفحص ثلاثة أدوار في تعليم الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية. أولاً، تستخدم كمهارة تمكين لتطوير المهارة الكتابية. وثانياً كمحفّز عندما يعبر الطلبة عن رغبة في تعلّم النحو، فيستجيب الأساتذة عن طريق توفير ما يرغب فيه الطّالب، وبهذا يتمّ تحفيز كلّ من الطلبة والأساتذة على حد سواء. وثالثاً، يمكن أن يكون النحو وسيلة الاعتماد على النفس، بمعنى أن تعليمات النحو تساعد الطلبة في أن يصبحوا أكثر وعياً بالبنية وأن يصحّحوا أخطاءهم بأنفسهم. والقدرة على التصحيح الذاتي تؤدّي إلى اعتماد الطالب على نفسه. دون الأخذ بعين الاعتبار مستوى المهارة أو الأهداف، وبالتالي يمكن أن يستفيد معظم الطلبة من تعلّم النحو الإنكليزي.

### - الكلمات المفتاحية:

تعليم - إنشاء - نحو - مهارة - الكتابة - قواعد - استراتيجية