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THE GENRE-BASED APPROACH TO TEACHING WRITING FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES

THE CASE OF 3RD YEAR LMD STUDENTS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMICS

MOHAMED BOUDHIAF UNIVERSITY-M'SILA

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2014

Dedication

To my parents

To my husband

To my brothers and sisters

To those whom I once met and shared even the fewest happy moments

Acknowledgement

First I thank the Almighty God for the great honor He afforded to me by allowing me to fulfill this work out.

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Abstract

EFL teachers understand the challenge of writing in a foreign language. They work very hard to improve their learners' writing ability in English, but always face an unsatisfactory and even frustrated outcome. This is the case of third year LMD students at the Department of Economics, at M 'sila University as they showed their inability to write even short texts. They encountered problems such as organization of ideas and appropriate rhetorical style. This is not surprising because the rhetorical conventions of English texts- the structure, style, and organization- often differ from the conventions in other languages. Accordingly, this study aims at introducing the Genre Approach to teaching writing to remedy the problem by engaging Economics students to wider functional range of Business genres. This would be through familiarizing them with genre-based writing, and come away with practical materials based on such an approach. The participants are 49 Economics students, chosen as a representative sample, with their teacher who teaches both English and Economics in the so-called department. Data has been collected through using two research instruments: a questionnaire for students, and a structured interview for the teacher. It has been, then, analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results confirmed the set hypothesis in claiming that the Genre Approach could be a remedy for both students and teachers to overcome the encountered writing difficulties. However, they could not be said to have fulfilled generalization requirement.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| BE: | Business English |
| EFL: | English as a Foreign Language |
| ESL: | English as a Second Language |
| ESP: | English for Specific Purposes |
| FL: | Foreign Language |
| GA: | Genre Approach |
| L1: | First Language |
| L2: | Second Language |
| LMD: | License-Master-Doctorate |
| NR: | New Rhetorics |
| SFL: | Systemic Functional Linguistics |
| TLC: | Teaching/Learning Cycle |

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INTRODUCTION

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1. Background of the Study

One support to our study is that researchers and practitioners in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are advocating genres to English Foreign Language (EFL) students. In this respect, Delpit (1988) argued that students need to be taught the hidden rules of the game. In the same point, Hyland (2003) states that EFL students need explicit instructions in genre patterns, features, and variations if they are to succeed academically and professionally.

Learning to write is learning to control genres. Students should learn all the structures, but emphasis should not only be on structures but also on meaning. Following the moves and steps which are proper to a specific genre would help the students not to lose the thread which connects the different parts together. That is why recent studies in different universities in the world (Ahn, 2011; Hughs, 2010; Mali-Jali, 2007; Minabad & Khoshkholgh, 2012; Palmer, 2011; Sidway, 2006; Xu, 2005) investigated the effectiveness of applying the Genre Approach (GA) to teaching writing to ESP students and came out with pleased results.

According to Hyland (2004), the reader's chances of interpreting the writer's purpose are increased if the writer takes the trouble to anticipate what the reader might be expecting based on previous texts he or she has read of the same kind. Hence, we can summarize our understanding as: Language learners need to recognize and know a range of genres; they need to understand the purpose of genres as well as their audience, the reader; and they need to become acquainted with the language features that pertain to each genre.

Our study is concerned with introducing a way on how business genres should be taught in order to perform communicative acts; that is to say, through implementing the GA. Business students should be made aware that business writing should facilitate communication, hence their writings should appeal to what is known to all participants sharing the same discourse community.

1. Statement of the Problem

Writing is often perceived as one of the most challenging processes of Second Language (L2) learning and difficulties in writing different types of texts may come

from the fact that students have to understand the linguistic features of the different text types. Within the ESP field, learners are concerned with writing specific text types according to the specific purposes of their study. However, they find it a difficult task to do (Hyland, 2004).

At the Department of Economics at Mohamed Boudhief University, third year LMD students show their low proficiency in learning English in general, and in learning the writing skill in particular (Appendix B). Most of the designed tasks are around summarizing or translating some economic texts to Arabic language. In this basis, the students' focus is on finding the Arabic words equivalent to the English ones. Besides, all the writing practice is not done in class but once students are back home. For this reason, most students are unable to perform such tasks as writing is a productive skill which needs support and guidance.

In this respect, since students are studying English for Business and Economics purposes, the provided writing tasks should appeal to their field of study. Accordingly, we do believe that students would practice writing by providing them with some business genres models where: types of lexical forms and patterns, types of verbs and tenses, and types of sentence structure proper to each genre are made clear. In this very point, Hyland (2004) argues that if we know what learners do when they write and the kinds of texts they need to write in their own contexts, and then we design language courses to meet those needs, we can help them more with their writing.

3. Research Questions

To accomplish what we have just claimed, some questions seek answers:

1. What do current applied approaches to teaching writing lack to result students' poor achievements?
2. Would students' awareness of business genres form-function correlation be of a great deal of help to write effectively?
3. Do writing activities based on the GA lead to a better students' writing performance?

4. Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to provide a general view about the situation of English teaching and learning in the Department of Economics, M'sila. The intention is to determine the reasons behind students de-motivation to learn English and to check whether enough teaching materials are used to enhance the teaching process.

More specifically, the study aims at helping students practicing writing business genres such as letters, reports and memos (Appendix D) through adopting a GA. Since communication is an end in the business arena, the study aims also at familiarizing students with some business formats and making them communicate through them because writing is as communicative as speech (Hedge, 2005).

This study will also, we hope, motivate students and change their negative attitudes towards writing once the designed activities are oriented to cope with their future career in their workplace.

For teachers, we hope that this study is a basis to teach the skill of writing effectively since most of the time, as shown when interviewed, they are in pain whenever they come to teach writing. Very often, teachers do not set their students to write in class and instead, they include the writing tasks with homework (Appendix B). Hence, we hope that the provided materials designed according to the genre approach will enable both teachers and students to do more practice.

5. Assumptions

Our assumptions are as follow;

1. The role of the teacher is to enhance the learners' effectiveness when dealing with writing activities.
2. Designing activities based on the GA would motivate learners to write some business texts related to their field of study, and hence will train them for future fieldwork.
3. Students will be more aware of the distinctive features which distinguish one business genre from another.
4. Being armed with some model texts, students would be confident enough to produce their own texts.
5. Students would trust themselves as persons who could find good words and ideas to cross the boundaries of the sentence.

6. Hypothesis

Applying a GA to teaching writing for Business English (BE) may facilitate the task of writing for students to write effectively.

In other words:

"If teachers adapt an effective Genre-based Approach to teaching writing and design writing activities based on this approach, then students would know the types of lexical forms and patterns; the types of verbs and tenses; and the types of sentence structure used in writing a particular business genre".

7. Means of Research

Two research instruments were used for the purposes of the current study:

1. In terms of the quantitative component of the study, a questionnaire was designed for students to be administered (Appendix A).
2. In terms of the qualitative component of the study, a structured interview was designed for the teacher (Appendix B).

More discussion about the instruments used is provided in chapter three .

8. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into two main parts; a descriptive part which includes two chapters about the review of the related literature, and an empirical part which includes three chapters.

Chapter one discusses the dependent variable which is *writing*. It reviews general issues about writing; definitions of writing, the nature of writing, perspectives involved in writing, the connection between writing and the other skills, the different approaches to teaching writing, and the way both teachers and learners go about evaluating writing.

Chapter two provides an in-depth discussion of the independent variable; that is to say, the *Genre Approach* to teaching writing. It includes some concepts related to the GA: a definition of the approach, the purpose behind choosing such an approach, the different schools of genre, raising learners' awareness through teaching genres, and teaching business genres.

Chapter three provides the research methodology design which explains, with justification, how this study has been conducted; it includes the means of data collection, population and sampling, and the methods of analyzing data.

Chapter four deals with data analyses. It provides a detailed quantitative and qualitative analyses of the students' questionnaire and the teacher's interview.

Chapter five tries to suggest and provide some materials teachers can use when teaching writing adapting the GA, a kind of guidance and support for learners to feel as confident as good writers.

The study ends up with a general conclusion where some aspects involved in this study are revisited to check whether the findings confirm the set hypothesis and come out with answers to the research questions.

9. Limitations of the Study

Many factors may interfere to cause learners' underachievement during the learning process. Those factors differ from one learning setting to another. To mention just a few which may affect learning: learners' motivation, risk-taking, cognitive abilities, learning styles, teacher training, motivation, experience...etc. Thus, our study is limited to a group of students and cannot be generalized unless the same results are obtained through other researches conducted under the same circumstances. Yet, recommendations can extend to include other ESP areas to treat difficulties in teaching the writing skill.

Chapter one: Theoretical Issues on Writing

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Introduction

Be it a first or a second language, learning to write has always been a big challenge for learners. Writing is said to be the most difficult among the language skills." The ability to write appropriately and effectively is something which evades many of us" (Tribble, 1996, p.3). The writing skill is not spontaneous like speaking, that's why it is difficult to write than to speak. Frendo argues that "while speaking is more natural, writing is more contrived; it is a skill that needs to be learned. It requires planning and organizational skills, as well as skill in linking paragraphs and sentences together, skills in spelling, punctuation, word order, word choice, and so on" (2005, p. 81). Being a productive skill, writing needs more thinking, more awareness, and more cognitive abilities. In many text books, the writing activities are left in last order as the writing skill can be only developed when other skills are taught. This is what Dudley- Evans and St John claim in saying that" developing writing skills involves other skills, like planning, drafting, and revising so that the final product is purposeful and oriented to what readers expect" (Dudley- Evans & St John, 1998, p. 115).

Looking at what writing is and what it requires to be learned may lead us to know what makes it a nerve-racking task?

1.1. Nature of Writing

Writing can be simply identified as an activity which takes place in the classroom or elsewhere. It is a silent reflective activity in which much awareness is needed. From a structural point of view, Hyland (2003) states that one way to look at writing is to see it as a set of marks on a page or screen where language units are placed coherently according to a system of rules. Thus, writing is a product and learning to write requires linguistic knowledge. For many who adopts this view, writing is regarded as an extension of grammar.

Writing teachers from liberal arts background focus on creative expressions. Hyland (2003) states that Writing is regarded as a creative art of self discovery. It is a way of sharing personal meanings empowering the individual to express his or her views on a topic.

A more cognitive definition, suggests that writing is a process which needs cognitive abilities and reflective thinking. In this respect, Zamel quotes that "writing is a non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (as cited in Hyland, 2003, p.11). In more practical terms, Zamel describes writing as "a meaning-making, purposeful, evolving, recursive, dialogic, tentative, fluid, exploratory process" (Zamel, 1992, p. 463).

Writing is communicative and communication is a dialogue not a monologue process; hence, it should appeal to what readers expect. Writing is dialogic not only in the sense that it responds but in the sense of being addressed of anticipating readers and their responses. Thus, it is a social process in which individuals participate. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) state that the writing skill involves having a map where the message, the communicative purpose, and the target audience are set beforehand. Badger and White argues that "writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential and by providing input to which the learners respond" (Badger & White, 2000, p. 158). This makes writing a process of discovery where learners come to discover how to compose a piece of writing.

Other researchers (Grabbe & Kaplan, 1996; Hyland, 2000; White & Arndt, 1991) think of writing as a problem-solving activity. Being as such, writing makes learners recall their cognitive abilities in order to define the problem, frame solution, and shape a good piece of writing. Yet, even in claiming so, Hyland (2003) argues that writing is not only a cognitive process but a rich amalgam in which cognition is only one aspect. Once again, and maybe more importantly, the overemphasis on the cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer's entire world eliminates the social nature of writing and the role of language and text structure in effective written communication. Being aware of defining communicative purposes while writing may just provide students with a stronger intensive for writing and allow them to be more flexible, reflective communicants. "When someone learns how to write, he is not just developing a new skill, he is also getting involved in an activity in which questions of social role, power, and the appropriate use of language cannot be avoided" (Tribble, 1996, p. 14).

As it is clear from what have been said, the term *writing* can be ambiguous. Accordingly, it is a demanding activity for writers to accomplish. "It is a key part of the day-to-day activities of most businesses and, like speaking, is used in a vast range of different situations. It allows communication across time and space, and provides an invaluable medium for storing records and other information" (Frendo, 2005, p. 81). Yet, it does not happen naturally as speaking. Though both writing and speaking have much in common, they differ in many aspects. The next section investigates these differences and explains why writing is a skill that needs to be learned.

1.2. Differences between Writing and Speaking

Human beings are born with the ability to speak at least one language fluently, but many are unable to write with confidence. As children, we develop an ability to speak our mother tongue day after day. At an early age, we just try to imitate what we hear adults say, but with time our need to speak more increases whenever we come cross new things and objects. Uttering taboo words may get us punished, but when we speak well we can gain a reward, an encouragement, or reinforcement. This enhances our speaking skill in a very rapid way. This is not the case with our ability to write. To engage oneself in a conversation, even if we know little about the discussed topic, is not that irritable like when we come to write.

Usually, it is only in formal education that we come to get familiar with written language. Frendo (2005) argues that while speaking is natural and spontaneous, writing is a skill that needs to be learned. In the same point, Raimes (1983) states that we learn to speak our mother tongue without any guidance while we need instructions to compose texts. At early stages, we are not aware that we have different types of texts, and we care less about the reader. This is clear in Tribble's quote, " young children learning to write in a first or foreign language, especially to write formally, can have problems because their main motivation as language learners is to make relationships with other people" (1996, p. 10). The complex nature of writing makes it different from speech. When we write, accuracy is an important aspect. We focus on both form and meaning hence, correct and complete sentences are recommended. In this very idea, Brooks and Grundy (1998) argue that we pay more attention to writing since we are more aware of what we are doing; as a result, more focus is given to correctness.

A similar idea comes from Brown and Yule (1983) who state that a major difference between spoken and written language is the elaborated and dense pack of information at the structure and text level in written language, that is to say the use of heavy grammar structures, connectors, syntax...etc, whereas spoken language is more simple and hence, less elaborated. To stress the importance of learning writing, Widdowson (1984) in Tribble (1996) claims that the focal problem for foreign learners is textual rather than discorsal. Learning how to write in their first language enables them acquire the essential interactive ability of discourse; thus, the problem lies in how to textualize a discourse in a foreign language.

A written text is not simply a spoken text written down. Raimes (1983) claims that while speaking is natural and unplanned, writing is both a planned and reflective activity which needs time and concentration. In stating another difference, Kress says: "Command of writing gives access to certain cognitive, conceptual, social and political arenas. The person who commands both the forms of writing and of speech is therefore constructed in a fundamentally different way from the person who commands the forms of speech alone " (Kress, 1989, p.46). One distinctive feature which makes writing different from speaking, as Tribble (1996) puts it, is its association with prestige and power.

Therefore, being deprived from the ability to write leads to a total exclusion from social roles. In other words, without a capacity to write effectively in the target language, foreign language learners will miss the opportunity to play social roles available to them. For instance, being able to inform people of the decision of a committee meeting is seen as a sign of power. In Having such a power, written texts are more trustful and reliable than spoken ones. Stubbs argues: "The mere fact that something is written conveys its own message, for example of permanence and authority. Certain people write and certain things get written" (as cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 13). It is for these reasons that writing is linked to power and status. By writing we can have confidence, information, and even control on people.

Differences between writing and speaking can extend to include non-verbal aspects. In spoken English, these are used to help give meaning to utterances. To mention just a few, rhythm, phrasing, and pauses are the most important ones. Because the writing system, as Tribble (1996) puts it, cannot directly mimic using the speech non-

verbal features, writers think of alternatives proper to written texts. These are punctuation and other features of typography like bold, underlined, or italicized text.

To treat it from a lexical ground, spoken language minus certain features; it is sophisticated. It is more prompted to informality, phrasal verbs, and common words. Rather, formality, the use of rare words and of conventional abbreviations are signs of written language. Similarly, Raimes (1983) states that while writing is formal and compact, speaking is informal and repetitive. "In general, the more written the language being used, the higher will be the proportion of lexical words to the total number of running words in the text" (Halliday, 1989, p. 64). One last but not least major difference is that discussed by Nunan (1991), decontextualisation of written texts. Usually, writers are distant; they have never met and will probably never meet the readers. The big task for them is to consider their audience while writing. They have to anticipate what readers may ask or find vague in the texts they produce. In this respect, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) claim that to be a successful writer, you should be able to convince your audience of the validity of the arguments you present in your text by respecting the conventions proper to your text and hence, you prove an awareness of the readers' needs.

In short and through discussing these differences, we come to know that writing is more complex and more contrived than speaking; it is a skill that needs skills to be learned. These skills are among other perspectives involved in writing. The next section will discuss what perspectives should be involved in order to perform successfully in the task of writing.

1.3. Connection between Writing and Reading

Reading and writing are individual processes which reflect the evolving skills of the individual language learner (Langer & Applebee, 2007). To Read and Write as a human being is something entirely different from Speaking, and we have to learn the first fundamentals of the difference between speaking and reading and writing. Only then shall we be able to understand the deficiencies and inabilities in reading and writing. The major difference here is while speaking is innate in every human being, reading and writing are processes which need training to be acquired. They are fundamental human qualities. In point of fact all cultures are intimately bound up with reading and writing.

It would have been quite impossible for states to come about if there had not been reading and writing. In this instance, once upon a time reading and writing were given only to priests. Only initiates came near to a condition which enabled them to read and write, ordinary people were denied this. Still today there are millions of people who cannot read and write; but everyone can speak. Everyone is able to experience himself by means of verbal communication. The spoken language between illiterate people changes infinitely quicker than any other.

In point of fact, one should not generally speak of language as long as this language is not written down. It is actually still a dialect. One cannot build up a state if everyone speaks a different dialect. Going through history, one sees that only when language becomes written language can states and culture be formed (König, 2009). König (2009) argues that reading is a process out of which writing comes forth. Reading is in a sense the mother tongue of writing. Out of this process of word revealing, the child gains the possibility of writing. Reading surrounds the child although he/she does not hear it.

In stating an opposite view, other scholars like Graham and Hebert (2010) argue that writing can be a vehicle for improving reading. In particular, having students write about a text they are reading enhances how well they comprehend it. Teaching writing not only improves how well students write; it also enhances students' ability to read a text accurately, fluently, and with comprehension. Having students spend more time writing has a positive impact on reading, increasing how well students comprehend texts written by others. For instance, writing about information in a science text should facilitate comprehension and learning, as it provides the reader with a means for recording, connecting, analyzing, personalizing, and manipulating key ideas from the text. Shanahan (2006), in Graham and Hebert (2010), states that "reading and writing are connected, as they draw upon common knowledge and cognitive processes" (p.4). Consequently, improving students' writing skills should result in improved reading skills. Reading and writing are both communication activities, and writers should gain insight about reading by creating their own texts, leading to better comprehension of texts produced by others.

To achieve a better learning of a second language, reading and writing should be viewed as integrated skills. According to Hyland (2004), the reader's chances of

interpreting the writer's purpose are increased if the writer takes the trouble to anticipate what the reader might be expecting based on previous texts he or she has read of the same kind. This indicates that there is a strong connection between the act of writing and the act of reading. Each may facilitate the other in the sense that there are some conventions that should be taken into account by both reader and writer.

Different text types have different language features. Thus, both writing and reading involves the application of elements such as context and purpose along with knowledge of grammar, syntax , vocabulary, discourse conventions, and meta-cognitive awareness in order to develop appropriate meaning (Minaabad & Khoshkholgh, 2012).

1.4. Perspectives involved in Writing

We write differently—often digitally—and we write more than in the past. Technological advances, changing workplace demands, and cultural shifts make writing more important than ever, especially because the way we write often predicts academic and job success, creates opportunities for civic participation, maintains relationships, and enhances critical thinking. Writing instruction needs to help students meet the challenges of writing effectively for many purposes. Yet, current studies indicate that time devoted to writing instruction and research focused on writing evaluation have both decreased in the last ten years. The growing demand for good writers requires more time and attention devoted to writing instruction and assessment in order to prepare all students for a changing world. Student writer enters classroom with diverse needs and skills. Attention to these gaps is especially important because writing acts as a gatekeeper; weak writing skills limit school, job, and advancement opportunities.

As we said previously, developing writing skills involve other skills. Duddly-Evans and St John (1998) define these skills as planning, drafting and revising to be the most needed ones. Alternatively, the student writer may start writing as much as possible and then revising, polishing and omitting or adding missing points and ideas. In a very similar point, Frendo (2005) defines these skills as organizational because they help to achieve coherence. They help linking sentences and paragraphs together.

Additionally, skills of spelling, punctuation, word order, word choice are of paramount importance to be learned. Cognitive skills while writing are important as well; that's to say when putting pen to paper, writers should think of the audience they intend to

address. This depends on what they want their reader to share them. This also depends on the kind of audience they address and hence, a piece of writing addressed for people not sharing the same discourse community is different from the one addressed to people sharing the same discourse community. In this latter, specific expectations of how a text is organized and of what it is written for are hold by readers.

Features of written language, though having something in common, may differ across communities. For example concerning layout, as Tribble (1996) introduces it, anybody who is familiar with British letter writing conventions knows that the addressee's name comes first, followed by their position in their organization and then the company, number, street, town, post code and, if necessary, country. What is important to note here is that a knowledge of how this sort of text is usually arranged in our first language may not guarantee success if we are attempting to write for a different language culture. Hereby, if students want to succeed in writing this kind of text, they should be aware of its conventions which are relatively simple to teach and to learn how to use. To go somehow deeper, knowing layout of texts is not enough. An important next step is to be able to make appropriate lexical, grammatical, and content choices. Consequently, the social function of the text is achieved and the desired job is done.

Another aspect of text organization is looking at how language is used to make connections within written texts of all kinds. The sentences are linked together in a sequence, so we have a text which is cohesive. Cohesion could be achieved through the use of pronouns, and reference words, lexical repetition, and other logical discourse markers. Yet the use of all these parts, even well organized, would be useless if the text has no communicative purpose; in other words, the text is not coherent. Hoey, in this very idea, states:

The writer initiates his discourse with a first sentence... The reader scans the first sentence and forms expectations as to the information that might follow. No harm is done by representing these expectations as questions. The writer then offers a further sentence as an answer to one or more of his or her questions. If something in the sentence signals that the question being answered is not one of the reader's short list, then the reader retrospectively has to re-create the question that it must be answering, and if this is in turn

impossible, the reader assumes that the sentences are in fact unrelated and seeks a relation elsewhere in the discourse.

(as cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 33)

So learning to write does not only imply knowing the text specific conventions but also being able to put them into practice in the right way. In sum, students need to know four types of knowledge to produce good pieces of writing.

These types are:

- Content knowledge: knowledge of the concepts involved in the subject area.
- Context knowledge: knowledge of the social context in which the text will be read.
- Language system knowledge: knowledge of those aspects of language system (e.g. lexis, syntax).
- Writing process knowledge: knowledge of the most appropriate way of preparing for a writing task.

1.5. Approaches to Teaching Writing

The teaching of writing has for long been a central element in all educational systems, and there are many theories, often conflicting, of how writing should be taught. For many teachers, the task of choosing the most effective theory is not that easy. Smith (1982), in Badger and White (2000), states that the teaching of writing suggested that the whole enterprise is behind both words and conception. The focus on different areas while writing, form; writer; or reader, led to approaching writing in three main ways. These are: the product, the process, and the genre approaches. Educationalists claim that the appearance of one approach may result as a reaction to another. In the following section, we will discuss the different approaches, each separately, and the theory underlying them. We will also cover both the linguistic factor, of how the approaches conceptualize writing, and the educational factor of how the approaches conceptualize learning to write.

1.5.1. Product Approach

This approach views writing as a product and encourages a focus on formal text units or grammatical features of texts. One of the most explicit descriptions of product approaches is provided by Pincas (1982) in Badger and White (2000). She views writing

as primarily about linguistic knowledge, and much focus is on the use of appropriate vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices.

The product approach is said to be a form-based. Teachers who focus on form present authoritative texts for students to imitate. They see it, as Tribble (1996) states, a professional obligation to correct errors. Thus, correctness and conformity are major aspects of the product approach. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) argue that the product approach to writing involves the provision of a model text upon which a task is based. This task aims at setting students to produce a similar or a parallel text. Robinson (1991) summarizes the method in the following way:

Model text → Comprehension/Analysis/Manipulation → New input → Parallel text
(as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 116)

Badger and White (2000) alongside with Hyland (2003) state that the product approach to writing goes through four stages: familiarization; controlled writing; guided writing; and free writing. The first stage aims to get students familiar with certain grammar and vocabulary of the presented text. The second stage is to make learners manipulate fixed patterns. In the third stage, learners imitate model texts. In the last stage, learners get ready to produce their free texts through using the patterns they have developed. Badger and White state;

A typical product class might involve the learner familiarizing themselves with a set of descriptions of houses, possibly written especially for learning purposes, by identifying, say, the prepositions and the names of rooms used in a description of a house. At the controlled stage, they might produce some simple sentences about houses from a substitution table. The learners might then produce a piece of guided writing based on a picture of a house and, finally, at the stage of free writing, a description of their own home (2000, p. 153).

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) stress the fact that designing tasks following the product approach is purely mechanical since the students are asked to imitate texts in a highly decontextualized way. Writing tasks should reflect the students' real-life situations because writing is an authentic process. They should regard the purpose of writing, the readership, and the expectations of the discourse. In such an approach,

learning to write was viewed as just another way to mastering grammar items. The learners' creativity was given little consideration and the teacher, who is usually the reader, was to function as a proofreader or editor who emphasized mainly on correct language usage. As the text to be produced was determined by the teacher, application of writing skills was limited to the given topics and hardly placed any concern on the audience or reader. In such a controlled environment, the development of writing skills in the learner was ignored. A resulting factor is the text produced was devoid of purpose and the reality surrounding the writer.

Another drawback of the product approach is that too much attention is paid to accuracy and good writing is usually later. Hyland (2003) argues that syntactic complexity and grammatical accuracy are not the only trustworthy measures of a good writing. Most of the time, students who can produce accurate sentences may not go beyond the sentence and are unable to produce appropriate written texts. Within a product class, teachers act like judges when assessing writing and hence, students tend to produce texts in which correctness is their final end. This may lead learners to think that the rationale behind writing is evaluation.

In a more serious limitation of the product approach, Hyland says: "The goal of writing instruction can never be just training in explicitness and accuracy because writing texts are always a response to a particular communicative setting. No feature can be a universal marker of good writing because good writing is always contextually variable" (Hyland, 2003, p. 5).

Jordan (1997) stresses that since the product approach is concerned with the finished product, the text, it gained dissatisfaction. He claims that with the provision of the aimed-for model, and practice which aimed for producing similar or parallel texts, students find themselves restricted in what to write or the way they want or prefer to write with. Therefore, the product approach does not address the issue of the learners needs and creativity.

Perspective in principle, the product approach was based on two assumptions; firstly, the writing process was a linear process, moving from one stage to the progressive next, and secondly, the imposition of form on the written text was more important than the effective communication of purpose. The essential elements involved in writing, namely the writer, the writing process itself and the context were omitted.

In short, product-based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development as mainly the result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher. With such a restricted environment, students would be passive participants in learning how to write. To escape this restriction, learners should be offered a space where they can express their personal meanings on different topics. This is the very aim of the process approach to teaching writing, the one we will discuss next.

1.5.2. Process Approach

The process approach has developed in a way as a reaction against the product approach and has focused on the writer as an independent producer of texts. It views writing as a problem-solving activity and hence, it requires thinking of a solution. In the thinking stage, students should identify the problem, plan a solution, and finally reach a suitable conclusion. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) claim that thinking is the first stage in the process approach, which involves generating, selecting, grouping, then ordering ideas.

Robinson states that the process approach follows the sequence below:

Writing Task → Draft1 → Feedback → Revision → Input → Draft2 → Feedback →
Revision → Draft3

(as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p.117)

Tribble (1996) argues that the process approach stresses both creativity and unpredictability of writing. He states that because writing is a developmental process, the process approach to writing goes through four main stages. The first stage is prewriting in which students specify the task, plan and outline, collect data, and then make notes.

In the second stage, which is composing, students produce texts. Revising is the next stage where students reorganize and focus information and style for readership. The last stage is editing in which students check grammar; lexis; surface features, for example punctuation, spelling, layout, quotation conventions, and references. Thus, the process approach stresses respectively; generating ideas; collecting data; then the publication of a

finished text. Badger and White (2000) state that writing in process approaches indicates less emphasis on grammatical structures and accurate syntax. Rather, it stresses the skills of planning, revising and drafting. Additionally, as the learner moves from the initial stages of data collection or brainstorming of ideas to the final written draft, he/she can choose to review any of the stages, and revise to reformulate ideas via conferencing with the teacher or engage in peer consultation.

The teacher plays a greater role in this approach in providing input and consequently, giving feedback during the revision and evaluation stages. The number of times this is done is not restricted as writing is a recursive activity. The teacher's response serves to provide support for the learner in the writing process as well as engage him in critical self-evaluation of the written product. They see their role as simply to provide students with the space to make their own meanings within a positive and a cooperative environment. More importantly, they try to avoid imposing their views, offering models, or judging students' writings beforehand. Hyland (2003) states that the process approach to teaching writing urges teachers to give feedback rather than to focus on evaluating whether appropriate syntax and accurate grammar are used. Therefore, students are no more slaves of imposed models; instead, they are offered opportunities to write using their own style and expressing their own experiences in certain topics. In the final analysis, the learner has to consider, to a fair degree, the context of the writing task. In summary, this approach informs us that writing essentially involves thinking skills and knowledge of the various stages in the process to transform information into coherently written texts. In this respect, writing is seen as a recursive process. By *recursive*, Raimes (1985), as indicated in Tribble (1996), means that writers can move forwards or turn backwards at any point while preparing a text. The writer may imply changes he felt necessary once he revised the collected data. In other words, though there are defined stages set beforehand for the writing of any kind of text, writers have the chance to revisit some of these stages recursively before final texts are set for publication.

Though the process approach attempts to match writing tasks to the learners needs and to foster learning to write in a very dynamic and creative way, the main criticism directed against it is that it does not adequately address the issue of the reader, especially when the form of the text expected is convention and content-specific. The main reason for the lack of discrimination between different text types is the assumption that all types

of writing are similar. Secondly, the imagined reality of the writer does not necessarily reflect the real context existing in a specific setting, thereby leading to a purposeful ignorance of the contextual meaning of a written text or discourse. In addition, teaching the correct usage of forms and even of grammar items is neither explicit nor context-related. Consequently, it may lead to the likely increase of grammar errors and use of irrelevant forms in the final written product.

Badger and White (2000) argue that: "Process approaches have a somewhat monolithic view of writing. The process of writing is seen as the same regardless of what is being written and who is writing. So while the amount of pre-writing in producing a postcard to a friend and writing an academic essay are different, this is not reflected in much process teaching" (p.154). To assert another drawback of the process approach, Hyland says:

Process approaches fail to offer any clear perspective on the social nature of writing or on the role of language and text structure in effective written communication. Encouraging students to make their own meanings and find their own text forms does not provide them with clear guidelines on how to construct the different kinds of texts they have to write (2003, p. 13).

Forces outside the individual that help guide the writer to define problems, frame solutions, and shape the text also need to be considered. In this respect, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) claim that writing is a social act in which the context imposes certain constraints on what writers can write or on the way texts are written.

Summarizing, we can say that process approaches see writing primarily as the exercise of linguistic skills, and writing development as an unconscious process which happens when teachers facilitate the exercise of writing skills. For the so-called drawbacks, we favor an approach to writing where awareness of content, audience, and of communicative purpose underlying the writing task are regarded. The approach based on these principles is referred to as the GA to teaching writing. The underlying theory here is that texts of a certain type have the same kind of purpose as each other and show similar language and features. Frendo (2005) asserts that the theory of genre is useful for teachers and learners alike as it gives something concrete and purposeful to rely on. In our study, we opted for adapting the GA to teaching writing since for most BE learners, as Frendo (2005) argues, writing is instrumental in the sense that learners focus on

achieving a particular goal or an outcome. As far as the theory of genre is concerned, we will not discuss it in details in this section since it will be discussed in chapter two.

1.6. Teaching Writing via a Synthesis of Approaches (Process-Genre Approach)

Before any writing task takes place in the classroom, two questions should be clearly answered:

- What is the purpose of the piece of writing?
- Who are the addressed readers of this piece?

Writing, as Badger and White indicate, " involves knowledge about language (as in product and genre approaches), knowledge of the context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and in using language (as in process approaches)" (2000, pp. 157-158). In other words, developing writing requires both cognitive awareness of the different skills from the part of the learner and providing input to which learners respond.

Writing is an activity which is embedded in a social situation, so we generally write to achieve a particular communicative purpose. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.118) state that developing writing within a synthesis approach which combines all previous approaches goes through stages:

- Develop rhetorical awareness by looking at model texts.
- Practice specific genre features, especially moves and writer stance.
- Carry out writing tasks showing awareness of the needs of individual readers and discourse community and the purpose of the writing.
- Evaluate the writing (through peer review or reformulation).

Badger and White (2000) argue that the development of writing vary between different groups of learners as they are in different stages of their writing development. Some learners are skilled enough of how to write different genres. They need little or no input. Others may lack knowledge about how certain genres are written and hence, a kind of input should be provided in order to be aware of the distinctive features of a specific genre. Learners may differ also in their degree of awareness concerning the purpose of writing and the target audience. Not any language is appropriate to a particular audience. Therefore, the use of input should regard both the purpose and the audience.

Learners may lack knowledge. In this case, teachers may provide them with input in terms of instruction. Within a synthesis approach, choosing input depends on whether students are aware of the context and the linguistic knowledge or not. Language awareness activities should be provided for learners to ensure their effective performance. Once the learners are aware of the similarities and differences between texts, and that texts are written for different reasons, they can manage to produce their own texts. They may also require input about the skills needed for writing. Here teachers may explain the different stages of the process approach to facilitate the task of writing.

The following figure is an illustration of how learners may write following a synthesis approach:

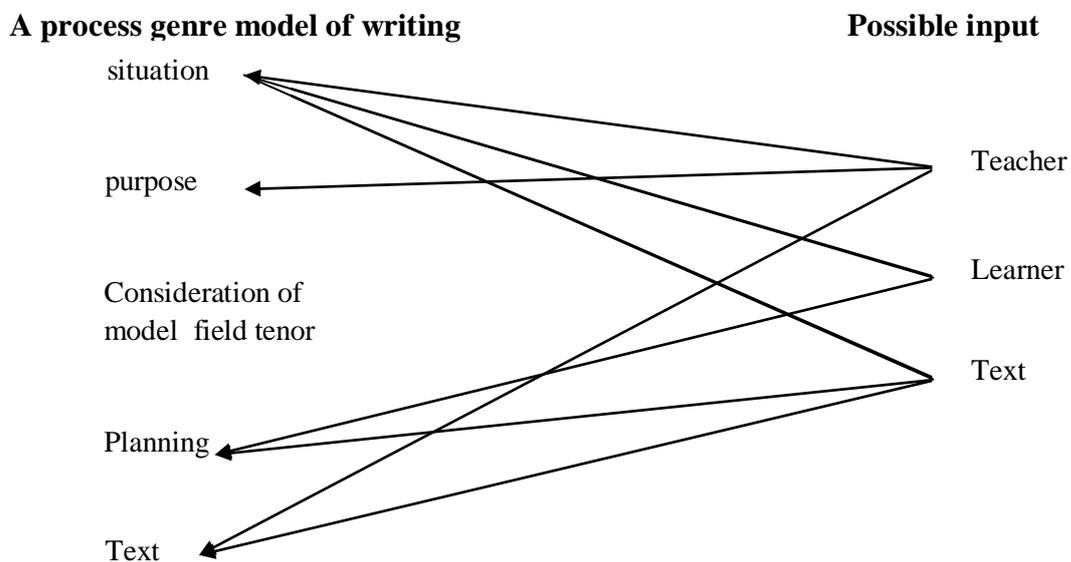


Figure 1.1: A Genre- process Model of teaching Writing (Badger & White, 2000, p. 159)

This model retains the basic stages in process writing as the central framework of instruction. It provides guided stages for the learner, encouraging him to investigate and consider the types of content knowledge he needs to acquire, inclusive of the various genres as input material, at the pre-writing stage. The main aim is to help the learner consider a variety of genres, and not only one type as introduced by the teacher in the genre-based approach. This serves to eliminate the weakness in the genre approach, with its over-emphasis on form in writing. As a result, the written text to be produced in this approach is not preconceived.

In the process genre-based approach, the learners will be able to reflect on the similarities and differences existing between different types of genres to understand their situated use and variety. A sense of text form is obtained but not imposed upon the learner. This is in contrast to the genre approach adopted by the Sydney School, which commences the initial stages of writing with modeling of the text or genre. Even though it is acknowledged that in the final stage, the creation of a genre according to context is a positive aspect in the approach, its successful implementation is contingent upon the ability of the teacher to guide the learner through the stages given. Besides, the flexibility of recursive writing allowed by the process approach in the reviewing and drafting stages highlights useful writing skills involved in the processing of different genres. Input materials (provided by the learner and the teacher) are useful complements to the cycle of activities in the process genre approach. Grammar can be taught in context while reviewing the text at various stages of writing. So, while the GA conceptualizes writing purpose, language and context clearly, the process approach provides a framework for teaching text production skills in an effective way.

In such a facilitative learning environment, the learners can start writing using the process approach, review the available genres at a later stage or earlier stage of writing to obtain more information to make informed decisions, thereby writing more effectively in the context of the task set for them. Explicit teaching of the presence of some conventional features in genres is tenable but it is hoped that learners view genres not as ends in themselves but as means to achieve the ends (communications).

1.7. Evaluation of Writing

In doing any kind of activity, learners wait for a feedback to their responds. They want to know their mistakes to learn from them, but they want to know more how much correct their answers are. In writing activities, mainly when writing whole texts using their own language, students are more suspicious to receive feedback. Teachers, most of the time, are considered the most trustful providers of feedback.

Trrible (1996) distinguishes between activities that are intended to help students learn to write and write to learn. Therefore, giving feedback depends on the type of activity provided. He argues that in writing to learn activities, learners want clear, unambiguous feedback to check whether they are right or wrong so they can learn from

their mistakes. This concerns sentence-level activities and short pieces of writing where learners focus more on performing tasks correctly. In this kind of activities, teachers give feedback via marking learners' answers. In learning to write activities, marking seems inappropriate. Teachers have to respond to learners products by taking on a variety of roles. Hence, judging whether a sentence is right or wrong is not enough. In this respect, four basic roles are available for teachers as readers.

1.7.1. Teachers' Roles in Evaluating Writing

1.7.1.1. Teachers as Audience

As audience, teachers may give comments as any reader. For example, is the text interesting? Is it easy to understand? Does it tell us something about the writer and his view of the world?

White and Arndt (1991) in Tribble (1996) state that while giving feedback, teachers should act as genuine and interested readers rather than judging whether sentences are right or wrong. As readers, teachers should respond to learners' ideas and feelings which they want to address through what they write. Therefore, giving comments like: 'I found your piece interesting' or 'it is touching' may foster the learners' writing skill. In this instance, learners are left in no doubt that their writings are appreciated and understood by their teachers. This invites learners to develop the texts they produce and write longer pieces.

1.7.1.2. Teacher as Assistant

As assistants, teachers work with learners to make sure that the text is as effective as possible in relation to its purpose. The teacher views writing as a progressive process where learners extend their knowledge of how to better write a text, the appropriate language to the task, and the features of the text they are writing. Writing more extended texts involves cycles of preparation, composition, revising, and editing. The teacher can assist the learner at any point in the cycle so the learner will find guidance to whether to extend ideas this way or not. Tribble (1996) states that teacher's opportunities to read students' drafts can increase if he makes explicit four practical stages during class time. These stages are conferencing, group writing, reformulating, and peer editing. In conferencing, teachers focus on plans and first drafts of a writing activity. While group

writing, students are set to write in groups then check each other's drafts. Reformulating is another way of providing feedback to students after a first draft is written. In peer editing, learners work together to develop drafts and to recognize each other's problems concerning writing.

1.7.1.3. Teacher as Evaluator

As an evaluator, the teacher is doing a pure kind of evaluation; he is no more guiding learners to develop texts. Rather, he comments on learners' final products. He checks the strengths and weaknesses as his aim is to help learners write more effectively in future occasions. This kind of evaluation is quite different as learners here are like to receive marks to grade them at the end of a teaching program. It becomes hence, an evaluation of the learner himself not only of the text.

Trrible (1996) indicates that being an evaluator, the teacher has to evaluate the produced text in different dimensions as being the output of different skills and knowledge. Content, organization, vocabulary, grammar...etc are good measures when giving feedback.

1.7.1.4. Teacher as Examiner

As an examiner, the teacher gives an objective assessment of how well a student can write. Learners are seen as candidates who write within the constraints of a formal examination. Assessment here is based on explicit criteria and is replicable by another trained examiner. Learners then are graded and a final decision of how well they can perform as writers is made. The criteria of examination are: validity, reliability, and practicality. Thus, teachers must decide on writing activities which will conform to these criteria. As far as validity is concerned, learners are expected to write texts in a given context. In reliability, if marks reproduced by another examiner when assessing the same text are similar, the writing task is reliable. When speaking about the practicality of a written task, a reasonable length of time should be available as marking written texts is time consuming.

Jordan states that giving feedback differs from one teacher to another. Zamel (1985) in Jordan (1997) states that some teachers react to a text as a series of separate sentences rather than a whole unit of discourse. They focus on surface-level features of

texts neglecting meaning. In addition, they give general comments to students' writing. This does not help students to improve their writing as their mistakes are not clearly identified by the teacher. To overcome this, teachers should be accompanied with an evaluative checklist when giving feedback. One checklist may include main language areas like organization, grammar, vocabulary, style with the more mechanical aspects of spelling and punctuation.

Brookes and Grundy (1991) argue that the teacher's role in the evaluation process is to help students discover their mistakes themselves. They added that, self-correction is better than peer-correction and this latter is preferable to teacher-correction. Ann Chenoweth (1987) argues that:

Better writers not only have strategies for correcting local problems such as word choice, grammar, and punctuation. They also deal with overall content and meaning of their writing by adding, deleting, or reorganizing larger chunks of discourse as well. Unskilled writers lack these global strategies...teachers of writing should structure their classes in ways that help students expand their repertoire of strategies of rewriting compositions. (as cited in Brooks & Grundy, 1991, p. 53)

Brooks and Grundy (1991) state that evaluating writing is really a difficult task which is of a multifaceted nature; hence, evaluating grammatical inadequacies has little to do with writing skills. It is a responsibility for teachers to point out inaccuracies in their students' writings, but we should not forget that accuracy is only one part of the skill of writing. Other parts like organization, observing cultural constraints, writing for a purpose, readership awareness, expressing complex ideas, exactness and writing skills should be carefully regarded. In the same point, Raimes (1983) stresses that grammar is one part of writing that can be straightforwardly taught.

1.7.2. Student Self-evaluation

Speaking about evaluation most of the time reminds us that such a task is a main concern of teachers rather than students. Yet, self-correction is so important a writing skill. A good teacher will leave a maximum room for it to take place in classrooms.

Self-monitoring is regarded by many researchers (Brookes & Grundy, 1991; Cresswell, 2000; Jordan, 1997) as an effective way to develop learners' responsibility and autonomy in the learning of writing. Brooks and Grundy (1991) stresses that only the learners can truly judge how their written English is improving. They tend to take the view that formal evaluation inhibits self-correction as it is more oriented to accuracy.

Cresswell (2000) indicates that the student self-monitoring technique increases autonomy in the learning of writing by giving learners a chance to initiate feedback. Learners write marginal annotations about problems which hinder their writing progress, to which the teacher will respond. In doing so, learners direct the feedback process to their needs and hence, teachers will give feedback on the learners' annotations to help them develop their writing skill. In pointing out areas on which they want feedback, learners will facilitate the task for teachers to give targeting language advice. Teacher response can be targeted at the development stage of each learner's written language; thus, evaluation will be an ongoing task along the whole process of writing.

Though having such advantages for learners to improve their writing skill, self-evaluation is a difficult task which needs training. While initiating giving feedback, learners will draw their attentions to some areas of language at expense of other major ones. In mentioning one serious drawback of self-correction, Cresswell says: "Indeed, my experience was that self-monitoring students' annotations focused mainly on grammar rules or spelling. This led me to the conclusion that if self-monitoring was to work properly, students needed to be made more conscious of the importance of attention to global factors during reviewing " (2000, p. 236). In this respect, he suggests that training learners for self-monitoring will help them better improve their writing. Figure 1.2 expresses Cresswell's suggestion of an annotation evaluation model.

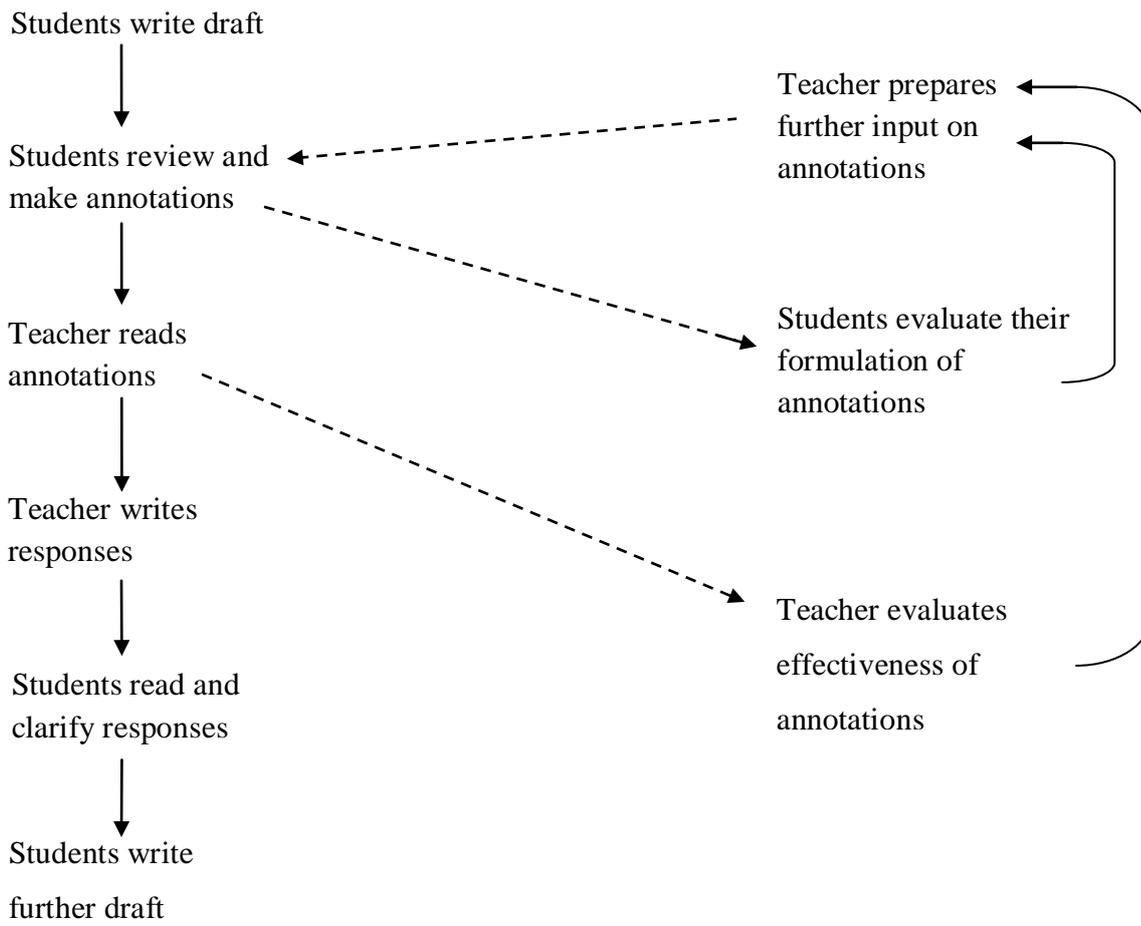


Figure 1.2 Training for Self-monitoring: An Annotation Evaluation Model (Cresswell, 2000, p.239)

Over all, evaluating writing is a task which involves a collaborative work. Evaluation is an ongoing process in which teachers and learners play dynamic roles. Teachers have to play different roles to make their feedback appeal to the learners' needs and interests. They have to show interest, enthusiasm, and encouragement to make their learners have self-confidence to produce better texts. Learners also should participate effectively to evaluate themselves. This is simply for the reason that, they know more about their areas of weakness when they put pen to paper. They are aware enough of their needs and hence, they have to direct their teachers' attention to these needs to help them re-write good texts.

Conclusion

In respect to what have been discussed in this chapter, we come to conclude that writing is a process which needs cognitive abilities. It is a skill that involves learning other skills since it is not innate in us. In academic settings, teachers must take steps to establish and maintain a positive atmosphere to help students develop as writers. They must also raise their awareness of the communicative nature of writing.

Through discussing the different approaches to teaching writing, we come to conclude that:

- Product approaches to writing are no more than another way to teaching grammar. The overemphasis on form and text as a final product may just push students to think that the rationale behind writing is evaluation rather than communication. Moreover, product approaches view writing as a purely mechanical process where no room for thinking or creativity is a matter of concern.
- Process approaches decontextualize the writer from his context. Readers cannot expect, when reading a text, what might come next. The imagined reality of the writer does not necessarily reflect the real context existing in a specific setting. The lack of discrimination between different text types leads to the assumption that all types of writing are similar.

For these shortcomings, this study introduces the GA where: text type, context, and communicative purpose are major perspectives teachers should regard when teaching a specific genre. The theory of this latter is that texts of a certain type have the same kind of purpose as each other and that they show similar language features.

In this respect, we do believe that Economics students need to learn how to write Business texts through which they would communicate in their future workplace. This is what the following chapter will be all about in concern to the so called perspectives, since writing is instrumental and the very end of teaching genres is to get things done.

Chapter Two: The Genre Approach

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Introduction

There has been a considerable interest in the Genre-based Approach to the teaching of language since the mid 1980s. Different researchers report the effect of genre instruction on student's performance and point to the positive effect of it on the understanding of text structure. Genre is essentially defined in terms of the use of language in conventionalized communicative settings. Approaching language learning from the perspective of texts requires an accompanying methodology which can enable students to develop the knowledge and skill to deal with spoken and written texts in social contexts.

The most effective methodology for implementing a text – based syllabus is the Genre Approach. Such an approach to language learning was first developed in Australia through the work of educational linguists and educators who have been working with disadvantaged groups of students. Later on, it was widely used in all sectors of education. It is based on three assumptions: Learning language is a social activity, learning occurs more effectively if teachers are explicit about what is expected of students, the process of learning language is a series of scaffold developmental steps which address different aspects of language.

2.1. Genre Approach to Teaching Writing

Over the last few decades, there have been numerous L2 writing pedagogies developed to improve students' writing proficiency. In the 1970s and for the most of the 1980s, experts were primarily interested in the process approach which focuses on developing students' linguistic skills through pre-writing activities such as planning, drafting, editing and revising (Badger & White, 2000; Trrible, 1996). In the late 1980s and the 1990s, however, theoretical interest in writing instruction shifted to a GA that considers writing as a purposeful act and focuses on the analysis of the contextual situation in which writing takes place (Atkinson, 2003; Cheng, 2006, 2007, 2008; Hyland, 2003a, 2003b, 2007; Johns, 2003; Paltridge, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002

2007; Swami, 2008). The GA was developed in response to the criticism of the limitations of the process approach, which left students to find the recurring text structures for themselves through experimentation and exploration. Paltridge (2007) claims that many writing conventions would remain opaque for L2 learners unless teachers brought these forms and patterns of language use to their conscious awareness. He claimed that since drafting, planning, and editing were only a part of the entire writing process; the process approach was deficient as it did not provide students with clear guidelines in how to construct different kinds of written texts. Instead the GA emphasizes on developing the students' awareness of recurring textural structures. The teacher's active involvement, through explicit explanation of the contextual dimension, can scaffold for students the distinctive use of the language appropriate to the various genres. The beneficial aspects of the GA have been asserted by a significant number of genre theorists. For example, the GA enables students to make sense of the world around them and to become aware of writing as a tool that can be used and manipulated (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998). As Paltridge (2001) claims, the GA focuses on increasing students' awareness of different ways of organizing information in writing, by discussing distinctive features of different purposeful texts. He further argues that;

Genres provide ways for responding to recurring communicative situations. They further provide a frame that enables individuals to orient to and interpret particular communicative events. Making this knowledge explicit can provide language learners with the knowledge and the skills they need to communicate successfully in particular discourse communities (Paltridge, 2001, p. 3).

As a result of this process, students systemically acquire a meta-linguistic awareness of the English language, which empowers them to manipulate information and accomplish different purposes through writing.

Furthermore, the GA provides students with the confidence to handle *real world* writing as it improves students' attitudes and desire toward language learning. Many arguments have been put forward in support of genre as an organizing principle for the development of L2 learning programs which is why it is arguably the most established

and popular writing approach not only in its place of origin, Australia, but in different schooling contexts over the world.

2.2. Overview of Different Schools of Genre Pedagogies

The notion of genre has been interpreted and investigated by different linguists and scholars in a variety of ways. Hyon (1996) identifies three traditions of genre approaches, separating these into three schools: the English for Specific Purpose (ESP) school, which its central theories relying on Swales' genre analysis (1990); the Sydney school, based on the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) work of Halliday (1985); and the New Rhetoric Group (NRG), influenced by post structuralism in North America. The notion of these three schools was further interpreted by Flowerdew (2002), who separated them into two groups: the linguistic approach (the Sydney school and ESP) and the non linguistic approach (NRG).

2.2.1. English for Specific Purposes

In the ESP tradition, genres are defined as structured communicative events engaged in by specific discourse communities whose members share the same communicative purposes (Paltridge, 2001; Swales, 1990). The general focus of the ESP movement has been to develop teaching procedures appropriate to the learners whose main objective is to learn English for a specific purpose other than just learning the language systems. Researchers in ESP are interested in genre as a tool for understanding and teaching the kinds of writing required in educational and professional contexts. Being competent enough to function in a range of written genres is a central concern for EFL learners, as this can determine their access to career opportunities, positive identities and life choices (Hyland, 2004, p.43). More specifically, ESP focuses on identifying the distinctive features of genres employed in both academic settings (e.g., research articles, book reviews, grant proposals), and professional settings (e.g., direct mail letters, business faxes and company annual reports).

The identification of recursive features in such genres is believed to clarify their structure for students through consciousness-raising and linguistic awareness tasks. For example, ESP teachers focus on raising students' awareness of the recursive features of the academic essay, such as high lexical density, the frequent use of nominalization and impersonal statements. It is argued that once students notice the salient features of a genre, they will be able to produce their own examples of the same genre more effectively. Therefore, it is believed that teaching with close attention to recursive textual features will provide learners with a concrete opportunity to acquire the conceptual and cultural frameworks of their L2 environment and foster their chances to communicate successfully in particular communities. ESP practitioners tend to be more linguistically and textually oriented. They generally begin their pedagogical work with the language and structure of the text rather than the context, and they tend to hypothesize about context from studies of texts.

ESP is most famous for Swales' *genre analysis* (1990), which is based on three key elements: the concept of discourse community, genre, and language and learning task driven by communicative purpose. Traditional genre analysis focuses on identifying the moves that make up the genre. Each move coincides with a communicative act that is intended to serve a particular communicative purpose. Moves in turn are often subdivided into a number of steps.

ESP genre analysis is known for the detailed information it provides about lexical and grammatical regularities. Once learners get familiar with these regularities, they will be able to produce purposeful texts, well appreciated by the discourse community members. ESP teachers are concerned with the communicative needs of particular academic and professional groups and so, genres are seen as the purposive actions routinely used by community members to achieve a particular purpose. Genres are therefore the property of the communities who use them rather than the wider culture, and ESP teachers look to the specific practices of those groups and the names group members have for those practices. So while genres are seen more specifically as related to groups, they are also seen in the wider context of the activities that surround the use of texts.

Thus, for Swales:

Genres orchestrate verbal life. These genres link the past and the present, and so balance forces for tradition and innovation. They structure the roles of individuals within wider frameworks and further assist those individuals with the actualization of their communicative plans and purposes.

(as cited in Hyland, 2007, p.154)

To summarize, one of the major advantages of ESP genre teaching is its efficiency in identifying the texts learners will need to write in a particular context and the rationale it provides for sequencing and grouping texts. Furthermore, ESP has a systematic way of describing the typical features of key genres that students can draw on for their own communicative purposes in their professional or academic lives. ESP type curricula also provide first; a way of seeing how genres are interrelated in real life, second; an authentic context for developing skills in a range of spoken and written genres. More particularly, they focus on an understanding of the roles and purposes of writers and readers.

2.2.2. Australian Genre Movement (The Sydney School)

The notion of the Sydney school has been successfully applied alongside ESP in the Australian school context (Paltridge, 2001). Genre here is defined as “systemic functional linguistics that is concerned with the relationship between language and its functions in social settings” (Hyon, 1996, p. 696).

The Sydney school emerged from linguists and teachers working to create a genre-based pedagogy consistent with Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) the notion of Halliday (1985). SFL was developed in response to limitations found in formal grammar instruction in schools which were disconnected from the real use of the language learning.

The Sydney school refers to genres as text types. Such a classification may help both teachers and students to understand the different features of genres. Theorists of this movement view language as a system of lexical and grammatical choices by which writers can communicate certain functions. They categorize genres into seven text types. These text types are: recount, procedure, narrative, report, description, explanation, and

exposition. By doing so, their main focus is on how these seven types of genres can be taught successfully in school settings.

The Sydney school initially applied genre theory and research to pedagogy in the public school system, working with disadvantaged students and additional language students and in adult migrant education (Johns, 2001). They have recently also applied their pedagogy to English-in-the-workplace programs and to ESL in university settings (Paltridge, 2001).

Unlike the ESP school, genres in the Sydney school are taught at a general level. For pedagogical purposes, a model of how language works to build the genres associated with school success, and to help teachers guide their learners to learn them. This tradition has developed an instructional framework known as the Teaching Learning Cycle (TLC) which comprises three phases: modeling, joint construction of text, and independent construction of text, as exemplified by *figure 2.1*.

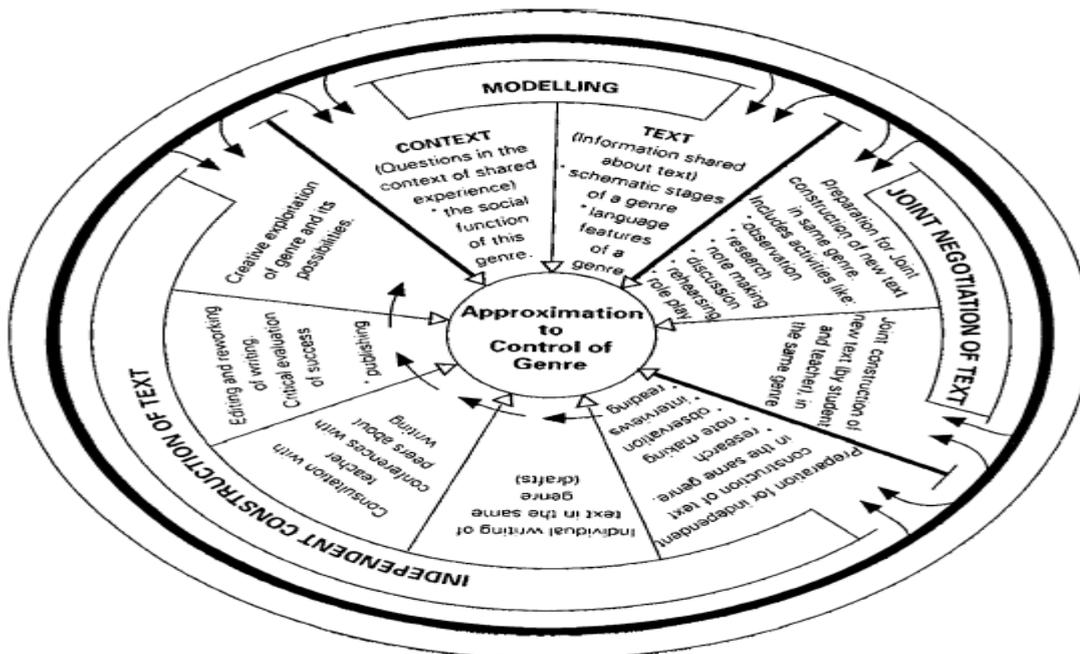


Figure 2.1: The 'Wheel' Model of Teaching and Learning Cycle (as cited in Ahn, 2012, P.13)

The teacher, here, provides initial explicit knowledge and guided practice, moves to sharing responsibility for developing texts, and gradually withdraws support until the learner can work alone (Hyland, 2007). The principles of the TLC have been influenced by the Vygotsky's theory of scaffolding. Such a theory stresses the idea that learning may be better achieved if teachers interact with learners to provide initial guidance, within the

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is the gap between what learners can do with the teachers' support and what they can do once they act individually. Later on, within such a zone, no more guidance is provided and hence, learners can develop without assistance.

Johns (2008) argues that SFL is the most pedagogical among the three traditions. She states that "the SFL focuses upon the novice student; it relates text, purpose, content domain, and language; it lists, and teaches 'key academic genres', providing information about their central purposes, social locations, register, and stages, and it provides an accessible Teaching Learning Cycle" (p. 245).

One of the main advantages of the Australian approach is that it offers a principled way to identify and focus upon different types of English texts, providing a framework in which to learn features of grammar and discourse. Additionally, it offers students a sense of the generic models that are regularly revisited in an English speaking culture, as well as initiating students into ways of making meaning that are accepted in such communities. Another advantage, as Hyland (2007) states, is that in developing TLC. The SFL approach allows learners to be more autonomous to express their own meanings through texts of their choice once the teacher gradually diminished support. Therefore, students' writing abilities develop gradually until they perform successfully in the genre.

Despite the so-called advantages of this school, it has been criticized because of the emphasis upon texts themselves in the SFL pedagogy, there is little room for schema revision, consideration of reader-writer relationship, for the richness of context, and for the ideologies and hegemonies that are central to our discourse communities and their values (Johns, 2008, p.246).

2.2.3. New Rhetorics School (NR)

The North American tradition maybe the least familiar to applied linguists and EFL teachers. Unlike both ESP and SFL approaches, the NR approach emphasis on situated learning theories and their reservations about the value of explicit genre teaching. The New Rhetorician perspective is that genres maybe challenged and reshaped to fit the needs of their users. Understanding genres for them does not indicate describing lexicogrammatical forms and rhetorical patterns, but also investigating their social, cultural,

and institutional contexts. Hyland discusses the contribution of the NR movement in saying that "through these contexts, we can understand the circumstances in which creativity is employed in writing and how meanings are negotiated" (2007, p. 153).

One source from which the New Rhetoricians stemmed their claims is 'Activity Theory', whose major tenet is that we cannot separate the cognitive from the social. The context in which we are working, or writing influences how we think- and vice versa" (Johns, 2008, p. 241). David Russell in integrating the work on Activity Theory among New Rhetoricians states his goal as follow:

...to move toward a theory of writing useful in analyzing how students and teachers within individual classrooms use the discursive tools of classroom genres to interact (or not interact) with social practices beyond individual classrooms including schools, families, peers, disciplines, professions... In other words, I am attempting to expand and elaborate theories of social 'context' and formal schooling, to better understand the stakes involved in writing.

(as cited in Johns, 2008, p. 242)

Freedman (1994) argues that understanding genres as a collection of text types which are defined by their textual regularities is not that valuable. Rather, genres are better understood as a repertoire of typified actions which are responses to repetitive social contexts.

In general, the New Rhetoricians express their reservation as to whether genres can and should be taught. Johns (2008) in this very point states that the New Rhetoricians claim that it would be difficult; if not impossible to apply their theories to the classroom, because taking a text from its authentic context decreases its situational value. More importantly, genres are not static but flexible entities which are subject to change and reshaping by individual users. Another reservation they have is that education might assist students in acquiring conventional genres, and this may lead to reforming, rather than challenging the genres of power. Genres are too complex and too varied to be successfully abstracted from their original contexts in an artificial environment such as the classroom (Hyland, 2007).

Johns (2008), though found the NR's contribution to be very useful, states that:

Their work is written for native speakers of English, and the pedagogical materials are quite advanced and insufficiently scaffolded for the ESL/EFL or other novice students. In addition, there is little discussion of the sentence level, linguistic issues that must be considered when we teach diverse students. Thus, though we can benefit in many ways from studying the NR theories, this school has not produced a pedagogy that is appropriate for novice classrooms, particularly those populated by diverse student populations (p. 243).

Summarizing, each of the genre schools can provide a great deal of help for practitioners to educate novice academic students through the promotion of genre awareness and rhetorical flexibility. The NR tradition stresses exposing the context in which genres are functioning so as not to lose their authentic value. The ESP school has tended to adopt more eclectic set of pedagogies, united by a commitment to needs analysis, contextual analysis, and genre description (Hyland, 2007). SFL gives us textual varieties related to purpose, curricular accessibility and a better understanding of the relationships between language and deep learning in the content areas (Johns, 2008).

2.3. Defining Genre

Genre is defined by Swales (1990) as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share the same communicative events" (p, 58). This definition stresses the very idea that there is an association between certain conventions and rules and the writer's purpose. For genre analysts, the central aspect of the situation is purpose. Different kinds of writing, or genres, such as letters of apology, recipes, or law reports, are used to carry out different purposes (Badger & White, 2000). Hyland (2008) defines genre as "a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations" (p, 543). He notes that "genre is based on the idea that members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognizing similarities in the texts they use frequently and are able to draw on their repeated experiences with such texts to read, understand and perhaps write them relatively easily" (2007, p.149).

Martin (1992), similarly, defines genres "as staged, goal-oriented, purposeful social processes" (as cited in Millar, 2011, p. 3).

Martin, Christie, and Rothery (1987) explain that "genres are staged because they use typical schematic or organizational structures; they are goal oriented because they are used to get things done, and they are social because members of the culture interact through them"(as cited in Millar, 2011, p. 3). In the same line of thought, Millar (2011) states that a genre represents a group of texts that all share a communicative purpose. They do not need to be identical in order to achieve their communicative purpose. They tend to share similar discourse structures and to use language in similar ways. In sharing similar discourse structure, a particular genre will follow a series of steps or moves to achieve its communicative purpose. Genres also share particular lexico-grammatical patterns to achieve their purposes.

Palmer (2011) describes genre as "the glue that binds disparate elements of content, context and language" (p. 84). Similarly, Johns et al (2006), view genres as ways in which people get things done through their use of language in particular contexts. The way writers use language in a genre also depends on the expectations of the context in which the genre is being produced. Writers also draw on the previous experiences with the genre to produce new texts.

Devitt (2000), in Brooks (2002), argues that genres should be defined as "a dynamic concept created through the interaction of writers, readers, past texts, and contexts" (p. 10). In claiming that genres are not dead entities, Brooks (2002) states that "genres ,as many in rhetoric, composition, and education have argued, are alive, are forms of life, and not simply dead categories to be applied to finished texts" (p. 13).

Bazerman (1997) argues that "Genres are the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guide-posts we use to explore the unfamiliar" (as cited in Brooks, 2002, p. 10).

Johns (2002) points out that since the term genre has existed a long time ago, there is a need for genre reconceptualization. Therefore, he defines genre as a term that refers to complex elaborates on the reconceptualization of genre, by referring to the work of Christie (1991) who defines genre in terms of referring to a text which has to be understood as functioning in a three- folded, referring to the field (which refers to the social activity), the tenor (which refers to the participants in the social activity), and the mode(which refers to the role played by language in communication). The second level is genre, whereby for any instance of language use, a genre relevant to that instance is

selected. Johns (ibid) asserts that genre has social purposes and functions, whether in oral or written form and these purposes have to reflect attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors of the communities from which it is based or produced from.

2.4. Genre Awareness

According to Meyers and Land, genre awareness itself can be understood as a *threshold concept*, a term deriving from Economics but which has been embraced by many other disciplines; "a threshold concept may be considered *akin to passing through a portal or conceptual gateway* that opens up previously inaccessible ways of thinking about something" (as cited in Clark & Hernandez, 2012, p.66). So, acquiring proficiency in different discourse genres involves an awareness of which syntactic structures are the most appropriate to the communicative context and purpose. In other words, to be familiar with the genre, students should be aware of the specific discourse proper to this very genre.

A crucial element in genre awareness is the ability to produce a discourse that is appropriate to the situation or context (Bazerman, 1994). This entails taking into account the targeted audience, the communicative purpose of the discourse, and the conventions socially constructed by the discourse community, which in turn will impact the linguistic choices made (Swales, 1990). In this respect, EFL students need to know how to package the information with which they communicate. As an example here, in expository discourse, the information discourse is high; syntactic management of this information is highly regarded. In such a discourse, the purpose is dual; it is not only informative but also rhetorical in that it aims to persuade. To achieve this dual purpose, mastery of the information flow requires a syntactic organization adapted to the genre, the communicative context, and the audience.

Views on how such an awareness should be promoted regard both the text and the context. Textual approaches support the idea of entering the context from the text, while textual instruction may be useful and that all teachers should incorporate a range of genre awareness activities in their classes. "These activities ask students to notice how language works in relation to rhetorical flexibility necessary for adapting their socio-cognitive genre knowledge to ever-evolving contexts" (Millar, 2011, p.7). This approach; also known as consciousness-raising "assist students both to create text and reflect on writing

by helping them to focus on how a text works as discourse rather than on its content" (Hyland, 2003, p.87). In short, once students get equipped with the general characteristics of each genre, they would perform better in producing texts which are accepted by the context and the audience. Therefore, Paltridge (2011) encourages teachers to think of using activities that focus on three levels: genre and context, genre and discourse, and genre and language.

2.4.1. Genre and Context Awareness

In genre and context awareness, students are asked to focus mainly on the purpose of the communication and the people involved. Whether to use more formal or less formal language depends on the audience; in certain contexts or certain people, discussing some topics may be considered taboo. Genre and context awareness activities make students aware that we write in different ways to achieve different purposes, and certain words for ways of writing. Millar (2011) suggests that context awareness can be taught to students through activities which may ask them to make possible combinations between text type, audience, and purpose. Teachers, by the end of the activity, point out to students that by noticing how genres vary, both in their L1 and in English, they will learn more about language and how to use it appropriately.

2.4.2. Genre and Discourse Awareness

The very focus in discourse awareness is on how genres are structured in different ways, using different moves to achieve the communicative purpose (Millar, 2011). Raising such awareness could be via comparing a number of authentic texts from the same genre, and discovering what they have in common in terms of structure. Hereby, Millar (2011) suggests activities which present texts with missing parts, such as stories with no ending, and having students discuss what is wrong and why; or scrambling up texts and having students put them in the correct order. By the end of the activity, teachers remind students of how genres are organized and learning different discourse patterns (e.g. problem/solution) will help them to become better writers.

2.4.3. Genre and Language Awareness

In genre and language awareness, students focus on the way different lexico-grammatical patterns are used in different genres to achieve the communicative purpose. Genre and language awareness activities, as suggested by Millar (2011), include examining an authentic text, highlighting the use and number of particular parts of speech and discussing why some parts of speech exist more in certain genres and less in other genres. Activities may also include transferring an informal text into a formal text to suit a new audience or to transform spoken texts into their appropriate written equivalents.

In short, by incorporating genre awareness activities into classrooms via exploring different genre types, in relation to their purposes, the context, the discourse organization, and the lexico-grammatical patterns, students can be encouraged to notice how language works. If they can better notice and describe similarities and differences among genres, then they may be equipped to write in a wide variety of contexts (Millar, 2011).

2.5. Raising Awareness through Genre Analysis

"Genre awareness, a recent development of discourse analysis, has concerned itself with describing the higher level organization and structure of written or spoken texts. It aims to study communicative purposes and strategies in using the language" (as cited in Xu, 2005). The application of its findings to English teaching has been greatly encouraged in the ESP field (Bhatia, 1993; Hyland, 2000; Swales, 1990). In a similar point, Dudley- Evans states that:

The moves and steps that Swales (1990) suggests for the article introduction marries the contextual awareness of the register analysts with a much broader view of how rhetorical considerations govern grammatical choice. The interest in discourse community and how the expectations and conventions of different discourse communities mould the texts that they use led to this broader view and placed ESP research in a position where it can make a meaningful contribution to discussion of how ideas are disseminated and facts created in communities (n.d, p.5).

The job of GA is to describe the appropriate structure of any instance of communication. This latter should adapt a form which is known to and commonly practiced by parties on both sides of the communication line (Nodoushan, 2011, p.63).

Dudley-Evans (1994) emphasizes that an understanding of genre analysis is a much needed step to communicate successfully in any setting. Through GA, it is possible to identify the essential linguistic, cultural, and social aspects appropriate to the situation. Then, training consciousness-raising courses can be developed to help students better communicate through using these features in their future communications. Bhatia (1993) further believed that genre analysis is an examination of linguistic performance in academic and professional settings. In the following is some guidelines for analyzing genres, which may provide a great deal of help to students to raise their awareness of the distinctive features of genres:

Figure 2. 2: Guidelines for Analysing Genre (as cited in Johns et al, 2010)

1. Collect Samples of the Genre

Try to gather samples from more than one place so that you get a more accurate picture of the complexity of the genre. The more samples of the genre you collect, the more you will be able to notice patterns within the genre.

2. Identify the scene and describe the situation in which the genre is used

Try to identify the larger scene in which the genre is used. Seek answers to questions about the genre's situation such as the ones below:

- *Setting*: Where does the genre appear? How and when is it transmitted and used? With what other genres does this genre interact?
- *Subject*: What topics, issues, ideas, questions, etc. does the genre address? When people use this genre, what is it that they are interacting about?
- *Participants*: Who uses the genre?

Writers: Who writes the texts in this genre? Are multiple writers possible? What roles do they perform? What characteristics must writers of this genre possess? Under what circumstances do writers write the genre (e.g., in teams, on a computer, in a rush)?

Readers: Who reads the texts in this genre? Is there more than one type of reader

for this genre? What roles do they perform? What characteristics must readers of this genre possess? Under what circumstances do readers read the genre (e.g., at their leisure, on the run, in waiting rooms)?

- *Purposes*: Why do writers write this genre and why do readers read it? What purposes does the genre fulfill for the people who use it?

3. Identify and Describe Patterns in the Genre's Features

What recurrent features do the samples share? For example:

- What content is typically included? What excluded? How is the content treated? What sorts of examples are used? What counts as evidence (personal testimony, facts, etc.)?
- What rhetorical appeals are used?
- How are texts in the genres structured? What are their parts, and how are they organized?
- In what format are texts of this genre presented? What layout or appearance is common? How long is a typical text in this genre?
- What types of sentences do texts in the genre typically use? How long are they? Are they simple or complex, passive or active? Are the sentences varied? Do they share a certain style?
- What diction (types of words) is most common? Is a type of jargon used? Is slang used? How would you describe the writer's voice?

4. Analyze what these Patterns Reveal about the Situation and Scene

What do these rhetorical patterns reveal about the genre, its situation, and the scene in which it is used? Why are these patterns significant? What can you learn about the actions being performed through the genre by observing its language patterns? What arguments can you make about these patterns? As you consider these questions, focus on the following:

- What do participants have to know or believe to understand or appreciate the genre?
- Who is invited into the genre, and who is excluded?
- What roles for writers and readers does it encourage or discourage?
- What values, beliefs, goals, and assumptions are revealed through the genre's patterns?
- How is the subject of the genre treated? What content is considered most important? What content (topics or details) is ignored?
- What actions does the genre help make possible? What actions does the genre make difficult?
- What attitude toward readers is implied in the genre? What attitude toward the world is implied in it?

2.6. Teaching Genres in Academic Settings

Academic writing has remained a problem for EFL students and teachers for decades. Most of the time, students are able to achieve high scores in grammar-based tests but fail to write a coherent English composition. Additionally, when required to write academic papers, they do just imitate some format of provided genre. In such a case, they are not aware of the reasons behind the moves of an academic paper and the flexibility in the move structures. Therefore, EFL students may have some knowledge of the structure of an academic paper but little idea about why academic papers should be written the way they are. One appropriate solution to these difficulties is to apply a genre approach to teach students how to write effectively in their academic contexts.

In effect, "academic genre analysis helps to distinguish between the various types of academic discourses such as abstracts, introductions, students' reports, presentations, and research article" (Xu, 2005, p.23). These academic genres have different communicative purposes what students need to know while writing. As an example for the communicative purpose of an introduction, it serves as a transitional part between what has been done by others in the field and what is done by the writer. It aims at "making the present story" relevant by placing it appropriately in the context of the previous research in a particular field study, and " is meant to motivate the research and to justify its publication" (Bhatia, 1993, p.82). Thus, a useful outcome for students is to learn how to identify, adapt, and acquire such a genre and other genres and hence, their competence in academic writing can be further developed.

Borrowing from Adams and Artemeva, Mali Jali (2005) in his study argues that "in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes, language skills are to be taught in conjunction with important factual data and theories about language learning that students can benefit from. Hence, a course can be designed by applying the theories of genre in a situated learning for teaching" (p.51). In a similar perspective, Paltridge states that "in EAP classes, students may be asked, for example; to analyze essays, lectures, and debates for similarities and differences in terms of generic structures. They can then be described to create texts of their own, drawing on the language and discourse patterns identified in the text they have already examined" (1996, p.242).

Sidway further argues that "the reason students' writing often goes wrong is not because of surface errors such as spelling or inappropriate choice of vocabulary, but because they are not abiding by the conventions of the genre in some way" (2006, p.25). This indicates that students need to be taught the distinctive feature of the genre.

2.7. Business English Genres

In speaking about business genres, business letters, for example, have to show the conventions in writing opening or closing remarks to be accepted by the business community as a business genre. The writing style should be both concise and precise and targeted to the communicative purpose (Rodgers, 1998). Certain form-function correlation should exist in such a genre. This is what genre-based teaching aims for; that

is to say making students aware of the distinctive features with which effective business purposes are achieved (some business genres are shown in Appendix D).

2.7.1. Business English (BE)

Though it is difficult to define and limit BE in linguistic terms, an agreed upon definition could be that: "Business English is the every-day language spoken by the general public than many other segments of ESP" (as cited in Dudley Evans & St. Johns, 1998, p.54).

BE is currently considered the area of greatest activity and growth in ESP for the simple reason that English has become the international language of business and trade. Businessmen from different parts of the world need to communicate using English to run their businesses. Non-British managers may be able to understand each other more easily when speaking English together than they can understand native speakers. Accordingly, to be able to speak or write in English is seen a sign of power. Therefore, EFL urges itself to be learnt not only in academic settings but in professional settings as well.

Research in business settings has revealed that more employees are now required to perform a larger share of correspondence themselves using the fax and the email. It is therefore evident that knowledge and application of the relevant conventions of text processing and production in the context of the given business reality be given greater attention. In this context, studies on written genres in professional and academic settings as initiated by Swales (1990) are of practical importance. Based on his seminal work on genre analysis of moves in authentic research article introductions, we are informed that genre analysis serves to highlight the purpose of using specific linguistic structures, specify their conditions of use and explain the rationale for use in the given context, and not merely to describe them. A GA can therefore offer us a way of looking at how a written product is used to accomplish its purpose in a social context (the business community).

But the teaching of specific specialist language text as an introduction to genres has been an issue in ESP, with some ESP practitioners not seeing its use as a critical feature in essential input materials (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993). While the opponents do not deny the relevance of such materials in some ESP courses, they have not fully realized that a mastery of the appropriate forms and language use is needed for one to

function effectively in the workplace. In the Business English context, an appropriate method or even methods, which can enable ESP practitioners to teach genres as a way to accommodate this specialized need, is required. If this method or approach is found to be effective in teaching writing in English as well as meet the learners specialized needs, it should be viewed positively as relevant methodology in the ESP classroom.

BE can be divided into English for General Business Purposes, and English for Specific Business Purposes. Though their learners have a lot of common needs, they differ in some principles.

2.7.1.1. English for General Business Purposes (EGBP)

Dudley-Evans and St. Johns (1998) indicate that EGBP courses are usually for pre-experienced learners or those at the early stages of their career. It is much more common to general EFL courses. The main perspective of EGBP is that learners attend courses at a language schools and groups will usually be formed on the basis of language level rather than job. The course includes the traditional four skills plus specific grammar and vocabulary development. The very focus of EGBP is presentation through listening and reading accompanied with exercises to practice grammar and vocabulary and hence, a focus is on accuracy and correctness. Other activities are more open-ended which develop fluency in one or more of the four skills.

2.7.1.2. English for Specific Business Purposes (ESBP)

In contrast to EGBP, ESBP runs students for job-experience in which the designed courses are carefully tailored and likely to focus on one or two language skills and specific business communicative events. Special activities are selected from a range of published books, and special written activities are stemmed from the learners' own business context. While in EGBP, less effort may be put into establishing individual learners' needs, more effort are paid to ESBP learners to identify their needs. Therefore, specific materials are selected to satisfy these needs and interests (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998).

2.7.2. Teaching Business English Genres

John Hughes, co-author of *Business Result* and *Business focus Elementary*, regards the GA to teaching BE writing as the most useful method. As an expert teacher of BE, he says:

When I first started teaching business English twenty years ago, the approach to writing was essentially genre-based. What I mean is that we –the teachers and course books- generally started any lesson by presenting a model version of a text. So we would show students a copy of, for example, a letter or a report, then we would analyze the features of the text type in terms of lay out, conventions, fixed expressions...etc. And finally we would ask students to try to produce a similar text type. The approach, which has been referred to as a genre-based approach, has always served us well (2010, p.1).

It is of paramount importance to state that business writing happens in context; it must relate appropriately to its setting. This means that BE writings regard the audience, the communicative purpose, and the expected response. The focus is on the performed action as an outcome of the genre rather than the production of the document as an end in itself (Frendo, 2005). These perspectives are corner stone of the GA which urges communication first and foremost. Frendo (2005) further argues that the underlying theory of the GA is that texts of a certain type .e.g. letters have the same kind of purpose as each other and show similar language and features.

Conclusion

This chapter justifies the choice of the Genre Approach to teaching writing for Business and Economics students. This approach urges teachers to raise their students' awareness of the standards, the formats, the structures, the communicative purposes, and the targeted audiences in writing business genres.

One important understanding in this chapter is that the concept of genre analysis seem to allow raising students' awareness of how genres are combined. Through analyzing genres, learners have to recognize the similarities and differences which classify certain genres under the same type of genre. Therefore, such analyses should be ongoing to help students distinguish between various genres.

In the business arena, students have to be acquainted with the discourse of such a community. Special formats and structures are conventional regularities shared by these community members. In this respect, if students are to be accepted as members in such a discourse community, they have to respect the rules and conventions set by specialists of such a community.

Summarizing and as far as our study is concerned, our suggestion is that the GA would serve as an effective tool to help students practice writing. This is what next chapters try to investigate through using different instruments to collect data and appropriate methods to analyze such data. The very next chapter deals with the research methodology and explains how such a study has been conducted.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

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Introduction

This chapter describes the research method and instruments used in this investigation. Information about the teacher and the students in relation to the performance of the writing skill are obtained by two different methods: a questionnaire, and a structured interview.

Research methodology is described by Burns and Grove as "a blue-print for conducting a study that maximizes control over factors that could interfere with the validity of the findings" (2001, p.223). It refers to the techniques used to structure a study and gather and analyze the data in the course of the research investigation and consists of a set of orderly, disciplined procedure to acquire information (polit et al, 2001).

3.1. Choice of the Method

Many factors may intervene once we come to choose the research method; the nature of the study, the research rationale, and the sample under investigation indicate the right choice of the method.

Burns and Grove (2001) state that "descriptive designs help to identify problems in a current practice with a view to improve outcomes" (p.248). The purpose of a descriptive study is to describe and explore real-life situations and to provide information of the elements as they occur.

As far as our study is concerned, it will be carried out using the descriptive method since it is concerned with finding out what, when, and how much kind of questions.

The methodological approach adopted in this research is a case study involving 49 Economics students learning EFL at the Economics Department of M'sila. The case study is defined as being the empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Anderson, 1993).

The case study is opted for in this work as its aim is to provide a detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation. This entails that the case study is the approach that provides the researcher with an in-depth study of a given phenomenon as it

occurs in its natural environment. Merriam (1988) argues that "the qualitative case study can be defined as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit. Case studies are particular, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources" (p. 16).

Yin (2003a), a case study methodologist in education and management, provides a definition that addresses issues of scope, data collection, and analysis strategies:

1. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

2. The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (as cited in Duff, 2008, p. 23)

In case study research, the investigator has to select one instance of a particular group of elements or phenomenon from the whole class or organization and describe how such an instance functions in context. Willis (2007), in Merriam (1988), asserts that a case study is "an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (p.239). He describes such an approach as inductive, heuristic, and highly descriptive.

Willis (2007) outlines three specific attributes of case study research:

- It allows the researcher to gather rich, detailed data in an authentic setting.
- It is holistic and thus supports the idea that much of what we can know about human behavior is best understood as existing experience in the social context.
- Unlike experimental research, it can be done without predetermined hypotheses and goals.

In discussing how much reliable is a case study, Barlett et al (1982) claim that case study is unrepresentative as the major barrier in doing case study lies in the extent to which a research finding can be generalized on the whole population beyond the case study.

In an opposite line of thought, Nunan argues;

One can learn a great deal about one's own student in general through a detailed study of one particular student in the same insights into language classrooms in general can be derived from the intensive analysis of a single classroom(1992,p.89).

3.2. Population and Sampling

Before introducing the sample population involved in this study, we should first define what is meant by sample and population.

Sampling is referred to as being "the group of participants or informants whom the researcher actually examines in his empirical investigation and population is that group of people whom the study is about" (Dornyei, 2007, p.96).

Polit et al (2001,p.233) define population as "the entire aggregation of cases that meet a specified set of criteria". They further add that:

Sampling involves selecting a group of people, events, behaviors, or other elements to conduct a study. When elements are persons, they are known as subjects selected from the delineated target population in a way that the individuals in the sample represent as nearly as possible (p.233).

It is of paramount importance to note that it is not that easy to choose a sample for one's research. This is due to the certain scientific techniques followed by the investigator to avoid bias and reach objectivity in such an operation. To achieve these goals, the following two perspectives were carefully regarded:

- **Randomness:** The investigator has to pick whatever informants (male, female, age...) involved in the target situation, and has not to limit his/her sampling on a given category (only female, or a given age) since "random sampling involves selecting at random from a population list" (Robson, 1993, p.137).
- **Quota:** is used for the sake of obtaining a representative research; in other words, "quota is a cell within an overall sample, designed to have the same socio- demographic characteristics as its population" (Oppenheim, 1996, p.41)

As far as our study is concerned, the problem we came cross was noticed when 3rd year LMD students at the Department of Economics reached the tasks concerning writing; as their performance in doing these tasks is said to be low. Hence, we chose to work with a representative sample to which we gave a questionnaire because even under normal conditions, it is neither possible nor desirable to study whole populations. Accordingly, the conducted data would reflect the whole population. Concerning the teacher, he was interviewed since he was the same teacher for the whole population.

3.2.1. Teacher's Profile

The subject teacher in this study is a subject specialist, a full time teacher, holder of a 'Magister' degree in the field of Economics and whose experience in teaching Economics in the Department of M'sila is that of 6 years. He is also a part time English teacher in the same department with no license degree. His experience in teaching English is that of 4 years. He is the only teacher of English for all the third year LMD students in the department.

The informant teacher adapts a course book designed for students of English for business purposes. The course-book is entitled "English for Business Studies"; a course book for Business Studies and Economics students in which teaching is based on making students familiar with the business world. It is a reading, speaking, listening and writing course book for learners with at least an upper-intermediate level of English who need to understand and express the key concepts of Business and Economics. It covers the most important areas of management, production, marketing, finance and macroeconomics. This course book aims to:

- Present the student with the language and concepts found in books, newspaper and magazine articles, and websites on business and economics;
- Develop the student's comprehension of business and economics texts;
- Develop the student's listening skills in the fields of business and economics;
- Provide the student with opportunities to express business concepts, by reformulating them in his own words while summarizing, analyzing, criticizing and discussing ideas.

As one can understand from this course book content, little room is reserved for writing activities and even the provided activities are fostering comprehension and reformulation of business texts via summarizing.

3.2.2. Learners' Profiles

The study in hand concerns 49 Economics students learning English as a foreign language in the Economics Department of M'sila. The 49 informants are 3rd year LMD students preparing for a license qualification, for the academic year 2012- 2013. The investigator has chosen to construct his research upon these students as it is only in third year that students learn the writing skill.

In addition to the other modules concerning the subject matter, that is to say Economics, students learn English in a rate of one hour and a half per week. Neither the teacher nor the students are satisfied with the timing allotted to learning the language which is said to be the international language of business. Accordingly, the students' performance in such a language is estimated by their teacher as being low.

3.3. Data Collection

Burns and Grove (2001) define data collection as "the precise systematic gathering of information relevant to specific research objectives or questions" (p, 49).

To collect the necessary data for our study, the investigator opted for two research instruments for the sake of multiplication of data resources; these are, the questionnaire, and the structured interview.

3.3.1. Students' Questionnaire

Since the learners are the center of the concept of ESP, they were considered, in this research, as an integral part of data collection. Hence, to confirm our hypothesis and assumptions, the researcher administered a questionnaire to Economics students as a main source of information.

The use of questionnaire enables the investigator to get objective information about the teaching/learning situation of the English course. Rechterich and Chancerel state that "questionnaires are structured instruments for the collection of data which translate research hypotheses into questions" (1980, p.59). Another justification to our choice is in Richards' quote:

Questionnaires are one of the most common instruments used. They are relatively easy to prepare, they can be used with large numbers of subjects, and obtain information that is relatively easy to tabulate and analyze. They can also be used to elicit information about many different kinds of issues, such as language use, communication difficulties, preferred learning styles, preferred classroom activities, and attitudes and beliefs (2005, p.60).

The questionnaire was written in English then was translated to Arabic to enable the informants better understand and answer the questions. It included different types of questions in order to get more information for both validity and reliability of data collection. In arguing that, Nunan asserts that "responses to closed questions are easier to collect and analyze (...). It is also likely that responses to open questions will more accurately reflect what the respondent wants to say" (1992, p. 143).

In this respect, the questionnaire is combined of 33 questions, including four types of questions:

Open questions- Closed questions- Mixed questions- Graded questions.

- Open questions:

The aim behind this type of questions is to allow the informant to express himself freely by providing his points of view and personal judgments.

Example: How can learning English for Business Purposes help you more in your future job?

- Closed Questions:

The informant, in this type, has to select an answer from some possibilities.

Example: Which of the following business genres are you familiar with?

- Faxes
- Reports
- Letters
- Emails

- Mixed questions:

In this type of questions, the informant has to choose an answer from the given possibilities, and then justify his choice.

Example: Do you think of yourself as a writer?

- Yes
- No - Why?

- Graded questions:

In these questions, the informant is asked to classify the proposed answers according to his own impression.

Example: What skills are you likely to learn more? (put numbers: 1-2-3-4)

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

The examples of questions are retrieved from the students' questionnaire (Appendix A).

The handed questionnaire comprises 33 questions of different types; closed, open, mixed, and graded grouped under 6 sections:

- Section one: Background information
To seek information about the learners as individuals.
- Section Two: Schooling information
Aimed at collecting data about the students' level of competence
- Section Three: Information about English language learning
Aimed at providing information about students' language background and attendance to the English course.
- Section Four: Attitudes towards writing
To provide information about the different problems encountered by learners while writing, as well as their attitudes towards the writing skill.
- Section Five: Writing in Business English
To assess how much aware learners are about Business English writings.
- Section Six: Feedback.
To provide information about the way both learners and teachers go about evaluating writing.

After the collection of the questionnaire given to Economics students at the Department of Economics of M'sila in May 2013 during the English course, it was

noticed that all the informants answered the questions and that few of them answered either in French or in Arabic.

3.3.2. Teacher's Interview

The structured interview is the most suitable instrument for collecting data when the investigator deals with a very limited population. It offers interaction between the interviewer and the language teacher and that any difficult or ambiguous question can be made clear immediately.

The structured interview is discussed by Mackuy (1978) as a strongly favored method of gathering data:

Firstly, since the gatherer is asking the questions, none of them will be left unanswered as frequently happens in questionnaires. Secondly, the gatherer can clarify any misunderstanding which may crop up in the interpretation of the question. Thirdly, and perhaps most advantageously, the gatherer can follow up any avenue of interest which arises during the question and answer session but which had not been foreseen during the designing of the structured interview.

(as cited in Dudley -Evans & St John, 1998, p.34)

In stating a similar point of view, Dornyei (2007) indicates that in such an interview "the agenda is totally predetermined by the researcher, who works through a list of set questions in a predetermined order" (p, 156).

The interview has been conducted with the teacher involved in the situation under study. Through this interview, the very objectives of the data collected were to have an idea about:

- The teacher's background and qualification.
- The teacher's background of the ESP course.
- The available teaching aids (the course book).
- The students' background of the ESP course.
- The students' attitudes and motivation towards the writing skill.
- The adapted approach to teaching and evaluating writing.

On the whole, the interview included 28 questions grouped under four sections.

- Section One: Teacher's background and qualification.

To seek information about the teacher, his qualification and teaching experience.

- Section Two: Special area of ESP.

To gather information about the teacher's experience in teaching Business English.

- Section Three: Teaching the writing skill.

To check the applied approach to teaching writing and to seek information about the students' attitudes towards writing. It aims also to assessing their awareness of business writing.

- Section Four: Writing in Business English

To check whether the provided writing activities are fostering writing business genres.

3.4. Methods of Data Analysis

After data collection, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used. These analyses are outcomes of the use of various research instruments in the current investigation (questionnaire, structured interview). In the following is a distinction between the two methods.

3.4.1. Quantitative Analysis

Quantification is the process of assigning numerical values to the trait of the subjects of sample which normally would be quantitative (Singh, 2006, p.214). the quantitative method of analysis is most used by fundamental sciences like, mathematics, physics, and all what is measured to provide precise and testable data from a large amount of data. In explaining a certain phenomenon, this type of analysis aims at collecting numerical data which are analyzed using statistical methods.

According to Hancock and Algozzin (2006), the quantitative analysis is preferred when research findings are presented in numbers rather than words. In a similar view, Singh (2006) indicates that quantitative research is more reliable since it is based on rigid mathematical treatment. Such type of statistical data is collected by questionnaires, tests, and interviews where close questions are included.

As far as the current study, the quantitative method was used for the analysis of the questions where the correspondents had to select from a number of answers as a respond to close-ended type of questions. In this instance, the quantitative data has

provided the investigator with the numerical data about the difficulties and the problems encountered by Economics students as well as their disabilities when dealing with the writing skill.

3.4.2. Qualitative Analysis

This method of analyzing data is referred to by Nunan (1991) as "the positivistic notion that the basic function of research is to uncover facts, truths which are studied within a natural context and independent of the researcher" (p.20). Hancock and Algozzin (2006), similarly, argue that "in qualitative methods, the research process is designed to reflect as much as possible the natural, ongoing context being investigated; information is often gathered by participant observer (individuals actively engaged, immersed, or involved in the information collection setting or activity)" (p.10). In this respect, qualitative analysis is concerned with the description of the studied phenomena in naturalistic settings by open questioning techniques.

The preferred means of data collection in qualitative research are: observations, interviews, diaries...etc in which open-ended type of questions are used.

In our study, qualitative method was used for the analysis of the teacher's interview. Its aim is to help the investigator have a clear idea about teaching the writing skill in academic business contexts, the difficulties encountered by both teachers and students to perform such a task, and the attitudes and the students' knowledge regarding such a skill. As it is structured of open-ended questions, the structured interview required some answers based on clarification where the interviewee is an active participant through taking notes, checking and qualifying data, and reaffirming the findings.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods, including case studies, have strong traditions within social and behavioral science research. In fact, each has been used to address specific research questions. Each method begins with identification of questions to be answered (based on what is already known) and ends with a documentation of answers grounded in systematic analysis of information gathered using appropriate methods. Together, they may enrich the study by providing a wealthy and worthy mixture of findings.

3.5. Research Instruments Design

Research Instruments Design

| Instruments | Definition | Advantages | Drawbacks |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| Questionnaire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It is the most common used for the collection of data in written form. -It consists of open, close questions, or open-closed questions. -It is easy to prepare and analyze -It is regarded as being entirely self explanatory. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It allows asking the same questions for a large sampling. -Respondents have enough time to think about the answer in anonymous way and liberty, without outside influence. -It is used in analyzing and quantifying data. -It is an introspective instrument(unobserved data can be gathered non-verbally). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It does not allow interaction between the researcher and the informants. -It may be completed in a rush. -There is difficulty of making questions clear, so the researcher usually translates the questions. -There may be reluctance from the respondents' answers. |
| Structured Interview | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It is the elicitation of data by one person on discursive rather than statistical analysis. -It is a direct interaction between interviewer and interviewee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It gathers in-depth information providing flexible and free space to answer. -It is an introspective research, the respondents are asked directly to tell what they think, or do verbally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It is time consuming. -There may be an influence of the interviewee by the interviewer and the responses may be different in terms of their verbal abilities. |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | - The responses can be clarified and developed through follow-up questions. | |
|--|--|---|--|

Table 3.1 : Advantages and Drawbacks of the Research Instruments Used.

3.6. Research Design

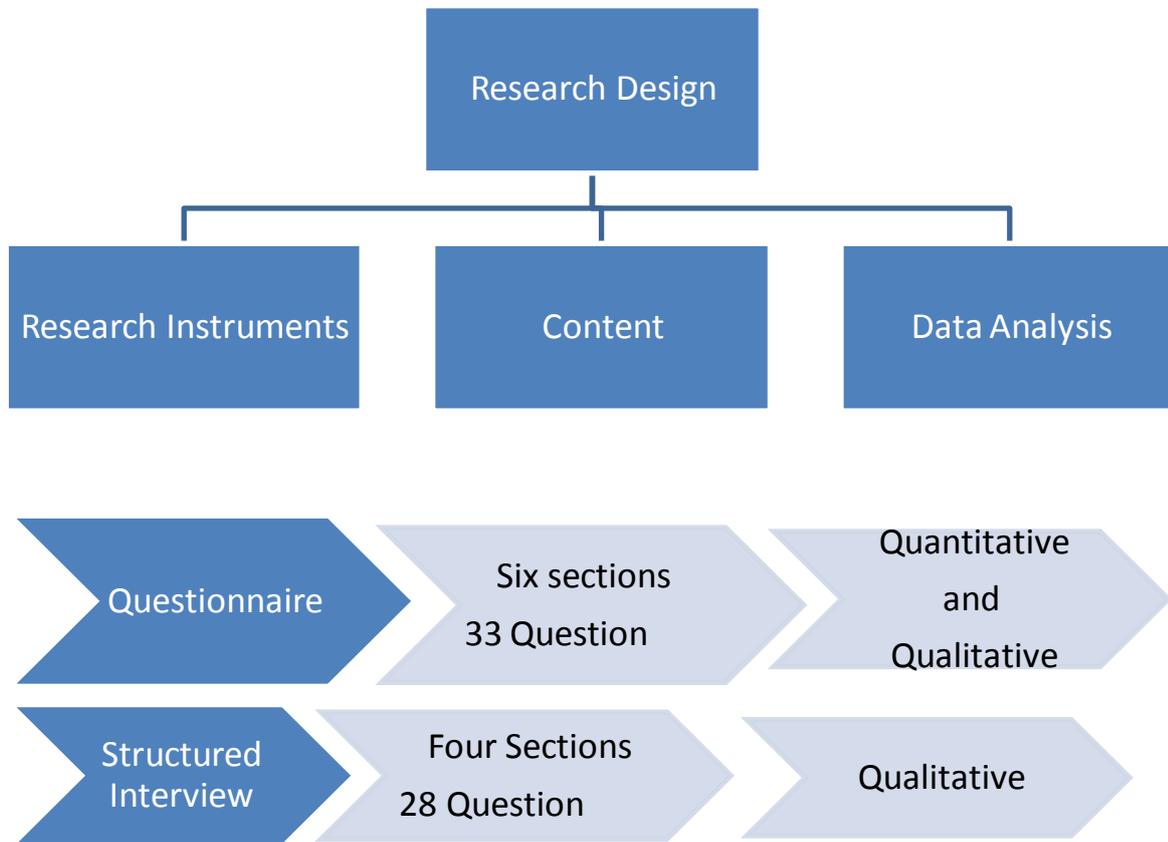


Figure 3.1: Research Design.

Conclusion

This chapter presents a description of the research methods and instruments used in this investigation. To enrich his study, the investigator used two research instruments appropriate for descriptive type of research; these are: a questionnaire for students, and a structured interview for the English teacher. Both instruments were defined and justified. Concerning the analysis of the collected data, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative analysis was used. Both methods were used for the analysis of the questionnaire, while the structured interview was analyzed qualitatively.

The current study is described as a case study dealing with 49 participants engaged through a questionnaire, learning English during their third year for the academic year 2012/2013 in the Department of Economics at M'sila University.

Accordingly, the aim of the following chapter is to discuss and analyze the collected data as it is an important parameter, first; to confirm the proposed hypothesis, and second; to design sample activities concerning the writing skill based on the GA to help students overcome the encountered difficulties.

Chapter Four: Data Analyses and Interpretation of the Results

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Introduction

In this chapter, the investigator attempts to figure out the reasons behind the students' under achievement in writing effectively. This will be done through the analyses of the collected data obtained from the students' questionnaire and the teacher's interview. The discussion of the results will hopefully confirm the hypothesis and go in the same line of thought with the assumptions set earlier in this study.

Both tables and graphs were used to display the findings. Interpretations and commentaries were immediately added to figure out what hindered students to write and to suggest solutions to the encountered problems.

4.1. Students' Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to third year Economics students to enable the investigator eliciting more information about the students' profiles, their linguistic background, the problems and difficulties concerning the teaching/learning process, and more specifically to determine the students' disabilities when learning the writing skill. Therefore, the collected data serve the researcher in her attempts to provide help and guidance for students in their writing.

4.1.1. Analysis:

In this section, the investigator tries to analyze and report the answers provided by the 49 students of Economics.

The data obtained from the questionnaire is the following:

Section one: Background Information

Question 1: Students' Sex

| | Absolute Frequency | Relative Frequency |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Male | 16 | 32,65% |
| Female | 33 | 67,35% |
| Total Number | 49 | 100% |

Table 4.1: Students Sex

The group is made up of sixteen male and thirty-three female students. The number of females is twice that of males (Figure 4.1)

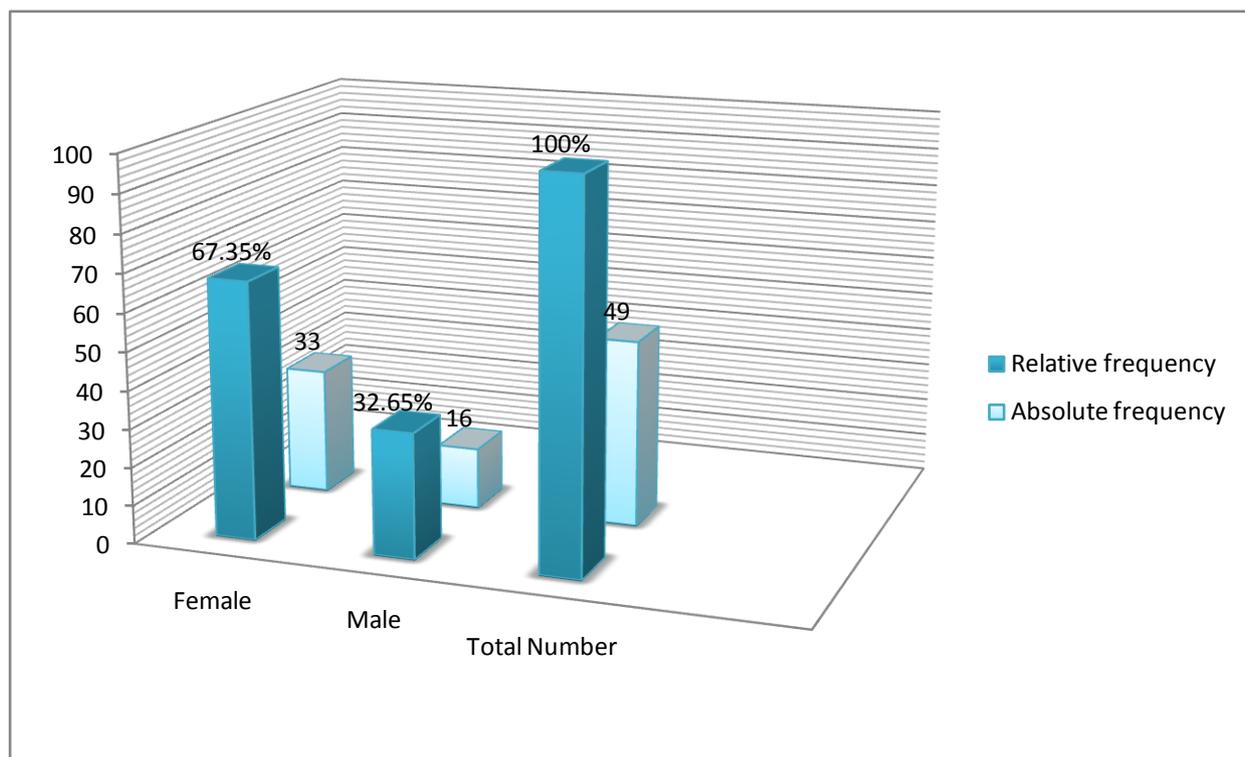


Figure 4.1: Students' Sex

Question 2: Students' Age

The students are aged between 19 and 26 years old.

Section Two: Schooling Information

Question 3: Number of years of English study

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|----|----|----|
| Number of years | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Number of students | 3 | 8 | 37 | / | 1 |

Table 4.2: Number of Years of English Study

As indicated in the table above, the number of years of English study varies from eight to twelve years. However, all students had studied English for at least eight years, those who repeated the year at the middle or secondary levels, and those who studied more than one speciality at university have the chance to study English for a longer period. Thirty-seven students declared that they have studied English for a period of ten years. Eight students had studied English for nine years. Three students had studied English for eight years, and only one student had the experience of studying English for twelve years.

From these results, we expect that students have at least the minimum background of English language.

Question 4: Number of years of English study at university

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|----|---|---|
| Number of years | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Number of students | / | 6 | 40 | 2 | 1 |

Table 4.3 : Number of Years of English Study at University

The majority of students gave the same answer that they studied English at university for three years; those who declared that were forty students. Six students stated that they had studied English at university for two years. Two students had the experience of four years, and only one student had studied English for five years.

Question 5: Number of Hours of English Study

All students indicated that they learnt English for one hour and a half per week.

Section Three: Information about English Language Learning

Question 6: How can learning English for Business Purposes help students in their future job.

Concerning this question, students gave different answers. Some of them argued that learning English for Business Purposes would help them to better communicate in future workplaces. They stated that the business world urges communication whether via writing or speaking.

Others reported that they are not sure that learning English for Business Purposes would help them in their future job. They argued that though English is said to be the language of business, most enterprises and companies in Algeria still use French language whether to communicate or to write their documents.

Some students stated that learning English would increase their chances to travel abroad and make businesses there. They thought that being competent to speak English well may facilitate the task of communicating with English people and hence, their chances to get a job would increase.

Question 7: Areas of Difficulty in English Learning

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Vocabulary | 6 | 12,24% |
| Grammar | 10 | 20,40% |
| Listening | 11 | 22,44% |
| Speaking | 2 | 4,08% |
| Reading | 9 | 18,36% |
| Writing | 11 | 22,44% |

Table 4.4: Areas of Difficulty in English Learning

As far as the areas of difficulty in English learning is concerned, students declared that listening and writing were the most difficult among the other language areas; for each area, eleven students claimed that. Ten students claimed that they faced problems with grammar, and nine students said that they found reading the most difficult area. Six students faced problems in vocabulary, and two students had difficulty in speaking as shown in figure 4.3. This difficulty encountered with listening and writing is because no room is provided during class to tackle such skills.

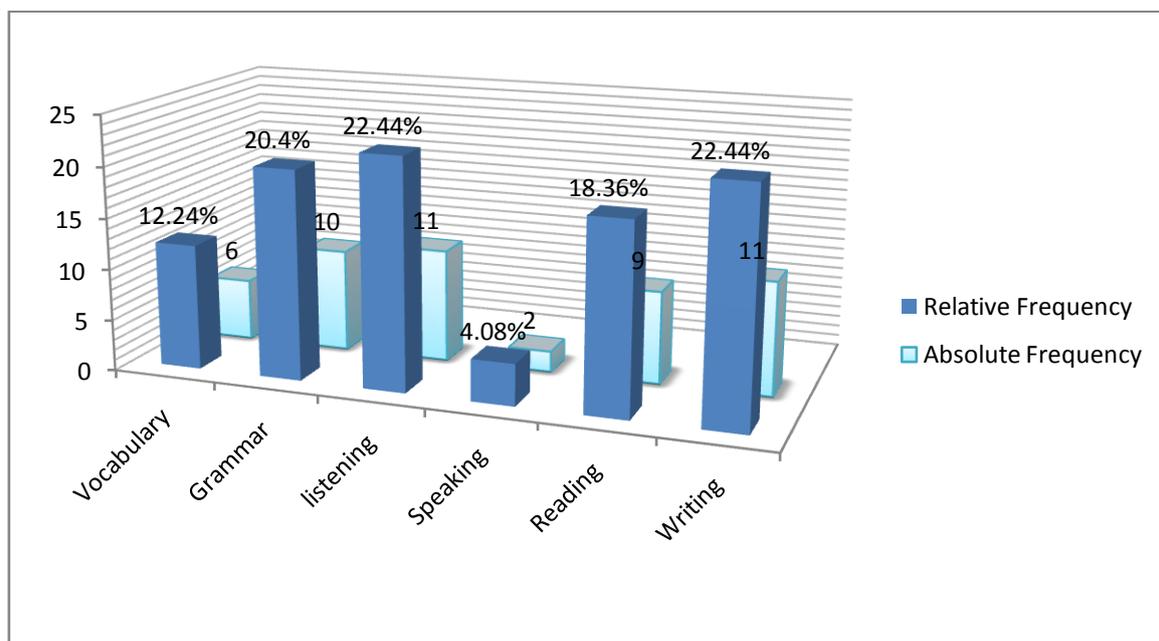


Figure 4.2: Areas of Difficulty in English Learning

Question 8: To know on which teaching areas teacher focuses more

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Terminology of business English | 38 | 77,56% |
| Texts of business English | 11 | 22,44% |

Table 4.5 : Teacher's Focus when Teaching Business English

The results in the table above show that the majority of students were taught terminology of BE as thirty-eight of them declared that. Eleven students stated that their teacher focused more on teaching texts of BE.

Thus, students were unable to write beyond the boundaries of the sentence. This may justify students' poor familiarity with some business genres as little guidance was provided. Being beginners in learning BE, students have the felt need to know business texts which are of paramount importance as means of communication in their future job. As a suggestion here, terminology of BE can be taught via texts. Additionally, being acquainted with business genres, students will be able to produce similar texts of their own. In the following is an illustration of the obtained results.

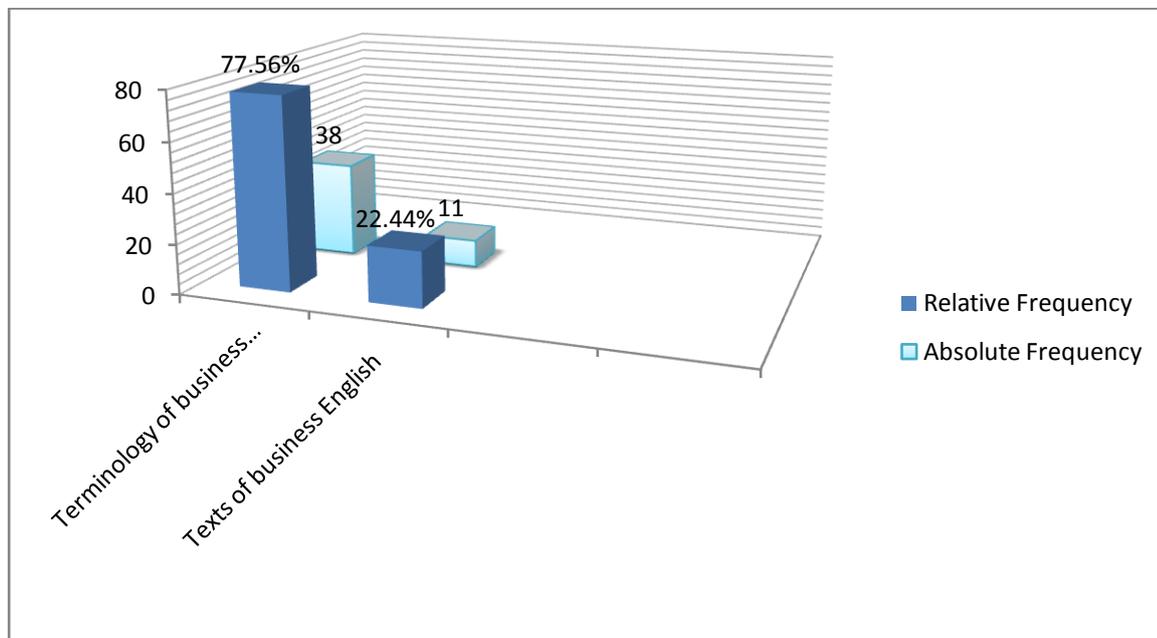


Figure 4.3: Teacher's Focus in Teaching Business English

Question 9: Importance of the Four Skills

| Number of students Skills | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Listening | 17 | 34,69% |
| Speaking | 13 | 26,54% |
| Reading | 14 | 28,57% |
| Writing | 5 | 10,20% |

Table 4.6 : Importance of the Four Skills

It is obvious from the table above that the four skills are important to fulfill students learning. Yet, this importance differs from one skill to another. Seventeen students viewed listening as the most important skill and fourteen of them had the same view as they advocated reading. Thirteen students argued that speaking was the most important skill, and only five students gave importance to writing. Therefore, listening came first followed by reading then speaking while writing came last. From these results, one can easily notice that writing was given less importance compared to the other skills and this could be a good reason of the students' under achievement in writing. More illustration is presented in figure 4.5.

in fact, the time allocated for English learning is only one hour and a half per week, and no time is allocated for practicing writing in class. From this, we do believe that learning the writing skill is marginalized as both teacher and students lack a useful support to perform such a task.

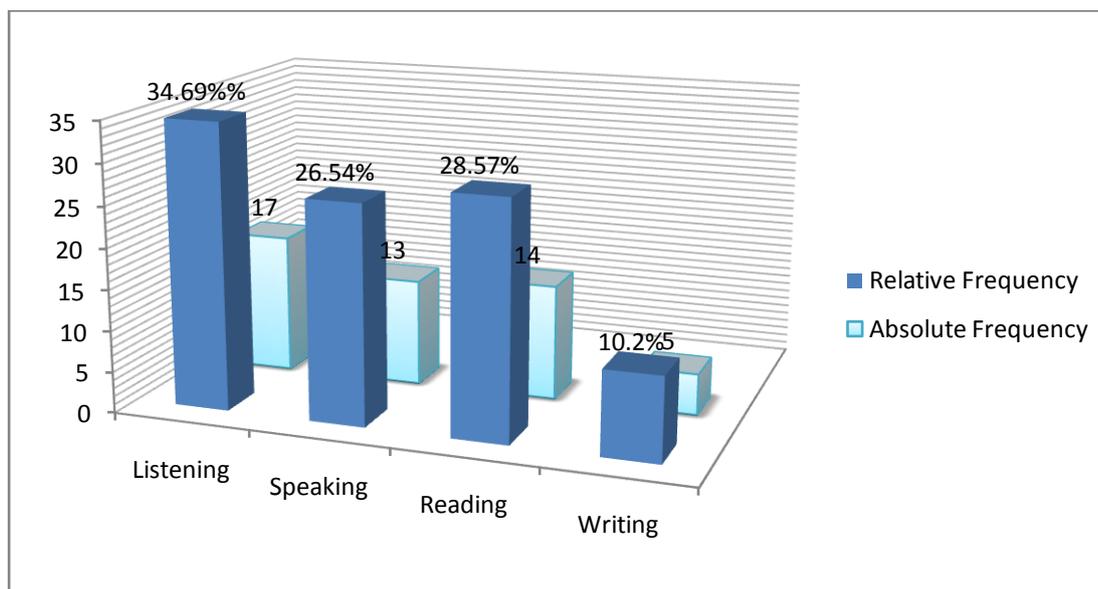


Figure 4.4: Importance of the Four Skills

Question 10: To know whether students use English more to write or to speak

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| To speak | 26 | 53,06% |
| To write | 23 | 46,94% |

Table 4.7: English Use concerning Writing and Speaking

The table above shows that there is a slight difference to whether students used English more to write or to speak. Twenty-six students used English more to speak while twenty-three of them stated that they used English more to write than to speak. This makes us think that if students receive some support to develop their writing, their negative attitudes towards writing may just fade away. The results prove that there is an acceptance among a considerable number of students to use English for writing. Therefore, we assume that positive attitudes are the result once writing is taught in class with an application of a suitable approach. (More illustration is shown in figure 4.6)

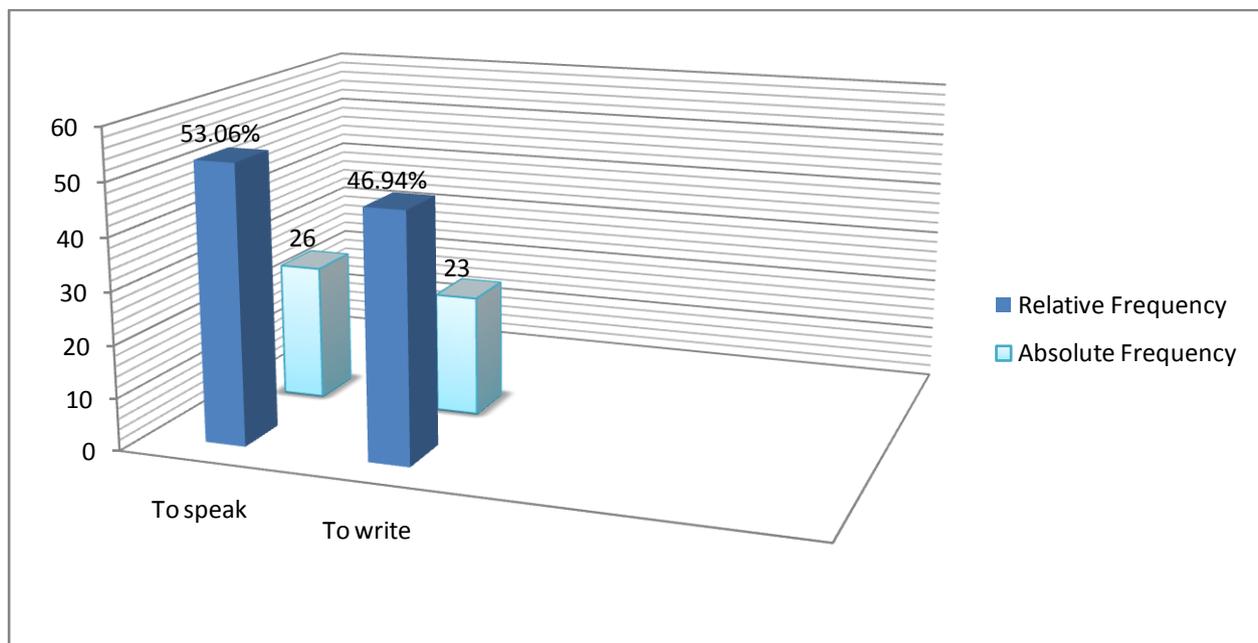


Figure 4.5: English Use concerning Speaking and Writing

Question11: Number of Hours allocated to Learning Writing

Students declared that no enough time is provided to practice writing in class. They stated that they could not speak about hours here, since the time allocated to check their drafts which they wrote at home is about twenty to thirty minutes maximum. Their responses to this question showed their dissatisfaction with such a timing.

Section Four: Attitudes towards Writing

Question12: to know whether students enjoy writing.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 13 | 26,53% |
| No | 11 | 22,44% |
| Sometimes | 25 | 51,03% |

Table 4.8: Students' Attitude towards Writing

At first glance, it appears that students' attitudes towards writing differ from one group of students to another. Twenty-five students enjoyed writing from time to time. Thirteen of them had positive attitudes towards writing, while eleven students declared that they did not enjoy writing at all. Such results indicate that students' negative attitudes to writing affect their writing performance. This is maybe due to the lack of practicing writing in class as writing activities are always left as homework. For more clarification, look at figure 4.7 below.

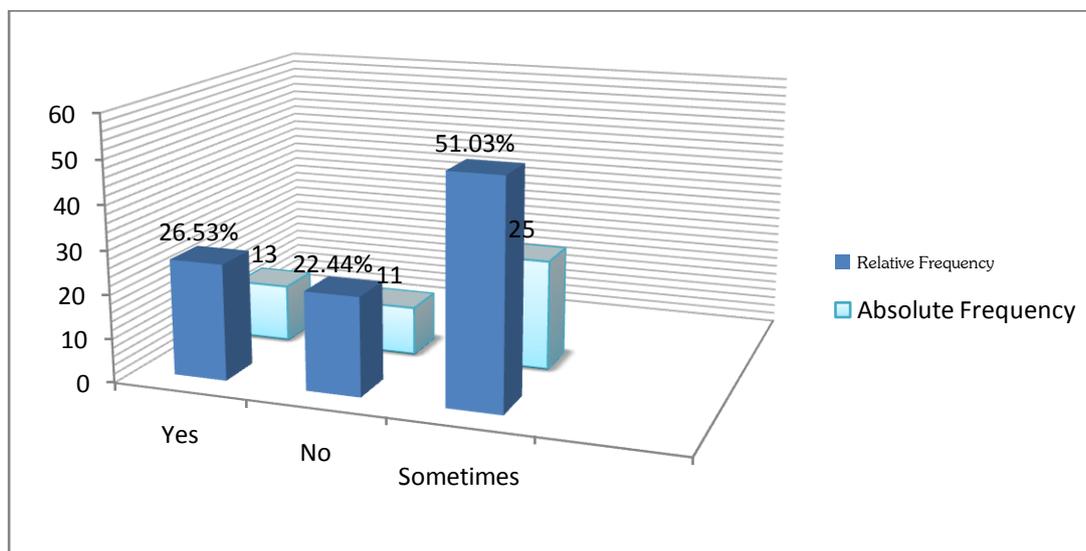


Figure 4.6: Students' Attitudes towards Writing

Question13: To know whether students trust themselves as persons who could find good words and ideas.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 16 | 32,66% |
| No | 12 | 24,48% |
| Sometimes | 21 | 42,86% |

Table 4.9: Students' Self- confidence in finding Good Words and Ideas

Students' self confidence, as persons who can find good words and ideas while writing, varies from one group of students to another. Twenty-one students stated that sometimes they did so and this is may depend on the situation and the topic they were asked to write about. Sixteen students answered negatively regarding this question, and twelve of them declared that they had such a confidence.

Once again, one understanding from these results is that lack of practice and time constraints may stand for the students' difficulty in generating words and ideas for their writing. one instance here is that when students responded to open questions in the handed questionnaire, some of them wrote their answers in Arabic while others answered in English, and when could not find the appropriate word they wrote it down in Arabic.

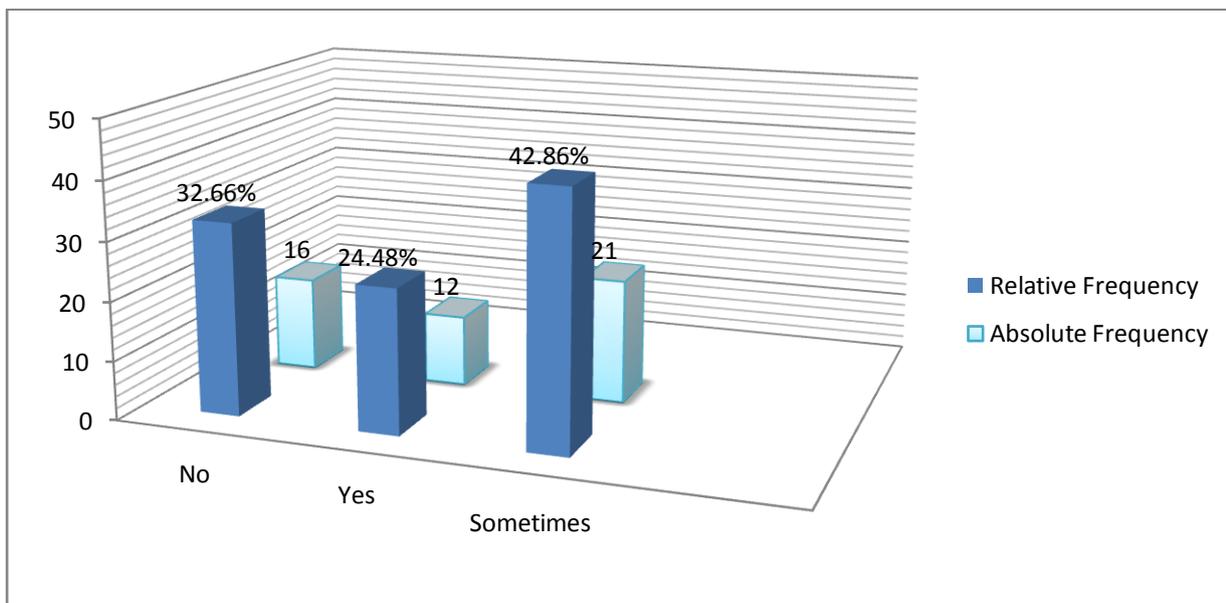


Figure 4.7: Students' Self-confidence in finding Good Words and Ideas

Question 14: To know whether students think of themselves as writers, and the justification they give concerning this question.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 1 | 2,05% |
| No | 39 | 79,59% |
| Sometimes | 9 | 18,36% |

Table 4.10: Students' Self- confidence as Writers

As can be seen from the table above, the majority of students did not think of themselves as writers as thirty nine of them reported that. Nine students declared that sometimes they thought of themselves as writers. Only one student was self confident that he thought of himself as a writer. This may be just another reason of students' disability to write. They lack the ability to find words and ideas to write confidently and the majority of them dare not think of themselves as writers. This lets us assume that both lack of practice and lack of support from the part of their teacher result students' negative attitudes and lack of trust towards learning the writing skill. In figure 4.9 is an illustration of the obtained results.

As far as the second part of this question, the majority of students justified their answers by saying that being a writer means that no mistake is found in your writing and as they could not write correctly, they did not dare to think of themselves as writers. Others justified that the act of writing is reserved for the elites of the society. The only student who thought of himself as a writer justified that the first step to be a writer is to start writing and let others read what you write asking them for comments, only thus you could improve your writing.

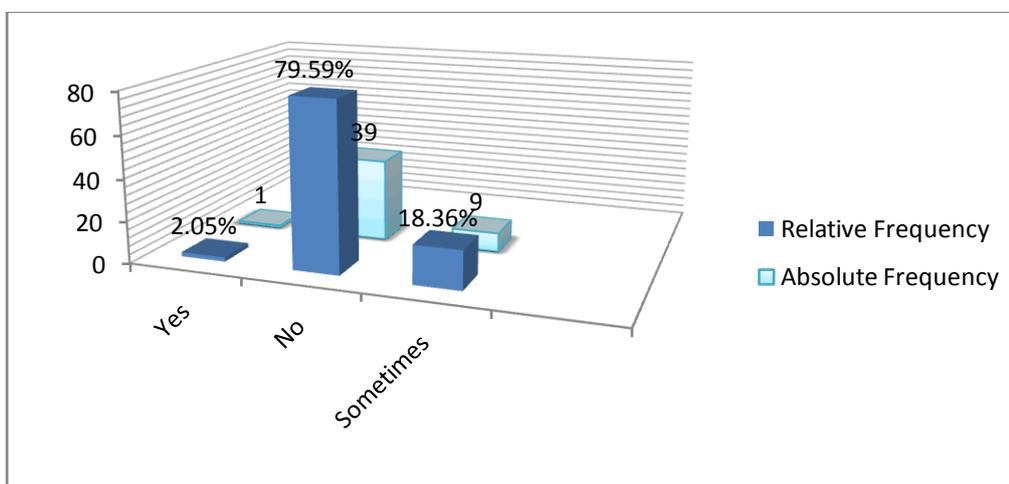


Figure 4.8: Students' Self- confidence as Writers

Question15: To know whether students face problems with grammar

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 35 | 71,42% |
| No | 3 | 6,12% |
| Sometimes | 11 | 22,44% |

Table 4.11: Difficulty in Grammar

From the forty-nine students involved in this study, thirty-five of them declared that they faced problems with grammar when they came to write. Eleven students stated that they sometimes found difficulty, and only three said that they did not have such a difficulty (Figure 4.10).

Grammar, as deduced from the results, is considered as an obstacle for students to write effectively. This leads us to think that students do not receive much explicit grammar exercises. Therefore, we have the assumption that grammar can be taught via texts of BE. Hereby, business genres require specific grammatical structures, and this may facilitate the task of writing for students.

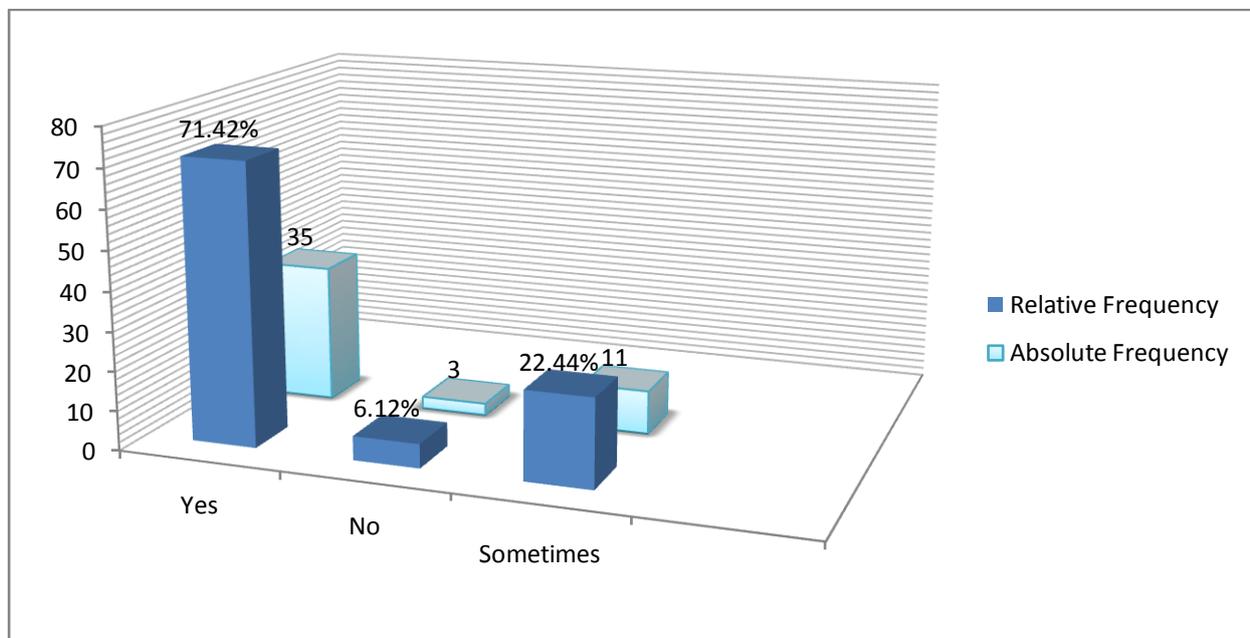


Figure 4.9: Difficulty in Grammar

Question16: To know whether students face problems with structure

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 32 | 65,31% |
| No | 4 | 8,16% |
| Sometimes | 13 | 26,53% |

Table 4.12: Difficulty in Structure

The majority of students stated that they faced difficulty with structure when they came to write, thirty-two students declared that. Thirteen students faced such a difficulty from time to time, and only four students declared their ability to structure their writing (see Figure 4.11).

It is important to indicate here that business genres have certain structures which are conventional regularities known by the discourse community who interacts through them. In this instance, we strongly believe that students should be taught the structures and formats proper to business genres. Thus, students would feel more confident when writing business genres which may help them in their future job as indicated earlier in their responses.

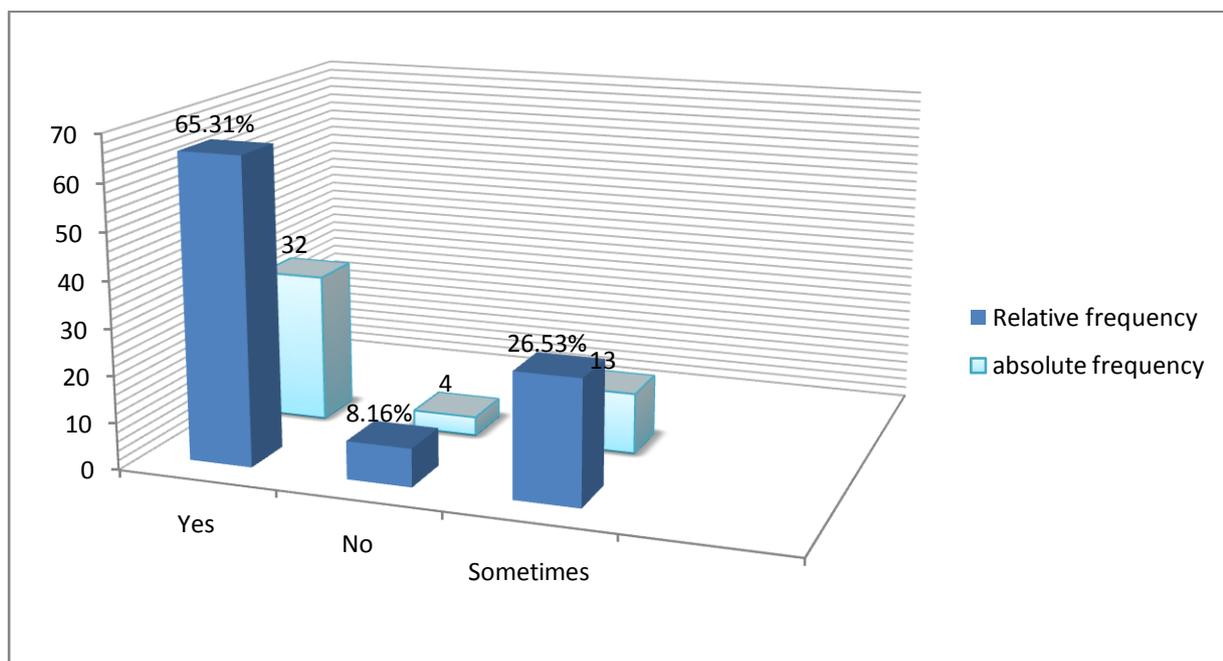


Figure 4.10: Difficulty in Structure

Question17: To know whether students face problems with meaning

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 32 | 65,31% |
| No | 2 | 4,08% |
| Sometimes | 15 | 30,61% |

Table 4.13: Difficulty in Meaning

As far as question 15 is concerned, the results show that thirty-two students faced difficulty with meaning. Fifteen students declared that such a difficulty is sometimes encountered, and only two students stated that they could write meaningfully (see Figure 4.12).

The obtained results may just give another reason why students could not write coherently; they lack the ability to generate a meaningful piece of writing. Therefore, we assume that knowing the communicative purpose of a business genre would reduce this difficulty.

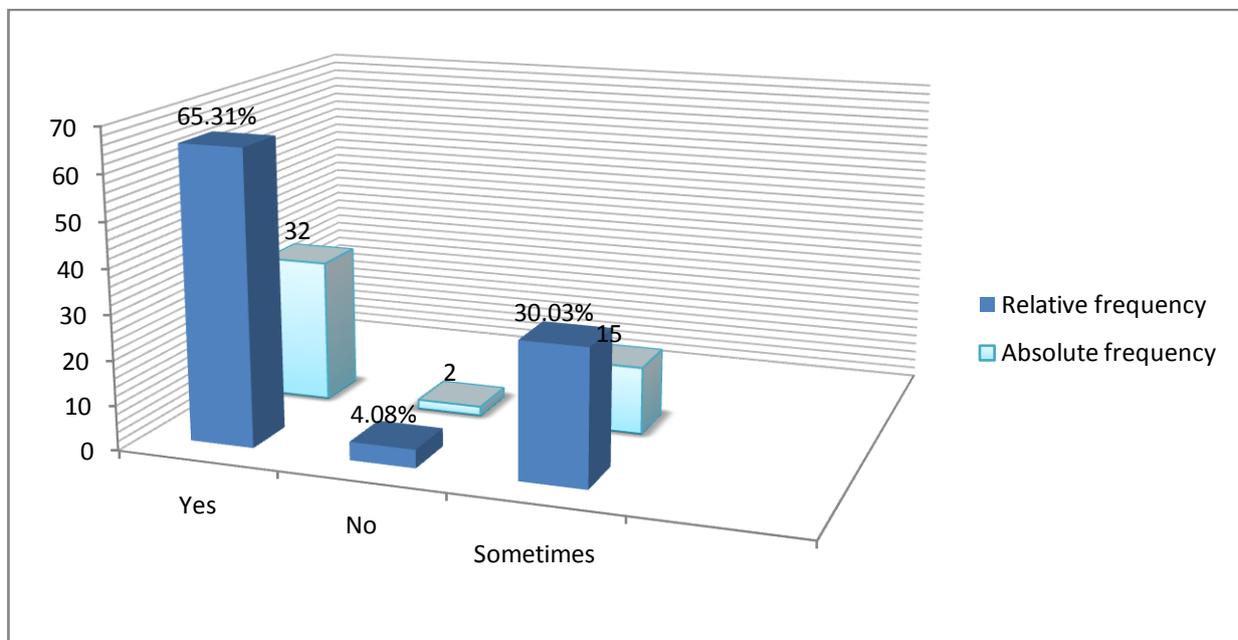


Figure 4.11: Difficulty in Meaning

Question 18: To know whether the teacher guides students to produce correct sentences.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 27 | 55,11% |
| No | 14 | 28,57% |
| Sometimes | 8 | 16,32% |

Table 4.14: Teacher's Guidance to Students to produce Correct Sentences

The collected data show that twenty-seven students received guidance from their teacher while writing. Fourteen students stated that their teacher did not receive such a guidance. The rest eight students declared that they received guidance but not usually. (see figure 4.13)

The results indicate that no enough guidance is provided to students to write in a correct way. Classes are outnumbered which makes it a difficult task for the teacher to correct his students' mistakes. Without their teacher's help, students find it difficult to recognize their mistakes. This lack of support may just be added to the reasons which affect the students' writing performance.

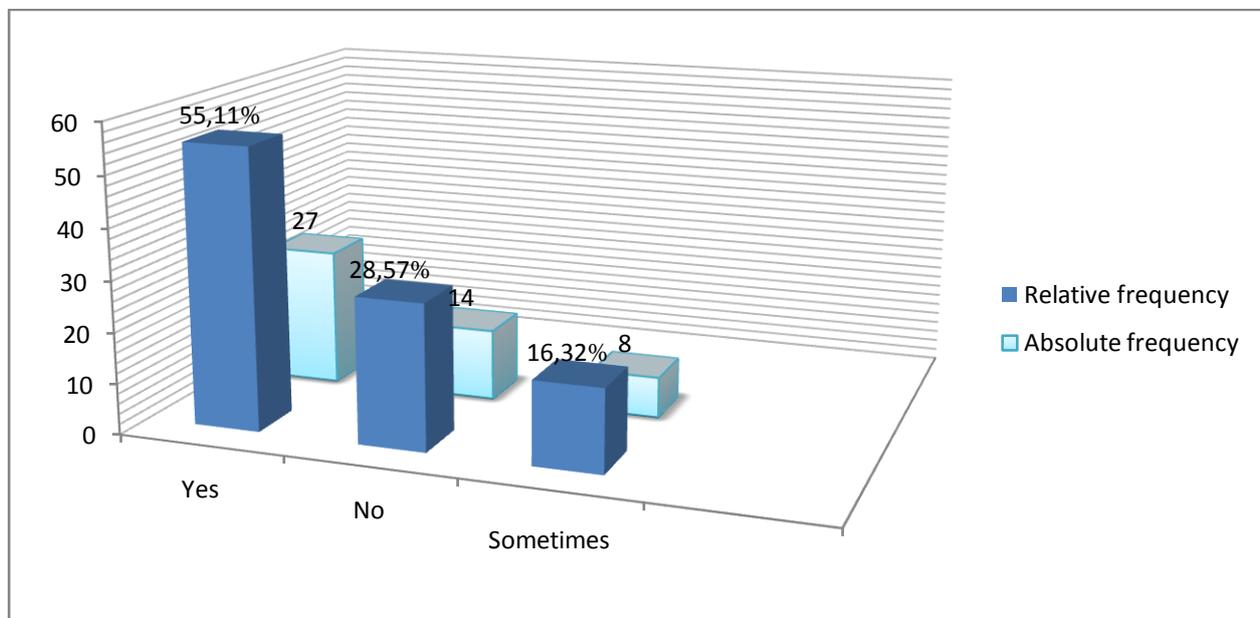


Figure 4.12: Teacher's Guidance to Students to produce Correct Sentences

Section Five: Writing for Business Purposes.

Question19: To know whether students write texts.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 13 | 26,53% |
| No | 36 | 73,47% |

Table 4.15: Students' production of texts

Concerning question 18, the results show that thirty-six students did not use to write texts while thirteen students declared that they used to write texts. (see figure 4.14)

These results lead us to assume that the teacher does not set his students to write texts and this may justify why students stated that they could not write texts.

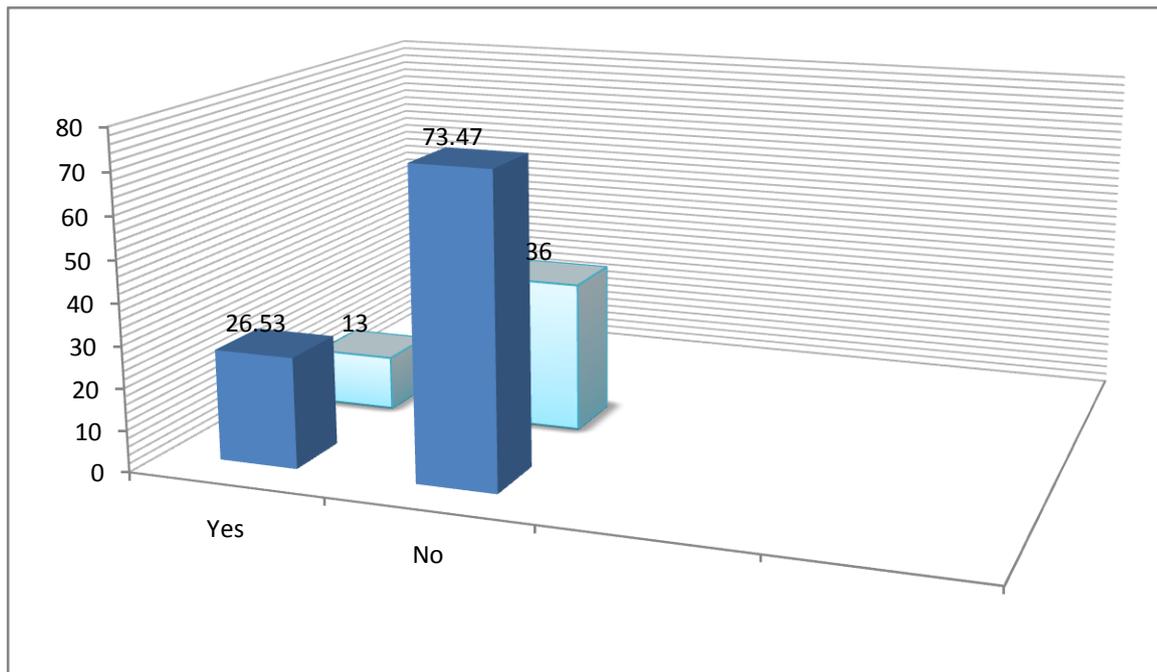


Figure 4.13: Students' production of texts

Question20: To know whether the written texts are business texts.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 9 | 69,24% |
| No | 4 | 30,76% |
| Total | 13 | 100% |

Table 4.16: Production of Business Texts

Among the thirteen students who declared that they usually wrote texts, nine students said that these texts were business genres and four students declared that these texts were not business genres.(see figure 4.15)

The written activities are not about business genres. This causes the students' unfamiliarity with these texts. From this, our assumption is that students need to be familiar with business genres necessary for their future job.

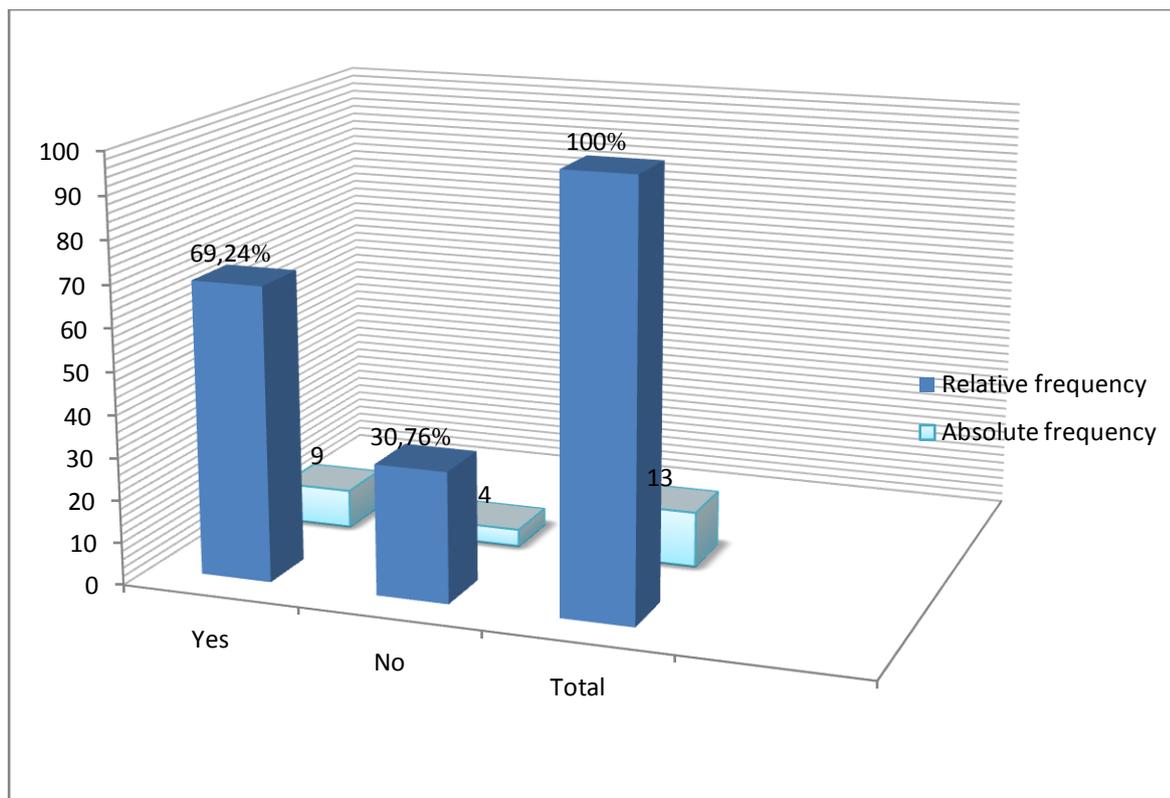


Figure 4.14: Students' Production of Business Texts

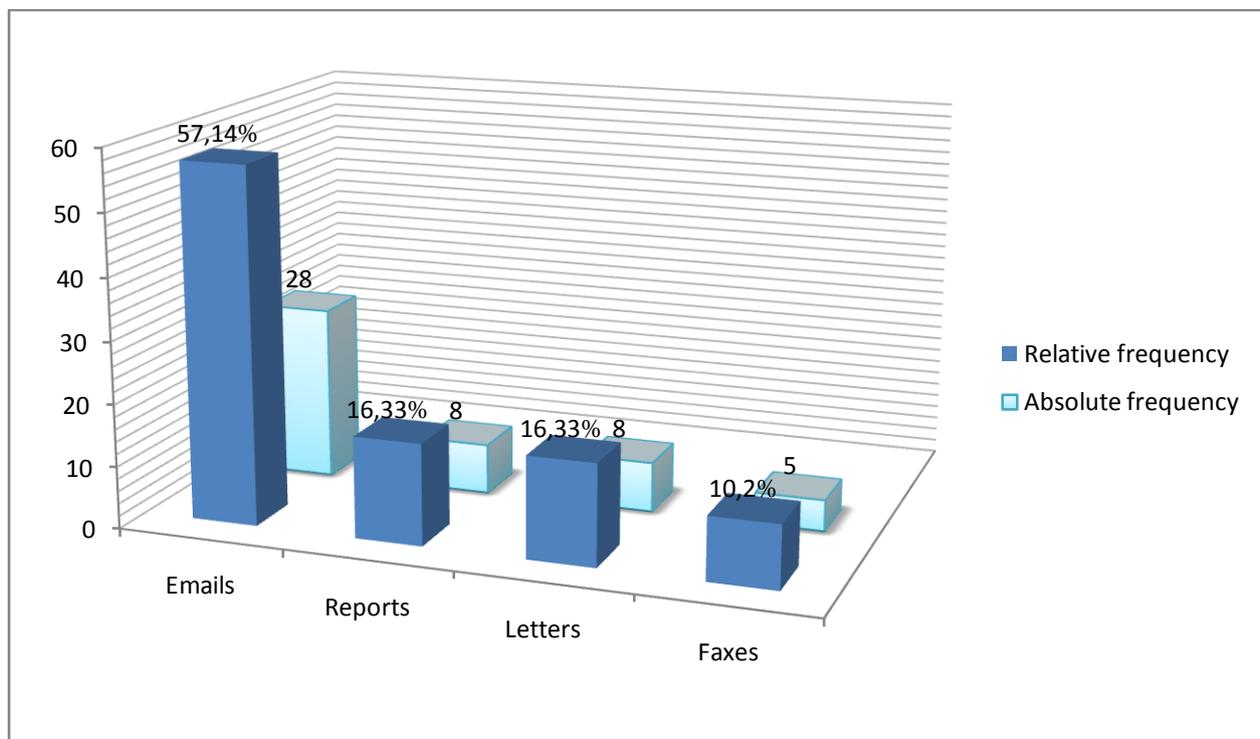
Question21: Students familiarity with some business genres

| | Faxes | Letters | Reports | Emails |
|--------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| Absolute frequency | 5 | 8 | 8 | 28 |
| Relative frequency | 10,20% | 16,33% | 16,33% | 57,14% |

Table 4.17: Students' Familiarity with some Business Genres

As far as students' familiarity with some business genres is concerned, twenty-eight students declared that emails were the most familiar business genre for them. Eight students stated that they found letters the most familiar genre while other eight declared their familiarity with reports. Concerning faxes, five students opted for them as the most familiar business genre (see figure 4.16).

It seems from these results that the majority of students are familiar with business emails and only few of them know other business genres like faxes, reports, and letters. Hereby, we do strongly believe that students should know a variety of business genres to be competent when they come to work.


Figure 4.15: Students' Familiarity with some Business Genres

Question22: To know whether students know their audience in writing business genres

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 25 | 51,03% |
| No | 24 | 48,97% |

Table 4.18: Students' Knowledge of their Audience in Writing Business Genres

The results in the table above show that twenty-five students knew their audience when writing a business genre. Twenty-four students stated that they did not know the addressed audience (see figure 4.17).

We can notice from these results that a considerable number of students do not know their addressee in writing business genres. This makes us assume that students should be made aware that business genres have different audiences and that one genre may be addressed to more than one kind of audience. Accordingly, students' ability to write will be improved once they know who their audiences are.

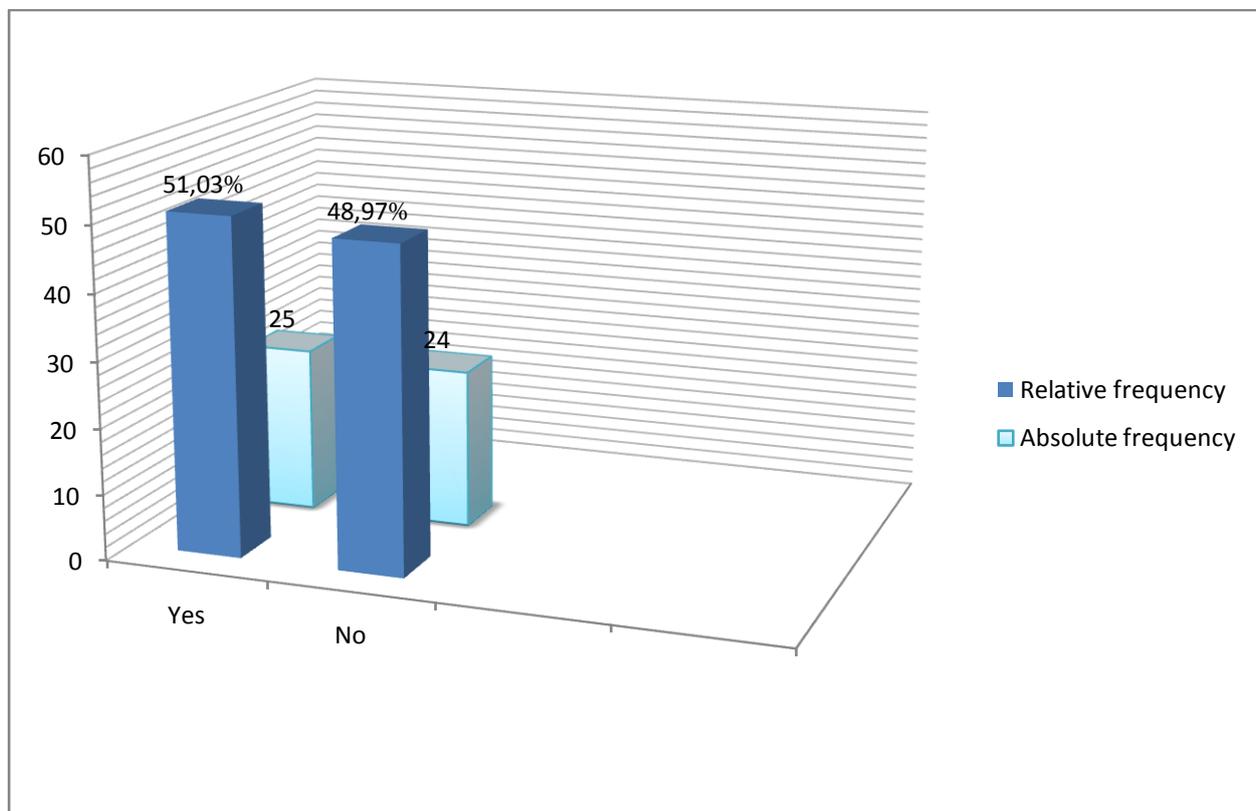


Figure 4.16: Students' Knowledge of their audience in writing business genres

Question23: To know whether students know the communicative purpose of business genres

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 18 | 36,73% |
| No | 31 | 63,27% |

Table 4.19: Students' Knowledge of the Communicative Purpose of Business Genres

Thirty-one students said that they did not know the communicative purpose of the business genre they used to write. Eighteen students reported that they knew the communicative purpose when writing business genres.(see figure 4.18)

This leads us to assume that knowing the communicative purposes behind writing business genres would facilitate the task of organizing ideas for students.

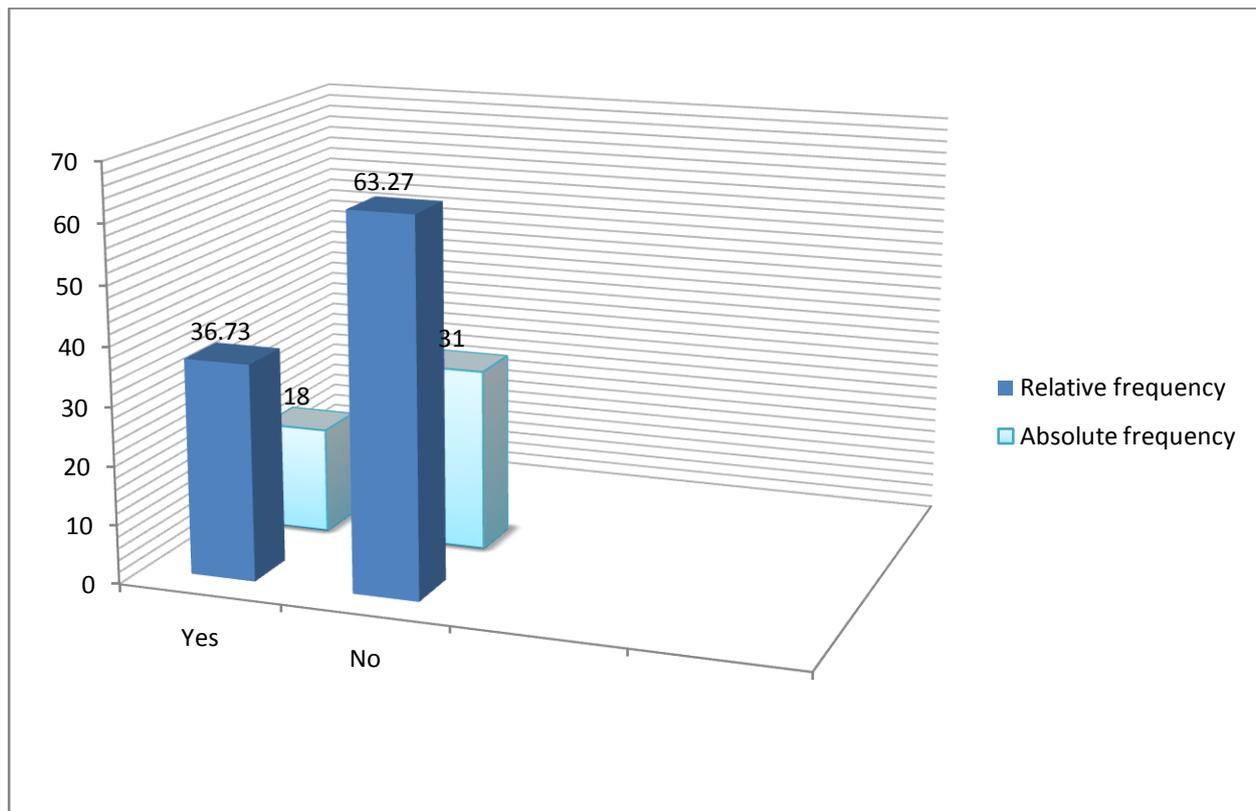


Figure 4.17: Students' Knowledge of the Communicative Purpose of Business Genres

Question24: To know whether the provided writing tasks are enough to make students familiar with business genres.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 9 | 18,36% |
| No | 40 | 81,64% |

Table 4.20: Students' Satisfaction with the provided Writing Tasks

It seems from the table above that the majority of students were not satisfied with the provided writing tasks; forty students declared that. Only nine students were satisfied with the provided tasks which they thought were enough to familiarize them with business genres. (see figure 4.19)

Accordingly, we have the assumption that the more writing tasks are provided to students the more familiar they are with business genres. Both the kind and number of tasks affect the students writing performance. Most of the time, as indicated by their teacher, students are asked to translate business texts into the Arabic language or to summarize them. All the work is done at home which provides no room for guidance and correction. Thus, we do believe that once students are set to write in class with enough support from their teacher they will manage to write in an acceptable way.

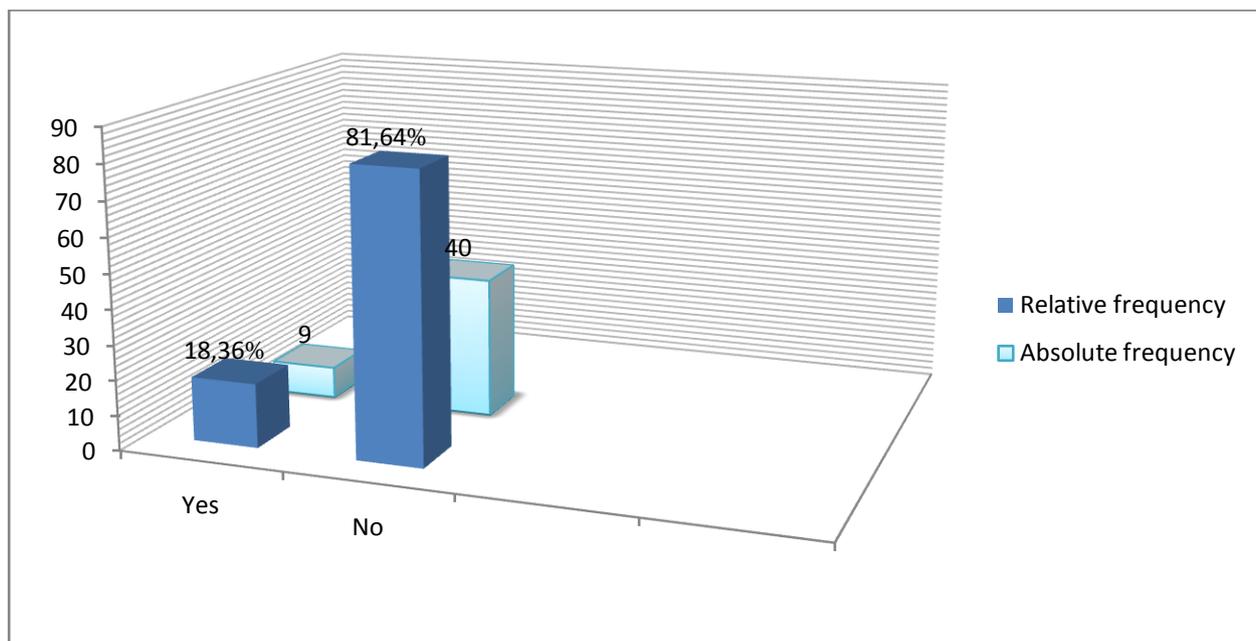


Figure 4.18: Students Satisfaction with the provided Writing Tasks

Question25: To know whether the teacher provides students with model texts of business genres.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 18 | 36,73% |
| No | 31 | 63,27% |

Table 4.21: Providing Students with Models of Business Genres

Concerning question 25, thirty-one students answered that their teacher did not provide them with model texts of business genres. Eighteen students stated that they received model texts from their teacher. (see figure 4.20)

These results indicate that the majority of students were not provided with model texts which may facilitate the task of writing for them. As a first step in performing writing tasks, students need to be guided with model texts to imitate them. In their progress to write, students may analyze the provided model to see what the distinctive features of such a model are. Then, at an advanced step this support may just be withdrawn and more autonomy is given to students to produce their own texts.

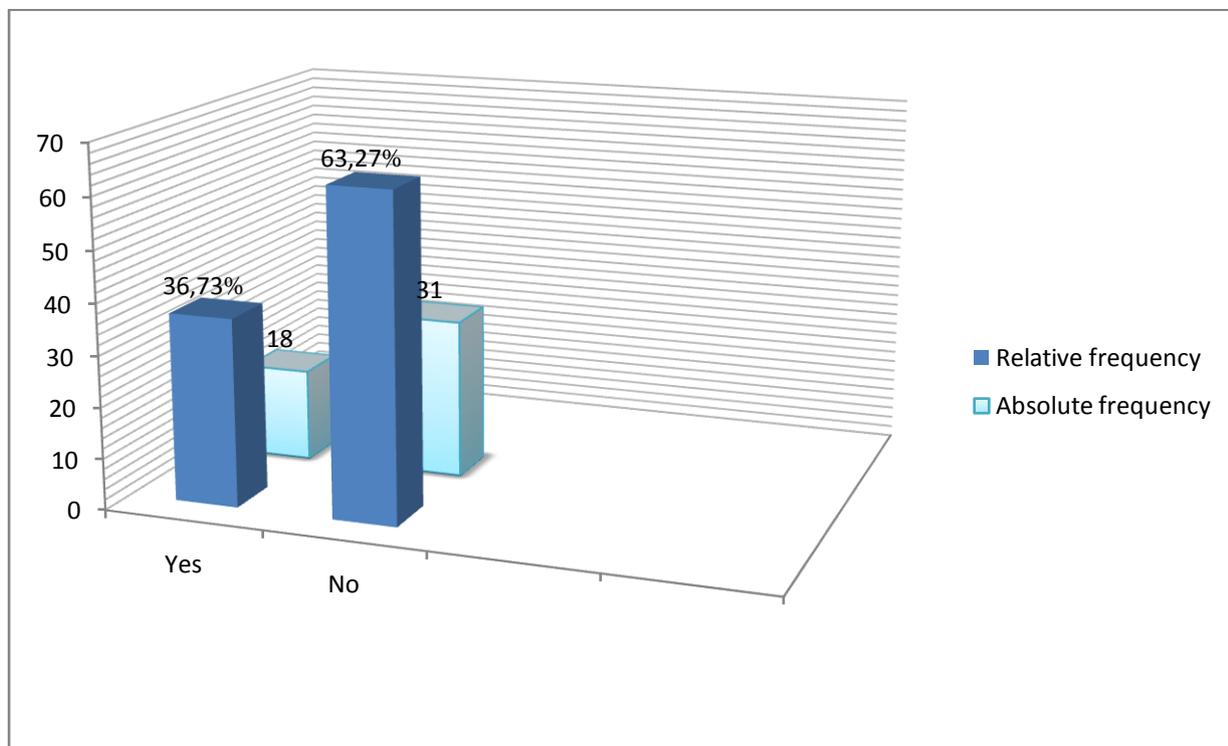


Figure 4.19: Providing Students with Model Texts of Business English

Question26: To know whether students would write better in case their teacher provides them with model texts.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 44 | 89,80% |
| No | 5 | 10,20% |

Table 4.22: Students' Performance when provided with Model Texts

The results in the table above speak loudly that the majority of students would write in a better way in case their teacher provided them with model texts as forty-four students declared that. The rest five students believed that they would not write in a better way even though their teacher provided them with a model text (see figure 4.21).

These results may support our assumption that being supported with model texts, students would feel more confident to produce their own texts. This makes us more confident to advocate the genre approach to teaching writing as it urges providing support for learners to write better texts.

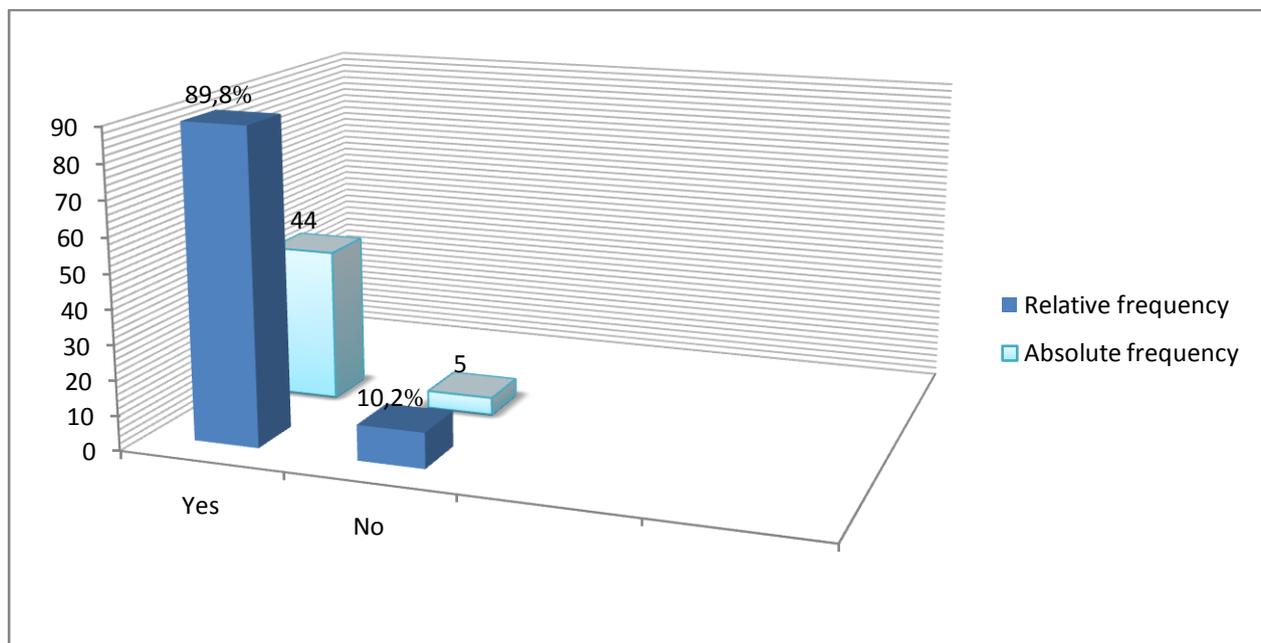


Figure 4.20: Students' Performance when provided with Model Texts

Question27: To know whether students are able to write texts depending on the situation, the topic, the audience, the purpose of writing and so on.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 2 | 4,08% |
| No | 47 | 95,92% |

Table 4.23: Students' Ability to write depending on the Topic, the Audience, and the Purpose

The results show that forty-seven students were unable to vary the way they write depending on the situation, the topic, the audience, and the purpose of writing. Only two students declared their ability to do so. (see figure 4.22)

From these results, we recognize that there is a felt need to adapt the Genre Approach to teaching writing since the situation, the audience, and the purpose of writing are the fundamental principles of such an approach. Thus, the proposed approach would provide a way to students to vary their writing for business purposes.

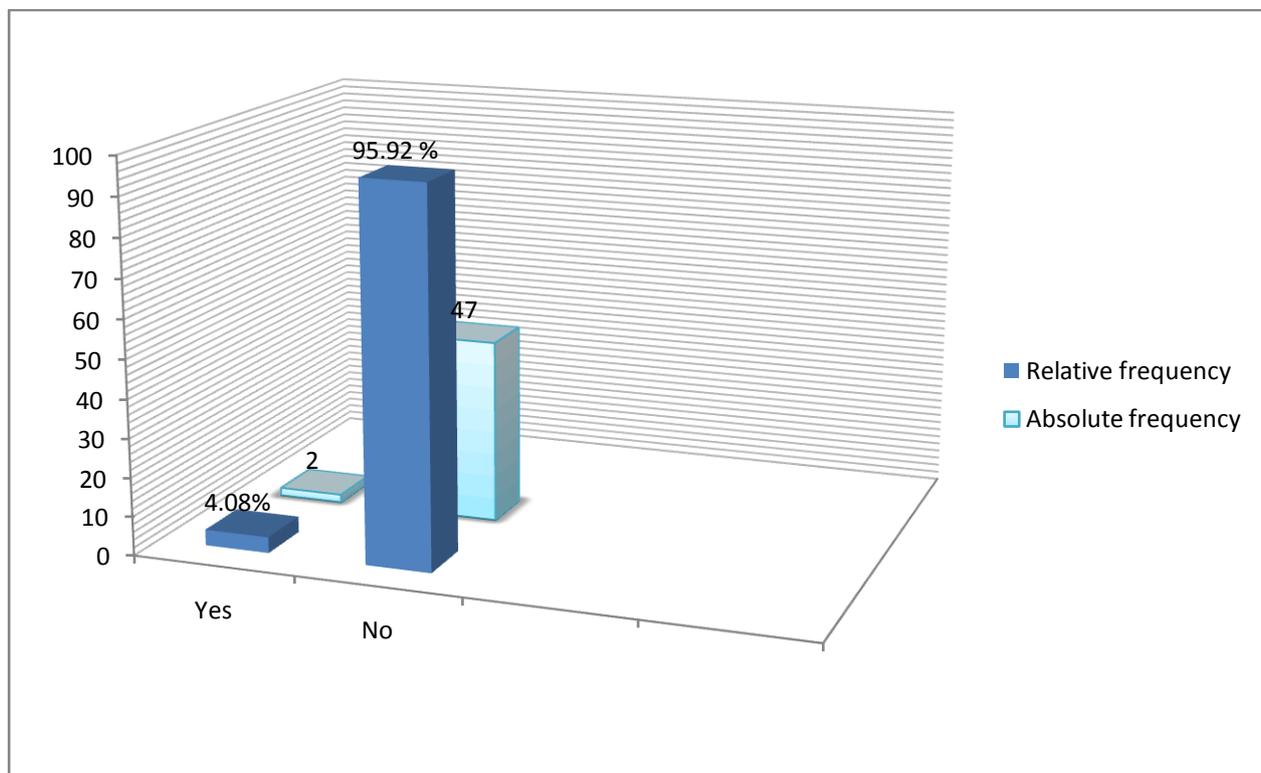


Figure 4.21: Students' Ability to write depending on the Topic, the Audience, and the Purpose.

Section Six: Evaluating Writing

Question28: To know whether students enjoy sharing with friends a draft of what they have written.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 27 | 55,20% |
| No | 22 | 44,90% |

Table 4.24: Students' Attitudes in sharing their Drafts with Friends

The results show that twenty-seven students declared their positive attitudes when sharing with friends a draft they had written. Twenty-two students reported that they did not enjoy sharing their writing with friends.(see figure 4.23)

The results indicate that some students, we assume, do not trust other friends to correct their mistakes or maybe they dare not share their drafts because they do not want their classmates to recognize their mistakes. In this instance, we strongly believe that it is the role of the teacher to encourage their students to think, pair, and share their drafts with their classmates.

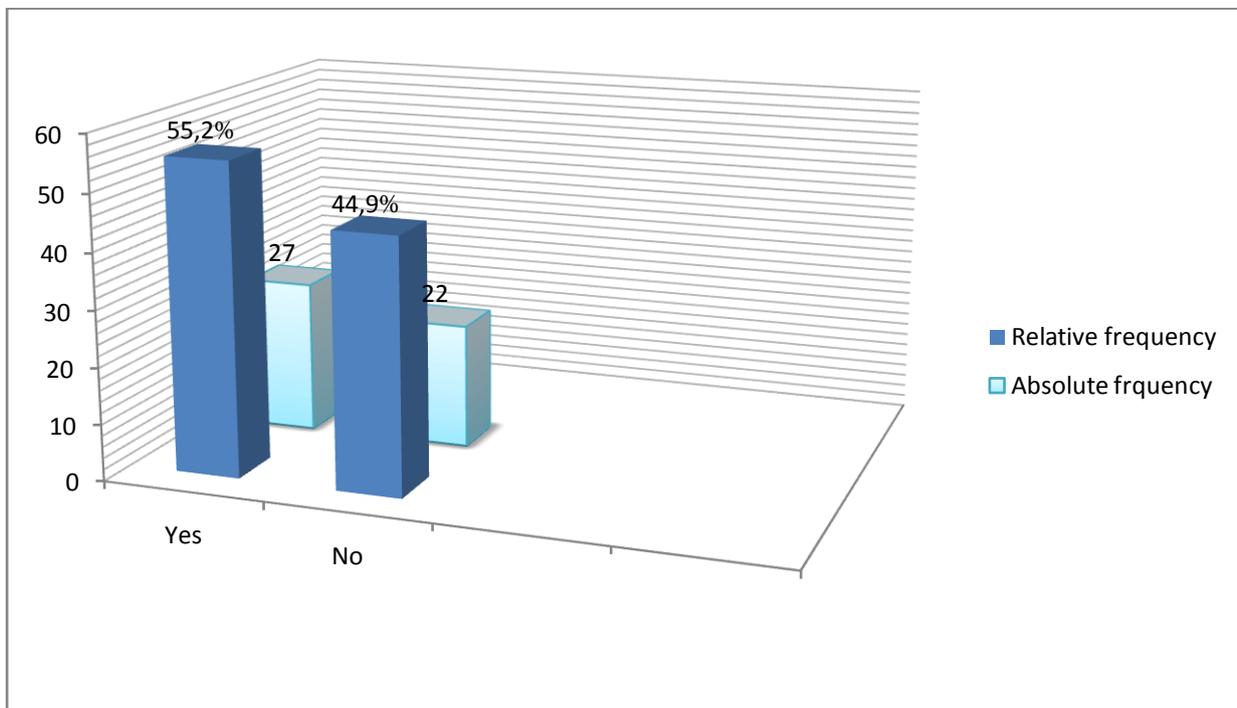


Figure 4.22 : Students' Attitudes in sharing their Drafts with Friends

Question29: to know whether students could read aloud their drafts to listeners.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 20 | 40,81% |
| No | 29 | 59,19% |

Table 4.25: Students' Attitudes in reading aloud their Drafts to Listeners

As far as students' attitudes in reading aloud their drafts to listeners are concerned, twenty-nine students reported that they could not read aloud their drafts to listeners. Twenty students stated that they accepted to read their drafts aloud(see figure 4.24).

We could understand from these results that the majority of students dare not read aloud their drafts to listeners. This may due to the fact that their teacher does not use to set them exchange and read aloud their drafts once they finish writing. Another interpretation could be that students face problems with reading as well. In addition, we do believe that students would accept to exchange and read aloud their drafts once they feel that what they write is good enough to be shared.

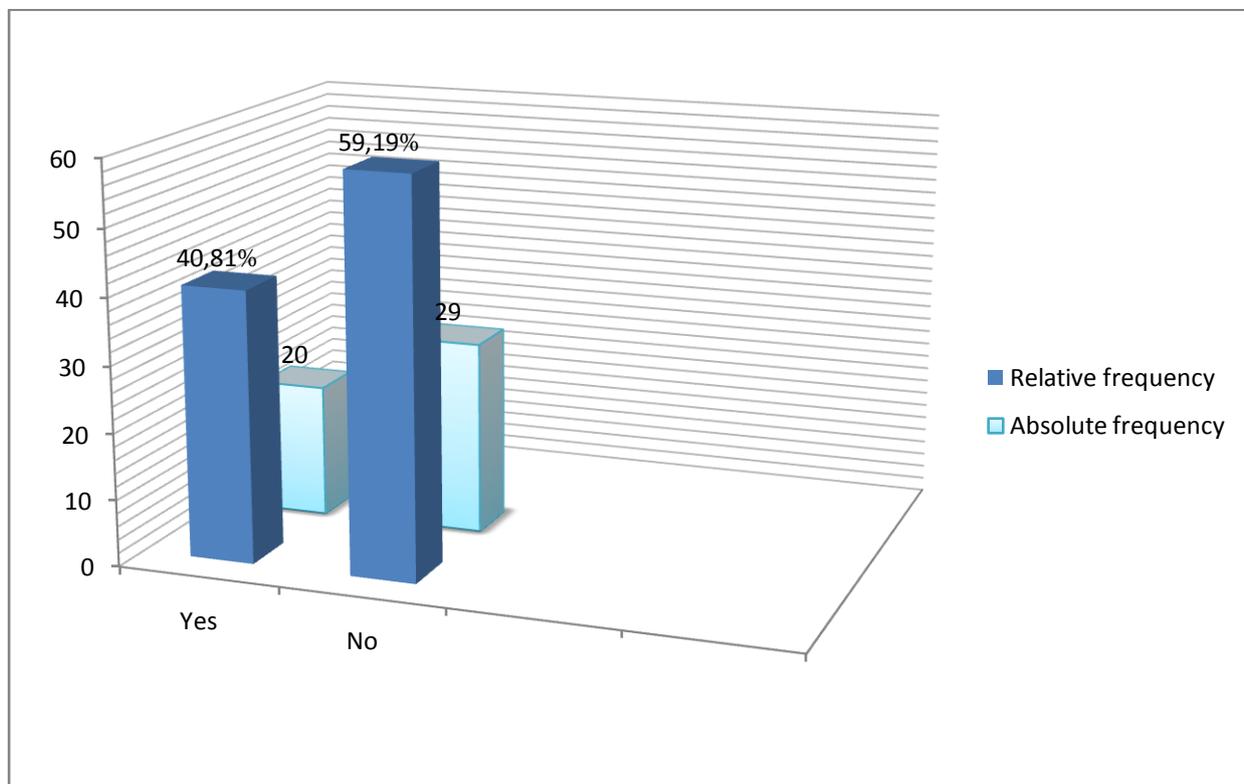


Figure 4.23: Students' Attitudes in reading aloud their Drafts to Listeners

Question30: To know whether students receive feedback once they finish their drafts.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 24 | 48,97% |
| No | 25 | 51,03% |

Table 4.26: Students' Receipt of Feedback once they finish their Drafts

Twenty-five students declared that they did not receive feedback once they finished their drafts. Twenty-four students stated that they received feedback when they finished writing (figure 4.25).

The results show that the majority of students' drafts are not evaluated. This may be considered as an important cause of students' underdevelopment in writing.

In fact, evaluation should be an ongoing process during the act of writing. It helps students recognize their mistakes so that to avoid them in their writing. Once again, we do believe that the teacher has an important role in providing students with feedback during the whole process of writing.

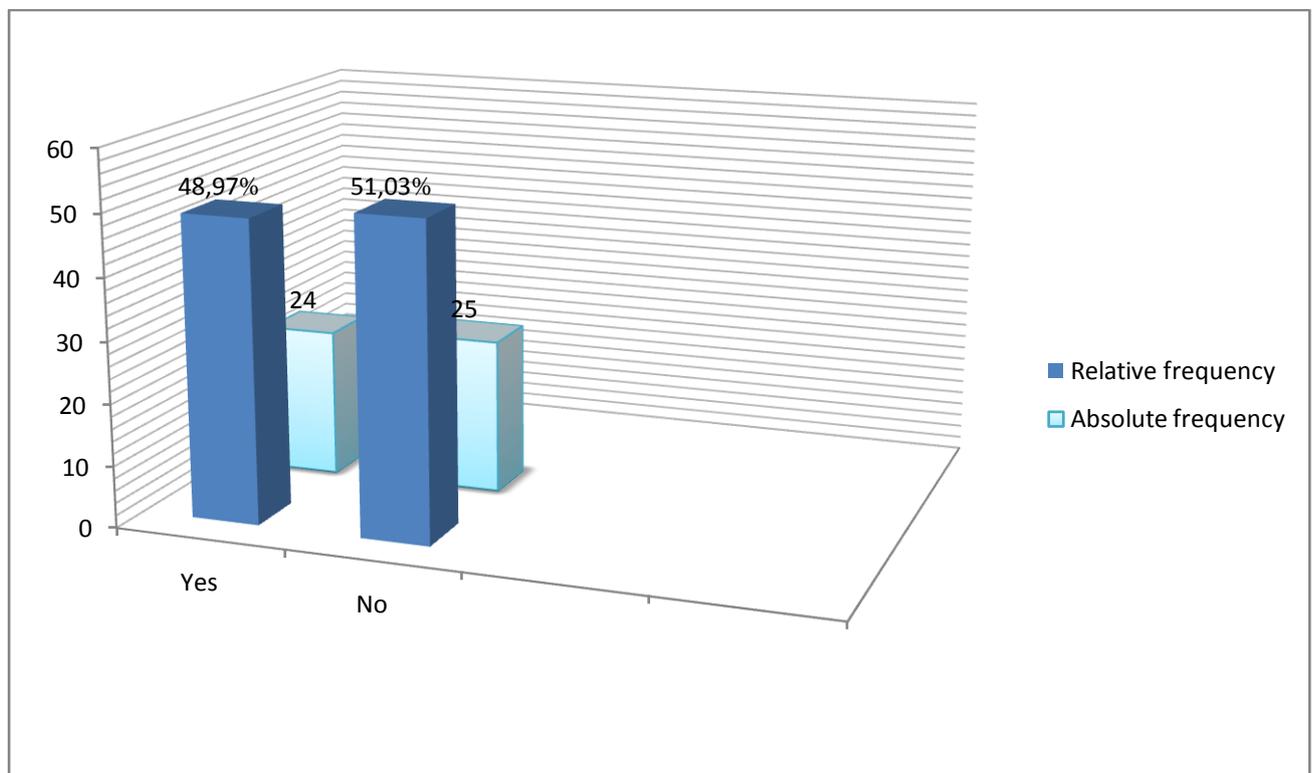


Figure 4.24: Students' Receipt of Feedback once they finish their Drafts

Question31: To know on which areas the teacher focuses when giving feedback.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Grammar | 19 | 38,77% |
| Spelling | 28 | 57,15% |
| Punctuation | 2 | 4,08% |

Table 4.27: Teacher's Focus when giving Feedback

The results show that twenty-eight students reported that spelling was the major area their teacher focused on when giving feedback. Nineteen students declared that their teacher focused more on correcting their grammar mistakes. Only two students said that their teacher focused on punctuation when evaluating their drafts (see figure 4.26).

Evaluation should include a variety of English language areas. Therefore, spelling, grammar, and punctuation are important perspectives that students should regard while writing. the teacher should make his students aware that their writings are to be read and evaluated by readers.

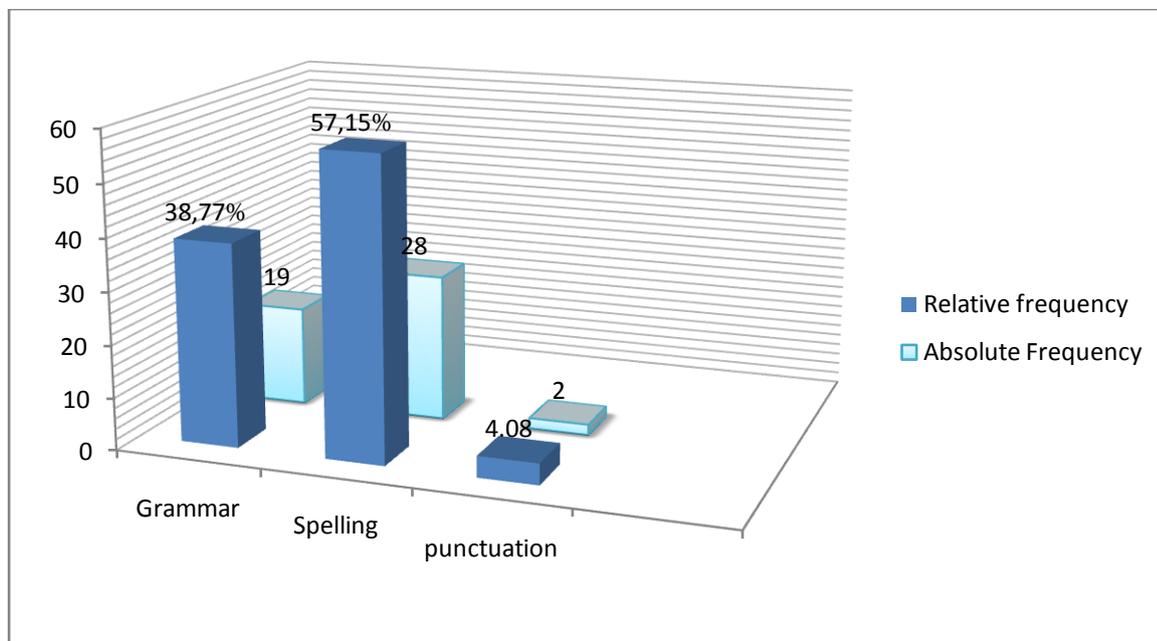


Figure 4.25: Teacher's Focus when giving Feedback

Question32: To know whether the teacher's feedback helps students to produce better texts.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 39 | 79,59% |
| No | 10 | 20,41% |

Table 4.28: Teacher's Feedback in helping Students to produce Better Texts

Thirty-nine students reported that the teachers feedback helped them to produce better texts while ten students said that such feedback did not help them to improve their writing.(see figure 4.27)

From these results, one can understand that the teacher's feedback is of paramount importance to students in helping them to develop their writing.

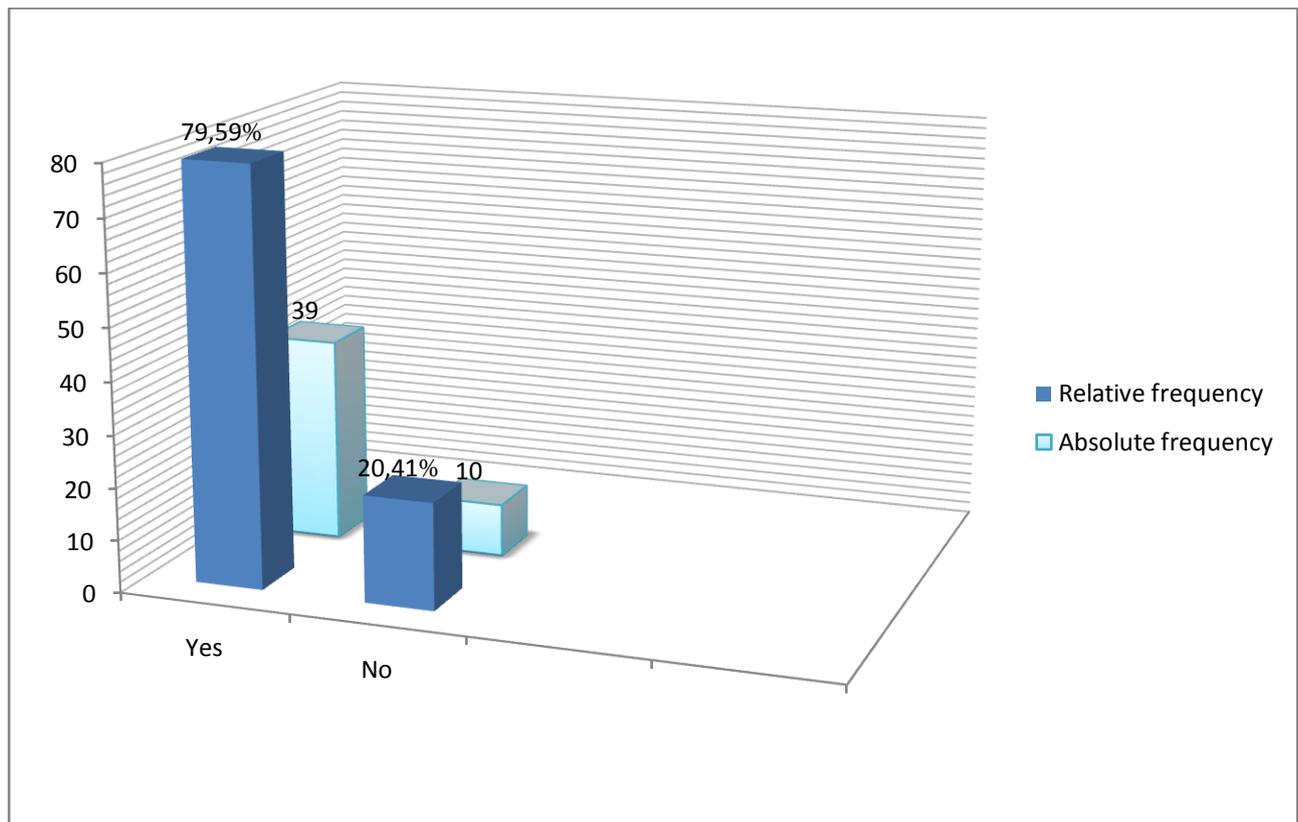


Figure 4.26: Teacher's Feedback in helping Students to produce Better Texts

Question33: To know if students could figure out the causes of their under achievements in writing without their teacher's help.

| | Absolute frequency | Relative frequency |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 39 | 79,59% |
| No | 10 | 20,41% |

Table 4.29: Students' Ability to figure out the Causes of their Under- achievements in Writing without their Teacher's Help.

Thirty-nine students stated that they could not figure out the causes of their under achievements in writing without the help of their teacher. Ten students reported that they could figure out these causes themselves. (see figure 4.28)

Accordingly, the teacher plays a dynamic role in helping students recognize the causes which lead to their under achievements in writing. One assumption here is that if the teacher makes his students aware of their mistakes, they would develop their writing performance.

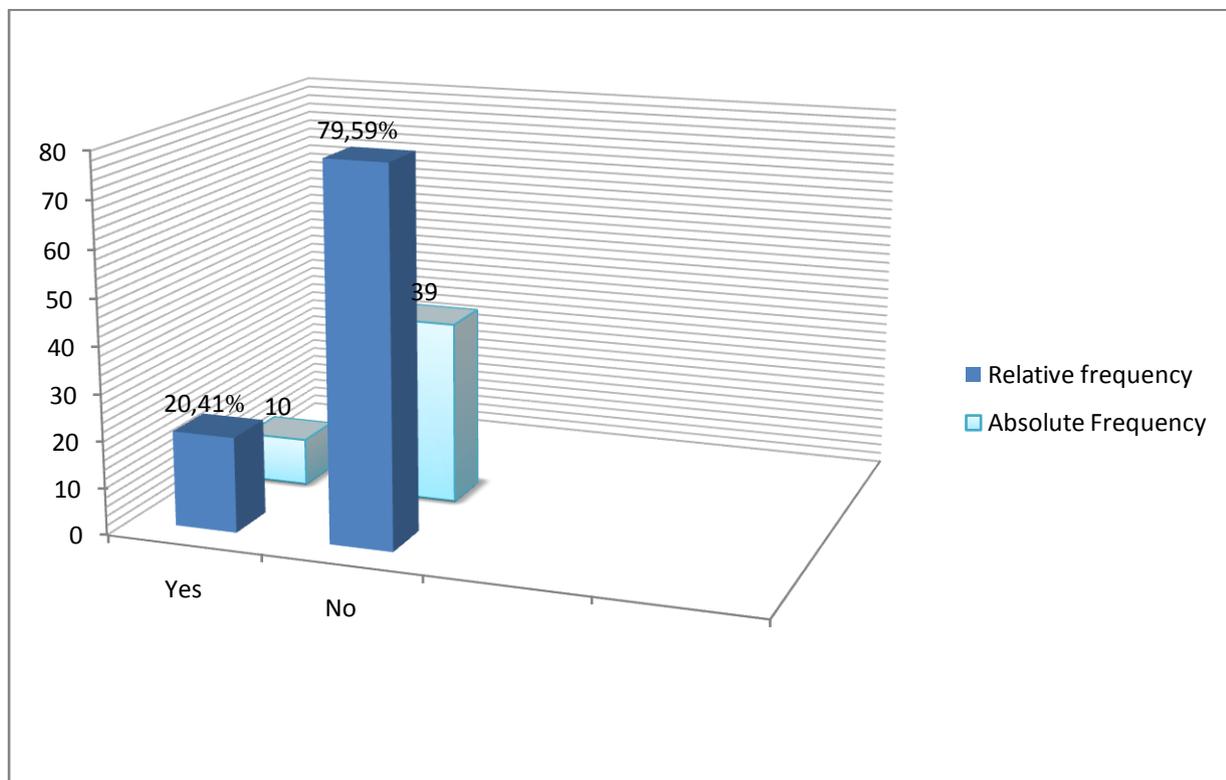


Figure 4.27: Students' Ability to figure out the Causes of their Under- achievements in Writing without their Teacher's Help.

4.1.2. Commentary of Results

The data collected from the students' questionnaire, concerning learning the writing skill, confirm the problem faced by the learners. They revealed that the students, under investigation, have the felt need to develop their writing skill to be able to write business texts required for their future job application. Primacy is given to reading and speaking while no room is reserved for writing to be practiced in class. All students have to do is to read the drafts they write at home.

Little guidance was provided while giving the writing activity as homework. The teacher explained for his students what to do but not how to do it. This resulted students' under achievement and disability to write. For these reasons, the majority of students showed their negative attitudes to learning writing though some of them declared their felt need to practice such a skill.

One of the main causes of students' lack of success in performing the writing skill is time constraints. Being the language of business nowadays, English urges itself to be learned for longer periods. Hereby, both students and teacher showed their dissatisfaction with the time allocated for English learning. One hour and a half is not enough to deal with the different language areas.

As far as business English learning is concerned, most students insisted on the importance of business English in developing their knowledge and increasing their chances in getting a job. The students reported that usually they did not write business texts and those who did declared their ignorance of the communicative purpose in writing these texts.

Additionally, the majority of students showed their dissatisfaction with the provided writing activities. They claimed that they were not enough to make them familiar with business genres. Students also thought that their performance in writing business genres would be improved if they received more guidance as to be provided with some model texts.

Students declared that they faced problems with different areas of language like grammar, structure, and meaning and that they lack the ability to find appropriate words and ideas when they came to write.

Once again, and due to time constraints, no regular ongoing evaluation is provided from the part of the teacher when students finished writing. This does not help students to

recognize their mistakes and feel confident to share their drafts with their friends or read them aloud.

All these results confirm our hypothesis which indicates that providing guidance to students before setting them to write may be of a great deal of help to make them familiar with texts and genres specific to their speciality; that is business, and to make them aware of the distinctive features and special structures of business genres.

4.2. Summary of Data obtained from Students' Questionnaire

| Section One: Background Information | |
|---|--|
| Students' Sex | 16 Male and 33female |
| Students' Age | Between 19 and 26 years |
| Section Two: Schooling Information | |
| Number of years of English study | From 8 to 12 years |
| Number of years of English study at university | From 2 to 5 years |
| Number of hours of English study | One hour and a half per week |
| Section Three: Information about English language learning | |
| The importance of business English for the students' future job | Yes |
| Areas of difficulty in English learning | Writing and listening come first, followed by grammar, reading, vocabulary, then speaking. |
| Teacher's focus in teaching business English | Terminology rather than texts |
| Importance of the four skills | 1. Listening 2. Reading 3. Speaking 1. Writing |
| English use concerning writing and speaking | Students used English more in their speech. |
| Number of hours allocated to learning writing | 30 minutes maximum. |
| Section Four: Attitudes towards writing | |
| Students' attitude towards writing | Not that positive |
| Students' self confidence in finding good words and ideas | Yes |
| Students' self confidence as writers | No |
| Difficulty in grammar | Yes |
| Difficulty in structure | Yes |
| Difficulty in meaning | Yes |

4.2. Follow up

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Teacher's guidance to students to produce correct sentences | Yes |
| Section Five: Writing for business English | |
| Students' production of texts | No |
| Production of business texts | No |
| Students' familiarity with some business genres | The most familiar genre is e-mails |
| Students' knowledge of their audience in writing business genres | Yes |
| Students' knowledge of the communicative purpose of business genres | No |
| Students' satisfaction with the provided writing tasks | No |
| providing students with models of business genres | No |
| students' well performance when provided with model texts | Yes |
| Students' ability to write depending on the topic, the audience, and the purpose | No |
| Section six: Evaluation of writing | |
| Students' attitudes in sharing their drafts with friends | Positive |
| Students' attitudes in reading aloud their drafts to listeners | Negative |
| Students' receipt of feedback once they finish their drafts | No |
| Teacher's focus when giving feedback | Spelling and grammar |
| The teacher's feedback in helping students to produce better texts | Yes |
| Students' ability to figure out the causes of their under achievements in writing without their teacher's help | Yes |

4.3. Teacher's Interview

The very objective of this interview is to have an idea of how writing is approached by the teacher, the students' attitudes to learn the writing skill, the difficulties encountered by the teacher and his students in learning English in general and writing in particular. It also aims at figuring out the major constraints behind the students' low proficiency in English learning.

The structured interview was arranged with the language teacher who has been teaching English for four years at the Department of Economics.

4.3.1. Analysis

The answers obtained from the teacher's interview will be analyzed in the following section.

Section One: Background Information

Interview question1: What is your professional qualification?

The teacher is a full time teacher, a holder of a 'Magister' degree in Economics and whose teaching experience is about 7 years at the Department of Economics. He is also a part time teacher of English in the same department.

Interview question2: How long have you been teaching English?

The teacher reported that his experience in teaching English is that of 4 years.

Interview question3: How long have you been teaching in the Department of Economics?

Concerning teaching Economics, the teacher reported that he had the experience of 7 years. As far as English teaching in the Economics Department is concerned, he had been teaching for 4 years.

Interview question4: Did you have any experience in teaching English for Specific Purposes prior to your current position?

Concerning this question, the teacher declared that he had no experience in teaching English before his current position.

Interview question5: Have you ever had any training in teaching ESP?

The teacher had never had any training in teaching ESP.

Section Two: The Special Area of ESP (Business English)

Interview question6: How comfortable and confident do you feel in working with Business English?

The teacher said that he felt well when teaching BE.

Interview question7: How did you acquire knowledge on Business English?

The teacher stated that he had acquired knowledge on BE through exhaustive reading whether from books or from the Internet.

Interview question8: Do you feel less confident with:

a-The subject matter (Business or Economics)?

Yes

No

b-English as a language?

Yes

No

The teacher expressed his total confidence with the subject matter which is BE. Concerning English, he felt that he was not that confident.

Interview question9: Do you feel the need for ESP training?

The teacher expressed his felt need for such a training as he claimed that it would be useful for both teachers and students.

Interview question10: Are you currently using a course book for Business English courses at your institution?

The teacher said that he was using a course book for Business English courses at the Department of Economics entitled: *English for Business and Economics*. He said that

this course book was not provided by the institution but he selected and adapted it as he thought it was appropriate for ESP courses.

Interview question11: If yes, do you think that its content meets the students' needs?

The teacher viewed the content as appropriate to meet his students' needs because it is about their speciality.

Interview question12: What do you teach in your ESP classes?

The teacher said that he was following the course book content.

Interview question13: On which skills do you focus more while teaching?

The teacher reported that he gave priority to teaching the reading skill, followed by speaking and then writing.

Interview question14: Do you feel that the ESP class prepares Economics students for using English in their future job?

The teacher said that the ESP class was not that effective to prepare Economics students for using English in their future job.

Interview question15: Why?

The teacher justified his answer to question15 as he believed that the very end of the ESP class is to make students ready for any challenge in their future job. He added that students need to practice the four skills to be ready enough for such a challenge.

Interview question16: What skills do you feel your students need more to improve their English?

Concerning this question, the teacher strongly believed that primacy should be given to reading and writing.

Section Three: Teaching the Writing Skill

Interview question17: What are your students' attitudes towards learning the writing skill?

The teacher described his students' attitudes to learning writing as negative. "There is a total neglect because of lack of background", the teacher added. The teacher viewed this lack of background as " a black whole which hinders the students to write".

Interview question18: Do you apply any approach in teaching writing?

The teacher reported that he had no background on the different approaches to teaching writing but after an explanation from the investigator, he could say that since he focused on correctness and as he saw writing as a final product "the approach is the product one".

Interview question19: Do you set your students to write?

The teacher confessed that he did not set his students to write during class time but he always asked them to write at home.

Interview question20: Do you evaluate their writings?

The teacher said that he tried to evaluate his students' writings but not usually.

Interview question21: If yes, on which areas do you focus when evaluating their writings?

The teacher reported that when evaluating students' drafts, he focused on the usage. That is to say, on grammar and spelling mistakes.

Interview question22: Do you think you provide enough time for students to write?

The teacher said that no enough time is provided to students to practice writing during the course. This is the main cause why he asked them to write at home.

Section Four: Writing in Business English

Interview question23: Do you set students to write business genres?

The teacher said that most of the time students were asked to write short summaries or to translate some texts, which their content is in the topic of Economics, into Arabic.

Interview question24: Don't you think that your students should learn how to write business genres?

The teacher strongly agreed that his students need to know how to write business genres. He believed that the majority of them were not familiar with such genres.

Interview question25: Are you satisfied with the writing tasks provided in the course book?

As far as this question is concerned, the teacher expressed his dissatisfaction with the provided tasks in the course book. He said that he found them so difficult to accomplish, as he lacked the appropriate way to perform them.

Interview question26: Have you tried to design writing tasks where you provide students with model texts?

The teacher reported that he tried to do from time to time. He stated that the designed tasks were in the topic of Business or Economics but he rarely provided model texts. He said that he focused more on giving vocabulary related to Business.

Interview question27: Do you explain to students what and how to write ?

The teacher reported that he explained to students the writing task but not how to perform it. Explanation, discussion, and communication took place in class while practicing writing was always done at home because no enough time was available.

Interview question28: What can you add concerning teaching the writing skill and teaching English in general?

The teacher stated that we should re-think of the position of English in our universities. He believed that learning English urges itself more and more. He added that fluency and accuracy are important to survive in the world of business. He strongly believed that students should spend a whole year learning English without learning any other subject besides. He viewed that students failure in English was due to lack of background. The teacher insisted on providing enough time to students in order to achieve success. In addition, he related future professional success to effective academic learning.

4.3.2. Commentary of Results

The data obtained from the teacher's interview confirm our hypothesis as far as approaching teaching writing to Economics students. The teacher expressed his felt need for a way to help him teach the writing skill.

we assume that having no ESP training may cause the teacher's low performance in teaching English in general and the writing skill in particular. We can clearly see that the teacher lacks knowledge of the approaches to teaching writing though the techniques he uses to correct the students' drafts indicate that he applied the product approach without being aware of that. Accordingly, the teacher himself expressed his need for a training to improve ESP teaching and teaching the writing skill in particular.

" Practice teaches success"; but as no practice is done in learning the writing skill in class, no success is achieved. For this, we strongly believe that students should spend enough time practicing writing in class with ongoing help and guidance from their teacher. In addition, correcting students drafts should focus on both structure and meaning and should be ongoing as well.

Concerning writing in business English, we think that the writing tasks should make students familiar with the necessary business genres to cope with future job communications. In this respect, the GA to teaching writing would be of a great deal of help for teacher to introduce the tasks with more confidence and less difficulty, and for students to practice writing and acquire more knowledge on the genres of business .

The position of English in the Economics Department, as indicated by the teacher, should be improved. It is important for students to learn the discourse of Business through which they will communicate. This will be only achieved if enough time is provided. Both teacher and students expressed their dissatisfaction with the time allocated to the English sessions. They believed that such sessions should be extended to allow them cover the different language areas and to reserve a time to evaluate the students' performance in learning the four skills.

Conclusion

The main results obtained from this chapter confirm our assumptions that both students and teachers are in need of an effective guidance to overcome the difficulties surrounding teaching and learning the writing skill. The students and their teacher expressed their felt need for such a guidance. Therefore, we are now confident enough that our hypothesis may just be a fruitful solution to teaching writing by presenting text models at the beginning of the task, and then gradually withdrawing these models to develop students to write autonomously.

Additionally, it is remarkable that students need to practice writing during class time. They need their teacher's guidance while writing. As indicated earlier in chapter one, writing is a cognitive process which needs thinking. Thus, students need enough time to perform such an activity.

The next chapter provides suggested writing tasks designed according to the GA. Teachers can use these tasks with more confidence during class time and set students to practice writing. The provided recommendations are instructions for ESP teachers to design writing tasks, in regard to their students' needs, according to the GA.

Some steps concerning the GA are fundamental perspectives which are carefully regarded while designing the writing tasks. Being guided how to perform such tasks, students would practice writing starting from following and analyzing a text model, then later on writing a similar text in respect to the moves and structures which characterize the text.

Chapter Five: Suggested Writing Activities Based on the Genre Approach

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Introduction

This chapter will provide both students and teachers with examples of writing tasks based on the GA where model texts of Business are presented. Thus, we hope that the suggested tasks would be a kind of guidance for them on how to apply the GA to teaching writing. The chapter also aims at making students aware of the standard structures and expressions that are commonly used for a specific genre and more clarification is provided in appendices (D&E). We strongly believe that once students become familiar with these structures and expressions, they will find it easy to write Business texts according to the set conventions.

This chapter starts with recommendations for BE teachers on how to design a writing task according to the GA. These recommendations may be of a great help not only for BE teachers but for ESP teachers as well. As stated earlier in this study, "students need to be taught the hidden rules of the game". In this respect, it is the role of the ESP practitioner to make these rules explicit for students to be ready enough for workplace challenges.

5.1. Recommendations for BE Teachers

How to design a genre-based communicative task? (3 The Genre Approach (II), nd, pp. 18-19)

Note that many writing tasks, students complete in a GA writing class, are communication-oriented. When we design a writing task in a GA course, we should create an appropriate communication environment in which the task is called for. Let us take the scenario of job application and the genre of application letter as an example to illustrate the steps or principles for designing a communication environment for a communicative writing task.

1. Choose a **relevant, authentic or close-to-authentic communication situation or event** which calls for some written communication. (a need to apply for a job; a need to recruit applicants).
2. Choose **an appropriate and relevant genre which is needed to achieve the communication** (a job application letter and a CV).

3. Create **the details of the communication context**:

- Wherever possible create some **realistic details of the key participants (readers & writers)** involved in the communication situation, e.g., the writer being a job applicant, who is a fresh graduate from a local university specializing in computer graphic design. etc; the readers being the potential employer and the personnel manager of a start-up advertising company looking for an IT-artist who is creative, energetic and committed applicants.
- To your best knowledge, outline the culture, nature, beliefs, values, requirements, and expectations of the key players and their discourse communities (e.g., a local advertising company which advertises different up-market products, etc., which requires employees to do a lot of team work, visit clients, etc.)
- These details are necessary for students to work with to complete the task. Ensure that there is internal logic among the details of the situation to solve the writing ‘problem’ or ‘need’.

4. Create the writing task which involves some **actions and a product** (e.g., to write an application letter and a CV) and **a topic or an event** (e.g., responding to a managerial position advertised in SCMP).

5. Set some **necessary constraints** (e.g., length of the letter, real/assigned names of the key players, etc.). Note that constraints are not always a must unless they are genre-specific constraints (e.g., all business letters are short). Some teachers set a cap on the length of students’ writing because they want to control the time spent on grading, while other teachers do this out the concern of students’ time management.

Note 1: The more **advanced** the class, the bigger need there is to **detail** all the above 5 items.

Note 2: The **less advanced** the class, the bigger need there is to **simplify** the task.

5.2. Suggested Writing Tasks based on the Genre Approach

Suggested Task One: Writing a Job Application Letter (Palmer, 2011)

Advertisement

Our gift shop at Kansai International Airport is looking for a part time worker. The successful candidate will be punctual and polite. The job requires being able to speak a little English, but confidence is more important than ability. The pay is 1,600 yen an hour. If you are interested, please write a letter of application in English to Mr. Watanabe.

Note:

- Teachers should provide students with a job application model (Appendix E)
- Analyze the model text:
 - ✓ Have students notice particular features common to the genre: that the addresser name is stated; that the addressee name or the company name is stated; that the addresser is applying for the job and the source from where he gets the information are stated; what makes the addresser suited for the job (his qualifications).
 - ✓ Have students notice the different elements of a job application cover: the address; the date; the inside address; the salutation; the opening; the focus; the action; the closing; the complimentary close; the signature; the enclosure.
 - ✓ At a more detailed level of textual analysis, the use of subject and present tense verbs is typical of the direct, factual information that can lend a feeling of trust.
- Set students to complete the following job application as a response to the advertisement above as a kind of controlled writing.

Dear Mr. Watanabe,

I was very interested to read the advertisement you placed in today's newspaper and am writing to apply for the job.

[Writing task]

I am...

I think I am the right person for this job because...

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

- For a more developing step, teachers may set students to write a job application letter as a kind of free or independent writing.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

UPS is hiring individuals to work as part-time Package Handlers. This is a physical, fast-paced position that involves continual lifting, lowering and sliding packages that typically weigh 25 - 35 lbs. and may weigh up to 70 lbs. Part-time employees usually work 3 to 4 hours each weekday (Monday through Friday) and typically do not work on weekends or selected holidays.

Package Handlers receive an hourly rate of \$8.50 – \$9.50.

Retrieved Nov. 1, 2011:

<https://ups.managehr.com/screening/hourly/apply.aspx?l=LAALE&p=1&src=P13>

practice

Replying to the job description above, write a job application letter stating why you are suited for the job.

- Note: More explanation on how to write a job application letter is provided in appendix E .

Suggested Task Two: Writing a Fax ordering Supplies

- The body of a fax ordering supplies generally has four parts. They are displayed in table below.
 - a) Try to order the four parts to accomplish the communicative purpose of this business genre.
 - b) Match each part and communicative move with their relative example.

| Part | Communicative move | Example |
|----------------|---|--|
| Focus | Tell when you need the item. Tell how to deliver the item. | These components should arrive no later than the stock dates noted in the purchase order. Delivery instructions are detailed in the purchase |
| Opening | Tell what you are ordering | If you have any questions concerning our order, please do not hesitate to contact me. |
| Closing | Ask them to contact you if necessary | I'm sending by fax Purchase Order 113512 for the following chip sets and drives. |
| Action | Tell how you will pay for the item | As you discussed in your November 23telephone conversation with M.Simpson, you offered to waive shipping costs and to give a 10 percent discount. We appreciate the offer and, as with previous orders, will pay upon receipt of an invoice and the components.... |

c) Complete the following order fax with the communicative moves in the table above.

| | |
|---|--|
| | Guangzhu Exports No. 6 Shamian South Street Guangzhou 510133 Phone (86-20) 8120-8777 Fax (86-20) 8120-8778 |
| March 18, 20_ | |
| Ms. Carmen Santana Go Manufacturing Western Industrial Zone Guangzhou 511356 | |
| Dear Ms. Santana: | |
| 1..... | |
| 2..... | |
| 3..... | |
| 4..... | |
| Sincerely yours, John Yu | |

Practice

Following the model above, write an "order fax" asking for the supplies in the following table.

| Purchase Order 8940 | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|
| Item | Item number | Quantity |
| File folders | ESS-128 | 6 boxes |
| Stick-on notes | MMM-7662 | 100 packs |
| Ship to: Melanie Brown Office Services | Send invoice to: Same | |

Suggested Task Three: A Genre Awareness Activity

(proposed by Miller, 2011)

- Look at the table below and try to come up with a list of possible combinations of:

Text type/Genre + Audience + Purpose

- ✓ Possible combination:

Memo + boss/president of company/ customer + to persuade/to complain/to explain

- ☒ Impossible combination:

Memo + family + to entertain

| Text type/ Genre | Audience | Purpose |
|------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Memo | Friend | To inform |
| Email | Teacher | To entertain |
| Advertisement | Customer | To explain |
| Thank-you card | Boss | To complain |
| SMS Text Message | President of a company | To request To describe |

5.3. Recommendations for Further Research

According to Bhatia (2002), the main goals of genre theory are:

- to represent and account for the seemingly chaotic realities of the world;
- to understand and account for the private intentions of the author, in addition to socially recognized communicative purposes;
- to understand how language is used in and shaped by socio-critical environment; and,
- to offer effective solutions to pedagogical and other applied linguistic problems.

Starting from this latter goal, the GA is considered a remedy for pedagogical problems. It can be applied in academic settings to facilitate the task of learning a foreign language like English. As such, we can come out with the following recommendations for further research:

- ❖ students of Business and Economics should learn the discourse of Business English besides learning grammar and vocabulary items.
- ❖ Grammar and vocabulary can be taught via discourse (business and economic texts, see appendix E).
- ❖ Achieving communicative acts is the target of learning and teaching Business English.
- ❖ Teachers of Business English should introduce authentic texts to students.
- ❖ Writing activities should reflect the students' real world; they should be stemmed from their real context (applying for a job).
- ❖ Beginner learners should be taught business genres explicitly. Therefore, teachers should go through all stages of teaching genres from modeling to reaching independent writing.
- ❖ Teachers may set students in a role play situation to achieve better writing (applying for /replying to a job).
- ❖ Learners should be made aware that their writings are responses to socially recognized communicative situations.
- ❖ Writing is a problem-solving activity. Therefore, whole courses should be reserved for such a task with providing both guidance and evaluation from the teacher's part.

- ❖ One path to successful communication is through the implementation of genre analysis in communicative events.
- ❖ Learners' knowledge of both linguistic competence and of the appropriate structure of genres and forms are an essential requirement for successful and effective communication both in verbal and written forms.
- ❖ In short, Language teaching programs and classes should not only focus on the teaching of micro-level linguistic components of any communicative event (e.g., words, phrases, sentences) but also on making trainees aware of the macro-level language components (e.g., discourse structure, rhetorical organization).

Conclusion

Setting students to practice writing tasks which meet their interest is one way to enhance their motivation and foster their learning. By explaining explicitly for students what and how to write, their negative attitudes towards learning such a skill will diminish gradually. We do strongly believe that the task of teaching and learning is more or less a matter of raising interest and awareness. Once the designed tasks reflect the learners' everyday situations, they will be willing to learn how to write in order to solve problems.

Instructions for teachers on how to design a writing task according to the GA were provided. Thus, teachers will feel at ease to design their own tasks and overcome the difficulties once found in course books (Appendix C). teachers can vary the way they design writing activities starting from guided, to less guided, then reaching free or independent writing.

We focused in this chapter on suggesting writing tasks based on the GA. Bhatia (2002) stated that the generic systems within business communities are: memos, letters, reports, and case studies. He argued that such genres may facilitate communication not only between the community members but also between community members and other people outside the community. Accordingly, we tried to introduce some of these genres where models are provided as a first stage for learners to have an idea of how such genres are shaped.

In order not to lose sight on teaching grammar and vocabulary, further tasks are provided in Appendix E where these micro-linguistic components appropriate for the business genre are introduced. Yet, we do believe that teaching the micro-linguistic level

should be inseparable from teaching the macro-linguistic level. The former should be looked at just as a useful tool to reach the latter's purpose which is communication.

General Conclusion

While the Genre-based Approach is not the final step on the long road to improve Economics students' knowledge of English, it has potential to make a significant contribution to the education achievement in academic setting, as many scholars and linguists argue in this study. Its main concern is to make students think in an organized and reasonable way when they come to write. As such, genre-based teaching approaches are finding their place in writing courses for developing students' sensitivity or awareness to diverse genres and facilitating students' writing tasks of different genres.

The results of this research support the assertion that lack of guidance and time constraints were major factors behind students inability to write. Economics students expressed their need for a first input as to be provided with model texts to free them from their severe worries over writing. The findings also stated that students were not aware of the diversity of business genres. They were not aware of the communicative purposes of these genres and hence, they could not generate words and ideas to write coherently. This reveals the necessity for teachers to address these issues in order to make them better writers.

One point related to the findings of this research is worth noting here. That is the fact that the students are set to write at home. Due to time constraints, they did never practice writing in class. Much time was devoted to teaching reading and grammar while writing was left as a homework. As such, students thought that their writing would improve once teachers provide model texts and elevate their awareness of written structures.

The very significance of this study is expressed in the last chapter. Some activities designed according to the GA were provided. Thus:

- Teachers would teach writing explicitly and remind students that their writings should convey communicative purposes.
- Teachers would also overcome the difficulties they faced when they come to teach writing and allow some practice to be done during the course.
- Teachers would look at texts as communicative events rather than final products.

- Students would change their negative attitudes towards writing and be keen on learning how to write business texts to improve their communicative and sociolinguistic competence.
- Students would acquire knowledge on how texts related to their field of study are structured, and make use of them in their future career each according to the communicative purpose it addresses.

One more important point is that the GA to teaching students how to write business genres can sensitize students to the structures of such genres and the motivations behind them. The advantage of using this approach lies in its strength in considering business language teaching as a knowledge building process. This makes it possible for students to exploit linguistic resources creatively to achieve their personal goals in their writing. This study is no more than a tentative attempt concerning the teaching of business genres writing based on the GA with a view to demonstrating how students can be taught to adapt to and acquire a genre. The arguments and the writing tasks presented in the study can also be applied to the teaching of writing other genres.

The implementation of the GA in writing classes is with no doubt an endeavor which will modify students' vision and perception of a text. Building the awareness among students about different discourse communities and their needs may turn out to be helpful for future practitioners, especially in the fields where ESP is a key element of successful communication. The approach proves its effectiveness not only in teaching the writing skill but also in teaching the other language skills like speaking (Frendo, 2005), and reading (Minabad & Khoshkholgh, 2012). Thus, ESP teachers can make use of the GA to foster students' learning and know how to deal with the different learning situations.

Given the positive learning outcomes of the use of this approach in this one context, it would be valuable to implement such an approach in other settings to determine its usefulness across the broader ESP contexts.

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Appendices:

Appendix A:

The Genre-Based Approach to Teaching Writing for Business Purposes

The given questionnaire is a part of a study that investigates approaching teaching writing through adapting a genre model to 3rd year LMD students at the Department of Economics in Mohamed Boudiaf University, M'sila.

The Questionnaire

I would be so grateful to you if you fill this questionnaire in a complete way.

A/ Background information:

1. What is your gender?

a- Male

b- Female

2. What is your age?

.....

B/ schooling information:

3. For how long have you been learning English?

.....

4. For how long have you been studying English at university?

.....

5. How many hours per week do you study English?

.....

C/ Information about English language learning

6. How can learning English for business purposes help you more in your future job?

7. On which of the following areas do you feel at ease?

- Vocabulary

- Grammar

- Listening

- Speaking

- Reading

- Writing

8. Does your teacher focus more on:

- Teaching terminology of business English?
- Texts (genres) of business English?

9. What skills are you likely to learn more?(put numbers:1-2-3-4)

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

10. What do you usually use English for?

- To speak
- To write

11. How many class hours do you spend to learn the writing skill?

.....

D/ Attitudes toward writing:

12. Do you enjoy writing?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

13. In general do you trust yourself as a person who can find good words and ideas?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

14. Do you think of yourself as a writer?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....

15. Do you face problems with grammar?

- Yes
- no

16. Do you face problems with structure?

- Yes
- No

17. Do you face problems with meaning?

- Yes
- No

E/ Writing for Business English:

18. Do you write texts?

- Yes
- No

19 . If yes, are they genres of business English?

- Yes
- No

20. Which of the following business genres are you familiar with?

- Faxes
- Letters
- Reports
- e-mails

21. Do you know who is your audience in writing such a genre?

- Yes
- No

22. Do you know what is the communicative purpose in writing such a genre?

- Yes
- No

23. Do you think that the provided writing tasks are enough to make you familiar with business genres?

- Yes
- No

24. Does your teacher provide you with model texts of these genres?

- Yes
- No

25. If yes, do you think you would write in a better way?

- Yes
- No

26. Can you vary the way you go about writing depending on the situation, the topic, the audience, the type of writing, the purpose and so on?

- Yes
- No

27. Does your teacher guide you to produce correct sentences?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

G/ Feedback:

28. Can you enjoy sharing with friends a draft of what you have written?

- Yes
- No

29. Can you read aloud to listeners your draft?

- Yes
- No

30. Does your teacher provide you with feedback once you finish your draft?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

31. In doing so, does he put remarks regarding:

a- Grammar

b- Spelling?

o

c- Punctuation? Yes

No

32. Does his feedback help you learn from your mistakes so that you would produce better texts?

- Yes
- No

33. When you notice problems in your writing can you figure out what the causes are without the help of your teacher?

- Yes
- No

Appendix B

The Genre-based Approach to Teaching Writing for Business Purposes

This interview is a part of a study that investigates approaching teaching writing through adapting a genre model to 3rd year LMD students at the Department of Economics in Mohamed Boudiaf University- M'sila-.

Teacher's Interview

Section One: Background Information

1. What is your professional qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching English?
3. How long have you been teaching in the department of economics?
4. Did you have any experience in teaching English for Specific Purposes prior to your current position?
5. Have you ever had any training in teaching ESP?

Section Two: The Special Area of ESP (Business English)

6. How comfortable and confident do you feel in working with business English?
7. How did you acquire knowledge on business English?
8. Do you feel less confident with:
 - The subject matter (business or economy)?
Yes
No
 - English as a language?
Yes
No
9. Do you feel the need for ESP training?

10. Are you currently using a course book for Business English courses at your institution?
11. If yes, do you think that its content meets the students 'needs?
12. What do you teach in your ESP classes?
13. On which skills do you focus more while teaching?
14. Do you feel that the ESP class prepares economy students for using English in their future job?
15. Why?
16. What skills do you feel your students need more to improve their English?

Section Three: Teaching the Writing Skill

17. What are your students 'attitudes towards learning the writing skill?
18. Do you apply any approach in teaching writing ?
19. Do you set your students to write?
20. Do you evaluate their writings?
21. On which areas do you focus when evaluating their writings?
22. Do you think you provide enough time for students to write?

Section Four: Writing in Business English

23. Do you set students to write business genres?
24. Don't you think that your students should learn how to write business genres?
25. Are you satisfied with the writing tasks provided in the course book?
26. Have you tried to design writing tasks where you provide students with model texts?
27. Do you explain to students what and how to write?
28. What can you add concerning teaching the writing skill and teaching English in general?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix C

Transcription of the Teacher's Interview

1. What is your professional qualification?

« I have a Magister degree in Economics».

2. How long have you been teaching English?

« For four years».

3. How long have you been teaching in the department of economics?

«About 7 years».

4. Did you have any experience in teaching English for Specific Purposes prior to your current position?

«Never, I had no experience before».

5. Have you ever had any training in teaching ESP?

«No, at all».

6. How comfortable and confident do you feel in working with Business English?

«I feel well».

7. How did you acquire knowledge on Business English?

«Through reading books, mainly from the Internet».

8. Do you feel less confident with:

a) The subject matter (Business or Economics)?

«I feel quite confident with the subject matter».

b) English as a language?

« Somehow; I mean, I don't feel that confident».

9. Do you feel the need for ESP training?

«Sure, I need, I hope».

10. Are you currently using a course book for Business English courses at your institution?

«Yes, I'm using a book entitled ' English for Business and Economics'. It is not provided by the department but I adapted it as a teaching material».

11. If yes, do you think that its content meets the students 'needs?

«Yes, I think it does; because its content is oriented to their speciality».

12. What do you teach in your ESP classes?

« I follow the manual».

13. On which skills do you focus more while teaching?

« I focus on teaching reading and speaking. Concerning writing, I devote less time».

14. Do you feel that the ESP class prepares economy students for using English in their future job?

« Not that much».

15. Why?

« I believe that students should spend more time practicing the four skills ».

16. What skills do you feel your students need more to improve their English?

«Reading and writing».

17. What are your students 'attitudes towards learning the writing skill?

«I can describe their attitudes as negative. There is a total neglect because of lack of background. It is really a black hole».

18. Do you apply any approach in teaching writing ?

«In fact I have no background on the approaches to teaching writing. All I can say that I view writing as a final product».

19. Do you set your students to write?

«No enough time is provided during the course. So, due to lack of time I ask them to write at home».

20. Do you evaluate their writings?

«I try».

21. On which areas do you focus when evaluating their writings?

«I usually focus on usage».

22. Do you think you provide enough time for students to write?

«No, at all. That's why I ask them to write at home».

23. Do you set students to write business genres?

«No, most of the time I ask them to summarize economic texts or to translate them into Arabic. The tasks are in the topic of business but they are not about writing business genres».

24. Don't you think that your students should learn how to write business genres?

«Yes, of course. I believe that the majority of students are not familiar with business genres».

25. Are you satisfied with the writing tasks provided in the course book?

«No, at all. I find them so difficult; because no explanation on how to perform such tasks is provided».

26. Have you tried to design writing tasks where you provide students with model texts?

«Yes I tried. They are in the topic of business but I rarely provide model texts. I focus more on giving vocabulary related to business».

27. Do you explain to students what and how to write?

«I always discuss the topic with students. When translating, for example, I ask them to focus on giving correct meaning with appropriate vocabulary. Discussion takes place during the course while practice is done at home».

28. What can you add concerning teaching the writing skill and teaching English in general?

«First of all, I think that it is high time we thought of the position of English in our universities. English is dominating the scene; if you are not competent to speak fluently and to write accurately, you could not survive in the world of business. I think that students should study English 'alone' for a whole year without studying any other subject besides. Students' lack the necessary background of English to succeed in their studies...hereby, I insisted on devoting more time to students if we want to achieve success in learning the English language. Something I want to add, students' professional success is tightly related to academic learning. The more trained students are the more chances they have to get a job ».

Appendix D

Some Business Genres Models

1. Electronic Mail (E-mail)

- **Format:** Many companies send messages both internally and externally through their computers. These messages are called electronic mail or e-mail. E-mail is fast and expensive way to communicate and less formal method of correspondence.
- **Parts:** There are usually five parts to an e-mail message. The sender's name and the date and time are provided automatically by the computer. The sender types in the e-mail address of the person receiving the message, the subject, and the message.
- **Model**

| | |
|---|--|
| To: | mberry@helpinghands.com |
| From: | susanp@businesssolution.com |
| Subject: | Business Opportunity |
| Date: | Mon, July 30, 20_ 9:00 A.M. |
| Dear Mary, | |
| Business Solutions is holding an open house on Friday. I think your group would benefit from the information and networking opportunities. I have attached the details of the meeting to this e-mail. | |
| Hope to see you there. | |
| Regards, | |
| Susan | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Solutions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Open House |

2. Memos

- **Format:** A memo is generally correspondence written from one person in a company to another in the same company, or as an informal letter to someone outside the company. Block format is usually used.
- **Parts:** A memo generally has five parts.

• **Model**

- Do not include an address or title, such as Mr.
- Instead of a signature, the sender signs his or her initials next to his or her name.

- This is the date of the memo

- The subject line is sometimes abbreviated as "SUB:"

The subject line tells what the memo is about

- The body of the memo discusses the subject

{ TO: Jose Salida

{ FROM: Maria Lundry ML

{ DATE: January 4, 20_

{ SUBJECT: Company Health Insurance Policy

{ BODY:

3. Faxes

• **Format:** A fax is a type of correspondence sent electronically through phone lines

• **Parts:** A fax transmission often has two parts

a) **Cover Sheet:** if a fax is more than one page, include a cover sheet. A cover sheet is the first page of the fax. It, generally, includes the following sections: addressee's name and title, sender's name and title, sender's fax and phone numbers, date, number of pages, subject, reference line, and message.

b) **Attachment:** An attachment is the material you are sending.

• **Model**

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Addressee's Name | Marta Cebula |
| Addressee's Title | Supply Manager |
| Sender's Name: | Olga Kotwa |
| Sender's Title: | Purchasing Supervisor |
| Fax: | 620-03-85 |
| Phone: | 620-03-84 |
| Date: | June 1, 20_ |
| Number of Pages: | Cover ± 1 |
| Subject Line: | June Purchase Order |
| Message: | |

See attached purchase order for our June shipment. Please call me at 620-04-12 when you receive this fax.

Appendix E:

Suggested task 1: Writing a cover letter (Applying for a job)

a) Model Cover Letter

Look at the different elements of a cover letter.

Address: this is your personal letterhead. Put your contact information here.

e.g. Michele Peters
45 Agate Road
London NW6 OAH
Tel: 208 847 9746
Fax: 208 774 8094
E-mail: mpeters@londonmail.com

Date: e.g. March 1, 2013

Inside Address: write a cover letter to a specific person

e.g. Maria Sanchez
Human Resource Specialist
NetLives Ltd
632 Garrison Road
Cambridge CB4 1HD

Salutation: e.g. Dear Ms Sanchez:

Opening: Tell that you are applying for a job and the source of your information

e.g. I read about a job opening for an administrative assistant on the NetLives Web site.

Focus: Tell why you are suited for the job

e.g. I am a recent graduate of EMP secretarial School, and I was in the top of my class. I am looking for a challenging work environment like that at NetLives.

Action: Tell what you plan to do

e.g. I will call you next Monday to discuss my enclosed résumé.

Closing: Be positive

e.g. I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Complimentary Close: e.g. sincerely yours,

Signature: Sign your name

Typed Name: e.g. Michele Peters

Enclosure: Add this if you are sending something with the letter.

b) Composing Your Letter:

The body of a cover letter generally has four parts

| Part | Content | Example |
|---------|---|--|
| Opening | Tell that you are applying for a job and the source of your information | I read about a job opening for an administrative assistant on the NetLives Web site |
| Focus | Tell why you are suited for the job | I am a recent graduate of EMP Secretarial School, and I was in the top of my class. I am looking for a challenging work environment like that at NetLives. |
| Action | Tell what you plan to do | I will call you next Monday to discuss my enclosed résumé. |
| Closing | Be positive | I look forward to meeting you soon. |

Practice 1: Circle the letter of the sentence that is most similar to the sentence in the Model Cover Letter.

1. Opening

- a. I am applying for the position of administrative assistant.
- b. I need a job.
- c. I saw your advertisement for an administrative assistant in the November 14 *International Herald Tribune*.

2. Focus

- a. My work experience matches your requirements. I worked as an administrative assistant for two years.
- b. I'm a quick learner. I've never worked before.
- c. I have the skills required. I'm familiar with word processing programs.

3. Action

- a. I will contact you early next week.
- b. I will call you on Tuesday morning to discuss the position.
- c. I'll be at home if you need me.

4. Closing

- a. Looks good, right?
- b. I look forward to working with NetLives.
- c. I look forward to talking to you next week.

c) Writing Your Message:

1/Salutation

- Write to a specific person. Before you write, try to find out the name (and gender) of the person you are writing to.

Dear Ms. Maroon:

Dear Mr. Ping:

- If you don't know the gender, use the person's full name or initial

Dear Lin Croft:

Dear D. Maxon:

- If you don't know the name, use the person's title.

Dear Human Resource Specialist:

Dear Recruiter:

- If you know only the address, use a generic salutation

Good morning:

Practice 2 : Write the salutation for a cover letter for the following jobs. Don't forget the colon.

| Position | Source | Contact |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Customer service Representative | May 13 Herald Tribune | M. Pollard |
| 2. Administrative Assistant | A-Way.com Web site | recruiter@a-way.com |
| 3. Receptionist | IronGate.com Web site | Jane Bowles |
| 4. Executive Assistant | Word-of-mouth | Chee Yu |

- | | |
|---------------------|---------|
| 1. Dear M. Pollard: | 3. |
| 2. | 4. |

2/ Opening

In the opening of a cover letter, tell the reader two things: (1) what job you are applying for and (2) the source of your information.

Practice 3: Complete these opening sentences for cover letters for the jobs in Practice2. Use the prepositions about, for, in, and on. Some prepositions will be used more than one time.

- I saw your advertisement.....a customer service representativethe May 13 Herald Tribune.
- I am applying the position of administrative assistant announced.....the A-Way.com Web site.
-the IronGate.com Web site, I read.....openinga receptionist.
- Your colleague, Jannie Qin, told methe executive assistant opening.

3/ Focus

The body of a cover letter focuses on your skills. Briefly describe why you are suited for the job. Tell the reader how your skills match the job requirements.

Practice 4: Write sentences that describe your experience and skills and explain how you are suited for the job.

- My work experience matches your requirements.
I worked as an administrative assistant for two years.

2. My qualifications fit your needs.
3. My skills match the job requirements.
4. I have the skills required.
5. I meet the job requirements.

4/ Action:

After you send a cover letter and résumé, contact the employer. In your cover letter, give either a general or a specific time that you will call or e-mail.

General I will call you early *next week*.

Specific I will call you *next Monday*.

Practice 5: Write G if the action has a general time or S if the action has a specific time.

1.I will contact you early next week.
2.I will call you on Tuesday morning to make an appointment.
3.I will e-mail you next week to arrange an interview.
4.On Friday, I will call your assistant to set up an interview.
5.I will telephone you tomorrow to answer any questions you have.

5/ Closing:

In the closing, be sure to thank the reader for looking at your letter. Be positive. Mention a future conversation or meeting.

Practice 6: Rewrite these sentences using the expression I look forward to(+ -ing verb).

1. I want to work with IronGate.
I look forward to working with IronGate.
2. I'd like to talk to you next week.
3. I'd like to meet with you.
4. I probably should discuss my interest in A-Way with you.
5. I hope I can contribute to your team.

Letter practice 1: complete the sentences in this letter. Use the job advertisement and the words below.

Changi News
July 2, 20—

File clerk wanted. Must have high school degree. Send résumé to Mr. Paul Rook, Human Resource Director. Island International

applying- forward- part-time -Resource- enclosed- interview- position- sincerely.

(write your address here)
.....

July 17, 20—
Mr. Paul Rook
Human (1)..... Director
Island International Airport
Singapore 659589

Dear Mr. Rook:

I am (2) for the position of file clerk that was advertised in the July 2nd *Changi News*.

I worked as a (3)..... file clerk after school for three years. Now I am for a full-time position. I have (4) my résumé, and I would like to schedule an (5)

I will call you early next week to follow up on my application. I look (6)..... To discussing this (7) with you.

(8) yours.

.....(write your name here)
.....(print your name here)

Enclosure

Letter Practice 2:

In the following e-mail, the bold type shows ten places where errors were made. Write the correct word or punctuation under the errors. The first one is done for you.

To: secy6433@JobsUnLtd.com

Subject: Secretarial **Positioning**
position

Dear Recruiter ,

I am responding **for** the secretarial vacancy posted on August 16 **in** your Web site.

I have been an executive secretary **since** five years. I also have trained other **secretares** how to use word processing and accounting software ; I type over 90 wpm, and i am very organized. I have attached my résumé to this e-mail.

I will e-mail you next week to follow up on my **apply**. I look forward to **hear** from you soon.

Sincer yours,

Liu Shia

Letter Practice 3: On a separate piece of paper, write responses to the following job advertisement.

Receptionist

Entry-level, position for receptionist in dynamic construction company. You will enter data, greet customers, maintain database, and type memos. Prefer individual with good communication skills. Great compensation. Apply today!

Job experience

Filing, General Office, Data Entry

Additional Information

Salary: \$9.00 to \$12.00 per hour

Contact Information

Account Executive,

myan@constructnow.com

Suggested task2: Replying to a Job Applicant

a) Model E-mails: Replying to job Applicants

Look at the different elements of e-mails replying to job applicants.

Reply 1: Acknowledging receipt of an application

Heading:

By the e-mail program

Opening:

Tell you received
the application.

Action:

Explain the process

Closing:

Thank the applicant
for her interest

From: Grace Chen<gchen@netlives.com>
To: 'Michele Peters'<mpeters@londonmail.com>
Subject: NetLives Administrative Assistant Position
Date: Tue, Mar 7, 20—10:51:18

We received your application for the position of
administrative assistant on March 1.

At the time, we are reviewing the résumé. We will contact all
applicants that we would like to interview by March 10.

We appreciate your interest in NetLives.

Reply 2: Requesting an interview

Heading:

Is supplied automatically
By the e-mail program

Opening:

Invite the applicant for an
interview.

Action:

Explain what will happen

Closing:

Be enthusiastic

From: Grace Chen<gchen@netlives.com>
To: 'Michele Peters'<mpeters@londonmail.com>
Subject: NetLives Administrative Assistant Position
Date: Tue, Mar 7, 20—11:51:18

After reviewing your résumé, we are pleased to invite you for an
interview for the position of administrative assistant.

Your interview is scheduled for Monday, March 13th at 10:00 A.M.
please come to the Human Resource Department of our main office.
If that is not convenient, please contact me immediately to
reschedule.

We look forward to meeting you at NetLives.

Reply 3: Rejecting an Applicant

Heading:

Is supplied automatically by
the e-mail program

Opening:

Tell you received the application.

Action:

Explain why the applicant
is rejected.

Closing:

Be polite and positive

From: Grace Chen<gchen@netlives.com>
To: 'Michele Peters'<mpeters@londonmail.com>
Subject: NetLives Administrative Assistant Position
Date: Tue, Mar 7, 20—12:26:35

Thank you for sending us your résumé for the position of administrative assistant.

Unfortunately, your qualifications do not match our needs at this time. We will keep your résumé on file. If a position that matches your qualification becomes available in the future, we will contact you.

We wish you every success in your career.

b) Composing your Message

A letter replying to a job applicant is short and direct. Its tone is formal. The body of a letter replying to a job applicant generally has three parts. These parts are: opening, action, and closing (reply1-2-3).

Practice 1: Write A if the sentence is for an acknowledgement letter, I for an interview letter, or R for a rejection letter. Some sentences may be found in more than one type of letter. Discuss your answers with your classmates.

1. Opening

- a. A.I.R We have received your application materials for the executive assistant position.
- b. After reviewing your résumé, we would like to schedule a time to meet with you.
- c. We are interested in speaking further with you.
- d. Thank you for applying for the position of customer service representative.

2. Action

- a. Our human resource department is currently collecting résumés.
- b. We are looking for someone with more experience.
- c. We will be reviewing applications over the next few weeks.
- d. If the time is not convenient, please contact me immediately.

3. Closing

- a. I look forward to meeting you.
- b. We appreciate your interest in our company.
- c. We wish you much success in your job pursuit.
- d. Thank you for your interest in the position.

d) Writing Your Message:

1. Opening

In the opening of any business letter or e-mail, tell why you are writing.

Remember to use a formal tone.

Practice 2: In each question, two of the sentences are appropriate to use in the opening of a letter replying to a job applicant. Circle the letters of the two sentences.

1.
 - a. I received your résumé last Friday.
 - b. We received your résumé yesterday.
 - c. My assistant opened your application yesterday.
2.
 - a. Thank you for applying for the executive assistant position.
 - b. Thank you for trying for that executive assistant job.
 - c. Thank you for your interest in the position listed in our advertisement.
3.
 - a. Thank you for responding to the advertisement.
 - b. Thank you for sending your résumé.
 - c. Hi! It's great that you sent your application.
4.
 - a. Your résumé is very impressive, and I would like to schedule an interview.
 - b. I would like to meet you to discuss your résumé.
 - c. I want to talk with you sometime.

2. Action

In the action part of the letter, explain the process or what will happen.

- In an acknowledgement letter, explain that someone is reviewing the materials.
- In an interview letter, suggest a specific time and date for the interview.
- In a rejection letter, explain why the applicant was not considered.

Practice 3: Match the beginning of the sentence with the appropriate ending. Then, write *A* if the sentence is for an acknowledgment letter, *I* for an interview letter, or *R* for a rejection letter. Use each ending one time.

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>R</i> 1. Your application has been carefully examined; however, c | a. is currently reviewing all files |
|2. Our human resource department..... | b. invite you to talk with our General Manager. |
|3. We are pleased to..... | c. your experience does not much the job description. |

| | |
|--|---|
|4. We are in the process..... | a. meet with you on April 1. |
|5. We would like to..... | b. of collecting résumés |
|6. Your résumé is excellent but..... | c. you don't have the experience necessary for the job. |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
|7. We have scheduled | a. we are reviewing application materials. |
|8. At this time..... | b. we need someone with advanced computer skills. |
|9. Unfortunately,..... | c. an interview with you at 4:00 P.M. next Thursday. |

3. Closing

In the closing, be positive and polite.

- In an acknowledgment letter, thank the applicant.
- In an interview letter, show your enthusiasm for the upcoming interview.
- In a rejection letter, be polite.

Practice 4: Read the sentences from job applicants. Then write appropriate closing sentences.

1. I am interested in the executive assistant position.

Acknowledgment: *Thank you for your interest in the executive assistant position.*

2. On the NetLives Web site, I read about an opening for an administrative assistant.

Acknowledgment:.....

3. I have six months of experience as an administrative assistant.

Rejection:.....

4. I meet the job requirements.

Interview:.....

5. I have been an executive secretary for more than five years.

Interview:.....

6. Although I do not have a college degree, I am a hard worker.

Rejection:.....

7. I am applying for the receptionist position announced on IronGate.com.

Acknowledgment:.....

Letter Practice:

The following log lists two applicants for the job advertisement below. The human resource department at Web Discount Corporation wants to interview only those applicants who have all three of the listed skills. Interviews should be scheduled on July 7 for one hour, between 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M.

On a separate piece of paper, write an acknowledgment letter to one of the applicants. Then write an interview letter or a rejection letter for the applicant.

Job Advertisement:

| Applicant Log | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|
| | Skill | Skill | Skill |
| Job Title: Client Services Coordinator Company Name: Web Discount Corporation | High school or business college program | Two to four years of experience | Word processing and database experience |
| Akiko Yamamoto 12-A Liverpool Place London BH1 4WP United kingdom | Y | Y | Y |
| John Kim 55 Havana Drive Long Beach, CA 90803 | N | N | Y |

Web Discount corporation of Barcelona, Spain, seeks full time Client Services Coordination. Responsibilities include greeting clients, answering telephones, and performing other clerical functions.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. High school diploma and/or business college program
2. 2-4 Years of clerical or administrative experience.
3. Excellent organizational skills.
4. Typing speed of 30 wpm.
5. Word processing and database experience.
6. Good communication skills.

If you would like to work in an exciting environment, fax or e-mail your

- **Useful Words and expressions:**

Acknowledge- applicant- equivalent- keep(something)on file- rejection- review
-meet the requirement- reschedule- review- search.

Suggested Task 3:

a) **Already, Yet, and Still**

The adverbs already, yet ,and still are close in meaning.

Already: Something happened before now.

Position: midsentence

Our records show that we already sent a check for that invoice.

Yet: Something did not happen before now.

Position: end of sentence

Our records show that we have not sent a check for that invoice
yet.

Still: A situation continues to exist from the past until now.

Position: midsentence.

Our records show that we still have not sent a check for that invoice.

Practice 1: Complete the following sentences with the correct adverb.

1. The check has been stopped.
2. We have..... sent the check, so please stop sending notices.
3. We havenot received invoice #4434.
4. If you havesent payment, please disregard this notice.
5. Our accounting department has not located your check
6. We have not determined the cause for this lateness.....
7. If you.....feel that we owe on this invoice, please let us know your reasons.

b) Dates

Most people use one of the two styles for writing dates: U.S. or non-U.S.

U.S. style: August 31, 20—

Non-U.S. style: 31 August 20—

U.S. style uses a comma after the day when the year is included; non-U.S. style does not use commas.

Practice 2: Correct the dates in the following sentences. Spell out the months.

1. We expect payment no later than 8, 31, 20-- .(U.S.)
2. Invoice 445-122 was mailed on 3, July, 20-- .(Non-U.S.).....
3. You didn't respond to our first invoice, sent 20--, 14, March.(Non-U.S.).....
4. Your first installment arrived on 7/17. (U.S.).....
5. Thank you for your letter of 20--, December 1.(U.S.).....

c) Commas with Introductory Phrases:

Use a comma to set off an introductory phrase.

Incorrect: *If you have any questions please call me.*

Correct: *If you have any questions, please call me.*

Practice 3: Add commas to these sentences.

1. As you know it is our policy to pay all accounts immediately.
2. According to our records we have already made this payment.

3. Given the misunderstanding we think it would be fair for you to offer us a discount.
4. Considering the weather problems I understand why your payment is late.
5. After reviewing your letter I'd like to discuss the original costs with you.
6. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

d) Thank you for + noun or gerund

Use the expression *thank you for* followed by a noun or gerund(-ing verb functioning as a noun). Do not use an infinitive or other verb form.

Incorrect: *thank you for to remind me.*

Correct: *Thank you for your reminder(noun)*

Thank you for reminding me(gerund)

Practice 4: Rewrite the incorrect sentences using the correct noun or gerund.

1. Thank you for send me a second invoice.
.....
2. Thank you for remind us to pay.
.....
3. Thank you for your understand about our late payment.
.....
4. Thank you, in advance, for gave us an extension on this payment.
.....
5. I want to thank you personally for your patient while we were moving offices.

Note: The suggested writing tasks are cited in Lougheed, 2003.