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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**MENTOURI UNIVERSITY OF CONSTANTINE 1  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF LETTERS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**The Effect of Blended Learning on EFL Learners' Motivation and  
Academic Writing Abilities: a Case Study of Second Year  
Students at Larbi Ben M'hidi University of Oum El Bouaghi**

**Thesis Submitted to the department of Letters and English language and in  
Candidacy for the Degree of Doctorate (LMD) in Foreign Language Didactics**

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## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this work :**

**To my father for his constant support throughout the accomplishment of the thesis.**

**To my beloved husband, my mother, my little brother, and wonderful sister who mean the world to me.**

**May Allah bless you all**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The present research investigates the effects of the blended learning method on EFL learners' motivation and academic writing proficiency through conducting a case study on students at the English Department at Larbi Ben Mhidi University. The study hypothesizes that when blended learning is used in teaching academic writing, learners would be more motivated, and that blended learning increases their proficiency in academic writing. To test these research hypotheses, both exploratory and experimental methods of investigation are conducted. The study uses the social networking site 'Facebook' and integrates it within the blended learning framework. For that purpose, a checklist of academic writing is designed and compared with the programs of academic writing that are used along the three years of undergraduate study. In addition, questionnaires are addressed to a sample of learners and teachers at the English Department, and a quasi-experimental implementation is carried out with a control group and an experimental group of second year students. The control group is taught in a fully physical setting whereas the experimental group is taught using a blended learning methodology. The study results indicate that the programs are not comprehensive in teaching the 'academic' writing genre. The research findings show that learners' motivation increased considerably after the experiment of blended learning, and that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in their academic writing proficiency. Hence, it is recommended that both teachers and learners take advantage of modern technology to enhance motivation, keep up with developments in modern teaching methods using Information and Communication Technology, and consequently improve learners' proficiency development in academic fields and foreign language learning.



## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

APA : American Psychological Association  
BL : Blended Learning  
CACD : Computer-Assisted Classroom Discussion  
CG : Control Group  
CIA : Computer-Assisted Instruction  
CMC : Computer-Mediated Communication  
df : difference in percentage  
EG : Experimental Group  
EFL : English as a Foreign Language  
FLT : Foreign Language Teaching  
FtF : Face-to-Face  
ESL : English as a Second Language  
GOT : Goal Orientation Theory  
HE : Higher Education  
ICT : Information and Communication Technology  
IMC : Internet-Mediated Communication  
LAN : Local Area Network  
L-C : Learner-Content  
L-I : Learner-Instructor  
L-L : Learner-Learner  
LMD :Licence-Master-Doctorate  
L1 : First Language  
MLA : Modern Language Association  
SDT : Self-Determination Theory  
SL :Second Language  
SLL : Second Language Learning  
SLT : Second Language Teaching  
SNS : Social Networking Site

S-S : Student-Student

TARGET : Task Authority Recognition Grouping Evaluation Time

T-S : Teacher-Student

WWW : World Wide Web

ZPD : Zone of Proximal Development

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# **General Introduction**

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## **1. Statement of the Problem**

The impact of modern technology on education in general and language teaching in particular is becoming nowadays an observable phenomenon. With the development of Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) in the 1980's, the appearance of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) and the different network tools and applications of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, several changes have been prompted in the ways and methods of education and teaching foreign languages. Looking into the discussions about second/foreign language teaching (SLT/FLT) education of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one can find a large debate on the preference of integrating the Internet in language classes together with traditional face-to-face (FtF) instruction. Accordingly, a new line of thought has now emerged to facilitate learning in language classes known as "blended", "mixed" or "hybrid" learning. The major reason this approach is gaining momentum is due to the fact that instructors do not use online learning to completely replace traditional FtF classroom teaching but to complement or overcome some of its shortcomings. This combination of the online activities and FtF instruction is what constitutes the philosophy of the blended learning (BL) approach.

One of the main reasons underlying the use of a blended approach is to improve students' motivation and encourage a more active rather than a passive approach to learning which can be particularly difficult in large classes. Considering the over-crowdedness of classes in the Algerian universities, one must admit the difficulty of creating a motivating environment that encourages the students to be active learners. Many students come to class less prepared and less willing to participate. They just sit passively and wait for the information when questions are asked. Few students, generally the outstanding ones, may volunteer to respond. However, shy/quiet learners -and those who need more time thinking before answering- tend to take the backseat. In this problematic situation (lack of space and time, lack of motivation to learn, and lack of learning opportunities) BL seems to be a solution to be tested. According to Marsh

(2012), students today are familiar with concepts such as forum, Skype, Facebook, chat rooms, and blogs. Hence, activities that promote the use of these tools can provide motivational interest to students to go online and interact in the target language.

Another important advantage of using the blended approach is to overcome the boundaries of space and time imposed by the physical classroom teaching environment. On the one hand, due to the time constraints in FtF teaching, students are not provided with the sufficient time to think deeply about a particular learning element. However, as far as academic writing is concerned, providing students with instruction about writing mechanisms is never enough. Learners must be given a number of opportunities to engage in the writing process. This can hardly be implemented in physical classes. On the other hand, due to space constraints, students receive limited opportunities to interact or gain feedback from their teachers and from their peers. Taking into consideration both space and time constraints together with the teachers' complaints about students' low academic writing achievement in tests, exams, research papers, dissertations...etc, it seems reasonable to suggest implementing BL in the teaching process. According to Wagner (2006), an important remedy to the problems of writing is that BL allows students to read their classmates' writings and develops self-correction through peer and teacher correction and using online resources.

Considering the number of benefits BL offers to teaching in general and language teaching in particular, it is not surprising that many institutions all over the world implemented or considered implementing it in their programs. As Graham (2006:7) wrote "we can be pretty certain that the trend toward blended learning systems will increase". Algeria like any other spot in the world is not an exception. Since a large proportion of Algerian teachers and learners can get access to the Internet, taking benefit of the BL applications as a promising method for teaching is always available. Hence, instead of using the Internet

haphazardly, teachers of writing can use it adequately to serve teaching purposes and subordinate it to the primary aim of making students better writers.

All university students both graduates and undergraduates need academic writing skills for accomplishing different writing assignments such as exam papers, research papers, term papers, essays, reports, dissertations...etc. Taking the Algerian educational context, however, one coherent and adequate method for an effective teaching of academic writing has not yet been established. Hence, academic writing teachers are often left to their own initiative to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of their students. While this approach allows room for teachers' creativity, it may also lead to unclearly defined objectives that may not meet the students' needs or may be difficult to achieve. While many authors studying academic writing agree that a single, all encompassing best approach to teaching is neither a possibility, nor is it advisable (Silva, 1993), we propose that certain philosophies can be used to create a curriculum that is suitable for students in any given writing course.

### **1. Aims of the Study**

The present study aims at investigating the effect of using BL on EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners' motivation and their academic writing abilities by conducting a case study on the students at the department of English at the University of Larbi Ben M'hidi. Academic writing in the context of this research is conceptualized in relation to the subject of 'Research Methodology'. As opposed to the subject of 'Written Expression', the former centers around an advanced type of writing, i.e. targeted more towards teaching writing that is 'academic' (See Chapter Two, pp.80-81). As part of the research general aim, the study also distinguishes whether there is a comprehensive and effective program to academic writing at the University of Larbi Ben Mhidi and determines whether research methodology teachers use BL learning as a means to motivate and improve the students' academic writing proficiency.

### **3. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Since this research work aims at investigating the effect of using BL on EFL learners' motivation and academic writing abilities at the University of Larbi Ben M'hidi, it addresses some questions about the feasibility and the effects of using BL to motivate learners and improve their writing abilities:

1. Do the teachers have an adequate program to teach academic writing?
2. What methodology do they use? Do they use BL?
3. Does the use of BL promote or hinder EFL learners' motivation to learn English?
4. Does the use of BL improve EFL learners' academic writing abilities?

In the light of these research questions, evidence related to the following hypotheses will be tested:

1. When the teachers use BL in teaching academic writing, the students will be more motivated.
2. When the teachers use BL in teaching academic writing, the students would develop a better proficiency in academic writing.

As it is assumed in this study that the teachers do not have an adequate program and do not use BL, the answers to Research Questions 1 and 2 will set the ground for the research validity and ensure that the practical aspects of BL are necessary to be implemented. However, answers to Research Questions 3 and 4 will provide data that will confirm or disconfirm Hypotheses 1 and 2.

### **4. Research Methodology and Population of the Study**

In the present case study, both exploration and quasi-experimental methods will be used. Since the researcher is teaching the subject of 'Research Methodology' to second year students at the University of Larbi Ben M'hidi, she will use the experiment with her students

as a sample population. 30 participants are divided into a control group (15 students) and an experimental group (15 students).

The exploration method includes a Checklist of Academic Writing which is developed in order to distinguish whether there is a comprehensive program to academic writing at the University of Larbi Ben M'hidi. Additionally, two questionnaires are administered to both the students and the teachers. The teacher's questionnaire is distributed on a representative sample of teachers at the English department of Larbi Ben M'hidi University which comprises 53 teachers. It aims at investigating the teachers' perceptions, use and attitudes towards using BL. Student's questionnaires are divided into three phases; pre-experiment, mid-experiment and post- experiment questionnaire. The three types of questionnaires carry a continuous evaluation of the students' level of motivation and academic writing proficiency, their attitudes towards how the writing skill had been previously taught and how it was taught during the experiment, and their readiness and overall perception regarding BL during, within and after conducting the experiment.

The quasi-experimental method consists of the implementation of an experiment with the experimental group using BL throughout the academic year 2015/2016 in the subject of 'Research Methodology', first semester. Here, the students are to be taught concepts following The Checklist of Experiment Implementation that is based on findings from academic writing literature the researcher used in this study (See Chapter Three, pp.130-134). The Checklist interweaves some academic writing features that are emphasized in the literature namely, objectivity, formality, concision (drafting skills), cohesion and coherence (structural skills) and analytical skills into the currently used program in the subject of "Research Methodology" for second semester which centers around teaching 'borrowing techniques', i.e. quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing (research skills).

During this academic year, each lecture is divided into one session for instruction about related principles and concepts, and another one directed for assignments to be done by the students. In order to apply the blended approach on the experimental group, sessions related to the theoretical part, i.e. teaching about related principles and concepts, are conducted in FtF teaching environment. The practical part of the lecture, however, i.e. the related activities to be done by the students- are carried out in a virtual environment using a Facebook Group. The control group, however, receives all sessions in a physical classroom environment. It must be noted that the students of both groups will be instructed using the same teaching materials concerning both lecturing and activities sessions. The only difference is on "how" the instruction will be carried out. This is because the present research work is based on the "replacement model" of BL. This model only replaces some of the FtF classroom meetings with online interactive activities instead of designing extra teaching elements as in the "supplemental model" for instance.

During the activities sessions, the experimental group students are required to post their answers on Facebook Group. Depending on the writing activity, the students are asked either to *judge* a given written corpus as being academic- that means not consisting of plagiarism, objective, formal, concise, coherent and cohesive- *re-write* an ill-written corpus or *write* their own productions (paraphrasing, summarizing or adding an analysis) by applying these academic writing features. While answering, the students are allowed to use different online resources simultaneously (including websites, online dictionaries, word-processor, Grammar Checking software and other applications). The instructor selects one answer after the other randomly for the students to negotiate any mistakes detected. Through the Comment and Tag Features, the students are encouraged to provide spontaneous peer-feedback by stating others mistakes and recommending alternative answers. The instructor only points out the type of error without providing the correct answer. Her role is to guide the students' online

discussions, provide assistance and clarify lack of understanding. The students are also invited to address any privacy concerns to their teacher through Private Chat Feature.

The control group students follow the same procedures using printed papers and the blackboard to write their answers and start an interactive discussion. A comparison of experimental control group participants' writing assignments, before and after the treatment, will be undertaken to confirm or disconfirm the effect of BL on the experimental group.

## **5. Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into seven chapters, according to the requirements of its variables: The first three chapters are theoretical while the last four ones are practical. The theoretical chapters delineate the three theoretical variables which limit the scope of the present study. They are presented in this order: 'blended learning' as the independent variable, and 'motivation' and 'academic writing' as the dependent variables.

The practical chapters present and discuss research tools and procedures that are carried out to investigate the research questions and hypotheses as well as the obtained results and findings. Specifically, chapter four discusses the research instruments and their validity and reliability together with the pilot study results which all aim at setting the ground for the research validity and ensure that the practical aspects of BL are necessary to be implemented. Chapter five provides a thorough presentation of the experiment rationale and its implementation with regards to lesson plans and activities taught during the treatment period. Both chapters six and seven present and discuss the research results and findings. Whereas chapter six presents findings pertaining to the exploration method including (1) comparison between the checklist and current programs of academic writing, (2) student' s questionnaires and (3) teacher's questionnaire, chapter seven presents findings of the quasi-experimental method. The research ends with a general discussion of the research questions and hypotheses with regard to the research findings followed by some pedagogical implications.

## Chapter One: Blended Learning

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## **Introduction**

The present chapter is devoted to a thorough exploration of the concept “blended learning” as the independent variable of this research. The chapter starts first with describing the nature of BL by setting aside the various definitions it has been given, discriminating it from Electronic learning (E-learning) and Distance Learning (D-learning), along with exposing a set of its ingredients. After that, the different levels and modes of BL together with types of communication are covered to cast the light on the concept as a continuum. In the succeeding sections, a thorough explanation is devoted to BL design guidelines, advantages, and challenges. Finally, based on a rationale that takes into account all previous concerns, the chapter ends with a lesson plan that is designed for the experiment implementation.

### **1.1. Nature of Blended Learning**

The aim of this section is to clarify the rationale and the aims of the BL approach. Accordingly, different conceptualizations of BL are presented. The concept is also distinguished from E-learning and D-learning with discussing its main ingredients.

#### **1.1.1. Definition of Blended Learning**

In order to define the concept ‘blended learning’, it would be preferable to define first the verb ‘blend’. According to The American Heritage Dictionary, ‘to blend’ does not only mean ‘to mix’ or ‘to combine’, but most importantly to mix ‘so that the constituent parts are indistinguishable from one another’, ‘to become merged into one’, or ‘to create harmonious effect or result’. Therefore, BL does not mean a haphazard blending of teaching tools and methods; rather equilibrium must be set between its different constituents in order to obtain a balanced teaching experience.

However, this definition can be confusing somehow since almost any teaching experience, even those based on traditional methods can be the result of blending some sort of

teaching tools and strategies. An example is that of an instruction that collects some aspects of both an audio-lingual and the communicative method.

Using Graham's conceptualization can, *to some extent*, narrow the scope of the term. According to Graham (op.cit), BL is the instruction that combines between FtF and online modalities of learning. Again, this definition does not accurately specify what modalities to use or even how to combine them together in a way that is unique to BL as a new method. This holds mysterious especially that most teachers make some use of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) applications. This is what led some researchers such as Williams (2003 as cited in Vaughan, 2007:81) to state that the term BL is not new; but it "has been in existence ever since humans started thinking about teaching".

In response to these views, we shall emphasize that BL does not only aim to add technology because it is available to us, but it is a "*principled*" approach that aims to change the overall philosophy of teaching as it is explained in section 3 (pp.22-30). Besides, the recent emphasis on BL in the literature is a proof of the seriousness of reaching an approach that leads to optimal learning beyond the mere blending of modalities as a sort of *habit or convenience*. For instance, Singh (2003) defines BL as: "optimizing achievement of learning objectives by applying the 'right' learning technologies to match the 'right' personal learning style to transfer the 'right' skills to the 'right' individuals at the 'right' time".

In addition to that, Graham, Allen, and Ure (2003 as cited in Graham, op.cit) document three broad definitions for BL: *combining delivery media*, *combining instructional methods*, and *combining online and face-to-face instruction*. The focus of the present study is on the third definition since the first two ones seem too broad referring to any combination of pedagogical tools such as using a textbook and a video both within a physical environment.

The emergence of BL reflects the rapid development of information and technology developments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its influence on the educational institution as an

undistinguishable part of the social structure. In other words, it reflects the change of societies. It aims to offer students the best learning conditions drawing on their needs, interests, and preferences. This idea is stressed by Corder (1981 as cited in Lee and Van Pettern, 1995), stating that ‘we cannot really teach language, we can only create conditions in which it will develop spontaneously in mind in its own way’ (p.22).

BL has been given other terms such as “hybrid”, “mixed”, “integrative”, and “multi-method”. Clark and Myer (2003) indicate that there is no exact definition of BL and might be perceived differently by different people. The reason as stated by Graham and Allen (2009:562) is that “by nature, both the terms “hybrid” and “blended” imply a mixing or combining of *something*. It is that *something* that people do not always agree upon”. Some researchers tend to define the concept from a very broad perspective while others totally narrow it to the point that it has been given percentages of its integrated sub-parts.

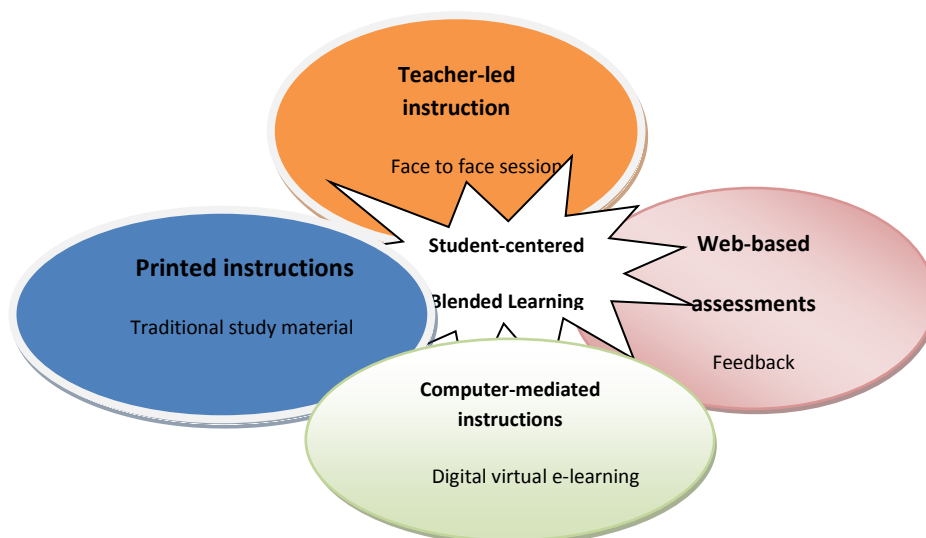
Two examples of opposed definitions would be those of Dudeney and Hockly (2007: 138 –139) and that of Horn and Staker (2011, p.3). The former considers BL courses as those having 75 % of the content delivered online and 25 % delivered FtF, whereas the latter states that BL is “any time a student learns at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home *and* at least in part through online delivery with some element of students control over time, place, path, and/or pace”.

Caraivan (2011) attributes this lack of a unified definition to the fact that BL is more than a concept: an on-going process that develops with every teacher who applies it. In other words, the design of the BL instruction is to a great extent “*situational*” as it depends on the learning situation itself including learners’ needs, objectives, and learning content.

Despite the complexity of the term, many definitions have been proposed. We shall offer an overview of the most common definitions:

- BL is learning outside the traditional classroom using information technology for the delivery of the learning materials (Kim, 2007).
- Combination of two kinds of learning environments; physical classroom learning and online learning to enhance the learning outcomes (Kudrick, Lahn, and Morch, 2009).
- The mixing of the traditional FtF approach with online approach (Kim, Bonk, and Oh, 2008).
- Combination of multiple delivery media designed to complement each other and promote learning and application learned behavior (Singh, op.cit)

All of these definitions consider BL a “*combined system*” including a FtF and an online component. Sharma and Barrett (2007) also agree that almost all definitions suggested for BL consider the FtF classroom component added to the e-learning application. Among the figures that depict this conceptualization is the one recently proposed by Ololube (2014:196). In addition to mentioning the combination of virtual and physical environments, such a figure mentions two aspects of BL: “*learner-centeredness*” and “*assessment*” (see Figure 1). Reference to these is left to section three.



**Figure 1: Blended Learning Approach (by Ololube:2014,p.196)**

We prefer, however, the definition suggested by Yoon and Lee (2010 as cited in Yoon, 2011) stating that BL means:

bringing together the positive attributes of online and offline education, including instructional modalities, delivery methods, learning tools, etc., in relation to language teaching and learning approaches and methods in order to reinforce learning process, to bring about the optimal learner achievement, and to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. (p.180)

In such definition, Yoon and Lee (ibid) not only refer to online and offline learning settings, but also refer to the integration of the different learning approaches and methods as integral components in the BL process. Hence, BL is more than a strategy that combines between virtual and physical environments; it is a strategy that attempts to interweave the benefits of the current teaching approaches and methods with the promising advantages of online teaching pedagogy and the good characteristics of the offline setting.

### **1.1.2. Blended Learning Vs E-learning and D-learning**

Throughout the evolution of the Web-based Instruction, many concepts have been developed along with BL such as D-Learning and E-learning / online learning. Due to the confusion that might occur between the meanings of these three concepts – as some would consider them synonymous- clarifications of their differences must be clearly addressed.

D-learning reflects the first introductions of Web 1.0 technology tools into education. At the beginning, the objective was to overcome problems of students who lived far from the institution or who combine between studies and work; therefore, cannot attend lectures regularly. Unlike BL , it is considered an umbrella term ‘covering correspondence courses, televised teaching, radio-broadcast teaching, open learning, computer-assisted instruction, telematic, individualized learning and self learning’ (Sauve, 1993, p.102). D-learning is also defined by Greenberg (1998, p.36) as ‘a planned teaching/learning experience that uses a wide

spectrum of technologies to reach learners at a distance and is designed to encourage learner interaction and certification of learning’.

From these definitions, it is evident that D-learning was truly “Distant”, i.e. learning was exclusively virtual with an intensive reliance on technology. The teachers and the learners were completely separate, and as Keegan (1995:7) point out, students are not obliged to be available « at a fixed place, at a fixed time, to meet a fixed person, in order to be trained”. Sethy (2008) adds that:

Distance education is mainly realized in asynchronic and material based interaction. [it] was based on the production and the asynchronous exchange of materials. The learner was sent written learning materials plus written instructions, and returned his homework in a written form. (p.34)

In recent years, the rapid development of technology and the movement from Web 1.0 technology tools to Web 2.0 technology applications have paved the way to broaden the scope of D-learning to a more beneficial experience. Many applications such as Twitter, You-tube, Skype, Facebook, Blogs have been proved superior to the modest use of tools like cassettes, video, and letters. In other words, a movement from using computers in FtF instruction, i.e. CALL to Web-Based Instruction (WBI). Following this evolution, new terms emerged such as e-learning, online learning, or web-based learning. All these terms are synonymous in some way as they refer to any learning which is achieved through the Internet, network, or just a computer (Clark and Mayer, op.cit).

However, in opposition to D-learning, E-learning tends to be more *focused* by limiting the learning materials and objectives, more organized as it is designed specifically to build learners’ knowledge and skills, and more practical as it ensures the continuation of the learning process throughout a longer period of time.

Branching from the roots of D- learning, BL emerged as a reaction to the drawbacks of both e-learning and traditional learning. The outstanding failure of e-learning is that is it

solely virtual, making students feel isolated from the academic community, unsupported during the learning process, and demotivated. Even when teaching virtually, it failed to use the social aspects of Web2.0 technologies. Consequently, as stated by Singh and Reed (2001:1), BL emerges to combine the positive sides of both environments “with the objective of optimizing the learning outcome and cost of program delivery”.

### **1.1.3. Ingredients of Blended Learning**

Despite the conflicting perspectives of researchers and teachers around the conceptualization of BL, Carman (2005:3-7) argues that for any BL experience to succeed, it must include five important ingredients. Those ingredients are based on the learning theories of Keller, Gagné, Bloom, Merrill, Clark and Gery (as cited in Carman, *ibid*):

*1. Live Events:* BL must include synchronous events in which students and the teacher gather at the same time as in live “virtual events”. For these events to be effective, Keller's ARCS (1987, 3-6) model of motivation is to be followed:

- *Attention* : such as asking students a thought-provoking question or a attention-getting question at the beginning of a session.
- *Relevance* : the content and activities used have to be relevant to learners’ needs.
- *Confidence* : Sustaining students’ confidence by giving them sufficient time to practice what they have learnt.
- *Satisfaction* with the overall experience.

*2. Self-Paced Learning:* Asynchronous learning events which the learner completes on his/her own, at his/her pace without the assistance of the teacher. Many objects can be used to create self-paced events. *Internet-based events* such as reading and answering uploaded audio/video files, e-documents, and posted questions, and *computer-based events* such as CD-ROM training.

*3. Collaboration:* based on constructivism tenets, collaboration is a vital component of BL whether in the form of synchronous (ex. online chat) or asynchronous communication (ex. E-mail). Brown (1998 as cited in Carman, *op.cit*) states: “humans are social beings, and, as

posited by the constructivist theory of learning, they develop new understandings and knowledge through their social interactions with a community of others” (p.5).

*4. Assessment:* In BL, assessment can be of two forms: *formative and summative*. Summative assessment assesses the students’ *knowledge and skills*-the written product through pre and post tests in this case. Formative assessment assesses student’s metacognition, self-awareness, and critical thinking skills through the use of *self and peer assessment* procedures. To encourage self-assessment, the students will be asked *self-reflection* questions like ‘what do you think is successful about your draft? Why? What concerns do you still have about your draft?’. In order to foster peer assessment, the students will be asked questions like ‘what do you think about your friend's draft? What constructive recommendations you would suggest?’.

For a better design of summative and formative assessment, Churches (2006) stresses the meaningful contribution of Bloom’s “levels of cognitive learning”: “Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, and Synthesis” in BL activities (see Figure4, p43).

*5. Performance Support Materials:* Using self-paced objects is essential as Gagné explains; they enhance “learning retention and transfer”. Examples of these materials are printable downloads, Job Aids (graphs, diagrams, summaries), and online downloads (audio/video files).

## **1.2. Blended Learning as a Continuum**

Many researchers seem to agree that BL includes the combination of FtF and online learning components; yet the confusion rests on the *percentage of combining* these elements. Therefore, to overcome the problem of defining BL in precise terms and setting well-defined application strategies, researchers prefer perceiving the concept more as a continuum of pedagogical events. Choosing a specific point in that continuum depends on the teaching situation including the learning content, subject matter, objectives, learners’ needs...etc.



### **1.2.1. Levels**

Before mentioning the different parts of the BL continuum, we should refer first to the “general” levels on which BL can be applied. As stressed by Graham (op.cit: 10-12), BL can occur at different levels which are determined by the designer or the learner: *activity* and *course* levels are designed by the instructor while *program* and *institutional* levels depend on the learner’s preferences.

BL events at *the activity level* imply completing some proportion of an activity in FtF environment and the rest of it in an online setting. This can be done to make activities more authentic such as bringing experts at a distance to assist students in solving and understanding the tasks. Blending at *the course-level* is considered to be the most common way of blending. It includes a combination of both FtF and online activities within the same course. Graham (op.cit) refers to the fact that combining both forms changes across different approaches: whether they are overlapped in time or sequenced chronologically.

Blending at *the program level* generally takes place in higher education [HE] institutions when online courses and FtF courses are mixed together. This mixture can be either prescribed by the program or left for students’ preferences to choose which ones to study online and which they prefer to keep FtF. *Institutional-level* blending, on the other hand, refers to the deliberate commitment of the educational institution to create models that blend FtF and online instruction.

*It must be noted that the blending level followed in the research experiment is the course-level blending. The course of the present research (Research Methodology) will involve FtF lectures and online activities as explained in section six.*

### **1.2.2. Modes**

Regardless the level on which the blending is selected, BL is perceived as a continuum of learning events. Bath and Bourke (2010) state that along this continuum occur a wide range

of activities between those that are fully FtF and those that are fully online as shown in the following diagram :



According to Bath and Bourke (ibid), this instructional continuum of BL allows for three modes of operation to indicate the degree to which web-based technology is involved.

In Mode 1, technology can mean simply providing administrative information, or resources that intend to *facilitate and support* the process of learning. Examples of this mode is to upload recorded lectures online or perform administrative functions such as uploading course announcements or schedule as supplements to traditional learning.

In Mode 2, technology used to *enrich* the quality of learning *through interactive learning activity beyond those attainable in FtF classroom*. To enrich in this sense means changing the philosophy of learning into more active, constructive, motivating, and interactive learning rather than using the most innovative and complicated technologies.

In Mode3, the process of learning is totally self-directed and *course delivered fully online*. The physical contact is *optional* and sometimes is not available at all.

Dudeney and Hockly (op.cit: 138 –139) tend to translate these three modes in terms of percentages stressing that a BL course is the one that covers 75 % of an online content and 25% FtF content. They concluded three possible BL course designs:

- 1-A 100 per cent online language course, where the course is similar to a coursebook online.
- 2-A blended course, where 75 per cent is delivered online and 25 per cent FtF.
- 3-A FtF course with supplemental online material that are used to support and extend it.

We consider that BL cannot be accurately described using percentages. Therefore, we prefer Rossett, Douglas and Frazee (2003) classification of BL applications into four methods :

1. Teach one lesson or more in usual classroom and another using e-learning then students are evaluated whether traditionally or electronically.

2. Sharing both FtF teaching with e-learning alternatively in teaching the same lesson. Yet, traditional method is used at the beginning of the lesson followed by e-learning. Students can be evaluated whether traditionally or electronically.

3. Sharing both FtF teaching with e-learning alternatively in teaching the same lesson. Yet, e-learning is used at the beginning of the lesson followed by traditional method. Students can be evaluated whether traditionally or electronically.

4. Sharing both FtF teaching with e-learning alternatively in teaching the same lesson more than once. Students can be evaluated whether traditionally or electronically.

*In the present study, the experiment follows Mode2 by using interactive activities in virtual settings for the objective of enriching learning. This entails using Method2 in the terms of Rossett, et al. (ibid) by teaching 'lecturing session' in a physical classroom followed by an 'activity session' in a virtual setting.*

### **1.2.3.Models**

Similarly to the modes described by Bath and Bourke (op.cit), Twigg (2003: 29-35) tend to refer to them in the terms of models: the supplemental, the replacement, and the emporium model.

In the supplemental model technology is used only *as a support* to FtF courses. It is not obligatory. What is important is that adding technology does not change at all the

structure of the traditional course. The replacement model is different from the supplemental model as the online component is integrated within the course and *is compulsory as it replaces some of the FtF seat time with online interactive activities*. In the emporium model *all FtF meetings are replaced with online learning*. These courses necessitate a whole redesign of the lecture since it relies 100% on the online medium.

It is important to mention that some researchers tend to restrict the definition of BL in the confinements of the replacement model. Laster , Otte, and Picciano (2005) for instance, define BL courses as those which integrate FtF with online teaching where a portion of FtF time is replaced by online activity. Vaughan (2007) also views the instruction that supplements traditional learning with online sources as not BL. In addition to that, Dziuban, Hartman, and Moskal (2004) state that BL refers to:

courses that combine face-to-face classroom instruction with online learning and reduced classroom contact hours (reduced seat time). The latter point is important distinction because it is certainly possible to enhance regular face-to-face courses with online resources without displacing classroom contact hours. (p.2)

*In our study, the research experiment is based on the replacement model, i.e. replacing some FtF seat-time with online collaborative activities that are compulsory*. The reasons for adopting this model are: (1) the general tendency to define BL within its confinements, (2) it limits the distribution of learning modalities to online activities and FtF content, (3) it reflects the philosophy of re-designing courses rather than adding extra resources, (4) it is not time consuming as it is the case with the emporium model, and most importantly because we assume that (5) academic writing can be improved when writing activities are conducted in a constructivist online setting.

### 1.3. Blended Learning Design Guidelines

Owing to the complexity of the concept BL and the divergent understandings of authors and teachers about what it exactly refers to, BL has become *flexible* by nature allowing for different '*situational*' design models to be developed.

Stressing the flexibility of designing BL, Rossett (as cited in Carman, op.cit:1), states that "learning theories aren't like religion...you don't have to pick Catholic or Baptist or Muslim and shun the others. The goal is to have the right theory for the right situation". He further explains that the situation depends upon "the people you serve, nature of skill they must master, and context in which they are to perform". Hinkelman (2005 as cited in Marsh, 2012:15) states that BL offers "a flexible continuum of various learning environments", whereas Shaw and Igneri (2006:3) conclude that there's no unique well defined blend. The efficient BL experience can only be determined in relation to goals and constraints presented in a given situation. Garrison and Kanuka (2004, 96) address the fact that "there is a considerable complexity in its implementation with the challenge of virtually limitless design possibilities and applicability to so many contexts". Moreover, Masie (2006:22) generalize the application of the concept stating that "all learning is blended learning".

Nevertheless, this has never ceased researchers in the field of SLT to suggest some principles needed for an efficient design of BL. This is because, as Watson (2008) notes, no matter what the exact definition is, BL is viewed as a pedagogical approach that represents a *shift in the overall instructional strategy*. Therefore, it shouldn't be perceived as a "temporal construct, but a fundamental redesign of the instructional model" that combines the benefits of traditional and online learning environments (Dziuban, et al., op.cit, p.3). In sum, researchers seem to *hold identical insights* about how BL should be designed, at least concerning the "general guidelines".

### 1.3.1.Design Principles

According to Marsh (2012), ‘there is no single perfect blend, nor is there a set or simple formula for making a “good” blend’. What we have actually are some important factors essential for an “effective” blend to take place. One of these actors is ‘*complementarity*’. To put it differently, the different ingredients of the BL experience must be coherent and complement one another. This is not an easy task to accomplish as Tabor (2005: 48) mentions that even experienced instructors ‘struggle with the question of creating balance and harmony between the two formats’.

Second, choosing learning materials should not be haphazard but ‘*carefully planned*’. The materials have to be both methodologically and pedagogically-driven and must be based on students’ needs and preferences about what they enjoy best. This suggests that while designing BL, teachers should not be bothered to include ‘modern/complicated’ technologies as opposed to ‘old/simple’ ones, but the technology that is useful and suitable to the learning situation. As recommended by Aycock, Garaham and Kaleta (2002, as cited in Kenney and Newcombe, 2011:48) to “start [BL experience] small and keep it simple” especially that it is time consuming to be overwhelmed with technological concerns over pedagogical ones.

Third, learners must be ‘*supported academically, affectively, and technically*’. Students must not be left alone during online lectures. The academic support is a continuous process that is carried through from the physical setting to the online environment. This entails two types of support resources: the teacher answering individual questions, and peers answering each other’s questions. By doing this, the teacher creates a sense of community among students and reinforces the idea that he is not the ‘*source of all knowledge*’. Such an interaction contributes to the affective support making students feel unisolated and relieved especially for shy, introverted students who can address their concerns privately to their teachers. Students must also be assisted if they are new to the technology involved.

In addition to that, *the role of the teacher and the FtF component remains central*. It is true that technology can be very beneficial to the learning process, but it is the teacher's task to organize the students' integration in online and classroom learning, to encourage and maintain students' motivation, to guide, monitor and give feedback.

Furthermore, the instructor must promote *student-centered learning* in both environments. This is because BL is '*by nature student-centered*'. Students no longer depend on the teacher as the ultimate power; they must be responsible about their own learning. The teacher should plan learning activities in which students actively engage in creating, explaining the knowledge collaboratively, help each other, and value each other's contributions. The teacher takes the role of a mere facilitator who directs students' learning. According to Smart and Cappel (2006), "the starting point" for the design and success of BL instruction is to apply the general principles of 'effective learning'. They emphasize the importance of using the activities that enable students to become more active in their learning, make them interact with their peers, and engage them in deeper-level thinking.

Considering that many teachers fail to apply a "learner-centered approach" when using BL, many authors such as Oliver and Trigwell (2005) tend to regard the practical applications of the term to erroneously capture blended "*Teaching*" not blended "*Learning*". In other words, the applications do not reflect the theoretical basis of BL in that they focus more on forms of delivery than on creating a learner-centered learning environment.

Moreover, the teacher must encourage *autonomous and collaborative learning*. This can be achieved by creating an online forum for discussion, encouraging students to work in pairs or groups, and ask students self-reflection questions. In addition to that, teachers must create a supportive online community by creating a "questions" forum where students can post any questions they want to ask and allow peers to answer them, encouraging shy students to participate by talking to them through private chat, and providing students self-paced

objects to study and work individually independent of time. This idea is stressed by Stracke (2009) who states that the philosophy behind BL is to encourage a higher degree of learner independence in the process of learning and is considered a sub-field within the area of independent learning.

Similar to Marsh's principles, Lin (2007) mentions how Chickering and Ehrmann (1996) update the "seven principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education" developed by Chickering and Gamson (1987) to the digital age. Lin (op.cit) proposed the inclusion of these principles in the "hybrid instruction" to make it efficient. These seven principles are promoting interaction between students and faculty, enhancing cooperation among students, promoting active learning, providing prompt feedback, increasing time on task, setting high expectations, and recognizing diversity in learning. Graham (op.cit), however, perceives BL as having the following characteristics among others: shift from teacher to learner-centered instruction, increasing interaction (teacher-student/student-student), and integrating formative and summative assessment mechanisms.

Wikibooks (2009) also mentions some broad principles of education design for BL suggested by authors of *Issues in Digital Technology in Education*. These are:

1. A *thoughtful integration* of FtF and fully online instructional components. This means that FtF and virtual components of the BL experience must complement one another in terms of objectives, content, and assessment. If the online component is not carefully integrated within the whole course, students would consider it as only another extra course that does nothing but increases the load of teaching materials. As stated by Vaughan (2007), the result of the effective integration of virtual and physical learning creates environments that are "highly conducive to student learning". Aycock, Garnham and Kaleta (op.cit as cited in Kenney and Newcombe, op.cit) also found that students who did not like the BL experience felt the online components a mere overload that makes the course seem a "course and a half".



**2.**Innovative use of technology

**3.***Rethinking the way we teach.* This suggests that BL is not intended to add technological devices to traditional teaching just because it is available for us, but to cast light on several issues/problems encountered in the physical classroom and trying to overcome them. This refers mainly to *increasing time, increasing learning opportunities and feedback, fostering learner centeredness, and fostering self-regulation (autonomy) and collaboration.*

**4.** *Sustained assessment* and evaluation using both summative and formative feedback.

As an attempt to reach a sort of ‘principled approach’ for BL , Sharma and Barrett (op.cit as cited in Tomlinson and Whittaker, 2013:17) suggest four principles:

**1.** *"The separate role of the teacher and role of technology"* as roles are not interchangeable but complementary. In other words, though technology helps a lot in suggesting new methods of feedback (*computer-generated feedback*), digital resources, collaboration opportunities (social networks such as Wiki, Blog, Facebook), the role of the teacher cannot be overlooked (monitoring students in virtual discussions, lecturing in the physical settings).

**2.** *Teach using tools that are pedagogically driven.* This stresses the idea previously mentioned that web-based tools cannot be chosen randomly but in relation to the nature of the subject matter, students' needs and learning objectives. In this realm, Neumeier (2005) comments that the aim of BL is not to find the best or the most innovative tools but to find the efficient way of combining learning modes that support the objectives, context, and learners' needs, and which in turn will be the point of evaluating the BL design implementation.

**3.**Technology must complement the FtF component which consists *the lead mode.* This suggests that FtF contact is still a *vital component.*

4." *It's not so much the program, more what you do with it*". (Jones, 1986). This implies that BL must be rich in comparison to traditional teaching and e-learning, but also simple. In a meta-analysis of online learning studies, Means, et al.(2010:18) report that students performed better in BL conditions than those receiving FtF learning. What they insist on is that "it was the combination of elements in the treatment conditions (which was likely to have included additional learning time, materials as well as additional opportunities for collaboration) that produced the observed learning advantages [of BL]" not the media features.

The previously mentioned design principles can be summarized using Shea (2007 as cited in Kenney and Newcombe, 2011) learning conditions. The conditions reflect those of an adult learning and they are based on the "How People Learn" model developed by Bransford, Brown, and Cocking in 2000. These are: "learner-centeredness" (considering learner's needs), "knowledge-centeredness" (active learning experiences), "assessment-centeredness" (constructive summative and formative feedback), and "community-centeredness" (community of inquiry with a sense of connectedness and collaboration).

### **1.3.2. Design Stages**

Not only do researchers suggest principles for design implementation, but some of them also propose some practical stages through which a designer could organize the BL instruction before, within, and after the experiment is applied. Others went further developing models of implementation such as Al Fiky BL Model (2011), Khan's Octagonal Framework (2005), Huang, Ma and Zhang Model (2008), Al Jazar Model (2002). Due to space constraints, our focus will be limited to revealing only some of researchers' proposed design stages with exposing Al Jazar Model (ibid).

According to Marsh (2001), in order to achieve the best blended mix, one needs to gather information related to: target *audience* description (such as students' needs, readiness,

familiarity, comfort); *skills/content* to be mastered (the nature of the skill affects the method chosen, some require synchronous interactions, and others need a self-paced environment); technical and personal *resources*; and *budget/time* constraints.

Bath and Bourke (op.cit) identify five stages for BL design: a planning stage, designing and developing stage, implementing, and reviewing stage.

In the planning stage the teacher defines the learning situation, i.e. whether he aims to design a new course or redesigning an existing one. If the choice is the latter (*as in our case*), the teacher needs to review some of the current course practices, identify what's valuable and needs to be kept (*the lecturing session in FtF*), and what needs to be improved (*the activities sessions, feedback in our case*) and why (*problems of time and space in FtF setting*). This includes issues related to current objectives, activities, assessment, strategies, content inventory, sources and their format and if all of these go in harmony with each other.

Reviewing a previous course depends on the teacher prior experiences and students' perspectives. As the researcher in the present research has already taught the subject of "Methodology" to SLL, i.e. the same level of the sample, she could review the subject's present teaching practices in terms of content, objectives, activities...etc. In addition to the researcher's review, students' perspectives towards the subject teaching practices can be well addressed through the pre-experiment questionnaire. After defining the learning situation, the teacher identifies the course context, i.e. roles of the teacher and student (who takes responsibility), time consideration, students' technical knowledge, students' experiences with BL, class size, motivation factors, students' needs, Internet accessibility. Much of these considerations can also be answered in students' pre-experiment questionnaire.

In the designing and developing stage, the teacher is supposed to design *content and resources delivery* such as uploaded documents, online links which can be stored for future

use. An important question during this stage is what content to move online. For instance, if lectures should be kept in FtF setting or posting recorded lectures for students to listen to whenever they need. Additionally, the teacher should manage *students' interactivity and collaboration*. S/he must ensure the students' engagement in active tasks of collaboration instead of the traditional passive activities of listening and reading. The tasks must be challenging, raises students' critical thinking, and based on discussion and negotiation. Other considerations are those of *assessment*, one-to-one and one-to-many *types of communication*, and *setting rules* which specify each student's rights and responsibilities prior to the experiment in order to manage students online.

After taking account of the previous concerns, the designer *implements* the course, and most importantly *reviews* it during and after the experiment has taken place. This can be done using students' mid and post-experiment questionnaires. Evaluations should cover learning activities, resources, content, integration between the virtual and physical learning, accessibility to the Internet and technology in general, the real applications of active learning, expectations, respectful atmosphere, cooperation... etc.

As far as BL design models are suggested, we prefer to shed light on AlJazar model as we consider it the most comprehensive and detailed model. In contrast to other models, it covers specific issues starting from needs' analysis till design implementation. The following list describes AlJazar Model (op.cit):

#### **Study & analysis Phase**

- Determining learners' characteristics.
- Determining educational needs.
- Analyzing educational resources.

#### **Design Phase**

- Writing behavioral objectives
- Determining educational content.
- Designing the pre-posttest.
- Selecting learning experiences and teaching techniques and students' organization.

- Selecting media, educational tools and facilities.
- Designing the educational mission on the median required.
- Designing teaching process elements.
- Setting the educational strategy to be followed.

#### **Production Phase**

- Accessing the media and required facilities.
- Having what is available.
- Modifying what is available.
- Micro experimenting of formative evaluation.
- Macro experimenting of summative evaluation.

#### **Evaluation Phase**

- Field usage.
- On-going follow up and evaluation

#### **Usage Phase**

Feedback Modify & review processes

### **1.4. Communication in Blended Learning**

This section is divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section presents two main types of communication that must be present in any BL design. The second sub-section explains the researcher's tendency to emphasize more the synchronous communication.

#### **1.4.1. Types of communication**

In any learning instruction, there are two ways by which teachers and learners can communicate: synchronous and asynchronous. On the one hand, synchronous communication is an instant type of communication. It takes place when students and the teacher gather at the same time, whether at the same place or from different places. Examples of this type are when students learn in the traditional FtF setting at the same time and place or in a 'live' online session. On the other hand, asynchronous communication is more flexible. In such type, students and teachers are distant in both time and place. This includes the students learning in a virtual setting but not at a fixed time as in self-paced study programs.

Fenton and Watkins (2010 as cited in Cheung and Hew, 2011:1320) compare between both types stating that asynchronous communication is an 'instruction and / or communication that takes place at different times, in different locations, eliminating obstacles related to time

and travel constraints’, whereas synchronous communication is an ‘instruction and /or communication that occurs in real time, whereby students and the instructor exchange information at the same time and, most likely from different locations’.

In the following list, Singh (op.cit, 6) illustrates with examples how these two communication types can be applied in FtF and online learning environments in three formats:

### **Learning Approaches and Choices (Singh, op.cit)**

Synchronous physical formats (live classroom learning)

- Instructor-led classroom & lectures
- Hands on labs & workshops
- Field trips

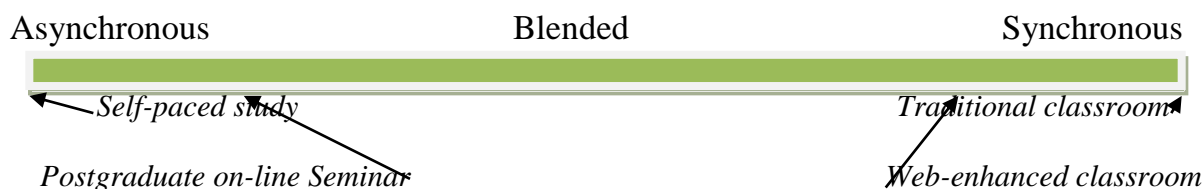
Synchronous online formats (live e-learning)

- Online meetings
- Virtual classrooms
- Web seminars & broadcasts
- Coaching
- Instant messaging
- Conference calls

Asynchronous formats (self-paced)

- Document & web pages
- Web/computer based training modules
- Assessments/Tests & Surveys
- Simulations
- Job aids & electronic performance support systems (EPSS)
- Recorded live events
- Online learning communities & discussion forums
- Distributed & mobile learning

Kasser, Sitnikova, Tran, and Yates (2005, 2) capture these three formats in large spectrum of synchronicity ranging from learning events that are totally synchronous to those that are fully asynchronous as shown in the following figure. According to them, these formats can be possibly mixed together at any learning instruction giving room for several learning environment. Postgraduate on-line seminar, for instance, is not totally asynchronous as it implies some kind of communication between learners and teachers.



**Figure 2: Spectrum of Synchronicity (Kasser, et al., 2005)**

What is important about the previous figure is that BL rests in the centre of the spectrum when synchronous and asynchronous events are combined together. Hence, BL necessitates the combination of both as emphasized by Norberg (2014) who comments that we cannot call a learning instruction “blended learning” unless it is *delivered both synchronously and asynchronously*.

In the present research, both types of communication are used, mainly, by following a synchronous FtF “lecturing” sessions, synchronous online “activities” sessions, and asynchronous virtual events such as E-mail. However, as it is shown in lesson plan (section 6), we tend to *focus more on synchronous online type of communication*. The reasons for such an emphasis are addressed in the following sub-section.

#### **1.4.2. Synchronous Communication Preference**

Although BL must include both synchronous and asynchronous learning formats as two ingredients of BL as previously mentioned, this experiment heavily relies on synchronous mode of learning in the form of online discussion of activities and FtF “lecturing sessions”.

BL practitioners consider that both communication types are advantageous. McVay-Lynch (2004), for instance, cites some advantages for both types. According to him, synchronous environment benefits students and teachers in four ways. First, it motivates students to continue with their studies by encouraging them to focus on the group synchronous interactions. Second, the instantaneous interaction fosters the student’s sense of belonging to a community of enquiry and be a responsible part of it. Third, the quick feedback reveals strong support to students’ ideas and decision-making process. Finally, pacing features

of synchronous learning create self-disciplined students who prioritize their studies and manage their time to attend the lectures.

Asynchronous environment also reflect the following advantages. First, the flexibility feature that allows access to the learning material at any time and from any location. Second, it provides students with sufficient time to think, answer, provide comments, and check posts and references. Third, it encourages situated learning as students can incorporate the course concepts into their working environment. Finally, it requires less cost/effective technology.

Compared to synchronous communication, *asynchronous communication is the most commonly used in online and BL settings*. Hew, Cheung and NG (2010 cited in Cheung and Hew, op.cit) confirm this fact stating that most of the teachers prefer asynchronous technologies to synchronous tools due to the flexibility it provides.

Despite the fact that most BL programs follow an asynchronous type of communication, our concentration on synchronous online events follows the aims of the present research. As our first aim is to reach a pedagogical approach that motivates the students to participate and take a responsible role, instant communication is proved to be motivating and therefore it is the most suitable type. Asynchronous communication, however, did not catch students' needs as they felt isolated, unsupported in e-learning programs (see section one in this chapter).

Our second aim is to improve the students' academic writing abilities by applying constructivism tenets. Constructivism necessitates encouraging real/instant interaction, instant feedback, one way and two-way communication among the teacher and the learners and the learners themselves. According to Holden, Westfall, and Gamor (2010:14) synchronous environment incorporate the following elements : “a dialectic learning environment with varying levels of interactivity, encourages spontaneity of responses, allows for optimal pacing



for best learning retention, allows for immediate reinforcement of ideas, controls length of instruction when completion time is a constraint, and it is constrained by time, but not place”.

Furthermore, in an academic paper that compares between synchronous and asynchronous communication types, Levin and Robbins (2004), challenge the idea that asynchronous communication is advantageous than synchronous one for its flexibility. A survey was handed to post baccalaureate pre-service teachers to identify their perceived communication preferences. It was found that students preferred synchronous modes of communication suggesting that it was "more conversational, and it felt like a real discussion", whereas asynchronous communication “tends to slow things down" since it "did not really have an audience in the same way as in the synchronous communication"(p.2).

We also tend to comment that the extensive reliance on asynchronous communication in BL settings reveal the teachers and the researchers’ fear of getting involved in instant online lectures as they perceive them more difficult to be executed (*mainly problem of losing connection and discipline-control*). Therefore, we take ourselves the initiative to execute such a task by adding synchronous online « activities » session as integral part of the BL experience.

Proceeding from the previous sections, specifically, Sub-section 1.3 “Ingredients of Blended learning”, Section 3 “Blended learning Design Guidelines”, and Section 4 “Communication in Blended learning”, we can deduce the following-most important-characteristics of BL: *complementarity between FtF and online settings, simple and pedagogically-driven technology, academic/affective/technical support, students’ centeredness, autonomous learning, collaborative learning, extra feedback, extra time, active learning, synchronous/asynchronous/self-paced learning.*

## **1.5. Rationale and Advantages of Blended Learning**

The rationale behind the rise of BL is presented to explain its importance as a promising instruction in the field of teaching. In addition, its advantages are discussed with regard to both the acquisition of the writing skill and motivating learners. The advantages are also contrasted to both traditional learning and e-learning.

### **1.5.1. Rationale of Blended Learning**

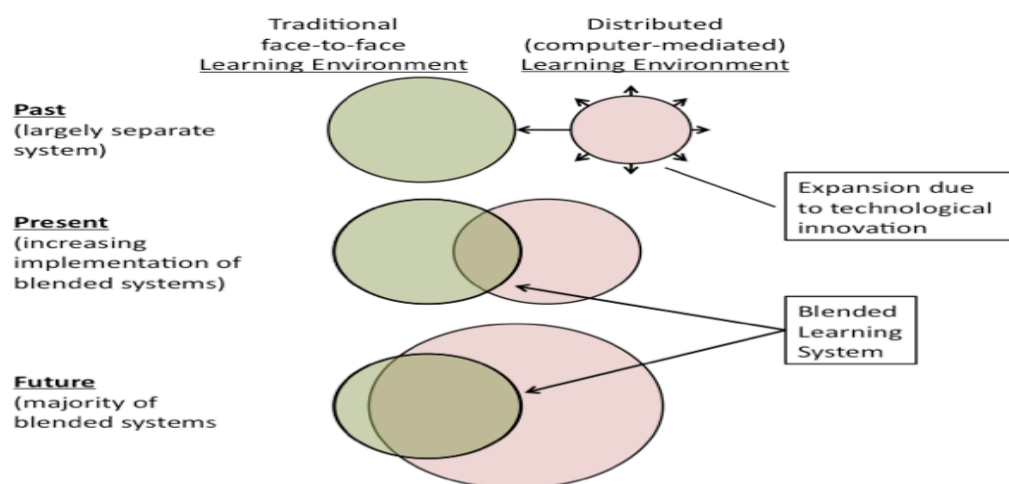
The growing body of literature on language teaching methodologies not only proved the complexity of the task of teaching, but also the difficulty to find a comprehensive method of teaching. As far as academic writing is concerned, teachers have always attempted to apply different approaches ranging from the product approaches till the process approaches. However, the pedagogical application of these theories has determined some shortcomings.

In contrast to a decade ago, the current teaching situation is more favorable due to the expansion of the Internet and the availability of a range of ICT (Information Communication Technology) tools that can be utilized for different pedagogical purposes. Learners are becoming more ‘digital’ - they are called “Net Generation Students” or “Digital Natives” - and traditional approaches are no more appealing to them. (see Chapter Two, p.86-93). No one can deny the fact that almost all students and teachers are to some extent familiar with using computers and surfing on the Internet. Similarly, no one can deprive learners from the benefits of WBI. Therefore, there is an urgent need to create a new method that reflects students’ current learning needs and preferences and go along with the evolution of technology. It is the teacher’s duty to discover how to exploit these various technological resources and tools and direct their use into a more pedagogical orientation.

Along with these convictions, BL is emerging in educational settings as a new promising learning instruction. The major reason this approach is gaining importance is that it holds a

philosophy that doesn't aim to completely replace traditional FtF and e-learning, but to *complement* or overcome some of their shortcomings. It is therefore not surprising that many institutions all over the world have implemented or considered implementing BL in their programs. As Graham (op.cit:7) wrote "we can be pretty certain that the trend toward blended learning systems will increase". Indeed, many studies have been conducted for the aim to apply or to suggest applying certain BL design frameworks. Graham (op.cit 5) provides the following figure that depicts the evolutionary trends of the method:

**Figure 1. The Trends of Blended Learning**



*Figure 1. Adapted from "Definition, Current Trends, and Future Directions" by C. R. Graham, 2006, The Handbook of Blended Learning: Global Perspectives, Local Design. In C. J. Bonk & C. R. Graham (Eds.). p. 6. Copyright 2006 by the author.*

**Figure 3: The Trends of Blended Learning (Graham, 2006,p.5)**

Algeria just like any other spot in the world is not an exception. With the facilities of the Internet tools available, the huge expansion, and the witnessed reforms of the state of the Internet in recent years must be exploited to the benefits of education.

### 1.5.2. Advantages of Blended Learning

Literature cites several advantages for BL which according to Graham (op.cit) have all contributed to its fastest-growing. We tend to classify these advantages in relation to four concepts: motivation, academic writing, e-learning, and traditional learning. This classification follows, first, the fact that the present research aims to investigate the relation

between BL as an independent variable with motivation and academic writing proficiency. Second, it reflects the convictions that BL as a mixed method is more advantageous than e-learning and traditional learning as it takes “the best of both worlds”.

### **1.5.2.1. Advantages of Blended Learning in Relation to Motivation**

BL is proved to raise students’ motivation in contrast to both traditional learning, i.e learning that takes place only in a physical setting and e-learning. The following sub-sections emphasize the main advantages of BL to motivation in relation to both learning settings.

#### **1.5.2.1.1. As Opposed to Traditional Learning**

##### **1.5.2.1.1.1. The Notion of Privacy**

In contrast to the traditional FtF learning, BL helps in establishing a more private and a safe learning environment. The characteristics of the online learning component such as ‘*anonymity*’ and ‘*private chat*’ have the potentials to encourage students to participate and take a responsible part of the learning process. Dziuban, et al. (op.cit) confirm that BL lowers attrition rates which increase outcome measures. Garrison and Vaughan (2008 as cited in Pearce, 2011:69-70) also state that the online learning environment facilitates “reflection in a way that is not possible in...the face-to- face classroom [where] verbal agility, spontaneity and confidence to express oneself in a group setting” is required. This advantage concerns mostly introvert students who tend to avoid answering in public fearing of losing face and being a point of criticism by their classmates if they commit any mistake. Sethy (op.cit:30) adds that in online interactions, “gender, race and social background tend to fade”.

The nature of Internet as a virtual setting gives the opportunity to students to use fake names, i.e. *pseudonyms*. Using these pseudonyms, students will no more hesitate to solve activities, and express themselves. As stated by Ferry (2009, 8), “having the students use their real names may cause some apprehension”. This is very important when it comes to

applying constructivist learning when students are required to freely indulge in a constructive discussion, explain their own contributions, and provide others constructive comments.

Another characteristic of the online component is '*private chat*'. Using this device, students can address any personal concerns to their teacher such as problems in understanding the lecture, problems with using the virtual device itself, connection problems...etc. One other important benefit is the ability of the teacher to answer each student's questions individually and simultaneously, and check that all students have understood the material. This issue can be difficult, if not, impossible within a crowded FtF setting.

In addition to that, although Stacey (1998 as cited in Gerbic 2006) claims that the absence of visual, social and communication cues of normal conversation makes it difficult to build trust in an online setting and leads to misunderstandings, Yus (2011) proves the opposite. Referring to Internet-Mediated Communication (IMC), mainly in the virtual space "Facebook", Yus mentions that this type of communication contains attitudinal and informal cues that do not only help in interpreting the message but also have a pragmatic function; that of interpreting feelings and attitudes of interlocutors. This is evident when using *text deformation* (the use of capital letters and repetition of letters for emphasis such as "I DIDN'T UNDERRRSTAND", and punctuation marks such as "!!!", "???", and *emoticons* (smileys).

#### **1.5.2.1.1.2. The Notion of Self-Regulation**

As previously mentioned, BL is by nature "learner-centered" as it draws on the needs of students. The traditional passive role of the student changes to a more active role when they are included in the decision-making process as responsible agents. Decisions include where they prefer to learn (BL Vs FtF setting), what online device they prefer to use, and the convenient time to use it. Providing students with such a responsibility is what keeps students motivated in the BL instruction. In this context, Twigg (op.cit) mentions the significant contribution of the Program in Course Redesign created in 1999 which compares between

online and traditional learning outcomes in a large number of colleges and universities. He concludes that online learning was better at keeping learners engaged not due to its media features but the extent to which students are given control over them. In practical terms, these programs provided students “active/learner-centered learning”, “computer-based learning resources”, and “On-demand help”.

Within a BL setting, students also learn to become *self-regulated* by acquiring the skill of time management. They learn how to adjust their schedule to attend the virtual session on time. Using emails as a pedagogical device, for instance, makes students punctual as they need to check for any new announcement from the teacher. Harding, Kaczynski and Wood (2005:60) stress the fact that BL fosters students’ responsibility by quoting these words from a student “You have to go every day and check and make sure you are up to date by choice instead of receiving everything the lecturer gives you.”

In addition to that, using *self-paced learning objects* in BL fosters students’ self-reliance and self-confidence since they require the student to deal with them independently at any time they need. Examples of these are uploading e-documents to be read by all the class, posting a quiz to be solved by students, or using email as a communication tool. Such asynchronous self-paced learning elements make the learners trust their own judgments with little reliance on the teacher.

Furthermore, due to the collaborative nature of BL, Eison (2010) points out that students are generally engaged working with active online exercises instead of merely attending classes and taking notes. He mentions a research conducted by McKeachie, et al. (1987) which compares between lecture methods and discussion methods. The results show that regarding the “measures of retention of information after the end of a course, measures of problem solving, thinking, attitude change, or motivation for further learning, the results tend to show differences favoring discussion methods over lecture” (p. 70)

In a word, in contrast to traditional learning, BL has a better chance to motivate students by setting *safe*, private and anonymous learning environment, and encouraging them to be *self-regulated* since the environment itself requires learner-centeredness, collaboration, and self-discipline together with the use of self-paced learning objects.

#### **1.5.2.1.2. As Opposed to E-Learning: The Notion of Socialization**

HE has witnessed a paramount shift from considering the instructor's content design to creating learner-centered environments in which the learner as a member of a society not only contributes to his/her own knowledge but other's intellectual growth as well. The *social networks* presented in Web 2.0 technologies such as Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs are inherently "sociable" as their names suggest. They tend to position people in a communication of a wide scale in order to express their ideas, and reflect upon others'.

The integration of these social networks into education as it is the case in BL provides learners and teachers the opportunity to create a *community of inquiry* in which each takes a part. According to Mc-Millan and Chavis (1986 as cited in Palmiotto, 2011:110) having a sense of community means having "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together". Students and teacher can interact with each other and with the content, explore their knowledge and others' knowledge, reflect upon and ameliorate other's understanding (Castaneda, Ahern, & Díaz, 2011).

In the same vein, Ally (2004:5) attributes several advantages of the Internet for education stating that it has the potentials to "access learning materials; to interact with the content, instructor, and other learners; and to obtain support during the learning processes, in order to acquire knowledge, to construct personal meanings, and to grow from the learning experience".

Therefore, the introduction of social networks in education is an important factor that paves the way for the applications of *constructivism theory* of learning (chapter three, pp.145-147). Consequently, in a BL instruction, socialization should not be thought of as a process that occurs only in the FtF human contact, but also as a process that can be executed through synchronous online sessions. In the words of Garrison and Kanuka (op.cit:97), “learners can be independent of space and time yet together”.

It is the presence of “socialization” features in BL which made it more superior than e-learning. According to many researchers, the most striking disadvantage to e-learning is the absence of interaction between learners and teachers and between learners themselves. As it was solely virtual, there was a lack of the human contact. In comparison to BL, learners and teachers in e-learning never meet for real. In addition to that, teachers did not even attempt to compensate this lack with creating interactional online learning activities. The teachers’ role online was restricted to administrative functions or posting announcements. No synchronous online learning formats were followed and many drop-outs were witnessed. All what e-learning was concerned with is content delivery rather than establishing a supportive community of inquiry.

The idea that e-learning hinders the sense of socialization, as stated by Sethy (op.cit) encouraged researchers to consider adding the human interaction in a completely new method: the BL instruction. In addition to that, in a comparative study of Rovai and Jordan (2004) that investigates the presence of sense of community in three HE learning settings: fully online, traditional classrooms, and BL instruction, the findings show that BL encourages a stronger sense of community among learners.

Although emphasizing the socialization process in BL is primarily an attempt to cover for the failure of e-learning, many researchers also discuss the complexity of applying a socialized environment in traditional FtF setting. Consequently, many studies have considered



discussing the benefits of Computer-Mediated-Communication (CMC). Unlike FtF discussions which are generally chaotic as students can dominate the discussion on the expense of others, or due to large sized classes, online discussions are more organized and democratic since all students can participate and have their voice heard (Harasim, 1990; Levin, Kim, & Riel, 1990 as cited in Swan, 2007). Using Moodle as an online pedagogical device, Britto (2009) mentions that communication among students and with the teacher was better than in a traditional classroom. This is due to the interactive properties of Moodle such as posting and answering queries, asking clarifications, offering suggestions...etc.

### **1.5.2.2. Advantages of Blended Learning to Academic Writing**

The advantages cited in relation to academic writing are considered superior than both traditional learning and e-learning. The researcher attempted to emphasize the most significant advantages that respond to the drawbacks of both learning instructions.

#### **1.5.2.2.1. Increasing Time**

Nearly almost all researchers agree on the fact that writing is the most difficult skill to acquire and improve especially for second language (SL) learners as discussed in chapter three. Nunan (1989 :35), for instance, acknowledges that “learning to write frequently and expressively is the most difficult of all motor skills for all language users.” Academic writing as a specific genre of writing with all its characteristics is proved to be even more problematic for university students. This complexity necessitates providing students with the sufficient time to practice academic writing exercises as the proverb says “practice makes perfect”.

However, under the classroom time constraints, it is difficult if not impossible, to guarantee a good practice of academic writing mechanisms and concepts. Students are generally given a few exercises that they have to answer under pressure, and sometimes even the teacher feedback is not given or not truly understood. Jack (2009 as cited in Sayed, 2010)

agrees with the time obstacle stating that most teachers would find it difficult to invest the class time over writing as it requires much practice.

Expanding learning opportunities through virtual means gives room to follow the students' most suitable and preferable time. Students can choose the time that suits them to have the online lecture which in comparison to the FtF lecture has an extra time. Providing additional time can also be done by adding asynchronous learning events which allow the student to study on their own pace. Whether adding time in synchronous events or via flexible means, the aim is to allow students to think more about the activities they tend to solve, to practice more, to answer individual questions, and to have more time for a reasoned discussion and for constructive peer and teacher feedback.

#### **1.5.2.2.2. Increasing Feedback**

In the situation of BL instruction, feedback is of two types: human feedback and computer-generated feedback (see Chapter Three, pp.158-162). What is to be reminded here is that the interactive and socialization properties of BL instruction make it more beneficial than e-learning in terms of providing feedback. In addition to that, the technological properties, i.e. the computer softwares/devices and web-based resources allow for an additional type of feedback which is not available in traditional FtF learning '*the computer-generated feedback*'. In the study of Britto (op.cit:18) both types of feedback are proved to be available in BL. In such a study, the students reported that "technology definitely helped them write better and faster since they could... rearrange words and sentences, correct mistakes, make outlines, send copies to others, have their essays corrected by peers, and consult dictionaries, phrase books, concordances, and thesaurus".

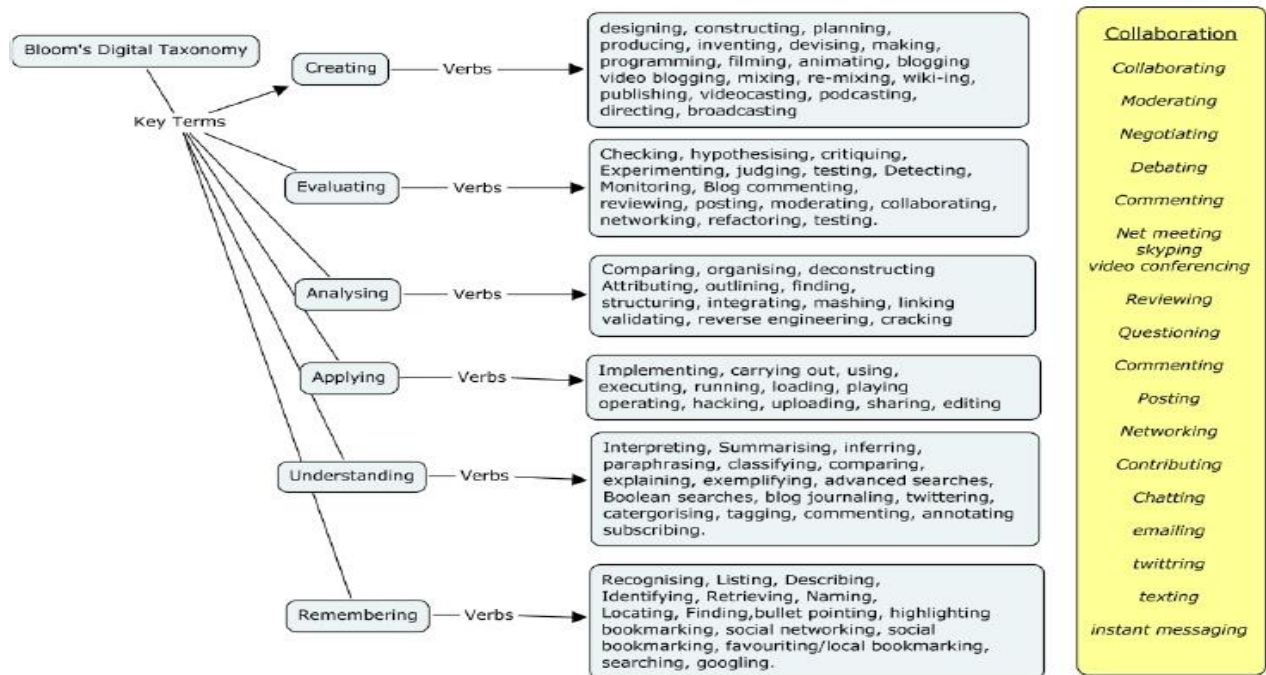
Another issue to discuss here is that feedback in the online component can be stored for future review. Students can connect to the website chosen for study and review the lecture. They can read the answers of their classmates and of their teacher and review the whole

discussion for more than once. This goes with the principle that exposure is important for a SL to be learnt. Supporters of the SL acquisition theory believe that reinforcing the exposure to material facilitates the process of memorizing and retrieving. Some researchers such as Cervero & Pichardo Castro (2000 as cited in Adas and Bakir, 2013:256) notice that “80% of the learnt material [in FtF traditional learning] is lost in 24 hours”. Therefore, BL could be the best instruction that reinforces acquisition due to discussing the same information in different context from different points of view. This leads to developing flexible mental schemata which contribute to memorization.

#### **1.5.2.2.3. Increasing Metacognition**

The socialization features of BL along with applying the constructivist learning tenets have the advantage to support higher levels of thinking. Once gathering the students and the teacher together within a constructive discussion and negotiation of the learning material, the process of learning moves from the passive activities of listening and reading to more challenging activities that necessitate critical reflection. Stressing the same idea, Hudson (2002 as cited in Stacey and Gerbic, 2009:147) argues “that the very basis of thinking is rooted in dialogue, drawing on a socially constructed context to endow ideas with meaning”.

Using Blooms’ taxonomy (1956), learning moves through different levels starting from low-ordered activities of remembering, understanding, and applying till reaching high-ordered activities of analysing, evaluating, and creating. An important contribution, in this realm, is that of Churches (2008 as cited in Bath and Bourke, op.cit) who suggests a revision of Bloom's taxonomy (op.cit) in a way that suits the BL setting which suggest that the same activities can be applied in BL. The following figure depicts Churches’ revision:



**Figure 4: Mind Map of Bloom's Revised Digital Taxonomy (Churches, p. 2008)**

To think critically or reflectively is to go beyond the mere acceptance of arguments or pre-assumptions. It is to judge these arguments, to think reasonably about them through analysis for the aim of a better understanding. Elder and Paul (2006 :4) define the term critical thinking as ‘the art of analysing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it’.

Thinking critically implies problem solving activities in which the student analyses challenging questions, interprets his/her own answers/questions, or answers/questions of other students. This can be an individual task that encourages the student to build *self-monitoring strategies* by judging his/her own knowledge, and evaluating the validity of his/her own questions and answers. It also encourages self-confidence in making decisions and builds the habit of giving oneself an “*internal feedback*”. An example of emphasizing critical thinking and reflective thinking is to ask reflective questions like “what do you think is successful about your answer?”, or “Do you agree with the answer of your classmate and why?”

It might also be a collaborative task in which students together with the teacher as a guide discuss a certain activity or an answer of a student. This improves the construction of a

community of inquiry in which constructive feedback is emphasized. According to Rovai (2002 as cited in Garrison and Kanuka: op.cit:99), “students with stronger sense of community tend to possess greater perceived levels of cognitive learning”. Hiltz (1994) adds that the community of inquiry fosters a culture of reflection in course discussion.

#### **1.5.2.2.4. Offering Extra Materials**

An obvious advantage to teaching online is the ability to use several online sources that can assist the learning process. Many websites are available and can be found through search engines such as Google. They vary between those which are designed specifically for the aim to add *informative knowledge* concerning a certain field of study in the written, audio and video formats, some which afford *explanatory knowledge* such as the online dictionaries, encyclopedias and thesauruses, and those *social networks* which set a social climate for learning such as Facebook. Azizan (2010) expects extra resources to develop critical thinking, enhance learners’ confidence and competence, develop the social communication, and improve the quality of learning.

Teaching using social networks can also help students and teachers to avoid the burden of searching online through the features of “upload” and “download”. In this sense, the results of the study made by O’Toole and Absalom (2003 in Adas and Bakir, 2013) conclude that students who read the material uploaded online in addition to the traditional lecture performed better than those who have been taught using traditional lecture only.

#### **1.5.2.2.5. Offering Flexibility**

The ‘any time’, ‘any where’ characteristics of web-based technology devices extend the flexibility of learning. This is very beneficial especially in HE where many university students cannot sometimes attend the lecture physically as they can be overwhelmed with other duties such as work, studying other fields, having injuries, or even due to the heavy program they study and the number of hours per day which oblige them to drop some of the

lectures. Another problem is that of transportation which makes distant students sometimes absent the lectures.

Problems as these can be avoided when specifying some of the lectures to be taught online. Using wireless technologies, students can attend these lectures at the time and place they prefer. This can raise the attendance rates as Oblender's (2002) study findings show that students' attendance to courses in the BL environment reached a high percentage of 99%.

All in all, Graham and Robinson (2007) specify three reasons for designing a BL instruction: Improved pedagogy, increased access and productivity. In addition to these, Osguthorpe and Graham (2003 cited in Larsen, 2012) identify six reasons: pedagogical richness, access to knowledge, social interaction, personal agency, cost effectiveness, and ease of revision. We prefer Al Fiky (2011: 24-26) summary of the BL advantages as follows:

1. Increasing students' interaction and participation.
2. Developing students' learning and performance.
3. Affecting teachers' approaches of other subjects.
4. Developing independent learners, a source of instant feedback, time saving and motivation to learners (Sharma and Barrett, op.cit, pp. 10-12).
5. Increasing student learning outcomes and reduce instructional delivery costs. (Dziuban, et al., op.cit).
6. Maximizing classroom space and/or reduce the number of overcrowded classrooms. (Gould, 2003, p. 55).
7. Allowing institutions to offer more classes at peak demand times of the day, thus maximizing the scant resources by increasing flexibility in scheduling.
8. Reducing paper and photocopying costs. In hybrid courses, all course documents, including syllabi, lecture notes, assignment sheets and other hard copy handouts, are easily accessible to the students on the course web site.

## **1.6. Challenges of Blended Learning**

As there are numerous advantages, the complex nature of the BL instruction also incites the existence of a number of challenges that must be considered when designing the BL methodology. They range between *design*, *cultural*, *technical*, and *professional* issues.

Stressing the cultural constraints of the BL implementation, Sait et al. (2003 as cited in Alebaikan and Troudi, 2009) state that some instructors can be resistant to adopt any new

teaching methodologies, especially those which involve technological methods. This resistance can be the result of the norms of a given society which might consider using the Internet as threatening to its culture.

Taking the case of Saudi Arabia for instance, Alebaikan and Troudi (ibid) also mention the study conducted by Al-Kahtani, Ryan, and Jefferson (2006). In such a study, they investigated Saudi female teachers' perceptions regarding the potential use of the Internet. They concluded that their perceptions influence their attitude towards using BL strategy. In practical terms, these perceptions vary from one field to another. The conservative proportion of the society tend to consider Internet usage dangerous for its improper content while others teaching in science disciplines consider it useful as it enhances their teaching outcomes.

Apart from the teachers' attitude towards BL, Graham, Allen, and Ure (op.cit) also discuss students' responsiveness in BL instruction. It is quite a difficult task for teachers to help students develop the habit of learning through an instruction that adds a virtual element. Students are "traditional academics" as they used to rely on the teacher, listen, read and take notes. In this sense, Al-Jarf (2005) mentions that some students in his study did not take online instruction seriously as it was not used by other instructors and students at the college.

In order to overcome the cultural challenges of BL instruction, we can change the content and accommodate it to the society's culture. In addition to that, to guarantee the students' readiness, self-discipline and responsiveness, web-etiquette or rules must be set prior to the instruction. Also, the students can be extrinsically motivated when they are promised some rewards for their presence in the online sessions.

Referring to professional, cultural and technical challenges, Graham (op.cit:15-16)) mentions the following issues:

1. Teaching in the online environment requires a *professional* development for instructors.
2. Learning materials must be made *culturally relevant* to the local audience.

3. Learners must be provided with the *technological* skills to succeed in both environments.
4. The accessibility to the communication technologies by individuals might differ greatly at different ends of the socioeconomic spectrum.

Similarly, Hofmann (2011) examines a number of issues that might hinder the execution of BL method. However, he focuses much on the *instructional/design challenges* as she believes that when implementing technology in learning, instructors generally care about how technology is embedded and give little attention on designing a suitable content.

1. Ensuring students and teachers' ability to use the technology.
2. Resisting the idea that technology is used simply because it is available.
3. Overcoming the idea that blended is effective.
4. Redefining the role of the facilitator.
5. Managing and monitoring participant progress.
6. Looking at how to teach, not just what to teach.
7. Matching the best delivery medium to the performance objective.
8. Keeping online offerings interactive rather than just "talking at" participants.
9. Ensuring participant commitment and follow-through with "non-live" elements.
10. Ensuring all the elements of the blend are coordinated.
11. Some adults experience some computer-related phobia
12. Frustration, confusion, anger, anxiety and similar emotional states which may be associated with the interaction can adversely affect productivity, learning, social relationships and overall well-being.
13. Various difficulties in evaluation, monitoring and class administration

In Britto (op.cit), the students reported some of areas of discontent with using BL. According to them, the workload was too heavy compared to that followed by their classmates using traditional learning. As argued by Britto, this problem was probably the result of the lack of a uniform syllabus to be followed which encourages the teachers to design their own BL programs. Despite this, students are still convinced that this workload was to their advantage as they helped them learn so much. Second, the textbook they were obliged to use was too heavy. Finally, and probably the most important challenge is that peer interaction was too difficult to settle. The students were not accustomed to make their writings public, to comment on other's writings, and to receive comments. They felt generally embarrassed to participate in the whole audience.



As stressed by Britto (op.cit:21), the teacher has to encourage students to take part in peer correction since “the goal of a university-level composition course is not simply to make private journal entries...but to communicate with a real audience”.

In order to respond to *technical obstacles*, teachers and learners can be trained using the technological tools involved prior to the instruction. To avoid spending much time training, it is better to use the simplest technologies that don't require a professional knowledge such as Facebook. In addition to that, *design issues* such as anxiety factors, successful integration of learning elements, managing time, managing students, setting interactive learner' centered setting can be avoided if BL is well-executed (Graham, op.cit). Solutions to these problems are included in the following section.

### **1.7. Blended Learning Design for Experiment Implementation: The Rationale**

As previously mentioned, the design of BL instruction is to a great extent *flexible* making it very problematic for teachers to agree upon a well-defined design methodology. However, we personally consider that the shortage in the BL designs and their “situational” applications is advantageous in some way as it provides teachers some freedom to decide upon the method of using BL. The design depends upon the teacher's decisions about learning objectives, content delivery, and students' needs. McSporran and King (2005) believe that BL, if well designed, has the potential to meet the various needs of learners regardless of the subject of study.

Following these convictions, the design of the research experiment is not implemented haphazardly. All issues mentioned previously in this chapter are taken into consideration, namely, *ingredients, design principles, modes, level, communication types, challenges*, together with *constructivism tenets* (see Chapter Three, pp.147-152) and *motivational* factors. In order to properly reflect these issues within the experiment, we decided to address them in the following decisions (from Decision 1 to Decision 12):

**D1: To discuss the issue of *component integration* we ask: what content/resources should go to virtual Vs FtF settings?**

Since the experiment follows a *replacement model* and *Mode2* of BL, the course will be carried out using two modes (the FtF and virtual one) in which the virtual mode will *replace* some of FtF setting, in particular *time devoted for activities*. As a result, each lesson will be divided into "a lecturing session" in FtF class, and "an activity session" in virtual setting. During the FtF session, the teacher *transmits* factual knowledge/concepts about the topic of study. She also provides the students with reading documents/references and discusses any challenged /unanswered questions/misconceptions articulated in the virtual setting.

In the online environment the students will *create* knowledge by *applying* what they have learnt in the session. In such settings, the students will be engaged in both *individual and collaborative tasks* that foster cognitive and social construction of knowledge. The students will be provided and asked to provide online resources and upload e-documents/references, and allowed to simultaneously consult online resources as they solve different activities.

**D2: What web-based tools best suit our learning situation?**

All activities will be carried out in a *Closed Facebook Group*. Our choice to use this social network site follows the reasons mentioned by Patrut and Patrut (2013). First, Facebook saves time for the fact that most students have a Facebook account. Second, it has a feature of Create Group which allow the teacher to join all class under one group and facilitates the share of information to all in real and same time. This helps in building a social identity by performing a joint action in a way that responds to the norms of the group. Third, Facebook has a friendly interface and its interactions are continuation of real-life interactions. Therefore, the students are likely to enjoy interacting by establishing existing/new personal relationships, expressing themselves, or being popular among their online communities.

Finally, creating a profile using pseudonyms makes interaction/communication less visible and leads to more self-expression and self-assertion which are key concepts in learner-centered teaching and in turn to constructivism. In addition, E-mail as an asynchronous tool is used to help both the teacher and the students to address any new events/questions.

### **D3: How much time would the students spend in virtual Vs FtF settings?**

Since BL aims to overcome time constraints imposed by the physical environment, efficient BL experience is the one that *maximizes time* spent especially on activities. Therefore, the time the students would spend in FtF class is hour and half (as usual), but in virtual setting *two hours on activities* because the students need more time to think, answer, discuss, provide peer feedback and even for the teacher to provide her feedback to her students.

### **D4: How could a community of inquiry be created? (social and cognitive presences)**

In order to comment/discuss texts posted by the teacher, or texts posted by peers, the students are asked to provide *a thought-out contribution* rather than a response that might add nothing to the students' knowledge. Ex: avoid contributions like " I agree with u", "I think your text is correct". The students are asked to provide reasons whenever they decide to comment or evaluate texts. Also, In order to answer any question posted, the students are encouraged to answer at a deeper level.

To foster the students' critical thinking skills, the teacher indirectly refers to errors made by peers without mentioning the error to make the students mindfully analyse it. If a question is raised in public, the teacher gives room for another student to answer it. In addition, in order to encourage higher levels of interaction and make the students value the online activities, *the students are told that posts and replies will be assessed for both quantity and quality of the posts just like participation in FtF setting*. The teacher would also avoid

harsh criticisms; instead she acknowledges her students' initiations .Finally, the teacher posts a summary of the online discussion, referring to areas of agreement and disagreement, including examples of model answers, and model peer-assessment, and provides her final feedback.

**D5:To what extent student's autonomy is allowed Vs guidance? (learner-centeredness Vs teacher presence)**

The fact that BL is a learner centered approach doesn't imply that the students would study on their own. Teacher presence is a vital component in BL. *Since the virtual sessions will be synchronous*, there is a well-defined time in which the students and the teacher will be logged in the virtual tool. However, the students are allowed to discuss with their teacher prior to the experience the time that best suits them to log in and join the online sessions. The students also choose one text of their peers to comment on/evaluate. They are also allowed to consult online sources while answering questions and address any question to the teacher privately through private chat. However, it is the teacher who monitors discussion, sets time limits for discussion, for answering questions, for posting their answers/texts.

**D6:To what extent is the students' self-regulation allowed ? (Self-paced learning)**

Although the present BL experiment is largely synchronous, *self-paced learning is a compulsory ingredient of BL* as shown from literature. Therefore, adding asynchronous modes of communication that makes the students self-regulated is a necessity. *E-documents* (e-books, web links, and lecture notes) are posted for the students to consult and study on their own pace. *E-mail* is also used to inform/or remind the students about any new event, and for the students to ask the teacher any question.

**D7: How to deal with the students' self-discipline and control? (Managing the students)**

Dealing with the teacher fear to lose control over the students online is an important issue to consider. In order to keep the students self-disciplined, the researcher decides to create rules of *Web-etiquette* including rules of Do's and Don'ts (be *critical* about what to post and comment, what is *expected* from the teacher and from the students, due dates and *time* limitations of posting comments, asking the teacher questions, sending to the teacher's email, expectations of the teacher's response).

**D8: Will the students use autonomous or identifiable identities? (Anonymity)**

It depends on the student's choice whether to use their real names on Facebook or using pseudonyms. As mentioned before, using pseudonyms lowers anxiety and raises the students' motivation to comment on their peer's texts and answer questions since everything is posted and shown to everyone. Those who fear losing face are given the choice to use pseudonyms, but they must be at least known to the teacher so she can assess them.

**D9: How much technical training the students need?**

Unlike other web-based applications, we assume that Facebook and Email are simple tools widely used by students and do not require a specific training. However, it would seem erroneous to suppose that all students know how to use Facebook and email; this is why we ask the students about their technical knowledge with these devices in the pre-experiment questionnaire.

**D10: How to assess the students' writing ability?**

As previously mentioned, formative assessment deals with students' critical thinking through *self and peer-assessment procedures*. Before we encourage the students to comment on each other posts and replies, we start first with *self-assessment*. We ask the students

questions like: “what do you think is successful about your draft? why?”, “what concerns do you still have about your draft?” In order to foster *peer assessment*, we ask the students “what do you think about your friend's draft?”, “what constructive recommendations would you suggest? Why??”. Summative assessment is to be dealt with using pre and post tests.

#### **D11:How to assess student's motivation in virtual settings?**

Through *mid and post-experiment questionnaires* and through *volume of posts and replies*.

#### **D12: How to ensure student's readiness to the course?**

It is important that before conducting the experiment, the students are told information about BL format including a whole schedule about course structure, types of activities, time management; specify course goals, policies, expectations, grading, and responsibilities.

Following the previous decisions, and incorporating the *Learning Presences* of Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2000), and *Types of Online Interactions* of Dziuban, et al. (op.cit), together with *Bloom's taxonomy* and Muilenburg and Burge (2000) types of *online discussion questions*, the researcher designed a lesson plan which provides a *general framework* on the basis of which subsequent lessons -used during the experimental study -are designed. The general plan as well as the plans of each lesson of the subject of “Research Methodology”, Semester 1, are found in Appendixes (V, VI).

#### **Conclusion**

It is becoming a well-known fact that the expansion of the Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) has changed dramatically the way education is conceived and delivered. A fact which cannot, and must not, be ignored in order to both accommodate the evolving needs and habits of the Digital generations and to keep up-to-date with the current teaching methods. BL

as being the last expansion of online teaching pedagogies promises education practitioners with striking benefits. We must bear in mind that the concept is still at its inception and it requires a lot of practice to be clearly addressed just like any other method in the field of teaching and learning. Therefore, despite the confusion that surrounds its applications, one must take advantage of the suggested principles, guidelines, and models as an attempt to reach a strategy that guarantees the students' acquisition and understanding of learning objectives.

## **Chapter Two: Motivation in Blended Learning**

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## **Introduction**

In the present chapter, an attempt is made to discuss the first dependent variable of ‘motivation’ in relation to the constructivism-BL context. The concept is first defined by emphasizing the fluctuation it has known along three general perspectives: the behavioural, the cognitive and the socio-cognitive. The discussion, then, moves to emphasize three motivation theories, namely, Attribution Theory, Goal-Orientation Theory, and Self-Determination Theory to examine the possible application of their major constructs in BL. After that, attention shifts towards highlighting the importance of motivation to the current research situation by referring to factors pertinent to the subject matter and the physical setting as well as to the changing learning patterns of the Digital Natives. The chapter ends with combining all motivation constructs within a motivating learning community framework which emphasizes learning presences and interactions in both BL environments.

### **2.1. Definition of Motivation**

Motivation was and is still a dominant subject of research regarding the long history attributed to study its components. Its significance to second language learning is being clearly acknowledged by many researchers. In this section, we shall first examine the term broadly in the way it is attached to one’s everyday life then; we move on to place its conceptualization within a fluctuating framework: the field of second language learning.

#### **2.1.1. In General**

A lexical definition of the term would be helpful as a first conceptualization. According to The Dictionary of the English Language, motivation is “the general desire or willingness of someone to do something; enthusiasm”. Motivation to perform an action is, therefore, synonymous to having the desire, willingness, and enthusiasm to do it. It holds within it the existence of “a motive”; an inciting force that encourages someone to perform an action.

Motivation plays a significant role in daily life activities. When one hears the word motivation, he automatically attaches it to words such as goals, desire, will, effort, ambition, energy, and persistence. These words are related to activities we perform on a daily basis; to our preferences and complaints. Examples of these are the job conditions we like or dislike, the extent to which our hobbies are appreciated by society, and even the extent to which others listen to our interests and wishes; all of which determine the degree we would pursue our dreams and ambitions of achieving what we desire to be.

Scholars in the field have proposed several definitions to the concept. Gardner (1985) specifies four aspects of motivation: a goal, an effort, a desire to attain the goal, and a favorable attitude toward the activity. Similarly, Oxford and Shearin (1994) define motivation as a desire to achieve a goal combined with the energy to work toward that goal. In addition to that, Keller (1983) states that motivation is the degree of the choices people make and the degree of efforts they will exert. Williams and Burden (1997: 120), however, see motivation as: " a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, a state which leads to a conscious decision to act and give rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort".

All of the previously mentioned authors have frequently used words such as “effort”, “goal”, and “desire”. However, Brophy (2004:3- 4) differentiates between goals and motives. According to him, motives are ‘hypothetical constructs used to explain why people are doing what they are doing’. In other words, motives are the primary energetic drives that stimulate someone to perform an action; they are basic needs. Goals, on the other hand, are the final objectives attained through using different strategies. If the motive disappears, the goal cannot be fulfilled. In this context, Brophy provides the example of someone who wants to eat. Having food in this case is a goal that emerged as a reaction to the motive/need of hunger and has to be attained through the strategy of going to a restaurant. Therefore, motivation is a

theoretical construct which refers to the initiation, direction, and persistence of behavior towards a specific goal. (Maehr & Meyer, 1997 as cited in Brophy, *ibid*).

The concept motivation, however, is not conceived in that simple form. Martin Covington (1992: 1) states that " motivation, like the concept of gravity, is easier to describe- in terms of its outward, observable effects- than it is to define". This complexity is highly revealed when the concept is related to SLL context for different elements can interrupt the learner's desire to learn. In this vein, McDonough (1981:143) resembles SL motivation to "a dustbin" which "includes a number of possibly distinct components, each of which may have different origins and different effects and require different classroom treatment". Motivation complexity is well-addressed in the following section.

### **1.1.1. Shifting Paradigms in Understanding Motivation**

While the process of acquiring the mother tongue seems to be easy, learning a second language is a difficult task to achieve. This difficulty is attributed to different factors; some of which are emerging from the inner self, others from the environment in which the process occurs (e.g. Deci, 1970). A long time ago, scholars attempted to examine the reasons behind students' low motivation as well as to find strategies to raise it. Many theories have emerged and models proposed for the sake of coming with a well-definite conception of motivation. Nonetheless, it was quite the opposite. The bunch of proposed theories has rendered the concept one of the most complicated ones considering that each theory views motivation from a different angle suggesting different, if not, opposing explanations. As a matter of fact, no agreed-upon definition is attached to motivation yet (Oxford and Shearin , *op.cit*).

L2 motivation has witnessed a remarkable shift in its conceptualization during the course of its development. As a whole, motivation is being examined according to three major perspectives: the behavioural, the cognitive, and the socio-cognitive perspective. In the present section, we shall move through these perspectives to expose the fluctuation that the

understanding of the term has known. Also, we shall briefly mention the major constructs, models, and theories that are suggested so far.

#### **1.1.1.1. Behavioural Perspectives**

At its beginnings, motivation was examined within a behavioural framework with Behavioural Reinforcement Theories. Scholars in this direction include Skinner, Pavlov and Watson. The objective was to explain "what moved a resting organism into a state of activity " (Weiner, 1990, p. 617). Terms such as "instinct" and "energization" were used instead of motivation. Motivation was understood as a response to a certain stimuli and being more automatic and impulsive than being intentional. It was of a "behavior control"; a term that was often used by behaviourist instead of motivation. It was believed that an organism desirable behavior can be maintained only if the stimulus is emphasized through reinforcers. Primary experimental research has focused on observing animals' behavior and controlling their responsive patterns in laboratories. It was considered too complex to investigate directly, and much experimental research conducted on animals was generalized to humans.

Once applying the principles of behaviourism to SL education, the teachers are advised to follow a rewarding system in order to ensure the continuation of desirable learning behaviors such as working hard or participating. Those include praising students or providing them with extra marks. Conversely, if the students manifest undesirable actions in class such as low discipline, or do not prepare their homeworks, the teachers are encouraged to use punishments. Perceiving motivation from this perspective is clearly irrelevant to the educational setting regarding its origins, practices, and aims (Weiner, *ibid*).

As an alternative to behavior reinforcement theories, need theories emerged to explain behavior not as a response to external pressures but to internal felt needs. According to need theories, external stimuli are not the determinants of an observable behavior. Behavior still occurs even with the absence of any external pressure. The best explanation, then, is that

individuals act as a response to inner needs when they reach a state of deprivation. These needs range from being physiological and universal such as hunger and those learned through cultural experiences such as the need for showing power and proving oneself in a society.

The most popular model based on need theory is Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs (1962). Maslow (1962) suggested a hierarchy of needs which function in an order of priority from lower to higher needs. These include: physiological needs such as sleep and hunger, safety needs such as protection from danger and threat, love needs such as gaining acceptance from society, esteem needs such as showing ability or mastery, and the need for self-actualization such as the need for self expression and curiosity. According to Maslow, higher needs cannot be satisfied unless lower needs are guaranteed. For example, need for love and for having warm interpersonal relationships cannot arise unless the individual's basic needs for survival are met.

To apply Maslow's hierarchy in the classroom setting, it seems true that the students whose needs are not met, let it be *physiological* (lower) like being hungry, cold or not at ease due to the classroom physical conditions, or *intellectual* (higher) as not been given freedom to express their opinions, or prove their intellectual knowledge are unlikely to be willing to study. Providing students with higher needs is a very important issue when it comes to increasing students' motivation especially within a constructivist BL environment. We suggest that both these needs (competence, relatedness, choice, comfort) may be better met within a constructivist BL environment as they match the principles of both constructivism and BL.

In fact, both behavior reinforcement theories and need theories depict motivation as reaction to pressures. They only differ in the source of where that pressure comes from; whether from extrinsic incentives or internal needs.

### **1.1.1.2. Cognitive Perspectives**

Cognitive theories emerged to criticize the machine metaphor that have been emphasized for years and considered it to be irrelevant to educational settings. According to these theories, most human actions are intentional rather than being automatic reactions to a certain stimuli. Humans are by nature *proactive*; that is to say, they can decide by themselves what they want to do without the necessity for any stimulus to be present. This conception is referred to as ‘choice motivation’ emphasizing the important role of the individual’s choice in achieving self-growth. Accordingly, the term “goal” has replaced that of “need” and it is understood as the internal, cognitive representations of what individuals are trying to do or want to achieve (Niemi-virta, 1998). In the taxonomy of Ford (1992), six major categories of goals are distinguished: (1) affective (entertainment, happiness), (2) cognitive (exploration, curiosity, and understanding), (3) subjective organization goals (having a sense of harmony with others), (4) self-assertive social relationship goals (individuality, superiority, self-determination), (5) integrative social relationship goals (belongingness, social responsibility), (6) task goals (mastery, creativity, material gain).

The study of achievement goals is linked to Atkinson’s ‘Theory of Achievement’ which suggests that people are differently predisposed from birth with ‘a need for achievement’. The latter cognitive construct has meant a need to reach a certain standard of excellence (success) and avoid failure. As a part of their cognitive processes, some children hold within their subconscious a high motive to achieve success through engaging in challenging tasks while others would avoid these tasks.

Having a goal in mind, however, necessitates a commitment to achieve it. Likewise, if one holds negative perceptions about his/her abilities, no effort will be spent in the process of realizing the goal. A significant direction within motivation studies is centered on exploring these cognitive self-perceptions or ‘self-efficacy beliefs’. An important theory to mention is

Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1985). It focuses on the effect of attributions (judgments of one's capabilities) on individuals' expectancies with respect to future achievements. According to this theory, 'the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal challenges people set and the firmer is the commitment to them' (Bandura, 1993, p.118). The pedagogical implication of this theory is to alter the source of attributions students make when explaining their academic accomplishments into controllable reasons (ex. Effort) and to foster their self-efficacy beliefs. Similar theories are those of Self-Worth Theory and *Dorney's L2 Self-System*. The former explains the appraisal of one's value in comparison to others while the latter is more related to SLL and explains how an individual develops a perception of his/her self while learning an L2.

### **1.1.1.3. Socio-Cognitive Perspectives**

During the cognitive era, there was an extreme attempt to conceive motivation in cognitive terms with an absence of any reference to the contextual variables. With the emergence of socio-cognitive theories, motivation studies extended to include important social factors that shift interest from *trait motivation*- which is an inner and constant- to *state motivation* –which is situation-specific state. These theories were divided into three wide directions.

The first direction has offered a remarkable shift of emphasis from *quantifying* goals as it was the case with the cognitive theories to *qualifying* them after recognizing the effect of the type of the goal on one's motivation. An outstanding theory in this regard is The Goal-Orientation Theory (GOT) which distinguishes between *mastery goals* which stress efforts and *performance goals* which draw on demonstrating one's ability where mastery goals are considered more superior to performance goals which might lead to maladaptive ways of achievement behaviour (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Although goals are cognitive in nature, the theory sheds the light on the importance of the social factors in activating them. Taking the

educational context, mastery and performance goals cannot be followed by students unless they are emphasized in the classroom environment. If outperformance is stressed, students will strive to obtain high grades even with the minimum effort they exercise (ex. Cheating) and learn that grades reflects one's true leaning, and vice versa.

Expectancy-value theories form the second set of socio-cognitive theories which focus on the individuals' perceptions about the usefulness of the tasks to their goals. These are termed "*outcome/ value expectations*". They suggest that individuals hold judgments about the value of the task they exercise in assisting them to reach their goals and the extent of pride experienced during accomplishments. Value is also referred to as 'identified regulation' and occurs when it is 'adopted by the self as personally important and valuable' (Brophy, 2010, p.187), and it is linked to the Future Time Perspective Theory of identifying the future benefits of a task. Pedagogically speaking, these theories emphasize a careful selection of learning tasks which meet students' needs. Likewise, students would appreciate the value of tasks and spend the efforts required. Although Attribution Theory- which falls into the category of Expectancy-value theories-is considered by many as cognitively-oriented, some would suggest that it can also be classified as socio-cognitive for the social factors it identifies for self-efficacy expectations such as vicarious experience and verbal persuasion.

The last direction within socio-cognitive theories has concentrated on the effect of the social environment on one's self-regulation and persistence with tasks. An important theory to mention is The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which links between intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and the availability of three social conditions translated into needs. The first condition is to engage oneself in challenging activities, the second is having a sense of connectedness to others, and the third is to assume responsibility. According to this theory, individuals become more self-regulated with the presence of these social conditions. Similarly oriented models are those of Otto Process Model of Motivation and Kuhl's Theory of Action



Control. The former distinguishes three stages through which an individual monitors his/her process of executing a task : the pre-actional, the actional, and the post actional stage while the latter represent an approach-avoidance system of regulation of behaviour.

Social theorists have also related motivation to Vygotsky's social constructivist approach which emphasizes the interplay between individuals in constructing knowledge. Rueda and Moll (1994) for instance, suggest that social negotiations do not only result in knowledge formation but also in constructing motivation.

In brief, motivation has known different conceptualizations in mainstream psychology; from an impulsive response to a certain stimulus, to a cognitive construct of goal achievement, and finally to be considered as socially constructed. Despite this fluctuation, Kanfer (1990:78) comments that most scholars agree on three motivational aspects: *the choice* to conduct a certain action, the *persistence* to accomplish it, and *effort* spent over it. Since our aim is to investigate motivation in BL and mainly 'online activities sessions', we prefer the definition forwarded by Rost (2006:1) for its relation to activities and to the previously mentioned aspects:

motivation provides a source of energy that is responsible for *why* learners decide to make an effort, *how long* they are willing to sustain an activity, *how hard* they are going to pursue it, and *how connected* they feel to the activity.

Given that the BL approach used in this research work follows both social and cognitive constructivism, we would adhere to socio-cognitive perspective by considering motivation as both cognitively and socially constructed from the learning environment.

## **1.2. Theories of Motivation**

The previous discussion to define motivation is sufficient to realize the bunch of theories and models that exist in the literature. We limit our focus on the three theories

previously mentioned, namely, Attribution Theory, GOT, and SDF. This section is divided into two sub-sections. While the first presents the rationale of these theories, the second section refers to their relation with BL and constructivism-*which therefore explains our decision behind choosing them.*

### **1.2.1. The Rationale Behind the Theories**

The section starts first with presenting a brief synthesis of the main principles and concepts raised by the three motivation theories. After that, an emphasis is placed on the complementarity between these theories. The section, then, ends with summarizing the main tenets of each theory.

#### **1.2.1.1. Attribution Theory**

‘Attributions’ are defined as individuals’ beliefs about the causes of their achievement results whether successes or failures (Weiner, 1985). The emotions rising from these beliefs, positive or negative, have a direct effect on one’s striving (effort) with future achievements.

The explanations individuals generate for their achievement performances have been related to two general sources: self-efficacy beliefs and task value beliefs. As mentioned earlier, attribution theorists adopted a cognitive tendency to motivation with emphasizing self-efficacy more than value expectations for the influence it has on causal attributions. For that, ‘people who regard themselves as highly efficacious attribute their failures to insufficient effort, those who regard themselves as inefficacious attribute their failures to low ability’ (Bandura, 1995, p.7).

Since the causes of attributions are not only limited to one’s self-perceptions of ability, but to many other factors, they are characterized by three main properties: *locus*, *controllability*, and *stability*. *Locus* identifies the source of a cause either internal (e.g. ability) or external (e.g. Luck) to the individual, *controllability* indicates the extent of control the individual has on the cause (an internal cause is controllable and vice versa), and *stability* that

refers to the perseverance of a cause over time. It is maintained that attributing causes of success to internal and controllable factors and causes of failure to external and uncontrollable factors leads to better achievement behaviours. A student, for instance, who deems success to the effort he spent, is likely to have feelings of pride and self-esteem. Contrary, a student who attributes his/her failure to low ability would experience feelings of shame and blame.

The pedagogical implication of Attribution theory is to encourage instructors to understand their students' self-perceptions and positively alter them to –preferably- 'effort'. To do so, the teachers must provide students 'constructive feedback'. By 'constructive', it has meant a feedback that provides students not only with good reasons of their academic performances but that aims to continually refine students' knowledge. Speaking about the teacher's feedback in relation to motivation leads us to mention the four sources of self-efficacy expectations suggested by attribution theory, among which feedback is incorporated. These include: *performance accomplishments* (past successes and failures), *vicarious experience* (observing models/people overcome difficulties using effort), *verbal persuasion* (suggestions to self-improvement) and *emotional arousal* (anxiety-provoking sources). These sources show the extent to which attribution theory is related to constructivism. It is both cognitively constructed-changing students' mental self-perceptions- and socially constructed by means of the four sources mentioned – and as opposed to the claims that attribution theory is merely cognitive. Even the term 'self-confidence'- sometimes used as alternative to 'self-efficacy'- is viewed from Norton's (1997) constructive perspective to be socially constructed as a result of learners' positive or negative experiences during the L2 learning context.

Task value –although given a less emphasis by the theory- reveals a significant contribution to motivation. It reflects the belief of 'what benefits do I expect to derive from engaging in the task?' Eccles, et al. (1983 in Wigfield and Eccles, 2000) classify task value into four types: (1) attainment value (importance of task completion to one's self worth), (2)

intrinsic value (enjoyment gained from the activity) (3) utility value (usefulness to one's goals), and (4) cost (negative interfering factors such as anxiety, effort needed, etc).

Attribution theory also relates between motivation and anxiety. Bandura (1993:132) concludes that 'Perceived self-efficacy to exercise control over stressors plays a central role in anxiety arousal'. People who hold low self-efficacy beliefs exercise stress and anxiety during challenging tasks and their motivation decreases. Emphasizing the writing skill, Cheng (2004) explores four sources of 'writing anxiety' which reflect both self-efficacy and value components: (1) instructional practices (which is related to the value component), (2) beliefs about writing and ability to learn it, (3) low self-confidence, and (4) the threats of interpersonal evaluation (which they all relate to self-efficacy).

#### **1.2.1.2. Goal-Orientation Theory**

Goal-Orientation Theory –also referred to as Achievement Goal Theory- is concerned with differentiating the types of goals- *goal orientations* or *achievement goals*- people pursue in different achievement situations (Ames, 1992; Ames and Archer, 1988; Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Pintrich, 2000) with an emphasis on the immediate classroom environment. Achievement goals describe the purposes of task engagement. Pintrich (ibid, 102) goes further to state that 'goals [...] are sensitive to both contextual and internal personal factors'. The latter statement reveals that goals are formed by the interplay of both social and intrapersonal cues. Specifically, goals may become more preferred in certain learning situations. If a given situation persists, students may attach to the salient goal a trait-like quality that they would follow with every other learning situation (Ames, op.cit; Ames & Archer, op.cit). In other words, emphasizing one goal or another affects students' cognitive perception of the end-objective of learning in general.

Two significant types of achievement goals are distinguished: Mastery goals and performance goals (Ames, op.cit). Other labels exist such as Task versus ego-involvement

(Nicholls, 1984)) and learning versus performance goals (Dweck and Leggett, op.cit). On the one hand, a mastery-goal oriented classroom stresses the intrinsic value of learning. It attributes success to efforts, self-improvements, and task strategies. A performance-goal oriented classroom, on the other hand, attributes success to one's ability and focuses on demonstrating achievements through comparing students' grades. Many educational psychologists such as Pintrich and Schunk (op.cit) consider mastery goals superior than performance goals as the former foster the belief that ability is changeable with effort whereas the latter place students' self-efficacy under question if failure occurs. Different comparisons are drawn between both type goals. An example to mention is that of Ames and Archer (op.cit) as shown in the following table:

<b>Environment dimensions</b>	<b>Mastery goal</b>	<b>Performance Goal</b>
Success defined as...	Improvement, progress	High grades, high normative performance
Value placed on...	Effort/learning	Normatively high ability
Reasons for satisfaction...	Working hard, challenge	Doing better than others
Teacher oriented toward...	How students are learning	How students are performing
View of errors/mistakes...	Part of learning	Anxiety eliciting
Focus of attention...	Process of learning	Own performance relative to others'
Reasons of effort...	Learning something new	High grades, performing better than others
Evaluation criteria...	Absolute, progress	Normative

**Table 1: Achievement Goal Analysis of Classroom Environment**  
(Ames, C and Archer,J, 1988)

The forwarded comparison suggests that mastery goals lead to positive learning behaviours whereas performance goals evoke maladaptive behaviours. With performance goals, the student is ego-centered. His/her main concern centers on proving his/her social position and maintaining a positive image against the other. This held priority results in developing short-term goals, surface-level learning, cheating, anxiety and low self-esteem when failure occurs. In contrast, students following a mastery goal appreciate the value of deep learning to the self and realize that failure is part of the learning process.

A significant distinction between mastery and performance goal that is mentioned in the above table is that of *error perception*. Two methods are emerged in this regard: *error*

*learning* and *error prevention* which they act in parallel with mastery and performance goal. Error learning tolerates errors while error prevention encourages learners to avoid errors the best they can. Advocates of these contrasting methods emerge originally from divergent theories; the behaviourists (eg. Skinner, 1957), and cognitivists (eg. Piaget, 1978). The traditional error prevention perspective considers errors to generate frustration and lead to incorrect learning. In contrast, error learning proponents perceive errors to be part of the learning process and a tool that serves as an internal feedback to students about their strengths and weaknesses. In their criticism, they argue that, in opposition to the previous claims, committing errors lowers students' anxiety, motivates them more to initiate responses, raise their attention towards what they write, and develop their self-assessment and discovery strategies (Frese and Altmann, 1989).

The way errors are approached give rise to two classroom environments-*classroom goal structures: cooperative* and *competitive* environments. Dornyei (1994:279) distinguishes both types stating that 'in a competitive structure, students work against each other and only the best ones are rewarded. In a cooperative situation, students work in small groups in which each member shares responsibility for the outcome and is equally rewarded'. In other words, competitiveness involves an emphasis on grades, considers them a standard for success, and cautions students against committing errors. This strategy might also lead to rising the sense of egoism among learners due to social comparison it draws (Nakata, 2006). In opposition, cooperation encourages learners to value the contribution of others to one's knowledge in order to solve shared problems, and where effort is valued.

### **1.2.1.3. Self-Determination Theory**

The theory is developed by Deci and Ryan in the 1980's. It is essentially intrinsic and deposits that motivation is constructed by the individual . This tendency led to the rise of key concepts such as 'autonomy', 'choice', 'self-motivation', or 'self-regulation'. In educational

settings, all these concepts stress the importance of instructors to involve students in decision-making, and provide them with the opportunity to be self-managers and directive of the learning process. By doing so, *students construct their own motivation*. In the words of Deci and Flaste (1996:10), the theory delineates ‘how people can create the conditions within which others can motivate themselves’. Therefore, students’ self-motivation is reached when practitioners provide learning conditions which satisfy three basic needs (Deci, et al., 1991):

-Need for competence: refers to the need to experience challenging situations that allow one to sense and show his/her abilities.

-Need for relatedness: pertains to the need to feel connected to, cared for, and supported by others with whom one shares ultimate goals.

-Need for autonomy: implies a need to regulate one’s own behaviours.

Although the theory emphasizes intrinsic motivation, it does not analyze it in terms of the total absence of extrinsic factors but the presence of self-determination concepts (Brophy, 2006). Self-determination still can occur even with the presence of external variables - although with differing effectiveness. This idea has led Deci and his associates to discuss how to facilitate the integration of extrinsic motivation instead of rejecting it all together (Deci, et al., 1991). Deci, et al. (1991:329-330) distinguish four types of extrinsic motivation which act along an autonomy continuum representing one’s internalization of external regulations into the self. These types range between both *controlled (extrinsic motivation)* and *autonomous events (intrinsic motivation)*: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation.

Those four types are generally described in two concepts; ‘introjection’ and ‘integration’ where ‘introjection refers to partial or subpartial internalization resulting in internally controlling regulation, and integration refers to optimal internalization resulting in self-determined behaviour’ (Deci, et al., 1994, p.120). The degree to which people integrate

external pressures to the self -be intrinsically motivated- depends upon the satisfaction of the three psychological needs. In the words of Deci, et al. (1994:120), '[humans'] intrinsic functioning can be either facilitated or impeded by the social context'.

It is suggested that with the presence of these needs -where individuals are either intrinsically motivated or have an integrated extrinsic motivation- individuals become more self-regulated, exhibit optimal learning, and strive for affective and cognitive well-being.

Two other concepts that are fundamental to SDT are those of *amotivation* and *flow* which describe two opposed states. On the one hand, amotivation refers to 'the state of lacking the intention to act [where] people either do not act at all or act without intent-they just go through the motions' (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 72). As such, amotivated behaviours are neither intrinsic nor extrinsic (Noels, et al., 2000). On the other hand, flow is described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975) as the state of deep absorption in a task leading to high concentration levels and a loss of self-consciousness. During flow events, individuals experience the peak of intrinsic motivation (joy and pleasure). They are also more self-regulated as they immerse in the strategies needed and ignore any distractions towards the desirable goals.

Egbert (2003, as cited in Dornyei, 2005) specifies four task conditions that might result in flow: (1) a perceived balance of task challenge and participant skills, (2) intense concentration and specification of clear task goals, (3) the task intrinsically interesting or authentic, and (4) a perceived sense of control over the task process and outcomes. These conditions combine the three psychological needs of SDT; task challenge, intense concentration, and perceived control reflect both competence and autonomy needs, while interest can derive from both the nature of task itself or the way to handle it- probably in cooperative structures which reflect the relatedness need.



#### **1.2.1.4. Theories Complementarity**

Once taking the statement put forward by Brophy (2010), we notice how linked are the three theories to each other. He states that:

when they [mastery-oriented students] encountered the more difficult problems, they did not become upset or talk about how they were failing. Instead, they redoubled their concentration on the task and began issuing more self-instructions— verbalizing plans and strategies designed to overcome their difficulties. Also, instead of losing confidence and beginning to predict continued failure, they maintained positive affect and spoke of meeting the challenge of mastering the more difficult problems. (p.59)

According to the previous quote, mastery goal-oriented students regard failure as an opportunity for new learning-which is explained earlier as error tolerance. This in turn affects the way they perceive their own self-efficacy abilities. As they consider failure to be part of learning, their self-efficacy beliefs are not negatively affected. Conversely, performance oriented students consider failure as an assessment to their abilities-clearly a low ability- leading to high levels of anxiety, and low self-confidence. Brophy's statement also explains how self-efficacy beliefs affect in turn the self-regulatory strategies followed by learners. For mastery oriented students, errors signal the need to adjust strategies in order to avoid falling in failure in future tasks. Therefore, they double their concentration, their revision and study plans. On the contrary, for performance oriented students, errors signal that their competence is under question giving rise to negative emotions of being upset, losing hope, having negative thoughts about future achievement results; all of which would undermine any attempt for self-initiations and strivings.

Put simply, 'flow' can only be reached when the learner is actively involved in 'challenging' activities (mastery goals/competence need), spending the 'effort' needed to sustain his/her self regulated behaviour through trial-error process (error-tolerance) and

through his/her own generated feedback ( autonomy) and others' feedback (relatedness), and where his/her 'self-efficacy' is high regarding past and future achievements. We summarize the tenets of the three motivation theories as follows:

- *Self-Determination Theory*: relatedness (or 'social presence' as referred in this chapter, p.103), competence (or 'cognitive presence'), self-regulation, autonomy.
- *Goal-Orientation Theory*: Effort, error tolerance, cooperation, cognitive presence.
- *Attribution Theory*: comfort, usefulness/task value, self-efficacy.

### **1.2.2. Putting them Together Within a Constructivist Blended Learning Setting**

In order to place the three motivational theories into a Constructivism-based BL, we highlight their main constructs and reveal their relatedness to BL. These constructs are presented according to the order followed earlier in presenting the theories.

#### **1.2.2.1. Self-efficacy and Value Constructs**

The former philosophy of attribution theory seems to have useful implications to a Constructivism-based BL setting in its both angles: self-efficacy and task efficacy.

On the one hand, if students are not self-confident enough (i.e. self-efficacious) they would avoid challenging activities for the frustration they experience. However, a better engagement in constructions of knowledge (cognitive and social) necessitates confident students who spend efforts, engage in challenging situations, and provide assistance. Although many scholars prove that BL is comfortable setting for the privacy it offers ( see Chapter One, pp35-36), we present some doubts of frustrations to our sample students given that this is the first time they experience learning through online sessions in the subject of 'Research Methodology'. To remove these doubts and also to overcome some researchers' counterclaims about the anxiety that BL might reveal (such as that of Stacey, 1998 as cited in Gerbic op.cit), we resort to the sources of self-efficacy beliefs, mainly, *vicarious experience and verbal persuasion*. These two sources seem to fit with the online constructions where

students and the teacher can present types of modeling strategies of asking and answering questions online, providing constructive feedback with suggestions and provided.

In addition to that, MacIntyre (2002) believes that anxiety reduces when feedback is provided individually. For this aim, when the feedback includes low achievement and understanding, it is addressed via private chat especially for introvert students. On the opposite, when high achievement engagement or understating takes place, verbal praise is raised publicly in comment/answer bar. The anonymity of BL is also an important factor to reduce anxiety. While investigating sources of anxiety, Koch and Terrell (1991 as cited in Hashemi, 2011) found out that oral presentation which is reported in front of classmates is one of the most anxiety-provoking activities. Such a finding suggests the usefulness of BL in reducing anxiety for no direct contact exists when the online sessions take place.

On the other hand, task value is very important to consider in BL. As mentioned in Chapter one (p23), an important principle in BL is to incorporate carefully planned; i.e. useful materials rather than modern or complicated facilities that can add nothing of a value to students' knowledge. Strictly speaking, students must perceive the relatedness of the online activities to the physical lectures they take. Value in our context can go beyond the usefulness of the activities to the usefulness of the BL methodology to the students. If the virtual modality is not carefully managed can undermine the students' confidence with its usefulness (in our case undermine the value of using Facebook in pedagogy). To increase students' task expectancy, teachers must address the rationale behind a selected method, an activity, or a course (identified regulation). In addition to the instrumental value, an online constructive learning community must be ensured by applying web-based rules and maximizing time on writing activities in order to result in the students' sustained appreciation of the course.

### **1.2.2.2. Mastery Goals, Error, and Cooperation Constructs**

The discussion forwarded for goal orientation theory highlights three main concepts that prove to be efficient: *mastery goals*, *error learning*, and *cooperation*. All these concepts emphasize efforts, self-improvements, and low anxiety-provoking thoughts such as making errors or proving one's ability to others. Although the theory has been expanded beyond the dichotomous analysis of mastery-performance goals -called 'mastery-goal perspective'- into a 2/2 framework which suggests that performance goals can also be associated with desirable behaviours (eg. Elliot and Church, 1997), we would adopt the mastery-goal perspective for the general adherence to mastery goals and due to the relevance of these goals with BL.

Mastery goals seem to comply with the cognitive aspect of constructivism (cognitive constructivism) where students need to spend efforts to solve challenging situations. They also reflect collaboration and autonomy needed in BL. Following these goals in a BL setting, the students would appreciate learning using this method (value learning itself and not only the virtual means: Facebook), work hard and take the online sessions seriously. In the BL setting, it is the quality of students' feedback that matters more than the quantity. Through emphasizing effort, the students will be engaged in an online community of inquiry where they strive to provide 'well-thoughtful contributions' rather than a superficial answer and question others' and their own answers using self-assessment questions.

These constructions of knowledge necessitate a cooperative rather than a competitive method where learners need to build up on each other's knowledge to reach the correct answer (social constructivism). Our sense of cooperation is more close to collaboration. Olivares (2005) draws a distinction between cooperative and collaborative learning:

Collaborative learning is a very structured process characterized by a high degree of individual accountability, positive member interdependence and social skill development [whereas] Collaborative learning is an unstructured, small group process that cultivates independence, free thinking, and dissent [...] Collaborative learning is, fundamentally, an intellectual process within a laissez-faire social framework.

From the previous quote, cooperative learning seems to be easily applied in a physical setting where the instructor guides thinking processes and assigns a role for each student in knowledge building. On the other hand, collaboration is more suitable to distant discussions and where free thinking is encouraged as it is the case with BL.

BL must also accept error-making. As explained earlier, error prevention can raise students' anxiety. Young (1991) confirms this idea stating that :

harsh manner of correcting student errors is often cited as provoking anxiety. In addition, learners consistently report anxiety over responding incorrectly, being incorrect in front of their peers, and looking or sounding "dumb". They also express concerns over how mistakes are perceived in the language classroom. (pp.428-429)

Given that BL is new to our sample- and assuming it is new to our educational context- the students might be anxious during the online sessions. Our aim is to encourage these students to take risks, initiate spontaneous discussions, provide feedback, and ask and answer questions whenever they feel the need to. To reach this aim, learners must be taught that error-making is part of learning that can generate other's feedback and free them from fearing criticism.

### **1.2.2.3. Self Determination Psychological Needs**

Once considering its three psychological needs, SDT seems to be easily applied within a BL setting.

First, the need of competence requires challenging activities. Brophy (2010), adds that to satisfy this need, it is better to choose activities that *offer opportunities for active responses and immediate feedback*. As she forwards, this should not be an individualistic activity in essence but a collective task which can go beyond factual questions to debatable issues that include problem-solving situations and exchanging opinions. Offering such a community of inquiry is the objective behind the Constructivism-BL methodology especially with following the replacement mode where the students are engaged in immediate online discussions, are asked self and peer assessment questions which raise their higher-ordered skills of applying (their knowledge), analyzing (exercises and their peers' and their answers), and synthesizing (debates/discussions to reach a well-defined answer).

Second, the need of relatedness coincides with cooperation learning types emphasized in GOT. It also accords with self-efficacy notions where feelings of comfort, support, and care (connectedness) are sensed. These relatedness states reflect the *collaboration principle* of BL to create a constructive learning community (see Chapter One, p 14) and *the notion of socialization* that BL emphasizes – and which is found to be lacking within E-learning formats- (see Chapter One, p.38).

Lastly, the need of autonomy highlights exactly the main objective behind BL which is to foster a learner centered approach. However, it must be noted that autonomy in this sense should not be confused with 'independence' where students are totally abandoned during the process of learning-and which might lead one to fall into the shortcomings of E-learning- Yet, it carries a meaning of 'self-regulated learning' which encompasses both the learner's independent thinking and the instructor's guidance. Similarly, a self-regulated learning is not a '*let go*' method of learning but one that fosters learners' responsibility over the learning process. Different features of BL promote self-regulation such as self-paced objects, self-discipline and online punctuality (checking lecture updates, reading and solving online

homeworks, online taking notes), and providing decision- making opportunities (lecture timing, interaction patterns, ...etc).

BL is, then, apparently the best environment to satisfy the three psychological needs stressed by SDT. Given that flow represents the extreme sense of intrinsic motivation, many researchers confirm the importance of Web environment in facilitating flow experiences. We mention Egbert in Dornyei (2005) who suggests that computer-based activities are the best sort of activities during which flow takes place given the high levels of challenge, control, and interest they exert. Wentzel and Brophy (2014:71) also mention computer games among the most frequent flow leading activities stating that “we are most likely to experience flow when engaged in hobbies or recreational activities (e.g. artistic endeavors, sports, arcade or computer games)...”. In addition, the study of Trevino and Webster (1992 as cited in Pace, 2003) reveal that flow was positively correlated with Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), mainly attitudes towards technology, communication effectiveness, and communication quantity. The flowing state in Web Navigation is best described by Chan (2000, 53-53) as follows:

People frequently report their web use behavior with the descriptions of ‘absorbed interest’, ‘feeling of discovery’, ‘immersed pleasure’ and ‘time going very fast’. This kind of phenomenon is commonly referred to as ‘flow’, a state of optimal experience characterized by total absorption in a challenging activity that engenders a sense of control, interest, enjoyment, and even exhilaration. It seems that the phenomenon of flow is not uncommon at all in a web environment. Instantaneous interaction, the ability to communicate with people on the other side of the planet, and an abundance of interactive resources and information are all part of the power and seduction of the Web. While searching for something on the Web, one sometimes sits for hours, clicking away at text, pictures, and sound from the Web gush by the screen. One becomes so focused that one goes into a ‘cybertrance’, losing track of time and self, with a sense of excitement that is comparable to flow experiences.

In his description, Chan (ibid) refers to some of the characteristics of online flow previously mentioned such as challenge, concentration, time distortion, and loss of self-consciousness.

To summarize this part, we can mention TARGET program rooted in GOT adopted by Ames (op.cit as cited in Morgan and Kingston, 2010) from Einstein (1988). We consider that the program combines some main features of BL and the three motivation theories (cited below between parentheses). It includes the following elements:

-(T)-*Task*: self-referenced, varied, and multi-dimensional.

⇒ *In Constructivist BL/motivation theories*: Tasks must be challenging and intrinsically engaging (increasing metacognition, active learning, Facebook: interest, mastery goals, competence, task value)

-(A)-*Authority*: participants are given leadership roles and involved in decision making.

⇒ *In Constructivist BL/motivation theories*: authority must be shared and based on students' needs. (students' centeredness, autonomy)

-(R)- *Recognition of improvement*: private recognition of improvement, effort and accomplishment. (continuous evaluation)

⇒ *In Constructivist BL/motivation theories*: improvement is stated privately and it is based on effort (privacy, self-efficacy, mastery goals, competence, self-regulation)

-(G)-*Grouping*: cooperative groupings.

⇒ *In Constructivist BL/motivation theories*: encourage collaborative learning and minimize competitiveness (collaborative learning, relatedness, self-efficacy ).

-(E)-*Evaluation*: private consultations with the teacher based on *improvement and effort*.

⇒ *In Constructivist BL/motivation theories*: evaluating individuals' progress privately rather than social comparison (privacy, self-efficacy, cooperation).

-(T)-*Time*: flexible time for task completion and maximum time to learn.

⇒ *In BL*: maximum time that goes beyond rigid scheduling, extra activities which cannot fit at the physical setting (extra time, extra learning opportunities, flexibility).



### **1.3. Factors Placing Motivation at the Core of this Research**

At the very first beginning of this research paper-in the Statement of the Problem Section- a problem related to motivation in the Algerian classrooms was presented. In particular, it was explained that the majority of Algerian students learn passively. Most of them come to class with an intention to rely completely on the teacher to provide them with the necessary knowledge. They participate only when they are forced to (by means of TD marks) or promised to be provided with a reward (extra marks). Only a few per class are found to take the initiative to participate and discuss for the sake of learning and understanding.

Although such an observation is not new to our classes, we would discuss the importance of motivation –not to learning, but- in relation the current research situation and to BL. We consider the discussion that is presented so far about the history of conceptualizing motivation and its related theories and models sufficient to reveal its paramount importance to learning-*which is to sustain one’s engagement and efforts in the learning process*. Therefore, the section highlights two demotivating factors and refers to *a significant shift in The Digital Natives’ learning engagement patterns* which both constitute the impetus behind which we decided to add motivation as a variable in the BL context. We therefore suggest that BL helps in overcoming these factors by improving motivation.

#### **1.3.1. Demotivating Factors**

The section highlights two demotivating factors which are particular to the current research situation. It emphasizes, first, *the negative attitudes that students hold towards the subject of “Research Methodology”*. Additionally, it highlights *the physical setting constraints which call for the necessity to go beyond the physical learning place*.

##### **1.3.1.1. Attitudes towards the Subject of “Research Methodology”**

Teaching the subject of “Research Methodology” for four years was sufficient for the researcher to notice learners’ lack of enthusiasm for studying it. By interacting with learners,

the researcher could deduce two possible reasons: *a lack of instrumental value and an absence of intrinsic interest.*

As mentioned earlier in the present research, the students' perceptions about the value of the task they engage in –or the program they learn- is of a paramount importance to their motivation (task value). The researcher, however, noticed her students to attach no instrumental value to the subject. The students are totally ignorant about any aims behind learning it. It was sufficient to ask learners at the first meeting session “do you know what is the objective of this subject?” or “why do you learn this subject?” to have divergent or “no’ answers. Having no clear value in mind is a significant reason behind learners’ lack of engagement in class.

The lack of instrumental value is not only caused by being ignorant about the objectives of the subject but for the fact that ‘Research Methodology’ has no semestrial exam on the basis of which the students’ achievement is evaluated. Although this should not undermine its value, but, *according to the learners*, a subject with no formal exam is not worth studying as it is the case for the other subjects. In this sense, the value is deemed not instrumental -not for the ultimate academic proficiency but –for the attainment of the other subjects.

To increase the learners’ instrumental value towards the subject, the students must be informed with the objective of the topics and activities incorporated, and the aim of the subject in general in order to appreciate what they learn. Teachers must also show the complementarity between the subjects taught, in our case, the complementarity between the subject of “Research Methodology” and the one of “Written Expression”.

As the researcher emphasizes, the subject of “Research Methodology” is of a paramount importance and in comparison to the subject of “Written Expression”, it prepares learners for more *advanced writing*. On the one hand, the aim of the subject of “Written

Expression” is to strengthen the students’ coherent, structural and reasonable writing that is used in different types of prose (descriptive, argumentative, contrast/comparison, cause/effect... etc) that must be known by every novice writer. Even when addressing an informal letter, one’s writing must be reasonable and coherent otherwise, the ideas will be difficult to understand. On the other hand, the objective of the subject of ‘Research Methodology’ -as the label suggests- is to guide the learner towards the adequate methodology of an academic research. This does not mean that it teaches only ‘research skills’ (how to search for documents, note-taking, paraphrasing, quoting, summarizing) but *also how to change the writing style from being personal to an ‘academic one’* i.e. objective, formal, and concise (from Checklist p.134). When altering others’ ideas into one’s own style-while conducting research- the style must be highly academic especially when the research is of a high academic degree (such as Master, Doctorate and Post doctoral). Therefore, ‘Research Methodology’ goes beyond structural and reasoning skills as it prepares learners for more *advanced writing*. The students must be informed that learning this subject is important for them when conducting formal research papers especially reaching Master and Doctorate degrees and for their English proficiency in general.

As for the fact that the subject has no formal exam but depends on a continuous evaluation, the teacher must emphasize multiple challenging tests and homeworks along the two semesters. By doing this, the students would take the subject more seriously and spend the effort needed to ensure success.

The second probable reason behind the students’ lack of enthusiasm –and where BL can be useful- is *the absence of intrinsic interest* in the subject. Kintsch (1890 cited in Wade, 1992) distinguishes two types of interest in a text : *emotional interest* and *cognitive interest*. *Emotional interest* describes the catchy feelings that arouse from the story and characters whereas *cognitive interest* is the value attached to the text and its structure, i.e. how much it

makes sense for the reader and to what extent it fits with his/her background knowledge. In our case, cognitive interest seems to be equivalent to the instrumental value of the subject of “Research Methodology” discussed earlier. By the absence of intrinsic interest we would refer to the emotional interest of the subject, i.e. *how much it is attractive and enjoyable*.

Considering the teaching components of the subject, one can suggest that the components are rigid making it difficult to create an enjoyable content including types of texts and activities. This goes in opposition to some subjects such as ‘Oral Expression’, ‘Phonetics’, or ‘literature’ where the content can be stimulating as it contains stories (literature), relates to the learners’ daily activities (Oral Expression or Phonetics) and where some technology-based elements can be used (audio and video tapes). The solution, then, is by changing completely the learning setting using BL when activities are mainly conducted in an online constructive setting in a Facebook Group. Taking into account the facts that our learners belong to the Net generation learners and the widespread use of Facebook, we assume that rigid matters (including hard sciences) can become more enjoyable when taught in an attractive setting to learners such as Facebook.

### **1.3.1.2. Physical Setting Constraints**

Research investigating learning physical conditions delineates different factors such as *‘temperature, air quality, acoustics, lighting, science laboratories, and overcrowdedness’*; all of which are found to affect students’ achievement and engagement (Earthman, 2004; Fisher, 2000). Higgins, Hall, Wall, Woolner & McCaughey (2005) also examine the effects of the institution’s *‘furniture and equipment, arrangement and layout, display and storage, and ICT’* on five aspects of human behaviour: attainment, engagement, affect, attendance, and well-being. It was found that students feel more comfortable both physically and psychologically, have a regular attendance and engage more in learning settings where furniture is of a modern quality, desks are arranged properly, and ICT tools are used.

The discussion over issues related to the institution's building conditions as being poor or good seems to go along with Maslow's lower needs of safety and security. When these conditions are bad (e.g. Low temperature), students' attention and engagement during the lesson decreases. Although it is necessary to fulfill the students' lower needs, we emphasize that the practitioners' concerns must move beyond that. The emphasis must shift from factors that affect one's physical well-being to those that affect the social and cognitive skills required for an efficient learning to occur. It goes without saying that providing good building conditions is a necessity -not only for learning- but for every '*regular*' action to be fulfilled including workers at their work sites and people at their homes. In addition to that, understanding an '*attractive*' classroom in the sense that its 'furniture' and 'decoration' are stimulating the senses (i.e. 'good-looking' and 'beautiful') seem to fit more with children than adult learners. Therefore, to relate the physical conditions to adult learners and to *higher needs* (interaction, competence, autonomy) we emphasize the problem of 'overcrowdedness' i.e. *space constraints as well as time constraints*.

Kerr (2011) discusses large class size (number of students per class) at university level and found out that it affects students' engagement and persistence, the quality and quantity of interaction and feedback between students and instructor, their motivation towards learning, and their critical thinking skills. With a crowded classroom, it becomes difficult on the part of the teacher to interact easily with students, provides feedback to every student and ensures each student understanding. The situation becomes worse when 'noise' that rises from the classroom or corridors intervenes leading to feelings of helplessness, depression, demotivation, and low persistence with task engagement (Cohen, et al., 1980).

Such a situation, as added by Kerr (op.cit) would also restrict the teaching methods available for the instructor. Given that the interactions are not interrupted by crowdedness and noise, the traditional lecture method becomes dominating whereas methods that are based on

discussion, collaboration, and groupings (eg. Constructive approach) are avoided. This problematic situation is generally noticed at our universities where instructors are most of the time 'lecturing' a large number of learners. Yet, learners at this stage must be prepared to become producers of knowledge rather than receive transmitted information; they need to learn at a deep level by discussing and questioning knowledge.

Time available in a physical classroom is another constraint to students' learning and motivation. Almost all instructors recognize that the time available in a class is not sufficient to fully explain the lesson and confirm students' understanding. Ames (op.cit) perceives time constraints to exert a pressure on learners' task completion, encourage anxiety and less concentration, and less amount of learning. Due to the overload students have, their concentration rapidly fades when the session is over and moves directly to tasks related to the following sessions. They lose interest in the subject matter very fast, and due to time limits, they consider tasks useless for no deep practice or understanding occurs (no task value). In Earthman's words (op.cit:50), overcrowdedness is extra reason that 'inevitably limited the time teachers can spend on innovative techniques such as cooperative learning and group work'. Their opinion refers to the wasted time that occurs in managing the crowded classroom into discussion groups rather than being spent on tasks at hand ; the fact that lead to revert to traditional methods as explained before.

As time and physical constraints hinder innovative teaching methods to take place and lower students' engagement, many authors suggested to apply methods that go beyond the school boundaries. These alerts raised along with changes of the concept of « space ».

At its beginnings, 'space' was restricted to the physical boundaries of an academic institution. Later, the term was elaborated with a distinction set between physical and social spaces, i.e between 'space' and 'place'. It is believed now that *space exists along with the existence of social relations and regardless of the physical places of people who interact*. In

the words of McGregor (2004b :14) the new understandings of space ‘challenges the view of places such as schools as pre-existing and bounded, replacing it with an open conception of place as hybrid, provisional and porous’. He (ibid :352) also adds that space is ‘constructed from relations intersecting (or not) ‘beyond’ the place as it is immediately experienced by individuals, who are placed in different ways to the flows of relations which construct it’.

It is the introduction of ICT tools and web-based learning which has brought the global understandings of space. Through these technological sources, students and instructors can maintain their interactions and learning opportunities beyond the classroom boundaries. In his article, ‘breaking down the school walls’, Horne (2004) recommends to exploit innovative technologies to stimulate learners and improve learning. He writes :

Bringing the outside world into the classroom is essential if we are to motivate stimulate and engage our young people...schools should strive not just to create knowledgeable young people but people who know how to use and apply their knowledge in a way that is meaningful and valuable to them beyond the formal setting of the examination hall. (p.6)

In the light of the extended concept of space, Horne (ibid) suggests adding ‘out of hours’ education especially for deprived regions through the use of Internet-based learning technologies that ensure connectedness between learning stuff and fight isolation.

Conceiving a motivating classroom beyond its physical boundaries is a call towards BL where learning proceeds with interactions occurring at virtual spaces. Fisher (2004:37) describes learning as ‘becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, collaborative, problem- and project-based [...] Neither Internet chatrooms nor classrooms alone can achieve this objective’. His argument suggests the introduction of BL as a combined system of virtual and physical environments. Kerr (op.cit :6) also cites that ‘Blended learning formats [...] are being implemented to address a number of large class issues’. As mentioned earlier, BL has

emerged as a reaction towards both e-learning and physical learning constraints including time and space constraints.

BL also serves to optimize the time needed for task accomplishment. Since the instructor has little authority to change the time schedule imposed by the institution, Ames (op.cit) suggests optimizing the time by ‘out-of-class learning’. She argues that ‘flexible’ learning fosters ‘time-on-task’ spent, learning opportunities, understanding, and learning performance. This can be reached by adding extra lessons in a virtual setting where extra tasks are worked out together with peers and the teacher providing feedback.

In a word, students’ motivation is influenced *by the type of activities and engagements that the learning space provides and not by space itself*. Understanding *space* in this way contends the view that space can go beyond the physical place to virtual settings where BL deems advantageous.

### **1.3.1.3. Digital Natives’ Learning Engagement Patterns**

This section emphasizes *the Digital Natives’ Learning engagement patterns* which categorize a shift towards using the Web 2.0 technology and Facebook. This shift changes the learners’ preferable modes of instruction delivery.

### **2.3.2.2. Digital Natives’ Inclination towards Web 2.0**

‘Digital Natives’ or ‘Net Generation Learners’ are terms which categorize the new generation of learners of the 21st century where modern technology is increasingly integrated into their lives, specifically the Web 2.0 technology. These new types of learners as described by Prinsky (2001 :1) ‘have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age’. Considering university students, Prinsky (ibid) adds that ‘today’s average college grads have spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours



playing video games [...] Computer games, email, the Internet, cell phones and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives’.

The fact that these learners are extremely immersed in technology-use led Prinsky (ibid) to conceive a discontinuity between the older generations-he called ‘*digital immigrants*’- and the young generation where the older generations attempts to *immigrate*, i.e. to adapt to the new patterns of technology-based learning.

An important question to ask is what does Web 2.0 technology imply to attract learners so much? Long ago with the first emergence of Web 1.0 technologies, such a discontinuity between old and young generations was not as enormous as it is nowadays. In his distinction between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0, Thompson (2007) argues that Web 1.0 technologies provide a one-way experience-from the computer to the individual- also called ‘The Read-Only-Web’ where the individual is *consuming* knowledge that is received from the Internet. With Web 2.0, the virtual experience becomes two-way or what is called ‘The Read-Write Web’ with the individual becoming a participant in knowledge creation. Through the use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Youtube, the individual has taken an active role of sharing his/her own knowledge and criticizing and elaborating the knowledge received by others. McLoughlin and Lee (2007 :664) argue that SNSs are based on ‘micro-content’, i.e ‘digital content in small fragments that may be combined and recombined by individuals to produce new patterns, images and interpretations’. The ability to *transmit* digital content in Web 2.0 makes individuals no more consumers but *producers* and *managers* of knowledge (Liu et al., 2011).

The function of content transmission and elaboration in SNSs makes them largely embedded in constructivism. *The elaboration of such a function is probably the first reason behind Digital Natives’ inclination towards Web 2.0 Technology.* Boyd and Ellison (2008 :211) add that the primary objective behind users’ connections -*and which makes SNSs*

*unique for them-* is ‘that they enable users to articulate and make visible their social networks [with] people who are already part of their extended social network’. In other words, the most attractive feature of SNSs to Digital Natives is the ‘*socially-directed*’ content transmission that aims to re-enforce their realistic social relationships.

Whether the use of Web 2.0 follows learning or social objectives, Digital Natives’ inclination towards these modern technologies is a reality. Such a new type of content exchange-either socially or academically oriented- shapes the learning modes of these learners. Kennedy, Judd, Churchward, Gray, and Krause (2008 ), summarize Digital Natives’ learning preferences stating that they :

prefer receiving information quickly; be adept at processing information rapidly; prefer multi-tasking and non-linear access to information; have a low tolerance for lectures; prefer active rather than passive learning, and rely heavily on communications technologies to access information and to carry out social and professional interactions. (p.109)

With the change in their learning modes towards Web 2.0 technology-delivered learning, Digital Natives are taken to be ‘self-directed, vital, self-managed and active in the generation of new ideas...’ (McLoughlin and Lee, op.cit, p.51). Following these facts, many researchers suggested using Web 2.0 in HE. Literature includes several studies which show a considerable correlation between Web 2.0 learning and students’ engagement in HE. We mention the findings of some of them:

- Audio messages via *emails* increase students’ participation and satisfaction (Woods and Keeler, 2001).
- The use of *iPods* by university students inside and outside of the classroom (recording lectures and discussions, storing and transferring files) led to higher engagement and more interest in the subject matter, and an increased sense of support and usefulness of *iPods* (Belanger, 2005).
- Online courses help in sustaining students’ motivation in an accounting module (Flynn, et al., 2005).

- *Podcasting* increases students' motivation and interaction, and high proximity was felt (*Fernandez et al., 2009*) as well as it makes learning enjoyable and lowers students' anxiety (*fothergill, 2007*).
- By using *Youtube* short videos in a Java course for undergraduates, students' engagement and self-regulation increased (they prepare before coming to class), and they enjoyed more learning from Youtube than the lecture (*Carlisle, 2010*).
- Incorporating an online asynchronous *Wiki* course to graduate students reveals high levels of satisfaction and perceived value, increased interaction and negotiation of online activities, and high intrinsic motivation (*Biasutti and El Deghaidy, 2012*).
- Surveys show a significant correlation between technology use and Keller's ARCS model of motivation (Attention, Relevance, Satisfaction, Confidence) (*Jaradat, 2013*).
- Using Web 2.0 outside the class, mainly *Twitter*, enhances students' communication, motivation, and engagement in the learning process (*Buqawa, 2015*).
- *Discussion Boards* have a positive impact on university students' collaboration, satisfaction, constructivist learning and performance (*Al Jeraisy, 2015*).

As shown from these sample studies, the efficiency of incorporating Web 2.0 in HE on students' motivation and learning is largely assessed in the literature taking into account its different tools and applications (such as Email, Ipods, Podcasting, Twitter, Youtube, discussion boards). These findings encourage the adoption of innovative teaching methods which offer a virtual space of learning as it is the case with BL. In addition to the fact that SNSs reflect social and cognitive constructions of knowledge, it is highly assumed that incorporating a SNS within a BL pedagogy would match the students' learning preferences and engages them more towards learning. The aim of the following sub-section is to reveal the attraction that Facebook receives in comparison to the other SNSs.

#### **2.3.2.2. Digital Natives' Inclination towards Facebook**

Facebook is created in 2004 as a part of a college project in Harvard University (US) where its use was limited to users who have access to the university network. Later, its use expanded to include different institutions, and then to become public and available to

everyone. Hew (2011) describes the basic functions of Facebook : (1) Registration is free and requires an E-mail address ; (1) it has the feature of *searching and inviting friends*, accepting or refusing others' invitations, and blocking friendship; (2) *joining and creating groups, following and creating pages* of different themes (fun, sports, health, television, cinema, games, music, education, etc ; (3) *Wall Function* through which people can express themselves, upload different documents (images, videos, files), or share events ; (4) *Comment and Like Function* to be used to reflect on others' ideas ; (5) *Private Chat Function* to communicate with others ; (6) *News Feed Function* to stay up-to-date with his/her own or his/her friends' activities ; (7) *Poke Function* to draw one's attention to start a conversation, and (8) playing games.

A recent statistical analysis held in January, 2017 represents Facebook as the leading SNS worldwide with the largest number of active users of over 1.87 billion user (Statista.com). *Facebook, then, represents the main attractive SNS for the Digital Natives and the main reason behind their inclination towards Web 2.0.* Statistics of Facebook use in Algeria show a significant increase from *3.45 million user* in 2012 (Statista.com) to *15 million user* in 2016, i.e. around 37% of the Algerian population (InternetWorldStats.com). *Although 37 % is below the average rate of the population, we consider such an increase to be remarkably rapid occurring within a short period of time (four years) and let us to expect a future immediate increase in Facebook use.*

Once considering Facebook use in HE, many researchers point out that Facebook is the leading SNS used by university students (Hew, *ibid*). The situation is similar to the Algerian university where one can hardly find a student without a Facebook account. The simplicity and convenience of Facebook are probably the reasons behind its familiarity. For example, a study conducted by Kennedy et al. (2008) emphasize that even when students now are considered Digital Natives, this does not necessarily mean that they know all technologies.

In their study, findings show that when one moves beyond accustomed technologies, students' familiarity and use varies considerably. The high use of Facebook, therefore, suggests that it is the easiest and the most friendly SNS for Digital Natives.

Researchers in Educause (2006) advocate that 'any technology that is able to captivate so many students for so much time [...] offers an opportunity for educators to understand the elements of social networking that students find so compelling and to incorporate those elements into teaching and learning'. Following these claims, many studies assessed the contribution of Facebook to university students' motivation. We mention three examples. First, the study of Al Mashaqbeh (2015) during which a '*Course Facebook Page*' was created as a part of teaching Computer Educational Course to undergraduate students. The findings demonstrated the participants' high levels of motivation, comfort, and acceptance of adding the synchronous Facebook page as well its contribution to learning the course materials. Second, the findings of the study of Gamble and Wilkins (2014) confirm undergraduates' positive perceptions towards conducting activities on Facebook, i.e Facebook educational use. Third, the study of Promnitz-Hayashi (2011) was conducted on undergraduate Japanese students with low English language proficiency. Through discussing related-class topics on a '*Facebook Secret Group*' once a week, these students showed more comfort as they enjoyed the online discussions, participated more and became more autonomous which all resulted in increased proficiency in English.

A study that appears more detailed though is that of Selwyn (2009). As he points out, Facebook promotes online interactions between university students as a continuation of the offline conversations occurring within institutions. In his study, Selwyn (ibid) delineates five types of education-related themes posted on Facebook:

(1)-*Recounting and reflecting on the university experiences*: critical reflection upon lectures/seminars/library visits/meetings with teaching staff; addressing future absences and encountered difficulties; revealing disappointments about learning events.

(2)-*Exchange of practical information*: seeking help and informing one another of due dates related to education such as assignments, tests, seminars, exams...etc.

(3)-*Exchange of academic information*: seeking information and providing peer assistance about issues related to academic content needed for different assignments such as suggest readings of journals/books, copy-paste academic websites and share on peers' walls.

(4)-*Displays of supplication and disengagement*: expressing emotional discouragement and helplessness and providing emotional support.

(5)-*Banter*: exchange of humorous content with sarcasm themes.

The emergence of these themes reveal that the students' online interactions cover both formal and informal subjects related to their education experiences : either addressing personal challenges, problems or frustrations with education-*informal content as in cases (4), (5)-* or discussing information and task-related issues-*formal content as in cases (2), (3).* (theme (1) seem to cover both formal and informal topics). When the *content is emotionally-oriented* (eg. expressing feelings of helplessness), peers are likely to support and motivate one another. However, when *the content is academically-oriented* (eg. having a difficulty solving an assignment as in case 3), students negotiate and reconstruct each other's knowledge. *In both ways, Facebook is a means for motivation and social and cognitive construction of knowledge* and it offers "the capacity to radically change the educational system ... to better motivate students as engaged learners rather than learners who are primarily passive observers of the educational process' (Ziegler, 2007 as cited in Selwyn, *ibid*, p.158).

McCarthy (2012) tends to be more specific in identifying the potential learning opportunities supported by Facebook for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. We eliminate reference to postgraduates (from Table 2) as the focus of the present research is on undergraduate learners. These advantages are listed by McCarthy as follows :

Group	What <i>Facebook</i> Technology provides	
Undergraduate students attributes	<b>Strong visual orientation</b>	-Intuitive interface -Sharing of uploaded images -Sharing of uploaded videos
	<b>Active learning and student centeredness</b>	-Opportunities for peer learning -Ability to critique and analyse peer’s work -Interaction between students -Ownership of discussion forums -Opportunities for lifelong learning -Private and public communication via Facebook comment, chat and message tools
	<b>Engaging and supporting students</b>	-Use of other social networking tools via embedded content and links Commenting on any design work by student and teachers -Confidence through an online voice for more reticent students -Availability of 70 languages supporting all international students Constant and costly need for printing eliminated
	<b>flexibility</b>	Anytime, anywhere access – via a range of devices Immediacy of feedback
	<b>Sense of community</b>	-Accounts created within a private teaching space -Student profiles showing name and portrait Identity not anonymity -Interaction across the whole student cohort, specifically interaction, both social and academic, between local and international students
	<b>Privacy</b>	Students can control extended privacy settings regarding their personal profiles Students can ‘add’ friends at their own discretion

**Table 2: Potential Learning Opportunities Supported by Facebook. Adopted from McCarthy (2012:761)**

Most of qualities of Facebook mentioned in the previous table conform with motivation theories: active learning, learner centeredness, engagement (competence and autonomy needs/self-regulation/effort/mastery goals), sense of community (cooperation, relatedness needs), and privacy (comfort and self-efficacy). In addition to all arguments presented, Facebook reflects BL and constructivism tenets of creating a constructive motivational learning community where students are both creators and contributors (sharers) of knowledge.

## **2.4. Establishing a Motivating Learning Community in Both Blended Learning Modalities**

After reading literature about BL designs, the researcher noticed some designers to cast most of their concerns on creating a motivating online learning environment while neglecting how also to improve learning taking place at the physical setting. Accordingly, in the present section, we emphasize the importance of setting equilibrium between the BL settings, i.e. the online and the offline settings in terms of sustaining motivation. All motivation constructs discussed earlier (*self-efficacy/comfort, value/usefulness, mastery goals/effort/competence, error tolerance, cooperation/relatedness, autonomy/self-regulation*) are combined together within a framework of a motivating community of inquiry involving important interaction types and learning presences.

### **2.4.1. Maintaining Interactivity**

Interactivity plays a significant role in sustaining students' motivation. In this subsection, the importance of interactivity is stressed in both the physical and the online BL settings. Subsequently, three main types of interactions are discussed.

#### **2.4.1.1. About Interactivity**

Interaction or interactivity are two terms used generally interchangeably despite a few attempts to attach 'interactivity' to a user's interaction with technology or to a content that is transmitted by technology as opposed to a human source (Su, et al., 2005). Both are generally perceived as 'reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions [where] these objects and events mutually influence one another' (Wagner, 1994 as cited in Su, et al., ibid, p.2).

The importance of interactions is originally discussed within a FtF setting with highlighting the concept of *immediacy*. Immediacy is understood as *the degree of perceived physical and psychological 'closeness' between people both verbally and non-verbally*. It was found that the more immediacy behaviours the teacher and peers exert, the more students' affect and motivation increases (Christophel, 1990). Immediacy is also taken to refer to the relationship between people and the objects they communicate about, i.e 'the referent' (Wiener and



Mehrabian, 1968) which embodies one's own constructions resulting from his interaction with the content. Physical interaction can, therefore, be human and non-human; which explains Wagner's tendency to state the phrase 'two objects' in his quote previously mentioned.

Nowadays, however, much of the discussion around 'interactions' is linked to the online mode of learning: 'interaction [...] is a primary focus in the study of online learning' (Garrison and Cleveland-Innes, 2005, p. 133); 'interactivity is an important component of satisfaction and persistence for online learners', (Croxton, 2014, p. 314); 'since the advent of distance learning, interaction has played a crucial role in learner satisfaction and more recently the quality of learning online' (Moore, 2015, para1). The tendency to opt for '*online interactions*' comes as a result of time and space constraints which stand as an obstacle against applying smooth interactions (Moore and Anderson, 2003) as well as the promising benefits of Web 2.0 applications which makes it possible to create 'virtual communities' with better interactions. Through Web 2.0 technology, interaction can be maintained in different patterns; text-based, audio or video conferencing; and synchronously or asynchronously; therefore maximizing the quantity, and assumably, the quality of interactions.

*It is imperative to apply interactive learning in both BL environments without prioritizing the virtual mode over classroom-based learning.* Many researchers such as Anderson (2003) and Anderson and Garrison (1998) are found to emphasize interactions in both on-campus and offline learning. It is also to be reminded that the rationale of BL is to set equilibrium between both learning modalities with the aim to optimize both.

Callagher (2008: 8) contrasts interactive learning with passive learning stating that passive learning 'includes sitting in a classroom and listening to a lecturer. Once the lecturer opens the floor up for questions and answers then there is a move from passivity into interactivity between the lecturer and the students'. Based on Callagher's statement, we tend to emphasize *interactive learning in 'a physical classroom' in terms of -at least- any learning that*

*is not passive and one that incorporates active exchange of information from both learners and instructors.* This is because BL is subject to an infinite number of designs where activities requiring higher interactions are preferably conducted in an online setting. Given that the BL methodology applied in the present work locates learning activities in a virtual setting, online interactions can be higher than in the physical classroom where the instructor is only ‘lecturing’. However, the researcher followed some procedures to make the lectures as more interactive as possible- as presented in the sub-section of ‘Ameliorating the Lecture Method’.

#### **2.4.1.2. Types of Interactivity**

Three well-recognized types of interactions occurring in online learning are proposed by Moore (1989): Learner-Instructor (L-I), Learner-Learner (L-L), and Learner-Content (L-C).

(1) *Learner-Content Interaction*: It represents the core of education and without it no learning can take place. It refers to the learners’ cognitive engagement with information to gain understanding; all of which include higher thinking processes such as analysing, synthesizing and evaluating. Juler (1990 :28) insists on the importance of this type of interaction mentioning that ‘the text is the basis of all forms of education and that interactions that learners have with their texts are just as important as the interactions they have with real people’.

In an online environment, content can be pervasive in both quantity and quality of presentation. Tuovinen (2000), for instance, classified online content into five categories : sound, text, graphics, video, and virtual reality where sound can be used in combination to all other categories. The visual, audio and graphic features of content override the unique text-based content in stimulating learners’ sense, fulfilling their different learning needs and preferences and maximizing comprehension. In addition to that, the WWW provides unlimited number of information-seeking engines and resources for learners to enrich their understanding. These resources in their multiple forms can be used by instructors during online lectures to maximize instructional materials, readings, assignments, and further resources for learners. The

possibility to store content and share it online is another significant advantage to radically alter Learner-Content Interaction.

(2) *Learner-Instructor Interaction*: Communication is a reciprocal process. For that reason, interaction between the learner and the instructor in this context is taken to be reciprocal, i.e. Learner-Instructor/Instructor-Learner. Anderson and Garrison (1998:101) argue that 'Learner-Teacher communication goes to the heart of education both FtF and at a distance'. Such an argument highlights the importance of the teacher in the learning process. Learners cannot instruct themselves; they rather need a highly educated figure to assess their progress, teach them the know-what (the right information) and the know-how (learning strategies), assess their misconceptions and provide them with the correct feedback. Moore (op.cit) points out that some online learning depends solemnly on Learner-Content Interaction (as it is the case with E-learning) which makes it largely self-directed with no assistance from the instructor. As it is the case with E-learning, the absence of the teacher resulted in students' low motivation and understanding even when content was provided online.

(3) *Learner-Learner Interaction*: It is believed to 'force learners to construct or formulate an idea in a deeper sense' (Moore and Anderson, op.cit:134). Many attempts have been made in physical classrooms to foster interaction between learners by applying group work activities. In the context of web-based learning, this type of interaction is being more emphasized with reducing L-I and L-C Interactions (Anderson, op.cit). With moving towards constructivism and student-centered learning, learners are taken to be responsible agents who construct knowledge based on one another elaborations and where the instructor is taking the role of a facilitator. The existence of virtual communities through audio and video conferencing tools rendered the process 'to gather learners and give all students a talk' easier than it is the case with physical classrooms where space, noise, and time obstacles may interrupt the smooth of interactions.

Several studies confirm the correlation between these types of interactions and students' motivation in an online environment applied on university students. A few are presented:

- Motivation of graduates was positively correlated with feedback received from the instructor after performing assessment during the course (formative assessment) and after the final assessment (summative assessment) (Espasa and Meneses, 2010).
- Using a supplemental web-based course to f-2-f learning, findings reveal that graduates' interaction and connectedness increased after reading peers' viewpoints and discussing learning materials online (Petrides, 2002).
- For graduates and undergraduates, L-L interaction was higher in the online course as they appreciated more peers' feedback 'for understanding course materials, completing assignments and preparing for exams' whereas L-I Interaction enhanced engagement, interest, and an ongoing commitment to the course (Hollen, et al., 2010: 176).
- With fostering L-I Interaction, satisfaction with the course and feelings of relatedness increased (Thurmond, et al., 2002; Grady, 2013).
- Active discussion among course participants (L-I) and (L-L) has strongly influenced students' satisfaction and perceived learning (Swan, 2001).
- CMC increased L-L communication as students reported increased understanding of the material by being able to read responses of their peers online (Ruberg, et al., 1996).
- Students highlighted the importance of the presence of L-I interaction in a synchronous mode of learning where only high ability students could overcome learning without the teacher (Offri et al., 2008).
- High levels of structured online small discussion groups affected positively students' satisfaction than one-to-one online interaction between instructor and learner (Driver, 2002).
- Both L-L and L-I interactions are found to be significant contributors to students' achievement and satisfaction in web-based learning (Sher, 2009).
  - Satisfaction was correlated with the three types of Interaction but with differing degrees : L-C with the highest variable followed with L-I and finally with L-L interaction (ahn, 2012).

*Although some studies suggest the superiority of one of the interaction types, these interactions are complementary.* In the words of Swan (2001:306), 'of course, none of the three modes of interactions function independently in practice. Interaction among students is supported by instructor facilitation and support and because it centers on content, can be seen as a variety of that type of interaction'. As mentioned earlier, providing students with information (content) alone and expecting them to follow some self-instructed process is never enough. Though learners are taken to assume an active role, their cognitive constructions do not function individually but in conjunction with the peers' constructions and the instructor's monitoring. Likewise, interacting with peers and instructors without having content would

possibly result in “interaction more typical of a pub chat than a high-quality educational experience” (Moore and Anderson, op.cit, p. 131)

Regardless of the type of interaction, researchers highlight two important conditions for interactions to yield positive results. First, interactions must be *voluntary and spontaneous*. Graduates in the study of Biesenbach-Lucas (2003) manifested negative attitudes towards online interactions as they felt they were forced to interact-despite having high quantity interactions. This finding insists on setting the online learning conditions that attract students to interact on their own will-such as choosing online platforms that follow students’ learning preferences (eg. Facebook), and relevant pedagogical content- rather than forcing students on interacting. Second, interaction ‘*must be structured and systematic* [and one which] influence thinking in a critical and reflective manner’ (Garrison and Cleveland-Innes, op.cit, p.133). Emphasis must be placed on the quality more than quantity of interactions where the exchange of information moves beyond catering social goals to usefully construct interacters’ understanding.

Because interactions occur in both physical and virtual settings, we relate these types of interactions to both. These interaction types occur in both formal and informal setting (Rhode, 2009). In the case of the BL design followed in this research, formal interactions refer to the synchronous interactions taking place both on Facebook and in the classroom. Informal interactions takes place during asynchronous activities: L-L (reading and commenting on peers’ answers on homeworks asynchronously, online chatting outside of the lecture, or interacting physically beyond lectures); L-C (asking the students to read e-documents/search for and post supplementary resources, solve and post homeworks online, interacting with content in hard copy); L-I (post extra materials beyond lectures, share due dates and announcements, interact with students by private chat or FtF). Both formal and informal interactions in BL assist in

fostering connectivity, proximity and relatedness among the students and between them and the instructor.

#### **2.4.2. Establishing Learning Presences**

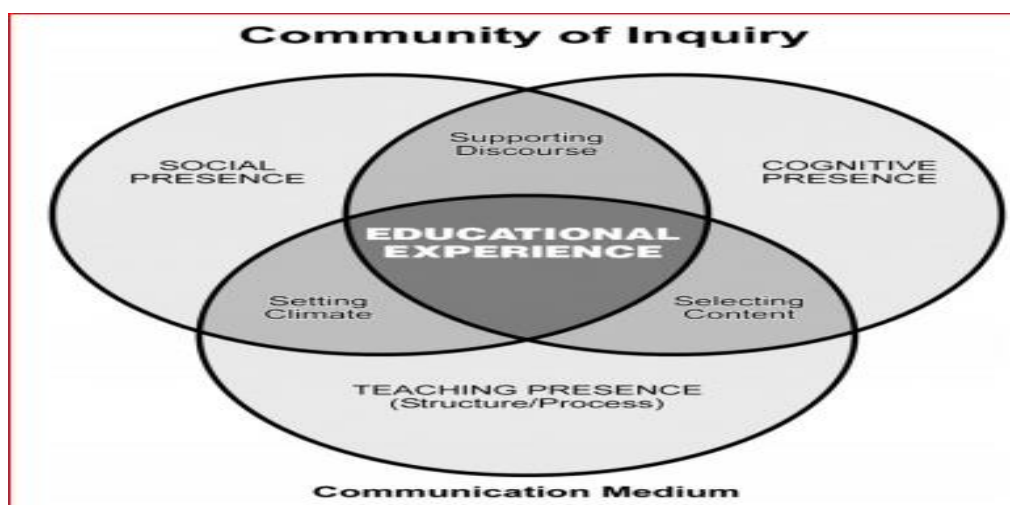
In their model of a community of inquiry, Garrison et al. (op.cit) highlight three types of learning presences: Social presence, Cognitive presence, and Teaching presence. Garrison (2007) defines the three as follows: social presence is ‘the ability to project one’s self and establish personal and purposeful relationships’ (p.63), cognitive presence is ‘the exploration, construction, resolution and confirmation of understanding through collaboration and reflection in a community of inquiry’ (p.65), and teaching presence refers to the instructor’s role in ‘moderating and shaping the direction of the discourse’ (p.69).

To be socially present in an online learning environment entails one’s ability to take part in online interactions successfully without fear of criticism, sharing his/her viewpoints with confidence, and maintaining positive online relationships. For this, attribution theory seems to play a significant role for social presence to be established. If learners are anxious or have low efficacy beliefs –both the self and the usefulness of the online course- they would avoid participating online. Social presence also engenders the SDT concept of ‘relatedness’ to a social community. To be cognitively present, however, necessitates one interacting with deeper contributions that adds to others’ understandings through ameliorations and constructions. This presence highlights the importance of interaction quality in setting a difference between creating a social community –social presence- and a true community of inquiry. In this sense, cognitive presence encourages motivational concepts of ‘effort, mastery goals, cooperation, and competence’. The teaching presence highlights the importance of the teacher in monitoring the online interactions. It therefore rejects any online learning design that limits the interaction between learners and instructor as it is the case with e-learning.

Learning presences seem to reflect Moore (2015) interaction types. Swan (2001 :307) argue that ‘if one equates cognitive presence [...] with interaction with content, teaching presence with interaction with instructor and social presence with interaction among students, it gives a good representation of how all three work together to support learning online’. We agree that presences and interactions work together, but not necessarily in this particular direction : cognitive presence can include not only L-C but also L-L and L-I interactions when these are cognitively rather than socially-oriented ; social presence can include not only S-S but also L-I interactions ; and teaching presence sometimes include L-L interactions when peers are given the leadership role.

*Whatever the ways interactions and presences are attached, it is through the interactions that learners and instructors claim their presences.* Similar to interactions, learning presences must occur in both physical and virtual settings. It should be reminded that the model suggested by Garrison et al. (op.cit) is rooted in Dewey’s constructivist approach of practical inquiry that has been traditionally emphasized in the physical settings and directed mainly to HE.

For a community of inquiry to be created (in both settings), the three learning presences must occur in combination as shown in the following figure :



**Figure 5 : Community of Inquiry Framework** (Garrison, Anderson and Archer,2000)

A community of inquiry cannot be fully developed if one of the learning presences is absent. By emphasizing the term ‘inquiry’, cognitive presence seems to present the core of this community. Learning which centers solemnly on socially-oriented and surface level discussions and discards inquisitive interactions serves more the development of a ‘social community’ than a community of inquiry. Interactions should proceed along three stages of cognitive presence : exploration (addressing ambiguities), integration (connecting ideas), and resolution (constructing new ideas). Similarly, social presence is a precondition to cognitive presence. In the words of Garrison and Cleveland-Innes (op.cit :141-142), ‘social interaction is necessary to establish relationships and create a secure climate that will provide the foundation for a deep and high educational purposes’. Learners are not expected to contribute in highly constructive patterns of interactions unless they are psychologically ready to be a part of these interactions, i.e. they feel comfortable with the online setting, the themes discussed, perceive the usefulness of their own and others’ contributions, and they interact willingly. Teacher presence is the key to shift from social to cognitive presence. It includes two main roles : direction and facilitation which are ‘required to establish and ensure messages are developmental (i.e. more than « serial monologues » or personal declarations) » (Garrison, op.cit, p. 66). In other words, learners can hardly elaborate structured and deep information exchange patterns without the instructor’s guidance. Likewise, when the instructor fails at choosing the tasks and type of questions that encourage reflective learning, time allowed for interactions, and designing well-structured conversations, it becomes difficult to transmit constructive feedback and ensure understanding.

Garrison et al. (op.cit) develop a coding template in which they translate these presences into indicators with examples. Our modification to this coding enlarges the scheme to show how these presences fit with BL, constructivism and motivation tenets as shown in the following table:



<b>Elements</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Indicators (examples only)</b>	<b>Blended Learning (Facebook)</b>	<b>Constructivism</b>	<b>Motivation Tenets</b>
<b>Cognitive Presence</b>	Triggering Event	-Sense of puzzlement	-pedagogically-driven topics -raising metacognition	-problem-solving situations	<b>SDT :</b> competence, self-regulation <b>GOT :</b> effort
	Exploration	-Information exchange -discussion of ambiguities	-active learning -learner-centeredness	-a sense of exploration -knowledge construction not reproduction	
	Integration	-Connecting ideas	-maximizing feedback/academic support	-scaffolding	
	Resolution	-Apply new ideas -critically assess solutions	-maximizing understanding	-awareness and reflection -cognitive reconstructions of ideas	
<b>Social Presence</b>	Emotional expression	-Emoticons -autographic narratives	-Emoticons on Facebook -Affective support (addressing personal issues)		<b>Attribution theory :</b> comfort, self-efficacy belief
	Open communication	-Risk-free expression -acknowledgment others/ being encouraging	-autonomous and sponatenous contributions -privacy and anonymity on Facebook. -poking, Liking, posting and sharing features of facebook	-encouraging multiple perspectives (social constructivism)	<b>SDT :</b> autonomy <b>GOT :</b> error tolerance
	Group cohesion	Encouraging collaboration	-synchronous and asynchronous communications	-Collaboation/scaffolding	<b>SDT :</b> relatendess <b>GOT :</b> cooperation
<b>Teaching Presence</b>	Instructional management	Structuring content	-ensuring complamentarity between f2f and online settings/maximizing time/ identifying and structuring online content..etc	Teacher is : a guide/monitor/facilitator	<b>Attribution theory :</b> Usefulness/task value
	Building understanding	Sharing personal meaning / seeking consensus	-monitoring and guiding discussions/showing points of agreementt and disagreement		
	Direct instruction	Focusing and pacing discussion/answering questions diagnosing misconceptions  summarizing leaning outcomes	-providing feedback -summarizing discussions with modelling best answers		

**Table 3 : Community of Inquiry Coding Template in Relation to Blended learning and Motivation** (Adapted from Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, p. 4)

The identified indicators can assist instructors to apply and evaluate learning presences in online settings. Reviewing table 3 reveals the connection between BL, constructivism, motivation and the three learning presences. It could be simply put that cognitive presence conform with the aims of constructivism-based BL to increase the students' metacognitive and reflective skills needed to construct knowledge individually and socially as well as the tenets of cognitive motivation theories which emphasize notions of competence, effort, and mastery goals (SDT /GOT). Social presence is facilitated by Facebook properties that allow for virtual proximity, authentic and secure learning (private chat, emoticons, privacy, anonymity...etc), complies with constructivism to encourage multiple perspectives together with social motivation theories insisting on setting a good climate for learning with comfort, low anxiety and high self-efficacy (attribution theory) to increase autonomous and spontaneous learning, relatedness (SDT), cooperation and error toleration (GOT). Teacher presence represents the teacher's role in a constructivism-based BL in management (content, timing, learner' roles...etc), monitoring discussions and providing final feedback ; all of which affect the learners' perceived usefulness of the learning process (attribution theory).

### **2.4.3. Ameliorating the Lecture Method**

Two main teaching methods that most scholars contrast are those of the 'lecture method' and 'discussion method'. Lecture Method is defined as "a process of teaching in which the instructor gives an oral representation of facts, concepts, or principles [and] involves the clarification or explanation of some major ideas that has been cast into the form of a question or a problem" (Gayles, 1966, p.95). This method is highly teacher-centered with knowledge being transmitted in a one-way direction from the instructor to the learner. Learners are forced to accept what the instructor interprets 'in the light of his own insights' and where synthesis follows 'his own reading' (Sutherland, 1976, p.30). Its counterpart is the discussion method which refers to any teaching method that "provides opportunity for discussion between the

teacher and students and students to students [and] center on shared conversation, discussion and exchange of ideas in class” (Omatseye, 2007, p. 88). Discussion methods is then oriented towards learner-centered pedagogy with diverse interaction patterns taking place: I-L, L-I, and L-L. These interpersonal interactions are aimed towards and inquisitive/reflective L-C interaction where learners are encouraged to examine and evaluate concepts and problems rather than merely accept them.

In the context of HE, Oblinger and Maryama (1996:2) point out that the “majority of institutions construe teaching almost entirely in terms of lecturing”. The dominance of lecture method in HE institutions does not agree with the seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education emphasized by Chickering and Gamson (1987): (1) encouraging contact between students and faculty (2) developing cooperation among students (3) encouraging active learning (4) providing prompt feedback (5) emphasizing time on task (6) communicating high expectations (7) respecting diverse ways of learning. For that, many authors believe that discussion method is more superior (eg. Omatseye, *ibid*; oblinger & Maruyama, *ibid*; Johnstone & Su, 1994). Main advantages of discussion method and drawbacks of lecture method are summarized in the following list:

#### **Drawbacks of Lecture Method (Sutherland, *op.cit* , p-30-31 ; Gayles, *op.cit*)**

- Little or no active student participation is involved.
- Passive learning (listening)
- Testing is based on rote memorization
- No productivity and retention of facts (recreate known material)
- Not respecting learners’ different learning styles (assumes that are all equally interested in listening)
- boring and demotivating technique
- Not adequate to teach all types of skills, concepts, and attitudes.
- emphasizing wants and desires of the lecturer not of students.
- acceptance of the teacher as the final authority
- encourage competitive not cooperative learning.
- little opportunity for problem-solving activities, initiative, and communication skills.

### **Advantages of Discussion Method (Brookfield and Preskill, 1999 ; Omatseye, 1990)**

- exploration of a diversity of perspectives
- recognition and investigation of one's own assumptions
- encourage attentive respectful listening
- keep connected to a topic
- showing respect for students' voices
- adopt the habits of democratic discourse
- students are co-creators of knowledge
- develops the capacity for clear communication of ideas
- develops collaborative learning
- increases breadth and makes students more emphatic
- increasing skills of synthesis and integration
- enhances interpersonal relationships.
- shared responsibility for leadership functions
- encourages rational arguments and logical reasoning
- increases students' achievement

Despite the different arguments held in favour of the discussion method, Brookfield and Preskill (ibid:36) argue that both methods are complementary and that it is erroneous to discuss them in terms of 'a simplistic dichotomy-discussion good, lecture bad'. Many authors still admit the potentials of lecturing (although inferior to the advantages of Discussions). Gayles (op.cit:95), for instance, states the following advantages of lecture method:

- economical of time and materials
- provides excellent opportunity for an extensive clarification and emphasis of important meanings.
- can be adapted readily to the characteristics, needs, and previous knowledge of learners.
- serves as a pattern of good oral English that counteracts with students' careless speech patterns.
- it visualizes rigid and impersonal ideas on printed pages.
- permits a judicious selection and use of materials.

We strongly accept the idea that discussion method and lecture method are complementary for that it supports the rationale behind our BL design to consider both the online setting –using a discussion/constructive method- and a physical setting- using a lecture method. However, as stressed earlier in this section, equilibrium must be set between BL settings. In other words, active learning, sustained interactions as well as learning presences must be fostered in both settings. *Taking the drawbacks of the lecture method, it generally*

*addresses only I-L type of interaction and fosters the teacher presence and neglects both social and cognitive presences.* For that reason, the lecture method has to be ameliorated. Two main contributions in this vein are those of Sutherland (op.cit: 32) who suggests a model of good lecture and Brookfield and Preskill (op.cit) who provide guidelines for effective lectures. Given that a lecture method is applied using the program of ‘Research Methodology’ (second year, first semester), only points who can be applied while teaching the subject are stressed:

*1-inspiring students to read and study, guide them rather than providing mountains of factual materials* (encourage them to be self-responsible, self-regulated, autonomous and inquisitive). When it comes to borrowing techniques, the instructor’s definitions of concepts, examples, and activities are never sufficient to improve the learners’ academic writing style. Learners must be encouraged to consult further documents and share them with peers (using also Facebook Group).

*2-Starting lectures with questions that show the instructor’s claims are temporary and subject to criticism.* Although teaching about ‘borrowing techniques’ invokes rigid matters with little or no room for subjective interpretations, an example to mention is when teaching about punishments of unintentional plagiarism (it is considered illegal but what do you think?) which can provoke counterarguments mainly in the Algerian context where some would have witnessed real-life examples of intentional plagiarism went unpunished.

*3-Simple, well-organized and few learning points.* Quality rather than quantity of materials is stressed. Limiting the program of the first semester to the three borrowing techniques with few examples and activities in an organized strategy (logical transition from physical to the online sessions) but with higher interaction, discussion, and cognitive reflection would result in beneficial learning.

*4-Deliberately introduce alternative perspectives.* The three types of formal interactions must be fostered. These interactions can occur while the instructor is providing examples/illustrations of some borrowing techniques/plagiarized Vs unplagiarized corpus.

The instructor welcomes different interpretations and asks the students to explain their points of view, to reflect upon peers' judgments and only then s/he provides the answer.

*5-It is interesting, relevant, and meaningful to students.* At the start of each borrowing technique, let students describe their experiences with borrowing techniques 'have you ever quote/paraphrase/summarize any work before? How did you use it?' The instructor can also refer to his/her own experiences with problems encountered and strategies of using these techniques while conducting master or doctoral theses. The instructor must also mention the future value of learning these issues and provide real-life examples of people who failed or succeeded in writing good dissertations or at their career after considering/or neglecting their academic writing skills.

*6-uses humour and conversational language.* The three informal Interaction types are used to maintain the students' attention, understand their needs/interests, their attitudes towards the subject and the online sessions.

*7-allows pauses for reaction or periods of silence.* The students are allowed to think further about the points presented or prepare any questions they would like to raise in public, or discuss in groups during the pause. These pauses can also break the boredom of continuous lectures and stick the learners' attention on major points.

*8-Ends with series of questions that lecturer raised at beginning and for those probably left unanswered (to encourage volunteers to reflect and peers correct) or ask learners to summarize the main points discussed.*

Further examples of adding interaction patterns (and increase social and cognitive presence) are included in the constructivism-based BL lesson plan (see Appendix V). By allowing the students to interact amongst each other and with the instructor formally and informally, and provide them with opportunities to be cognitively and socially present can help in moving the lecture method beyond the traditionally held practice of having a continuous oral transmission of information.

## **Conclusion**

In sum, motivation represents a core variable to the present research. The demotivating factors emerging from the nature of the subject matter and the physical learning setting as well as the changing learning patterns of present-day learners engender a call towards novelty and adopting contemporary learning methods such as BL. The idea is more supported by the fact that the constructs of the three motivation theories (attribution theory, GOT, and SDT) coordinate with the principles of BL suggesting that the latter can lead the way to construct a motivating community of inquiry (including online presences) in both its learning environments; physical and virtual.

## Chapter Three: Academic Writing

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## **Introduction**

The present chapter is devoted to the discussion of the literature related to the second dependent variable: "academic writing". The chapter starts first with defining "writing" in general and revealing how its conceptualization has changed over the course of time along three major perspectives, namely, the *linguistic perspective*, the *cognitive-psychological perspective*, and the *socio-cultural perspective*. After that, it examines the characteristics of "academic" writing as a specific type of writing along with presenting two checklists being developed following the aims of the present study. In addition to that, the importance of teaching academic writing is revealed. The chapter also traces in brief the history of SL writing research by reviewing its main approaches and emphasizes the "*constructivism theory*". Finally, writing is placed in the BL environment in which electronic feedback types are presented, namely, *human* and *computer-generated feedback*.

### **3.1. Definition of Writing**

Just as developing academic writing proficiency can be a difficult task to achieve, being competent in teaching writing can also be challenging. Academic writing teachers usually face a serious difficulty to deduce the academic writing features they need to integrate. They have to examine a variety of inconsistent findings as an attempt to come up with an adequate program that guarantees the students' well-developed writing skill. This difficulty to decide upon a universal set of writing components lies behind the long research advocated to investigate SL writing. The bunch of writing conceptualizations, theories, and methods of delivery which have emerged since writing gained importance have rendered the concept "one of the least well-understood" concepts in applied linguistics (Silva and Matsuda, 2002 as cited in Rahimpour and Nariman-Jahan, 2011, p.120).

Looking deeply at both first language (L1) and SL writing research, writing is being conceptualized according to three perspectives related to major approaches that will be

discussed further in this chapter. They are as follows: *the linguistic* perspective, the *cognitive/psychological* perspective, and the *socio-cultural* perspective. Although referring to writing in its *general* sense, what is worth mentioning is that each of these perspectives sheds light on particular set of academic writing components as what constitutes the concept "academic writing". They are classified into *drafting, structuring and thinking and, research skills*. (see checklist, pp.128-130).

### **3.1.1. Linguistic Perspectives**

Up to the early 1960's and until the 1980's, the focus of early approaches on ESL (English as a Second Language) writing was mainly on language *accuracy* and *sentence-related concerns*. In other words, writing was seen as the production of words which are written in a structured way following a system of rules. In this view, as Hyland (2003:3) asserts, "learning to write in a foreign or second language mainly involves linguistic knowledge and the vocabulary choices, syntactic patterns, and cohesive devices".

In order to apply these language-related approaches, the audio-lingual method (ALM) was used. This is because, as Onozawa (2010) reports, up to the 1960's, the audio-lingual was the prevailing method. Following a structural view of language together with the behaviourist principle of stimulus-response-reinforcement, writing was taught using a habit formation process. Practically, learners memorize sentence structures provided by the teacher in the form of drills until acquisition of error-free sentences is guaranteed.

In the 1970's, there was a gradual change in ESL writing with the appearance of *guided and controlled writing*. Though emphasis was still on the accurate use of Grammar and lexis, learners would either *manipulate* sentences where necessary (*guided writing*) or *imitate* the provided models, i.e. sentences (*controlled writing*). In this context, Hyland (2003:3) describes writing as "an intricate structure that can only be learned by developing the ability to manipulate lexis and grammar". Hence, the "slot and filler" frameworks were used

when students are asked to complete sentences, change tenses or personal pronouns. After that, some ESL teachers started to use *free writing* in which students are given the opportunity to apply the patterns they learnt to generate their own free texts. Hasan and Akhand (2010 :79) mention that in this stage student need to reveal their writing competence by using “the skills, structures and vocabulary they have been taught to produce the product”.

Based on what has been preceded, it is evident to state that the linguistic approaches to writing define writing as a *product* and casts light only on *sentence-related concerns* such as Grammar, lexis, and spelling. Even when students write at the *text-level as in current-traditional rhetoric*, they whether re-order sentences or imitate a certain organization provided by the teacher. As stated by Kroll (1990:14), within this perspective, “writing is basically a matter of arrangement, of fitting sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns”. Sentence-related concerns are being referred to in this research work as "*drafting skills*" and are considered to be a one single element of what defines the term “academic writing”.

### **3.1.2. Cognitive/Psychological Perspectives**

Starting from the 1980s, ESL writing moved from language-based approaches to the cognitive/psychological approaches. In other words, writing research shifted emphasis from the surface structure of language and creating error-free composition to considering writing as a *process* in which the writer's thinking moves along various stages while composing a text. Flower and Hayes (1981:366) considers that "the process of writing is best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of writing".

According to Flower and Hayes (ibid), writing within this perspective is goal-directed as it proceeds following the goals of writers and the various rhetorical problems they face. As a result, a central concern of the schooling enterprise was to encourage students how to think

and how to engage in problem solving through reasoning and critique instead of being primarily concerned about teaching Grammar and vocabulary.

Following this orientation, teaching students how to reflect on the strategies they use while composing, i.e. developing the students' *metacognitive awareness* of their writing processes is the teachers' first responsibility. This implies assisting students as they move along different stages such as *planning* (generating ideas, setting goals, and organizing), *translating* (turning plans into written language) and *reviewing* (evaluating and revisiting). Within this perspective, writing is defined as "the production of thought for oneself or others under the direction of one's goal-oriented metacognitive monitoring and control, and the translation of that thought into an external symbolic representation" (Hacker, Keener, & Kircher 2009, p.154).

In this sense, cognitive approaches did not narrow its focus to mere sentence-related issues such as Grammar, lexis, spelling...etc. but broadens it to the level of extended piece of writing such as *paragraphs* and *essays*. An important distinction with product-based approaches is that students are taught how to create a well-structured paragraphs and essays in a way that reflects one's thoughts and own goals rather than copying a certain model, i.e. *compose creative texts*. Reference was made to different types of essays such as argumentative, analytic, descriptive, and the like. In addition to that, the focus was on developing effective paragraphs such as the creation of topic sentence, supporting sentences, and different types of paragraphs. The same applies for the structure of essays as Introduction-Body-Conclusion. The writing elements that the cognitive approaches highlight are being referred to in this research as "*structuring and thinking skills*".

### **3.1.3. Socio-cultural Perspectives**

Starting from the 1980's, new social and cultural perspectives on language and learning have emerged to ameliorate and broaden the scope of cognitive theories of

composing. Sperling and Freedman (2010:4-5) state that "scholars have been pushed to elaborate existing cognitive theories by research that was conducted in a broad spectrum of social and cultural contexts". From this perspective, writing is given a complex conception by being regarded a *social practice* rather than an activity situated within the individual's cognitive structures.

According to Sperling and Freedman (ibid:5), such approaches have deemed significant as they explore "how writing is learned across varied populations and for understanding the roles and relationships of writers and readers in different contexts, including the norms, assumptions, values, and beliefs that influence them". In particular, there exist, in the words of Schmied (2011, 3), a number of "accepted institutionalized conventions of metadiscourse" by which readers and writers of the same community communicate. As stated by Hyland (1998), metadiscourse is a concept that contextualizes a text by relating it to the understandings of a certain discourse community by means of cohesive and interpersonal devices that are "acceptable" in it. The use of these metadiscourse features function as a guide for readers to understand and interpret the text.

To put it another way, according to these theories, SL writers' problem is not primarily linguistic. Writers also need to learn how to produce writing that will satisfy the norms of the academic communities they belong to. As Kern (2000, as cited in Vollmer, 2000) points out:

Sociocultural approaches to literacy disabuse us of the notion that how and why we read and write is an entirely private and individual affair. [Rather] . . . reading and writing are communicative acts in which readers and writers position one another in particular ways, drawing on conventions and resources provided by the culture. (pp.34-37)

In such approaches, the major concern is to identify what rhetorical resources writers exploit. Writers position themselves in the text they write *interpersonally* by resorting to

diverse ways that reinforce their relationship to the reader. Examples of these are the choice of pronouns, the use of conjunctions, modal markers of certainty, addressing their stance, evaluations, judgments, appraisal, hedges, seeking agreement...etc. According to Hyland and Tse (2004:271), using the first personal pronoun in postgraduate Phd acknowledgments, for example, assist writers to emphasize “their commitment to their words, set up relationship with their readers, and establish their personal sincerity in thanking various people”

A growing body of research was geared to reveal the metadiscourse features employed by writers from different discourse communities. This was generally implemented through examining students' dissertations, results and discussion sections in particular. One important study is that of Hyland (2002a) offering a clear description of the preferences of using reporting verbs as in-text citations in research articles among eight disciplinary communities. As stated by Hyland (ibid:115): "reference to prior research [citation] is almost a defining feature of the academic research article". As a result, teaching the students how to cite efficiently and how to write a dissertation in a way that is convincing to its readers and goes along the conventions of the discourse community is vital as teaching them the linguistic, structural and cognitive skills. Those skills are being referred to in the present study as "*research skills*".

When taking into consideration all these perspectives toward defining writing, we notice that it is difficult to come to one single view of what writing is. As Weigle (2002: 3) states “this is not a simple task, since, as researchers in both first and SL writing have pointed out, the uses to which writing is put by different people in different situations are so varied that no single definition can cover all situations”. According to us, EFL writing is perceived as a *multidimensional* process composed of a cognitive activity affected by a number of linguistic and contextual factors. As such, we take into account all skills needed for developing academic writing proficiency, namely drafting skills, structural and thinking skills,

and research skills. If these factors are well addressed, this will make writing an unforgettable experience.

### **3.2. Characteristics of Academic Writing**

After presenting how broad perspectives define “writing” , it is important to explain what the word "academic" refer to, and how it differentiates "academic writing" as a “special genre of writing having its own rules and practices” (Bowker, 2007:4) . In an attempt to summarize the main characteristics of academic writing, we have compiled a range of researchers' perspectives. Some of them emphasize only one feature as to what characterizes writing as “academic”, while others identify several features. As a result, while very thorough in their own rights, these perspectives collectively offer a holistic and comprehensive view of the important aspects of academic writing overall.

#### **3.2.1. Objectivity**

Among the features of academic writing that researchers focus on is ‘*objectivity*’. Hartley (2008:3) states that “there is a generally accepted way” of writing scientific articles. He mentions Smyth’s (1996) explanation of the importance of this notion in “scientific texts”. According to him, a scientific text is *impersonal* as it must not include the author’s subjective value judgments, subjective statements such as “in my opinion” or “I think”, and personal pronouns such as “I”, and “we”. The scientific text should rather be neutral in presenting facts and views. Hartley (op.cit) adds that it is important to incorporate in scientific articles “the passive tense, complex terminology, and various footnoting and referencing systems”.

However, once reading the literature about the notion of “objectivity”, one notes that researchers do not agree on a definite set of aspects. Examples of disagreements are the sentences *voice* and words *complexity*. Although some, such as Hartley (op.cit) believe that using the passive voice and complex terminology reveal more objective tone, others think quite the opposite. Authors in a newsletter (2006) in the Firebelle Productions Site support

using the active voice arguing that it is straightforward and clarifies for the reader *who* did *what* to *whom*. Sheldrake (2004:8-9) also states that "the passive style is not only misleading, it is also alienating" and that "many scientists abandoned the use of the passive voice years ago". After conducting a survey on the teachers' opinions about using passive voice in scientific writing, he reported the following teachers' answers : it is "more natural", "gives pupils ownership of their work" and "makes science more personal and pupils more involved". Again, commenting about the use of complex language, Jones (2013) suggests using simple lexis and avoiding the inflated language that serve nothing but to impress the reader.

In addition to the researchers' disagreement about "objectivity", the extent of writers' commitment to the notion of "objectivity" varies across different academic fields. While drawing a distinction between hard/exact sciences and soft sciences, Brett (1994) notes that knowledge presented in the "results" section of research articles in Sociology includes more personal commitment and subjective analysis. This is because; studying the human behavior, his/her feelings, and thoughts is a complex task that makes it difficult for the researcher to reach accurate predictions of the outcomes. These latter are generally influenced by internal "mental" concepts such as desires and beliefs which are difficult to measure empirically.

In addition to that, human actions are subject to many unknown circumstances, and even when these circumstances are known, they are usually difficult to describe accurately. This often leads the researcher to generate his/her own explanations. According to Collingwood (1946 as cited in salmon,1989:388), for instance, "the physical description of one person cutting another with a knife does not distinguish an act of surgery from an act of assault, a ritual act, or an accidental cutting". It is only when the intention of the cutter is determined that the action that has taken place becomes known.



### 3.2.2. Formality

Other researchers focused on the notion of *"formality"* as a main feature of academic writing. In an academic paper entitled "Formal Academic Writing" (2016)-presented in the writing center, Texas- formality is placed at the forehead of academic writing. It is argued that academic writing is somehow problematic for students since they are required to address the academic community in a way that is different from the way they address their friends. The journal offers some general guidelines for learning to write formally in the form of "the DO", i.e. what is permissive, and the "Don't", i.e. what is to be avoided in academic writing. The guidelines are summarized in the following table:

Formal writing "Do"	Informal writing "Don't use"
<p><b>1-Use Precise language and Effective Words:</b>  <b>-Using denotation and connotation appropriately:</b>  <b>Ex.:</b> firm=steady (positive).            stubborn=unreasonable (negative).  <b>-Precise words:</b>  <b>Example:</b> It was really awesome just how creepy the characters in "A Rose for Emily" were.  <b>Revised:</b> Faulkner, through his use of tone and symbolism, creates mysterious and complex characters.</p> <p><b>2- Present others' arguments fairly and with an appropriate tone.</b></p> <p><b>3-Use Active Rather than Passive Voice:</b>            The doer of the action must be known.  <b>Passive voice:</b> The law <b>was passed</b> in October 2007. (Who passed the law?)  <b>Active voice:</b> <b>Mayor Jones passed</b> the law in order to be re-elected in November.</p> <p><b>4-Say it; do not say that you will say it:</b>  <b>Faulty:</b> <b>In this paper, I will analyze</b> the arguments against handgun control.  <b>Revised:</b> Arguments against handgun control are unconvincing because . . .</p> <p><b>5-Use concise language.</b></p>	<p><b>1-Contractions:</b> Ex. You're, Can't</p> <p><b>2-Personal Pronouns ("I, we, our, you")</b>  <b>Ex:</b> In order to travel, <b>you</b> have to save hundreds of dollars for gasoline.  <b>Revised:</b> In order to travel, <b>one</b> has to save hundreds of dollars for gasoline.</p> <p><b>3-Language that is Biased:</b>            . Avoid the generic "he" by using "he or she"; labels that disparage the person or group the writer refers to.            • Use names for racial, ethnic, and other groups that reflect the preferences of each group's members.</p> <p><b>4-Slang, Jargon, Clichés, and Conversational Language:</b></p> <p><b>5-Pretentious Language/Euphemisms</b>  <b>Pretentious:</b> To perpetuate our endeavor of providing funds for our elderly citizens as we do at the present moment, we will face the exigency of enhanced contributions from all our citizens.  <b>Revised:</b> Citizens cannot continue to fund Social Security for the elderly unless we raise taxes.</p> <p><b>6-Ambiguous references</b>  <b>Ex: It is not fair that administrators make all decisions that affect students in many ways.</b>  <b>Revised: Administrators make</b> all decisions for the school, affecting students' independence and finances.</p>

**Table 4: What to Do and What not to Do in Formal Writing**

Apart for the previously mentioned characteristics, some researchers consider certain *linguistic aspects* to be generally used in formal academic writings in comparison to informal writing. Bennett and Gorovitz (1997), for instance, consider that in order to improve students' formality, teachers should place their emphasis on teaching some linguistic features at the sentence-level in what they labeled "Bennett Rules". Among these rules is to emphasize the use of verbs at the expense of nouns, and adverbs at the expense of adjectives. Therefore, instead of saying "there is a difference between x and y", it is better to say "x differs from y". Also instead of saying "he is a clear writer", it is better to say "he writes clearly".

In addition to that, Baumann and Graves (2010) recognize the importance of learning "*academic vocabulary*" in improving formal academic writing. According to them, "academic vocabulary" has been defined as "domain-specific academic vocabulary" or as "general academic vocabulary". However, the former was the most common definition.

However, one of the disagreements placed around "formal writing" is how "agency" is expressed. In other words, some tolerate the use of personal pronouns, while others prefer to present knowledge as self-explanatory. Through analysing academic discourse, MacDonald (1992) describes the way "*agency*" is addressed in academic fields. In particular, her study aims to explore the relationship between expressing "agency" and the nature of grammatical subject presented in History, Literature, and Psychology. According to her, there is a sound connection between syntax and semantics in the way "agency" is presented. If academic writers prefer to emphasize agency, they would make use of personal pronouns, however, if they tend to avoid agency, they would rather refer to the knowledge as being self-explanatory using a noun phrase or a grammatical subject. In MacDonald's terms (ibid):

the issue of agency arises in relation to method and epistemology when academics address issues like whether to use “I” in scholarly articles. If academics want to conceal the contractedness of their accounts, we should not expect them to put themselves in the subject position; we should instead expect to find the data presented as self-explanatory. On the other hand, if academics are increasingly aware of the contractedness of their accounts, we should see signs of that awareness in the subject position. (p.538)

Drawing the distinction between humanities and social sciences, she notes that humanities are more particularistic in the way they define problems. Such conceptual differences affect the way nouns are presented in the subject position. In Psychology, for example, writers do not use instances of names of individuals while in literature a highest percentage of individual names occur in the subject position. History writings, however, contain a few names of individuals but more reference to classes or groups of people.

Researchers proposed some strategies for improving formality. Those and lists of common formal words are explained and handed to the students in the form of Pdf and Word files (see Appendix VIII).

### **3.2.3. Metadiscourse Functions**

Considering writing a social act, many researchers consider the existence of "*an imagined reader*", "*arguments*" presented, and "*rhetorical/ metadiscourse conventions*" used to *convince* and *satisfy* the audience's expectations important characteristics of academic writing. Thaiss and Zawacki's research (2006: 5-7) aimed to collect professors' perceptions of what academic writing means and its standards. They deduced two important characteristics: "*argumentation/evidencing*", and "*rhetorical conventions of an imagined reader*".

First, supporting ideas with clear *evidence* in writing is central. In this context, Lai (2013:4) reports that "all the unsatisfactory writings have two things in common": whether a lack of a clear thesis statement or a failure to support it with sound evidence. He (ibid) states that such writing deficiencies lead us to conclude "that the difficulties in academic writing is

not primarily due to a lack of language skills, but a lack of a proper training in logical thinking skills; i.e. knowing how to think clearly and argue well". It is important to mention that the word "argument" does not mean a loud quarrel between two opposing positions which necessitates one's victory over the other; instead it means a presentation of different viewpoints which are discussed in a respectful atmosphere. It covers all perspectives suggested in order to reach a solution that is to be approved by each side of the debate.

In this realm, Barton (1995) attributes "*argumentation*" a metadiscourse function when academic writers use contrastive and non-contrastive connectives in order to present claims and counterclaims. According to him, connectives in the context of "argumentation" serve more than the explicit function of setting or denying a claim or a counter-claim, or that of creating textual relations. They hold an interpersonal function of "politeness" and "solidarity" among writer and reader. Barton (ibid:225) distinguishes between claims and counter-claims stating that "claims provide direct assertions in support of the thesis of the essay, whereas counterclaims provide indirect assertion that still support the thesis of the essay but do so by responding to potential detractors or criticisms".

Therefore, in order to guarantee the reader's positive response, writers have to ensure that claims and counterclaims are presented in a polite way. This is by introducing first a *counterclaim* which states the background knowledge shared with the reader using a non-contrastive connective, and then presenting the writer's opposed statement by means of a contrastive connective.

The second characteristic that Thaiss and Zawacki (op.cit) refer to is the existence of an imagined, rational reader who responds reasonably to the information written. The target reader represents the professional community that one needs to become a member of. To be accepted as a member requires meeting the norms that the professional community expects.

In a textual analysis of scientific and academic writing, Hyland (2002a) examines the use of *reporting verbs* in the following fields: philosophy, sociology, applied linguistics, marketing, biology, electronic engineering, mechanical engineering, and physics. The study results indicate that writers in the humanities and social sciences use reporting verbs more frequently than writers in exact sciences. This suggests that each discourse community expects from its writers to employ certain discourse features.

Apart from the frequency of using reporting verbs across academic disciplines, the study of Hyland (ibid) stresses the metadiscourse functions these reporting verbs perform in academic writing. Hyland (ibid) distinguishes two types of functions: "the process function", and "the evaluative function". In the process function, the writer exhibits three acts: the research, the cognitive, and the discourse act. In other words, the writer mentions the research experiments, represents his/her beliefs and judgments, or verbally expresses his/her conclusions. In the evaluative function the writer presents his/her own evaluations. The role of reporting verbs, then, goes beyond the mere reference to views and results, rather they embody within them the researcher's position toward these results-let it be a neutral, supportive, or critical position- and then addresses it to the audience.

### **3.3. Structuring, Analytical and Research Skills**

In the book "Academic Writing: A Guide to Tertiary Level Writing", Bowker (op.cit), gives due reference to the presence of *well-defined structuring patterns*, and *published literature* as essential elements in academic writing. First, academic writing follows a *standard organizational pattern*. Academic essays, for instance, follow the Introduction-Body-Conclusion pattern. Reference is also given to notions of cohesion and coherence. Second, writing academic papers necessitates the effective *integration of research* findings that are published in the literature to support one's own ideas. The writer cannot present

his/her ideas separately and expects the audience to accept them. The source materials must be analyzed carefully and their contribution to one's ideas must be clearly manifested.

Murphy (2009) draws attention to the characteristics previously mentioned together with two other features "*use of borrowing techniques*", and "*critical reading*". Irvin (2010) also confirms their importance by referring to them as "*knowledge of research skills*". She states (ibid) that researching is not only consulting Google or Wikipedia; it is a whole process in which one has to learn how to limit the focus of a research around a specific issue along with staying up-to-date with all the source information being published. She adds that:

college writing typically asks you [students] to write on unfamiliar topics. Whether ... reading ... textbook, a short story, or scholarly articles from research, your [student] ability to write well will be based upon the quality of your [student's] reading... You'll [students] need to think critically as you [they] read. That means separating fact from opinion, recognizing biases and assumptions, and making inferences. (Irvin, ibid, p.8)

Another basic feature in academic writing is "*the evaluation*" of the research results and arguments. Evaluation in academic writings is very significant as it provides an explanation of why ideas of others are accepted or dismissed. It also emphasizes the *writer's voice* and proves that he has tested rather than merely accepted the arguments.

This evaluation is more evident in the results and discussion sections of master and doctorate dissertations. It is considered the heart of any research paper and requires several writing attempts. It answers the questions posed, indicates the procedures that led to the results, demonstrates how these results are accepted within the existing knowledge, and offers suggestions for future research.

### **3.2.5. Simplicity and Concision**

Another important characteristic of academic writing which several authors wrote about is "*simplicity*". The following table which is taken from Hartley (op.cit:4), for instance, displays some people's viewpoints about an academic text. He states that some consider

academic writing “sparse, dull and undistinguished”. Some regard the articles published in prestigious journals to be less readable because of their complex writing and greater use of technical vocabulary. Others are not in favor of using an eloquent style just for the sake of publishing "poor-quality" articles. Furthermore, Hatley (op.cit:5) mentions Sokal’s (1996) famous article he wrote in scientific and sociological jargon which made it “undetected by the editors of the journal to whom it was submitted”.

Academic writing is: -unnecessarily complicated -pompous, long-winded, technical -impersonal, authoritative, humourless -elitist, and excluded outsiders But it can be: Appropriate in scientific circumstances- -easier for non-native speakers to follow
---

**Table5: Some Characteristics of Academic Writing.** From Hatley (2008:4)

Furthermore, Bennett and Gorovitz (op.cit:9) state that journal and book editors prefer writing which is more clear and precise as “it does not waste valuable space and can be published more economically”. According to him, phrase such as ‘It is important to that... ’, "The fact of the matter is that. . . ", "I think that...", "I feel that...", "In fact..." are superfluous as they add nothing important to the text, and therefore, they have to be deleted.

An important rhetorical means to achieve precision and concision in academic writing is stated by Vande Kopple (1994). He notes the inclination of writers toward using long noun phrases functioning as grammatical subjects in scientific discourse. Hence, instead of presenting information in compound /complex sentences or even more than one sentence, writers condense that information in the grammatical subject of a sentence. According to him, the writers’ use of this rhetorical device is an attempt to render their claims a fact to be taken as true and as remaining true, to add all attributes needed to describe the subjects, and to emphasize old information as a background shared knowledge.

To sum up this part, it seems that while exploring the characteristics of academic writing, one notices that researchers differ in the way they emphasize one feature over the other. As stated by Thaiss and Zawacki (op.cit):

many people in our field realize that “academic writing” is not as stable, unified, ... and that they wish to learn more about the complexity of what we call “academic writing.” Yet we also know that many others ... do perceive academic writing as unnecessarily narrow.... What these two groups have in common is their concern for student writers, for giving them an accurate sense of what they need to know in order to succeed as writers... writers who can meet others’ expectations and...express their individual and communal identities, desires, and understandings. (p.2)

However, according to us, academic writing is considered *a form of evaluation* that seeks to demonstrate the students’ proficiency with certain disciplinary skills and presenting it in the form of different assignments (research paper, exam paper, literature reviews, ...etc.). It is the style of writing in which the writer *narrows* the focus of the investigation, supports his/her claims with *evidence*, *structure* the analysis logically by following the implications of statements made, presents it in a *formal, simple, concise, and objective* language, along with taking into account the *readers'* norms and the community expectations.

### **3.3. Teaching Academic Writing**

The researcher attempts throughout this section to offer, first, a comprehensive checklist of teaching academic writing. Second, she designs another Checklist of Experiment Implementation that is taught to the students during the treatment period. The rationale behind the design of both checklists is thoroughly discussed.

#### **3.3.1. Checklist of Academic Writing**

Based on the previous discussion of the shifting paradigms in defining the concept "writing" and the different characteristics that make it "academic", a checklist is being developed as an attempt to gain a better understanding of how to teach academic writing comprehensively -at least to include the major components that both theories of SL writing



and researchers in the field make reference to- This checklist, as we assume, enlightens academic writing teachers about the true and thorough understanding of academic writing components.

This initiative is inspired by the fact that undergraduate students seem to have little understanding of what is required of them in terms of developing their academic writing. The confusion is not only a students' problem; academic writing teachers also seem helpless in deciding upon one uniformed set of academic writing components. Research reveals that teachers hold varying ideas about what constitutes 'good academic writing', leading some researchers to conclude that "no single version exists that can be handed down to our students" (Harwood and Hartley, 2004). Harwood and Hartley (ibid) state that "most undergraduate tasks are not 'proper' academic writing" since lecturers base their writing practices on their own assumptions about what is "good writing". This in turn makes students confused about what they have to learn in writing. As reported by Lea & Street's (2000) as cited in Harwood and Hartley, (ibid) on one of their student's opinion:

The thing I'm finding most difficult in my first term here is moving from subject to subject and knowing how you're meant to write in each one. I'm really aware of writing for a particular tutor as well as for a particular subject. Everybody seems to want something different. (p.41)

Teachers provide their students conflicting advice that range between the appropriate style to use, the structural patterns to follow, the metadiscourse functions accepted in the academy, in-text-citation guidelines, etc. Therefore, Lillis (1999 cited in Harwood and Hartley, ibid: 360) deduces that writing academically is "an institutional practice of mystery".

However, in spite of the fact that many authors studying academic writing agree that a single, all-encompassing best approach to teaching is not a possibility, nor is it advisable (Jordan, 1997; Leki & Carson, 1994; Raimes, 1991; Silva, 1993), we suggest that taking the characteristics proposed in the literature, a comprehensive list can be used as a guide for

teachers to hold a thorough understanding of the academic writing components and for practitioners to create a curriculum that is suitable for the students at each educational level.

The checklist is divided into three major skills of academic writing, namely, *drafting skills, structuring and thinking skills, and research skills*. This division follows the components emphasized by each of the three perspectives of SL writing previously mentioned, i.e. the linguistic, the cognitive and the socio-cultural.

In specific terms, *drafting skills* are skills to master at the sentence-level, namely, Grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation. Those skills serve to maintain the overall presentation of any academic paper. Within those skills, reference is given to "objectivity", "formality", "simplicity", and "clarity" as features to be taught in academic writing.

Without any question, knowing how to properly use the language, such as its Grammar and punctuation, is very important to academic writing. But, knowing how to write cannot just be about knowing how to use the language. After all, knowing how to properly use the language rules can only help to deal with the sentence-level problems. The most serious problems confronting academic writers are beyond the sentence-level. This is why native English students also have difficulties in academic writing. Hinkel (2004) states that despite the fact that L1 students possess productive knowledge of Grammar and vocabulary, their academic writing is still poor. As a consequence, students also need to develop their structuring, thinking and research skills.

*Structuring and thinking skills* focus on teaching structures beyond the sentence-level and developing the students' thinking skills. Reference is made to the structuring format of paragraphs, essays, articles and dissertations. In addition to that, types of essays such as argumentative, analytic, and expository are being considered. This is to enhance the students' argumentative, analytic and thinking skills. Concerning *research skills*, characteristics such as critical reading, note taking, use of published literature, borrowing techniques, and in-text

citation are taken into consideration. In addition to that, the existence of "imagined reader", "metadiscourse functions", and "evaluation/analysis" are given a good emphasis in data presentation and discussion of results.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that the checklist is not comprehensive in its specifications- *the examples provided under each minor sub-title (such as objectivity)* - but it is comprehensive in the overall classification of these specifications. In other words, it provides a 'framework' of how to classify academic writing features from low to high-ordered skills when major characteristics of academic writing are taken into account (objectivity, formality, concision...etc). This is what explains the addition of "further tips" under the sub-titles of "Drafting Skills" (ex: objectivity) when infinite strategies can be suggested in addition to what the researcher has gathered from reading the literature.

The checklist is presented as follows:

**I- Drafting Skills: (sentence-related/linguistic concerns)**

**1. Grammar-related concerns:**

**1.1. Objectivity:**

**1.1.1. Passive Voice Vs Active Voice.**

**1.1.2. Third Person Vs Personal Pronouns (Agency)**

**1.1.3. Use of the Present Simple Tense.**

**1.1.4. Neutrality**

**1.1.5. Further tips on objective writing.**

**1.1. Formality:**

**1.2.1. Avoiding inappropriate or informal phrases. (A list containing examples of incomplete, informal phrases).**

**1.2.2. Formal Negatives**

**1.2.3. Formal Sentence connectors.**

**1.1.4. A Sample of Conjunctions Problems.**

**1.1.5. A Sample of Prepositions Problems (the list containing rules of how to use prepositions-most frequently used prepositions-).  
Example: we say: correlate with but relate to.**

**1.1.6. A Sample to Participle Problems.**

**1.1.7. A Sample of Article-use Guidelines. (List containing general rules about the use of "a" and "the").**

**1.1.8. Further tips on formal writing.**

**1.2. Simplicity:**

**1.3.1. Noun phrases and sentence complexity (grammatical subjects).**

**1.3.2. Further tips on concise writing**

**4. Vocabulary:( *Formality*)**

**2.1. A list of verbs for academic writing. (Example: instead of to show, we use to indicate).**

**2.2. Genres and domain-specific vocabulary.**

**2.3. Words confused or misused. (Ex. Effect Vs affect).**

**2.4. Reporting verbs.**

**2.5. List of Latin abbreviations commonly used in academic writing.**

**2.6. Formal tips on formal vocabulary.**

**3. Punctuation:**

**3.1. Chief uses of the Comma, semicolon, colon, dash, hyphen, slash, apostrophe.**

**4. American Vs British spelling. (List containing the differences).**

**II. Structuring and thinking skills: (develops the students' structuring and clear reasoning/ beyond sentence-level)**

**1. Paragraph Structure**

**1.1. Topic sentence**

**1.2. Supporting ideas**

**1.3. Cohesion (cohesive markers)**

**1.4. Coherence**

**2. Essay Structure**

**2.1. Introduction**

**2.2. Body**

**2.3. Conclusion.**

**3. Types of essays**

**3.1. Argumentative**

**-Present arguments fairly with an appropriate tone (Objectivity).**

**3.2. Analytic**

**-Objective analysis**

**3.3. Descriptive.**

**-Neutral description**

**4. Research articles format.**

**5. Dissertation format.**

**III. Research Skills: (using published literature, evaluating results, and convincing readers of the claims)**

**1. *Critical Reading***

**1.1. Identifying academic sources**

**1.2. What does it mean to be critical?**

**1.3. Guidelines for reading critically.**

**2. Setting research questions.**

**3. *Integrating ideas of published authors.***

**3.1. Note-taking**

**3.2. Paraphrasing**

**3.3. Summarizing**

**3.4. Quoting**

**4. *In-text citation***

<p>5. <i>References list</i></p> <p>6. <i>Rhetorical devices used to help the reader follow the ideas presented.</i></p> <p>7. <i>Rhetorical devices used to persuade the reader of the validity of the argument. (Metadiscourse)</i></p> <p>7. <i>Data presentation and discussion of results.</i></p> <p>7.1. <b>Data Collection and presentation.</b></p> <p>7.2. <b>Discussion of results and implication.</b></p>
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**Table6: Checklist of Academic Writing**

### **3.3.2. Checklist Designed for The Experiment Implementation**

Since the present study takes the case of second year students at the University of Larbi Ben M'hidi, and since "academic writing" as a complex skill cannot be taught to the students within a year of study, using the previous checklist, limiting the focus of study in terms of "academic writing components is necessary. Consequently, we decided to implement within the program of second year "research methodology" a selected number of academic writing components.

Given the importance placed on *objectivity, formality, simplicity, concision, structural and analytical skills* as crucial characteristics of academic writing, and following the previous checklist framework, the researcher decided to teach the students some tips related to each one of them by focusing on a limited number of features. The choices taken are not haphazard; they are based on a whole consideration of what second year students are expected to know and have learnt in "Research Methodology" in their first year as background knowledge, and also what they will learn in their third year and advanced levels.

In order to teach objective writing, four elements are to be addressed: *present simple, active voice, neutrality, and third person/impersonal agent*. We assume that although the students are taught in the subject of "English Grammar" how to conjugate a verb in the present simple tense and how to apply active and passive voice, they are unaware of their importance in academic writing as emphasizing objectivity. Concerning both "voice" and

“agency”, there is a disagreement among researchers on whether to use “active” or “passive” voice and "personal pronouns" or "third person". (see pp.120-121/123-124).

However, since the experiment’s lesson plans are about “borrowing techniques”, we suggest that using active voice is better suited for paraphrasing. It is true that the author can be mentioned at the end, in the middle, or between parentheses (using a parenthetical citation), but it is better to mention him at the beginning of the borrowed material using a signal phrase in order to link ideas together and sustain their flow. The signal phrase follows the active voice and it is at least constituted of the subject (author) and a reporting verb. Additionally, the students are reminded of keeping a neutral tone while paraphrasing or summarizing since the aim is only to re-state what the author has said. The researcher also decided to emphasize *third person/impersonal agent* rather than personal pronouns. When teaching “quoting”, the students are reminded of the necessity to provide objective interpretations after “long quotes”. To do so, the teacher provides the students with a list of expressions used to maintain an objective tone while still giving their own viewpoints. These expressions include using inanimate agents such as “the findings indicate that....”, “survey is conducted”, or third person such as “the author concludes that” instead of writing “I think that the findings indicate....”, “I conducted....”...etc. Other terms help to express more cautious evaluations such as “less convincing” instead of “wrong” and “strong evidence” instead of “right” (see Appendix VIII)

Concerning formality, the students will be taught tips of using *formal vocabulary*. Reference is given to "*reporting verbs*", "*formal signal phrases*", "*formal synonyms*", and "*formal analysis*". In this sense, the students are not going to be taught how to use a "reporting style" as in the subject of "English Grammar", but how to use the formal academic verbs which are suitable for the context of the sentence. In the context of borrowing techniques, reporting verbs are used in the signal phrase and they have to be formal and

suitable for the intention of the author. During the treatment period, the students are advised to change informal verbs by using *strong verbs and avoiding phrasal verbs*. Examples are those of using “assemble” instead of “put together”, and “argue” or “refuse” instead of “say” or “think”. In addition, the students are encouraged to use formal structures of signal phrases rather than using one signal phrase model, i.e author+verb. Furthermore, they are taught substituting words with synonyms as a strategy for paraphrasing and they are asked to choose formal equivalents. Moreover, “long quotes” must be followed with formal analysis. The students are given lists and further materials about formal writing style such as avoiding formulaic expressions, contractions...etc (see Appendix VIII).

As far as simplicity and concision are concerned, the students will be taught to use long grammatical subjects when identifying the agent in the sentence (the author). This is related to adding the “*author’s credentials*”-any information about the author-before the name of the author as an adjective phrase in order to add credibility to the information brought. For example, instead of writing ‘*Noam Chomsky, who is a famous linguist, cognitive scientist, and an author of over 100 books , argues that...*’ in which credentials are added as a non-relative clause, it is more concise to write ‘*the linguist and cognitive scientist Noam Chomsky argues that...*’ where emphasis is placed on important information. In addition, the students are taught the paraphrasing strategy of *combining two sentences in one sentence* as a strategy that helps to concise their paraphrases and summaries. Further tips of concise, simple language are provided to the students in the form of Pdf and Word files in order to apply them when writing a concise analysis of a long quote or when summarizing. These include avoiding wordiness, redundant legalism, word wasting idioms, and so on (see Appendix VIII).

Although structuring skills are taken to be taught in the subject of “written expression”, these skills must not be totally discarded when teaching borrowing techniques. Therefore, the students will be reminded to use *cohesive devices* to avoid *run-on sentences*.

This is to draw the students' attention to the fact that subjects they study are attached to each other. The subject in question here is that of "Written Expression". The students must understand that even when paraphrasing and summarizing the aim is not only to avoid plagiarized corpus but also to write a cohesive text. This is because writing a passage that is free from plagiarism but lacks linkage between its ideas is academically poor. Besides cohesion, coherence is also being emphasized. One of the strategies to paraphrasing and summarizing is to re-order ideas where necessary in order to avoid 'style plagiarism'. In this respect, the students must be careful to retain a coherent/meaningful passage while changing the order of ideas. The last aspect under structuring skills is to teach coherence within quotes. Teaching punctuation marks such as "ellipsis" while quoting is important, but teaching how to keep the quote –that includes ellipsis- coherent is more necessary.

Analytical skills will comprise teaching to analyse long quotes and analyse passages when summarizing. Research skills, however, constitute *borrowing techniques* which already present the currently used program. The students are supposed to know how to use note-taking and critical reading as they learnt reading strategies in their first year. The same applies for "data presentation and discussion of the results" and Metadiscourse *Rhetorical devices used to persuasion*" which are discarded as elements included within the program of third year.

Therefore, the checklist of academic writing that is used in the experiment conducted in the present research work contains the following elements:



<p><b><u>1-Drafting skills: (sentence-related/linguistic concerns)</u></b></p> <p><b>1.1.Objectivity:</b></p> <p>1.2. Active Voice (signal phrase).</p> <p>1.3. Present Simple Tense (reporting verbs).</p> <p>1.4. Third Person/Impersonal Agent (agency/objective analysis of long quote).</p> <p>1.5. Neutral Description of the Passage (paraphrasing/summarizing).</p> <p><b>1.2.Formality:</b></p> <p>1.2.1. Formal reporting verbs.</p> <p>1.2.2. Formal signal phrases.</p> <p>1.2.3. Formal synonyms. (paraphrasing)</p> <p>1.2.4. Formal analysis (long quotes)</p> <p><b>1.3.Simplicity and concision:</b></p> <p>1.3.1. Long grammatical subjects (signal phrase)</p> <p>1.3.2. Combining two short sentences in one sentence.</p> <p>1.3.3. General tips on simple concise writing.</p> <p><b><u>2.Structuring and Thinking Skills:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>2.1. Structuring skills: (cohesion and coherence)</u></b></p> <p>2.1.1. Coherent quote with ellipsis (quotes)</p> <p>2.1.2.Re-ordering ideas but retaining coherence.</p> <p>2.1.3.Cohesive devices to avoid run-on sentences.</p> <p><b><u>2.2. Analytic skills:</u></b></p> <p>2.2.1. Analysis after long quote</p> <p>2.2.2. Extracting main ideas. (summarizing)</p> <p><b><u>3. Research Skills:</u></b></p> <p>3.1. Borrowing techniques</p> <p>3.2.In-text citation</p>
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**Table7: Checklist Designed for Experiment Implementation**

### **3.4. Importance of Teaching Academic Writing**

Improving one’s academic writing skills has become a necessity today to his/her social and intellectual functioning. Yet, academic writing is more required in SLT contexts. Reference to the importance of academic writing is explored in details within this section.

#### **3.4.1. General Considerations**

According to Warschauer (2010), the evolution that social technologies witnessed over the preceding two decades was believed to underestimate the skill of writing. Today, however, writing has gained an interest more than ever before. This is probably thanks to technology which paved the way for studying new forms of writing, as Chesher (2005:1) has

noted, “The uptake of blogs proves that reports of the death of the author are greatly exaggerated. The Author is alive and well, and has a blog”.

To begin with, Ariel and Will Durant's famous saying "Education is the transmission of civilization" is definitely true. It is through writing that knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another. With writing, we express our ideas, revise them and assimilate them into the general thinking pattern of our societies. If humans stop writing, all the essential educative transmissions that have been passed along the centuries, generation after generation, are in danger of fading away. As stated by Kane (1988:1) "our growth as human beings depends on our capacity to understand and to use language. Writing is a way of growing".

Historically speaking, writing started to gain a special importance in parallel with the development of the notion of "Literacy". According to Wagner (2004), definition of “literacy” has changed over the course of time. Traditionally, it exclusively meant having the ability to read and write. Within the contemporary view of literacy, it has become a complex concept to define with serious implications on the individual’s social and cognitive functioning. It refers to the competency one gains in order to practice the general daily tasks such as reading newspapers, writing job applications, and surfing the World Wide Web (WWW). Within this new perception, Law and Ecke (2000:111) offer the following definition to literacy: "a social phenomenon that exists within a context; it is the ability to use one’s reading and writing skills to participate efficiently and effectively in today’s complex society".

The importance of writing has been emphasized by many researchers. Carroll (1990), for example, asserts that:

The most important invention in human history is writing...it provides relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, arguments, explanation and theories...allows us to share our communication not only with our contemporaries, but also with future generations. (p.1)

Owing to the extensiveness of social technologies, learning to write is becoming a necessity for every individual. People no more need to travel in order to apply for a job or communicate business affairs; instead they write E-mail messages, communicate instantly through chat, and send business letters overseas. This allows for a technology-based type of writing other than the traditional paper-and pencil writing. Olshtain (2001 cited Motallebzadeh and Amirabadi, 2011) stresses the status of writing within the modern world as the message can be delivered to close or distant, known or unknown readers.

### **3.4.2. Academic Writing in Second Language Teaching**

When placed in second language teaching contexts, improving the academic writing skill is paramount. The importance of second language writing is highlighted by its benefits to HE learners' educational success and its complexity compared to the other language skills.

#### **3.4.2.1. Benefits of Second Language Writing**

It is true that L2 writing did not attract attention until the 1960's; however, learning to write fluently and correctly seems to be the students' tool of survival at educational institutions today. This holds true despite the recent changes that occurred on the nature of university study, not least because of technology, in which writing remains a constant variable guaranteeing students' success.

Evidence of the importance of writing in SL contexts is revealed by Reid (1993 as cited in Onozawa, op.cit:153) who indicates that the "increase in textbook writing, conference presentations, and published research and commentary about L2 writing, the inclusion of direct tests of writing on standardized tests of English proficiency such as the TOEFL" are all proofs of the re-assessed awareness of the importance of L2 writing. Manchón (2009) also confirms that over the past few decades, education has witnessed two significant changes: the global spread of English and prominence of writing. In addition to that, The National

Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges (2003) addresses the importance of learning writing in the following quote:

if students are to make knowledge their own, they must struggle with the details, wrestle with the facts, and rework raw information and dimly understood concepts into language they can communicate to someone else. In short, if students are to learn, they must write. (p.9)

There exist many reasons why writing is so important to teach to L2 students. Many researchers conceive the necessity to teach writing in SL contexts an ultimate response to the "needs" of both learners and instructors. On the one hand, learners need to develop their writing proficiency in order to achieve their study objectives such as pursuing advanced degrees, preparing for English proficiency exams, and participating in study programs abroad. On the other hand, many instructors have raised the institutions' problematic issue of not adequately teaching writing to SL learners. Lavelle (2003), for instance, believes that many reforms at the level of the university and especially in undergraduate writing courses are required such as focusing on teaching different types, skills, and mechanisms of writing. He mentions that universities usually provide students "few opportunities to hone and refine skills as [they] progress through the university" (p. 87). As a result, as content gets more intense and more advanced writing is required, the programs being followed usually provide little assistance and students find themselves unequipped to perform successfully.

Furthermore, writing is proved to develop the students' *cognition* and *understanding*. Rao (2007 as cited in Ahmed, 2010) explains two ways by which EFL writing benefits learners. First, it enhances students' critical thinking skills of summarizing, analyzing and criticizing. Second, it improves their reflective thinking on the English language itself. Krashen and Lee (2004) also state that although there is no evidence that writing excessively leads to better writing competence, he believes that writing can make the person "*smarter*". In

other words, when someone starts writing, the brain automatically ameliorates his/her cognitive structures to a better representation of ideas.

Moreover, writing is a vital skill that determines students' *academic or occupational success* in Higher education [HE]. It plays a significant role in *assessing* students' knowledge. Lillis (2001:20), for instance, states that writing in HE is "seen as the way in which students consolidate their understanding of subject areas as well as the means by which tutors can come to learn about the extent and nature of individual students' understanding". He (ibid) adds that success in academic writing affects not only students' success within the institution but extends to their life chances after it. Similarly, Leki and Carson (1997 as cited in Nga, 2009) emphasize the fact that student's performance in written assignments, tests, and graduation thesis affects largely their grades. The importance of academic writing is generally undertaken as shown in a survey conducted by Ganobcsik (2004) in all universities in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The survey's results reveal that 90% of staff believed that it was necessary to teach writing skills to university students.

Writing is also a vital means to *self-expression* and building *social relations* especially for introvert students. MacArthur, et al. (2008:1), for example, attribute writing a strong power presented by the fact that when someone writes about his/her "feelings and experiences [this] can be beneficial psychologically and physiologically because it can reduce depression, lower blood pressure, and boost the immune system". Therefore, writing responds to different learning styles as it can serve as an alternative to the oral skill especially for those students who might feel uncomfortable with learning through instant oral communication. Writing also fosters the *social relations* between students when they work in pairs or groups to accomplish different writing assignments. This idea is endorsed by Hyland (2003:69) who asserts that writing does not only assist in creating *discourse relations* but it is also "one of the main ways through which we create a coherent social reality by engaging with others".

Some researchers explained the necessity to teach academic writing through examining the type of writing tasks undergraduate students are expected to fulfill. According to Gulcat (2004), undergraduates are generally expected to work with data and write from other texts. Student at the university level need to formulate and test hypotheses, read and generate information, and compare and contrast between several phenomena. Hence, techniques such as reformulating, summarizing, note-taking, writing reaction papers, criticizing the work of others, constructing an academic argument, writing lab reports, evaluating scholarship, writing research results in the form of reports, writing a thesis or a dissertation must be taught to students to prepare them as Bazerman (1980 as cited in Gulcat, *ibid*:87) states to "enter the written exchanges of their chosen disciplines and the various discussions of personal and public interest".

#### **3.4.2.2. Complexity of Second Language Writing**

Literature confirms that learning to write has always been one of the most complex language skills to master especially for SL learners, and specifically in HE institutions. It is this *complexity* which led practitioners to emphasize placing writing as a cornerstone in SLT curriculum. Grabe and Kaplan (1996 as cited in Ghodbane, 2010:2), for instance declare that "probably half of the world's population does not know how to write adequately and effectively". Hinkel (*op.cit*) also reports the following:

In the past two decades, a number of publications have emerged to point out that, despite having studied English as well as academic writing in English in their native and English-speaking countries, non-native speaking students experience a great deal of difficulty in their studies at the college and university level in English-speaking countries. (p.4)

Taking the context of HE, Lea and Street (1998 as cited in Chokwe, 2011) report that literacy in HE is "very low" and academics' complaints about students' improper writing is persistent. Comparing between the four skills, Hedge (2000 as cited in Ghodbane, *op.cit*:2)

states that students “devote 45% of their energies to listening, 30% to speaking, 16% to reading, and 9% to writing”. Even in practice, compared to the four language skills, writing is placed at the end because it is thought to be highly complex and difficult to master.

SL learners' writing shortfalls have been recurrently acknowledged by experts in the field. For instance, Johns (1997) found that even with training, the writings of many graduate and undergraduate ESL students still include some instances of improper “academic prose” such as “vagueness”, “unstructuredness”, and “impersonality”. According to Langan (2005), what makes ESL/EFL writing complex is the fact that it requires the ability to discover a good thesis, to advance it with supporting details, connecting the ideas logically, and finally editing the overall structure which necessitates unity and coherence. In English for academic purposes' orientation, however, the complexity rests in producing the different academic discourse genres which are acceptable in the academic community.

In a nutshell, it seems safe to conclude that writing has become vital nowadays, especially in the context of SLL, given the number of *benefits* it offers to both learners and teachers along with considering its *complex* nature which requires a lot of training compared with the other four skills. By teaching student how to write academically, we offer them the key to succeed in HE studies, in future occupations, and in their lives in general.

### **3.5. Academic Writing in Language Teaching Theories**

Through this section, three general approaches of writing are discussed, namely, the product, the process, and the post-process approaches. An emphasis is placed on the constructivist approach with analyzing its evolution with the web 2.0 and BL.

#### **3.5.1. General Overview of Writing Theories**

Given the importance of writing and its complexity in comparison with other skills, a growing body of research is devoted to the study of L2 writing going back to the 1960's. Although the approaches to teaching writing are well covered elsewhere in the literature, we

will offer a general overview of the commonly known approaches, namely, the product-based approaches, the process-based approaches, and the constructive approach.

After reading literature about writing approaches, we found that the *product/process* approaches reveal much of the discussion of L2 writing; therefore, reference to them should be clearly manifested. *The constructive approach* is considered one of most influential "*post-process*" approaches which combine between process and product approaches and it is best suited for BL environments.

Hashemnezhad and Hashemnezhad (2012:1) summarize the evolution of writing approaches stating that "over the last twenty years, process and product approaches have dominated much of the teaching of writing that take place in the EFL classroom. In the last ten years, post process approaches have gained several advocates". Hyland (2002b) delimits three approaches to writing: "text-oriented", "writer-oriented" and "reader-oriented", whereas Cooper (1993) describes three paradigm shifts in designed instruction; from behaviorism to cognitivism to constructivism.

We tend to shed light more on the shortcomings of both product and process-based approaches in order to reinforce the contribution of "constructivism theory" in combining the benefits of both within a new learning context: *BL context*.

### **3.5.1.1.Product-Based Approaches: Advantages and Disadvantages**

To begin with, the product approach is a traditional "text-oriented", and the teacher-based approach which goes back to the mid 1960s during the audio-lingualism era. At that time, writing was seen as only a supportive skill since the teaching of literature was highly emphasized. Therefore, writing was not taught for its own sake, rather as Kroll (op.cit:245) states, to "respond to literary texts".

According to Hyland (op.cit), the product-based approaches are characterized by four stages: *familiarized writing*, *controlled writing*, *guided writing* and *free writing*.



*Familiarization* aims to raise students' awareness about the grammatical and lexical features of a particular text. *Controlled Composition* emphasizes solely the prescription of language at the sentence level. Consequently, drawing on classical behaviourism, modeling strategies were used and regarded as beneficial for practicing and memorizing lexical and grammatical structures. As Zamel (1983:165) argues, the product approach was "prescriptive, formulaic, and overtly concerned with correctness".

According to Rivers (1981 as cited in Ezza and Al-Mudibry, 2014:34), these writing methodologies only served as a reinforcement of "paradigms, grammatical exercises, dictation, translation from native to target language", and it failed to teach students writing at the level beyond the sentence. Therefore, the following development within the product approach was the '*current-traditional rhetoric*' which aimed at teaching students writing at the discourse level, i.e. paragraph and essay development mechanisms (Silva, 1990). Particularly, students read a model text and study the features of its genre.

In comparison to controlled writing, *guided writing* offers students some limited freedom to make some changes on their writings. Examples of exercises in such a type of writing are completion exercises such as fill-in-the blanks, reproducing exercises such as re-writing something from memory. The last evolution of product approach is *free writing*. According to Pincas (1982 as cited in Badger and White, 2000:153), in free writing, students 'use the writing skill as part of a genuine activity such as a letter, story or essay'. In other words, students have the freedom to use their own creativity, express their own ideas, and pay no attention to grammatical and lexical mistakes or even to critical comments.

Product-centered approaches are deemed advantageous by the fact that they are still used by teachers nowadays and they help in raising the students' awareness about how to use vocabulary, syntax and cohesive devices appropriately.

However, the product approach was subjected to strong criticism in the 1980's. The over-emphasis on "accuracy" limits students' creativity as they become less likely to write in a personal and meaningful manner. Any knowledge or skills that learners bring to the classroom are either ignored or devaluated. As reported by Harran (1993:2), "the process of discovery is constantly interrupted by undue attention to form".

In addition to that, Krashen (1984 as cited in Ezza and Al-Mudibry, op.cit:8) addresses a strong criticism to the "perfection philosophy" of product approach stating that if a student is "able to master all the rules of punctuation, spelling, Grammar, and style that linguists have discovered and described", then they must be rewarded a Ph.D in Linguistics but they would never reach competency. Another important criticism to the product approach is that it ignores any relation given to the psychological implications and thinking skills incorporated in the writing process.

### **3.5.1.2.Process-Based Approaches: Advantages and Disadvantages**

As a result of the researchers and the teachers' dissatisfaction with product approaches, a demand is raised claiming for new directions in writing research and pedagogy. Influenced by L1 research on composing processes, L2 researchers started reacting against the form-dominated approaches and developed an interest in what L2 writers actually do as they write. In other words, a shift of emphasis has moved from *text-based approaches* to *writer-based approaches*. Zamel (1982 as cited in Harran, op.cit) indicates that ESL researchers considered the possibility of applying the composition approaches used on native speakers to the teaching of ESL composition as they might be equally effective. In other words, *the process approach* emerged to identify the processes writers go through while practicing their craft. It suggests a new methodology for teaching writing by providing a context for "natural learning" similar to learning a native language.

Unlike product-based approaches that narrow the task of writing to knowing syntax and lexis, ESL researchers discovered that "writing was a highly complex process, made up of various sub-processes. Hence, it seeks to answer the question of "how to teach writing", rather than "what to teach" in writing. Writing is considered the result of inquiry and discovering meaning rather than through memorizing knowledge.

In exact terms, students are trained to generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, and write multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. In order to do so, teachers must give students the sufficient time to organize their ideas in their drafts. Drafting is considered to be of a great value following the belief that no text can be perfect and that the more students write, the better their writing becomes.

According to the process theorists, writing is viewed as a sequence of steps starting from pre-writing to writing and then rewriting with their underlying sub-processes which are recursive and sometimes simultaneous. Many cognitive process models are being developed. Although the process of writing is approached in many ways, The Cognitive Process Model of the Composing Process proposed by Flower and Hayes is regarded as the effective model and the most widely accepted by L2 teachers (Hyland, 2003). It involves planning, drafting, revising, and editing.

Despite the fact that the process based approaches are considered by many researchers more effective than the product based approaches as they offer an exploration of writers' composing practices, serious critiques have been made. Since process approach is an L1-oriented approach, it might be unrealistic as it does not suit L2 contexts. This is stressed by So and Lee (2013:2) who mention that "an L1-oriented process writing approach might be inappropriate for L2 Learners in different social and educational contexts from L1 contexts".

In addition to that, a lack of a good model can be seen as a drawback in this approach despite the bunch of models being suggested. The fact that led many researchers to conclude

that there is no universally accepted definition for the process approach. Harran (op.cit:4) explains that “the process approach does not explain why the processes of planning, drafting and revising are important or even how to institute them”. This is one of the reasons why teachers often discard the process of composing and emphasize the product approach instead.

Moreover, writing within the process approach is taken to be often painful and time consuming as students are obliged to produce multiple drafts and allow a certain time between one draft and another. Harmer (2001:258) addresses this problematic issue confirming that time is limited in the classroom. Therefore, students are not given the sufficient time to “brainstorm ideas or collect them in some other way; ... to draft a piece of writing and then, with the teacher’s help perhaps, review it and edit it in various ways before, perhaps, changing the focus, generating more ideas, redrafting, re-editing and so on” (Harmer, *ibid.*).

Furthermore, the process approach puts much emphasis on the writer's cognitive skills and discards "accuracy" as well as the social skills. Silva (1990: 15-16) for instance, mentions that the product (the text) is of “a secondary, derivative concern”, and according to (Grabe and Kaplan, op.cit) “much of this work has been descriptive rather than explanatory and, as it focuses on the individual act of information processing and pays less attention to the social conditions of the writing process”.

### **3.5.2. Shift to Post-Process Approaches**

Although ESL writers would benefit from the incorporation of process-centered approach, this would be insufficient without more help in coping with the demands of "writing-as-text". Most writing classes are still based on product-oriented activities. This means that ESL teachers still conceive the aim of writing not only as teaching students writing *strategies*; but also "enriching [their] knowledge of linguistic resources in the L2" (Raimes,1985 as cited in Harran, op.cit:13).

This dichotomy between research and what actually happens in the classroom encouraged ESL researchers to re-assess the relationship between process and product approaches and call for an "*integrated theory*" of writing that includes both of them. Arndt (1987) mentions that:

It may be ill-advised, and perhaps even impossible, to divorce the processes and products from each other either in teaching or research. For at the heart of effective writing lie the techniques for successful fusion of thought and language to fit the rhetorical context - rhetorical, that is, in the fundamental sense of gearing message to audience. (p.257)

Through analyzing the "think aloud" protocol of ESL writing essays, Raimes (1985 as cited in Harran, op.cit) notices that students concentrated on both form and meaning in that their main challenge was to find the right words and sentences to express their ideas. Therefore, she recommends that when teaching writing "we consider the need to attend to product as well as process" (p.12).

Thus, due to these considerations, the late 1970's witnessed a shift to a new direction in writing pedagogy where more attention is paid to the social (and cultural) context of writing in a way that integrates product and process approaches. Many scholars such as (Bruce, 2006; Kastman Breuch, 2002; Matsuda, 2003) have suggested the application of "post-process" approaches which aim at broadening L2 writing by adding on the product and process approaches. In essence, a post-process writing perspective shifts the focus from cognitive to interactive and social writing processes. Those approaches stress the sociolinguistic and socio-cultural dimensions of writing. They stress both a final product and process writing.

Post-process approaches include the *functional approach*, the *genre approach*, and the *constructive approach*, to mention but some. In the present paper we focus on the constructive approach as it provides a framework that combines between product and process approaches and at the same time locates the writer within his/her social environment. This is because; we

assume that an all-encompassing understanding of writing necessitates the incorporation of all aspects of the rhetorical situation: the linguistic, the cognitive, and the social aspect.

### **3.5.2.1. The Constructivist Approach**

This sub-section starts first with synthesizing the main principles of the constructive approach. Then, it reveals the collaboration of the web evolution and BL in the effective application of constructivism.

#### **3.5.2.1.1. Tenets of Constructivism Theory**

Constructivism is an old concept that goes back to the past fifteen years influencing both the philosophy and application of learning. According, Applefield, Huber, and Moallem (2001:4), “constructivist perspectives on learning have become increasingly influential in the past twenty years and can be said to represent a paradigm shift in the epistemology of knowledge and theory of learning”. Cooper (op.cit) describes three paradigm shifts in designed instruction; from behaviorism to cognitivism to constructivism.

However, despite the oldness of the term, it had been understood differently by different people. This is mainly due to the emergence of several types of constructivism such as radical, physical, social, cognitive, and evolutionary constructivism. However as Murphy (2007) points out, we must not waste the time to dig into the differences set between constructivism types, but to concentrate on what “constructivism” in its first sense refers to.

Constructivism in its general sense emerged mainly as a reaction to the behaviourist approach which influenced education for decades. In opposition to behaviourism, it views knowledge not as “absolute”, “objective” and passively “transmitted” from the instructor to the student, but as “subjective” and “constructed” by the learner based on his/her own experiences and relationships with the social environment. In this sense, Brooks and Brooks

(1993: 7) views constructivism as a theory which “defines knowledge as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, nonobjective.”

Although focusing on teaching “mathematics”, Davis, Mzher, Noddings (1990 as cited in Jones and Brader-Araje, 2002) also explain the cognitive and social construction of knowledge implied within constructivism:

It is assumed that learners have to construct their own knowledge-- individually and collectively. Each learner has a tool kit of concepts and skills with which he or she must construct knowledge to solve problems presented by the environment. The role of the community-- other learners and teacher-- is to provide the setting, pose the challenges, and offer the support that will encourage mathematical construction.( p. 3)

Taking the case of the writing skill, the writer “ is neither a creator working through a set of cognitive processes nor an interactant engaging with a reader, but a member of a community” (Hyland, 2002, p. 40). In other words, constructivism does not only consider the *cognitive* processes the writer goes through as it is the case for the process-approaches and neither is restricted to the acquisition of *social* metadiscourse devices. It views the writer as a member of a community who contributes with his/her cognitive constructions of knowledge and simultaneously takes benefit of the overall social constructions.

For writers, the idea of a community refers to the “*academic community*” which situates the writing task in the confinements of certain “acceptable” forms and genres. By making students write for a certain community, or a well-defined group of readers, we help “*bringing the product back into the writing process*”, but in an interactive, socially situated way, as learners are forced to see their work through the eyes of others.

In terms of classroom practice, the approach is “*reader-based*” as it follows a *reader-centered pedagogy*. Here, the student is not only considered a writer but also a reader who provides judgments about a text. The best sort of activities are the ones that ask students to

write a specific sort of text while other peers are invited to read the written text and comment on it, generate questions, etc. As such, students will be engaged in deductive tasks, solve problems, take risks, discover mistakes by themselves, negotiate with one another, and provide feedback. The teacher takes the role of a facilitator who observes the discussions and intervenes in the learning process, as he/she deems appropriate.

Within the academic writing community, constructivism proposes that learners conceive knowledge as a result of a *meaning-making search* in which learners engage in a process of constructing individual interpretations of their experiences. Therefore, *experiential learning* and the constructions that result from the examination, questioning and analysis of tasks and experiences consist the heart of this approach. Constructivism, then, emphasizes "*knowledge construction*" rather than "*knowledge transmission*". In the words of Woolfolk (1993 as cited in Koohang, Riley, Smith and Schreurs 2009):

The key idea is that students actively construct their own knowledge: the mind of the student mediates input from the outside world to determine what the student will learn. Learning is active mental work, not passive reception of teaching. (pp.92-93)

It is a *learner-centered approach*. However, for this *autonomous, self-learning* to take place, students must be engaged in meaningful and relevant activities. Errors should also be tolerated as regarded as part of the process. A wide range of activities and settings are provided to promote *metacognition, critical thinking, reflection, and awareness*. This enables students to take their prior knowledge, transfer it to new situations, and re-construct it as they notice the contradiction between their existing understanding and what they are experiencing.

Murphy (2007:11-13) summarizes the characteristics of the constructivist theory in the following points. According to her, those characteristics are common between all constructivist types:



1. Multiple perspectives and representations of concepts and content are presented and encouraged.
2. Goals and objectives are derived by the student or in negotiation with the teacher or system.
3. Teachers serve in the role of guides, monitors, coaches, tutors and facilitators.
4. Activities, opportunities, tools and environments are provided to encourage metacognition, self-analysis -regulation, -reflection & -awareness.
5. The student plays a central role in mediating and controlling learning.
6. Learning situations, environments, skills, content and tasks are relevant, realistic, authentic and represent the natural complexities of the 'real world'.
7. Primary sources of data are used in order to ensure authenticity and real-world complexity.
8. Knowledge construction and not reproduction is emphasized.
9. This construction takes place in individual contexts and through social negotiation, collaboration and experience.
10. The learner's previous knowledge constructions, beliefs and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process.
11. Problem-solving, higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding are emphasized.
12. Errors provide the opportunity for insight into students' previous knowledge constructions.
13. Exploration is a favoured approach in order to encourage students to seek knowledge independently and to manage the pursuit of their goals.
14. Learners are provided with the opportunity for apprenticeship learning in which there is an increasing complexity of tasks, skills and knowledge acquisition.
15. Knowledge complexity is reflected in an emphasis on conceptual interrelatedness and interdisciplinary learning.
16. Collaborative and cooperative learning are favoured in order to expose the learner to alternative viewpoints.
17. Scaffolding is facilitated to help students perform just beyond the limits of their ability.
18. Assessment is authentic and interwoven with teaching.

In the present research, constructivism refers to both *cognitive constructivism* and *social constructivism* which are respectively developed by Piaget and Vygotsky. Therefore,

among the characteristics mentioned by Murphy (2007), these are the most relevant to our framework of constructivism:

1. Encouraging *multiple perspectives*.
2. *The teacher is a monitor and facilitator*
3. Activities and environments encourage *metacognition, reflection, and awareness*.
4. The student mediates and controls learning. (*Learner centeredness*)
5. *Knowledge construction* and not reproduction is emphasized.
6. This construction takes place through *social negotiation*.
7. The learner's *previous knowledge* is considered. (*learning is developmental*)
8. *Problem-solving, higher-order thinking skills* are emphasized.
9. Errors provide insight into students' previous knowledge constructions. (*tolerating errors*)
10. *Exploration* encourages students to seek knowledge independently.
11. Collaborative is favoured in order to expose the learner to *alternative viewpoints*.
12. *Scaffolding* is facilitated to help students perform just beyond the limits of their ability.

Individual/cognitive constructivism derives from Piagetian theory conceives learning as a production of the individual's personal construction of knowledge based on his/her prior knowledge and following experiences. Along the process of learning, L1 children as well as SL learners experience a cognitive conflict. In order to solve such a conflict, they "negotiate the meaning of experiences and phenomena that are discrepant from their existing schema" and advance their cognitive structures to accommodate the new understandings (Applefield, Huber, and Moallem, op.cit:8).

Unlike Piaget's approach which is cognitively oriented, Vygotsky's approach is socially oriented. It "suggests that knowledge and social reality are created through daily interactions between people and particularly through their discourse" (Hyland 2013: 9). In this way knowledge is *mutually built*. In his sociocultural theory (1978), Vygotsky explains the child's process of learning. According to him, the child internalizes knowledge through the social interactions that take place in his/her environment within the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD)-interactions which provide guidance in the areas that the child cannot manage independently, but can do so with help. The ZPD is similar to Piaget's

"comprehensible input +1" as it refers to "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978:86).

Though Vygotsky and Piaget's views seem to be different, they are in fact complementary. Piaget has never neglected the input of the social milieu that leads to the mental construction of knowledge. Similarly, Vygotsky does not neglect the mental reflection of the individual to his/her environment (Cole and Wertsch, 1996). The difference is a matter of emphasis. Consequently, when taking into account both the cognitive give and take of social interactions, one constructs his/her personal knowledge.

In a word, constructivist approach prepares the students for problem-solving situations as they take a more active role in creating knowledge *individually* and *socially* based on their experiences. Therefore, it refers to both cognitive and social construction of knowledge. It emphasizes the *final product* as it concentrates on how the production is improved through both the kind of input provided that must be complex, challenging, and the type of interaction students receive. It also concentrates on the most beneficial part of the process approach which is "the revision/feedback" part and discards all its other features which have been criticized such as "drafting which is time consuming». As stated by Zimmerman (1993 as cited in Mu, 2005:3), constructionist writing instruction "*considers both a process and some aspects of the product approach*".

#### **3.5.2.1.2. Evolution of Web-Based Instruction and Constructivism**

Constructivist theories have been even more influential within the digital arena. The evolution of the Web-based Instruction has opened doors for the practical application of the underlying theories of constructivism. According to Murphy (2007), technology is the key to overcome the criticism which states that constructivism stops short in theory and does not

suggest any practical implications. She explains that many researchers and teachers nowadays apply the principles of constructivism in online environments in order to come up with new teaching models. She states (ibid:3) that “technology is increasingly being touted as an optimal medium for the application of constructivist principles to learning. Numerous online environments and technology-based projects are showing that theory can effectively guide educational practice”.

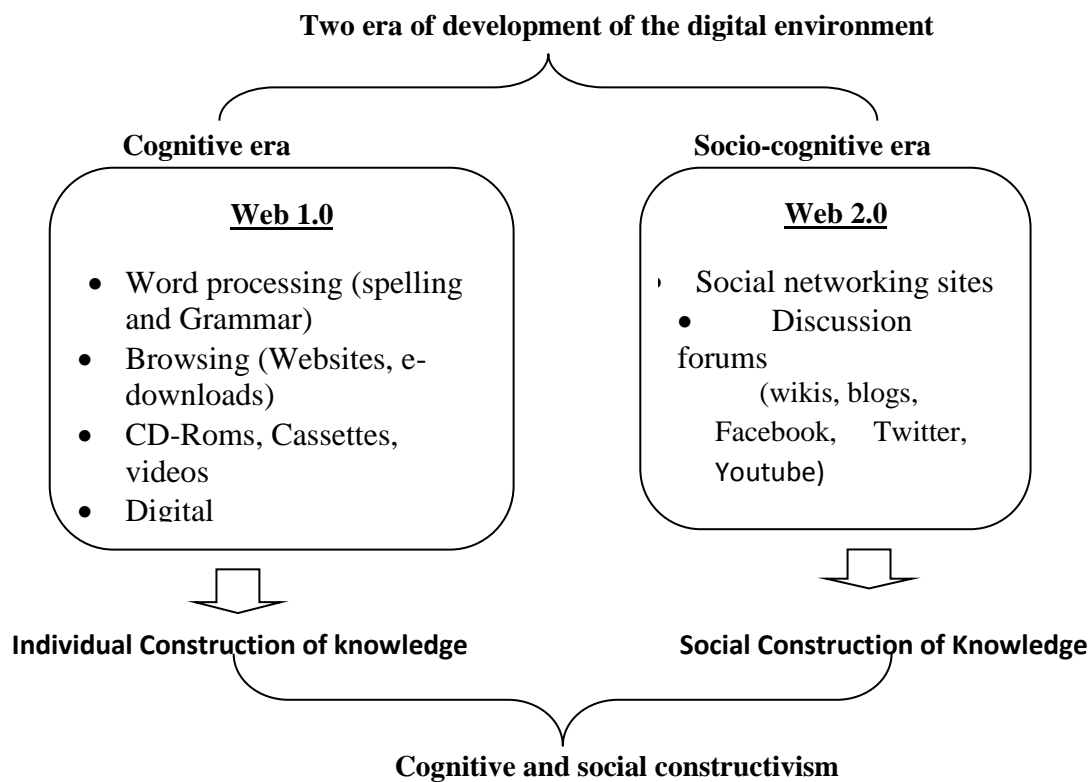
Once examining the development of the digital environment, one can deduce two era of development: “the cognitive era” which is known for the widespread of Web 0.1 applications, and the “socio-cognitive era” which is known for the Web 0.2 applications. Web 0.1 applications are advantageous in that they develop the learner’s cognitive structures. They encourage learners to think deeply about the information they read or write via a computer-based or a Web-based environment. Examples of these applications are word processing tools and checking applications which help the writer to revise some important elements of his/her production such as spelling and Grammar. Other devices include cassettes, videos, CD-ROMS, and online sites which allow for the features of uploading and downloading documents of several formats.

All of the previously mentioned technological devices concentrate on “*the transmission of content*” to the reader; a content which can be revised by the writer and given a deep search by the reader in several sites and tools.

The introduction of the Web 0.2 tools have altered the way *content* is delivered. The reader is no more seen as passive recipient of the information but user who collaborates with other members of the virtual community in order to negotiate the content. Therefore, both cognition and social relations are working together. According to Wikipedia (2015), web 0.2 has the advantage to:

allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community, in contrast to the first generation of Web 1.0 era websites where people were limited to the passive viewing of content. (para.2)

*It is within the framework of the web 2.0 instruction that constructivism is to be applied. In the context of SLL and academic writing in particular, learners and teachers can gather in a social milieu when they can receive and provide feedback concerning their writing products. The researcher depicts the relation between constructivism theory and web-based instruction in the following figure:*



**Figure 6: Evolution of Web-based Instruction and Constructivism**

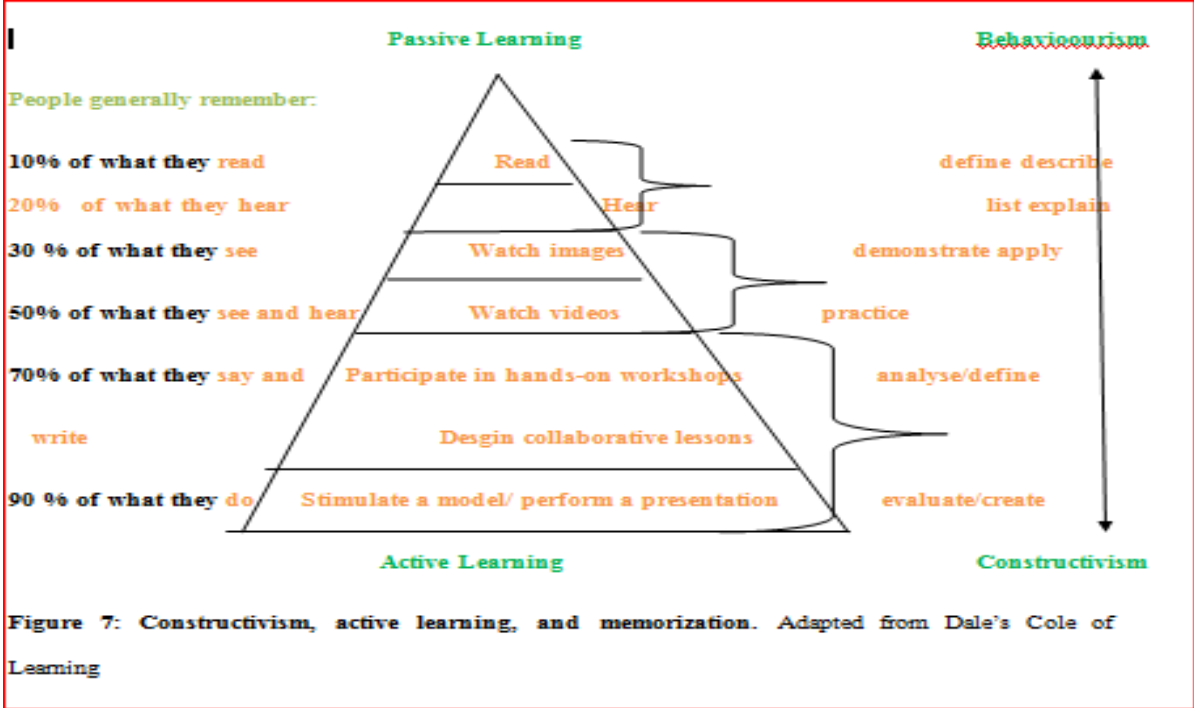
### 3.5.2.1.3. Constructivism in Relation to Blended Learning

The constructivist approach is the most suitable for BL environment. According to (Bath and Bourke op.cit:7), ideally BL experiences must be *participative* not just interactive. In this sense, cognitive and collaborative constructions of knowledge are working together. As

previously mentioned, constructivism allows for both cognitive and social constructions and hence it follows the philosophy of BL. BL, in its turn, provides the authentic environment and audience, the sources needed for negotiation to take place.

In this context, Almala (2006) in the words of Li, Chu, Ki & Woo (2012:162) argues that “electronic communications between and among groups have been found to support an effective constructivist instructional strategy that fosters social negotiation”. Al-huneidi and Schreurs (2012), also acknowledge that using the constructivism approach in BL make us overcome the criticism of BL which states that it focuses more on the teacher than the student.

In addition, constructivism tenets support active learning which is the cornerstone of BL. The idea behind encouraging students to solve challenging tasks in collaboration is that higher levels of interaction facilitate remembering the information by storing it in the long-term memory. The following figure is adapted from Dale’s Cone of learning and tends to explain the relation between constructivism, memorization, and active learning.



**Figure 7: Constructivism, Active Learning, and Memorization**

For all the previously mentioned reasons, constructivism theory is chosen for the application of BL experiment.

### **3.6. Establishing a Constructive Learning Community in Blended Learning**

Research has proven the importance of feedback in material acquisition and comprehension especially when it comes to the writing skill. Therefore, through situating writing in a constructivist- BL environment, we tend to clarify the advantage that Electronic feedback (E-feedback) with its sub-types play in comparison to other instructional methods. We tend to label it Electronic Constructive feedback (E-C-feedback) for the function it serves to cognitive and social constructivism. Accordingly, *this section highlights the role of BL in fostering a constructive leaning community through E-C-feedback.*

#### **3.6.1. Emergence of Electronic Constructive Feedback**

Providing students with feedback has come to be recognized as one of the most fundamental tasks of the ESL teacher. However, despite the apparent agreement on the significance of feedback, many problems arise under the "physical classroom setting" which detriment its effectiveness. Among many, time and space constraints imposed by the physical environment eliminate the number of opportunities to engage students in writing activities and provide them with the necessary feedback. In addition, in large lecture classes it is difficult to establish personal contact with each student, provide feedback to each, and answer all students' questions.

This problematic situation has called for an action to search for alternative methods of effective feedback. With the development of CMC and Internet, the discussion of feedback has not been limited to the traditional FtF classroom but extended to Electronic (E-Feedback)/Online feedback.

E-Feedback is defined by Tuzi (2004:217) as “feedback in digital, written form and transmitted via the web”. Within BL environment, some studies have proved that e-feedback is the preferred feedback method for learners as it lowered their anxiety and improved their writing revisions. (Tuzi, 2001, Tuzi, 2004, Matsumura & Hann, 2004).

An efficient mode of e-feedback is to encourage students to comment on each other’s compositions. When receiving multiple feedbacks, students become more focused on areas that need improvement in their work. Many researchers attempted to foster feedback by using web-applications such as blogs, wikis, Moodle ...etc. Franco 's BL study (2008), for instance, aims to examine the effect of applying collaborative strategies into the digital context using Wikis on students’ writing skill. By allowing students to edit and co-construct their texts based on the contributions and comments of their peers, students reached a higher level of consciousness about their areas of writing difficulties.

In the online/virtual setting, many applications are at hand including word processing, games, corpus linguistics, CMC, WWW resources, monitoring learning activities, providing reinforcing messages, keeping track of students responses for further analysis, administering tests, and supporting different types of interaction (human– computer, human–human). In online learning communities, students can share information, practice critical reflection, negotiate meaning, test and rebuild their synthesis. As stated by Zhu (2012:128), “through online collaborative written assignments, group discussions, debates and critiques of arguments, students can enhance knowledge construction”.

Digital students receive two types of E-Feedback: *computer-generated feedback*, and *human feedback*. Computer-generated feedback refers to " automated feedback" provided by a computer. Plenty of software programs are readily available that can generate immediate evaluative feedback on student writing such as word-processing, consulting web-based resources (Grammar websites, online dictionaries, thesaurus ... etc.). Computer-generated



feedback may also refer to the electronic assessment techniques that facilitate the teacher's task of rating students' academic texts. For those who view writing as a social practice, the term "electronic" indicates the means by which technology mediates human feedback such as using teacher or peer response groups or matching students with native-speaking keypals.

Many researchers have investigated the effectiveness of E- Feedback. One interesting study is that of Schultz (2000) which aims to explore the role of computer-assisted classroom discussion (CACD) as a medium for peer writing feedback, in comparison to FtF interaction. It was found that, L2 students who received feedback in a physical classroom made revisions on a global perspective; however those who received computer-mediated feedback made more detailed revisions. In his study, Lee (2001) also states that during online interactions, non-native students engage in feedback construction concerning both content and form, and make use of negotiation techniques such as comprehension and clarification checks, requests and self-repairs to clarify misunderstandings. MacLeod (1999 as cited in Ravand, and Rasekh, 2011) argued that e-feedback can be more "honest" since students do not face each other physically when providing their feedback. Furthermore, Tuzi (2004) acknowledges that e-feedback leads to significant changes at the sentence and paragraph levels. According to him, while writing online, students felt that their writings can reach a wider audience which includes more than their peers and instructor.

### **3.6.2. Types of Electronic Constructive Feedback**

The present section explores the types of E-C Feedback. These types are presented subsequently starting with the human feedback then moving to the computer-generated feedback. Their underlying sub-types are further explained with examples.

#### **3.6.2.1. Human Feedback**

Human feedback refers to three types of feedback: *teacher feedback*, *peer feedback*, and *internal feedback*.

### **3.6.2.1.1. Electronic Teacher Feedback**

Since BL aims to foster a sense of community, encourages the collaborative construction of knowledge and it emphasizes an active role of the learner, much of the discussion of e-feedback in BL settings tend to focus on e-peer feedback. However, given the shortcomings of peer feedback previously mentioned, the role of the teacher's feedback can never be underestimated. It is true that the teacher using BL must take the role of a facilitator, but s/he must monitor his/her students' discussions, correct any mistakes arise, answer students questions, and sometimes teach students how to form a constructive criticism rather than giving mere complements or refusals.

Within the virtual setting, teachers can answer each student' questions individually with ease. Asking questions to teachers is the most recognized form of feedback-seeking behaviour. Taking the case of the physical classroom, however, students hesitate to ask questions due to possible embarrassment or losing face. (Fassinger 1995; Hwang et al. 2002 as cited in Arbaugh and Hwang, 2009). In addition to that, the over-crowdedness of the classroom makes it difficult to make sure that all questions are being answered. In order to overcome these problems, students can privately address their concerns in a virtual setting using synchronous chat. This also permits teachers to answer all questions and foster the social relations with all students.

### **3.6.2.1.2. Electronic Peer Feedback**

Bearing in mind the drawbacks of classroom peer review sessions, many researchers have examined how e-peer feedback can help overcome these drawbacks. We can mention the study carried out by Liu and Sadler (2003) which aims at comparing the quality of peer feedback received in a traditional and electronic environment and their overall effect on revision. By classifying students into an experimental group which used a pen-and paper peer

editing and a control group which used e-peer review, the technological group manifested the larger number of over-all and revision-oriented comments.

Heift and Caws' study (2000) examines the quality and quantity of e-peer-feedback that occur between French students in an electronic environment called Local Area Network "LAN". The results have shown that students contributed a high percentage of messages. Not only the quantity was high, but contributions were more cognitively- oriented than socially-oriented. Practically, the feedback was concentrated more on content and the task itself rather than being off-topic. What is striking is that the students who produced the highest contributions were not necessarily better in English comparing with other students.

### **3.6.2.1.3. Internal Feedback**

Self-monitoring means one's ability to examine and correct his/her oral or written production on his/her own. It can be viewed as a long-term goal when students "will repair their own communication breakdowns and produce the target language accurately and fluently without guidance" (Allwright & Bailey, 1991:107). According to Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997), writing is a self-initiated, self-planned, and self-sustained cognitive activity. It is imposed by internal factors such as the writer's knowledge, skills, goals, intentions, and topic selected. Therefore, while writing down one's thoughts, the writer becomes self-regulator when he manages those factors, and provides himself each time a personal feedback at a metacognitive level. Using such an internal feedback, the writer evaluates to what extent his/her writings reflect the constraints imposed.

According to Flower and Hayes (op.cit), teacher, peer and self-feedback are *recursive and interactive*. Peer feedback can act as a source for self-feedback. Students take benefit from the evaluations made by their peers in order to assess their own writings. Self-feedback in its turn can be a seeking-behaviour for peer-feedback. When self-reviewing, writers become more conscious about their writing difficulties and they seek any helpful adjustments

from their peers. Cho and Cho (2011) argue that students often compare between both evaluations, and use their peer's feedback to improve their texts. In other words, *self-regulated* learners are those who first seek external feedback, such as peers' contribution and the teachers' remarks, and then modify their own contributions. In the same vein, Hwang and Arbaugh (op.cit) state that feedback in interactive settings improves metacognition and it is a part of self-regulated learning.

In BL setting, similar to the recursive relation between peer, teacher, and internal feedback, e-teacher and e-peer feedback promotes the students' internal feedback and metacognitive skills.

### **3.6.2.2. Computer-Generated Feedback**

The feedback that is generated from a computer-using the web applications- can be pervasive. Our discussion of the computer-generated feedback is limited to two main sources, namely, the word processing applications, and using online resources.

#### **3.6.2.2.1. Word-Processing**

Computers are full of software programs and applications that might provide students (and even teachers) with valuable information. Word-processing applications are probably the most often and widely used by both students and teachers. As the name implies, they process words. However, modern word-processing programs include extra features that process paragraphs, and even whole texts. Examples of word- processing applications are Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, AppleWorks, Lotus WordPro, Open Office Writer and Web-based word processors, such as Office Web Apps or Google Docs, are a relatively new category.

While conducting writing activities within a virtual setting, students can at any time benefit from word-processing applications. These applications are advantageous in many ways. They can edit a text easily without having to retype it for a second time. They include features such as font application, spell checking, Grammar checking, a built-in thesaurus that

provides words' meanings, their synonyms and opposites, automatic text correction, collaborative editing, and graphical user interface such as images and diagrams. These applications may also foster students' metacognition, self-monitoring, and self-awareness each time they get to know their erroneous productions and what their correct versions are. According to Coffin, Curry, Goodman, Hewings, Lillis and Swann (2005):

Word-processing allows for extensive revision of work, and students may find the grammar, spelling and word-count tools useful [...] Word-processors make a valuable contribution in terms of producing a tidy, legible piece of work. They may also, however, save less time than expected in that writers are often tempted to keep re-drafting. (p.131)

In other words, the feedback received from word-process applications encourages students to alter their cognitive/internal constructions of prior knowledge towards the correct constructions; therefore, it develops their critical thinking skills.

#### **3.6.2.2.2. Using Online Resources**

Apart from the software programs that are –or can be- directly installed on a computer, there exist a growing number of online resources that can be exploited by students to assist them in the process of self-editing. This includes search engines such as Google which make it easy for students to search for useful websites such as Grammar websites, online libraries, online dictionaries, Google books, and Online Writing Centers. More targeted text-retrieval sites can help students clarify the strong selectional restrictions of specific words in more specific and relevant contexts. These include WordPilot 2000, Check my words and Word neighbors (Milton, 1999, 2004, 2006 as cited in Hyland and Hyland, 2006). All of these online resources play a significant part in shaping the Digital Natives' cognitive constructions of knowledge.

## **Conclusion**

In a nutshell, we may conclude that the different writing theories which have been developed are sufficient to prove the complexity of writing, let alone if the objective is to teach a highly "academic" genre of writing with all its sub-components. However, the constructivist theory is proved to gather both product and process approaches and goes beyond mere transmission of knowledge. Therefore, if the *constructivist theory* is adopted, together with the promising benefits of the *BL experience*, and the appropriate elements of *academic writing*, we would probably reach a comprehensive and efficient teaching experience.

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## **Introduction**

This study is supposed to investigate the effect of using BL on EFL learners' motivation and academic writing proficiency. It requires a conduction of both exploration and quasi-experimental methods of investigation. Accordingly, the present chapter offers a detailed explanation of the different steps followed in each method by emphasizing three main elements: the subjects who participated in the study, the research instruments, and the pilot study rationale and results.

### **3.1. Population of the Study**

The subjects of the present study are 83 participants as a whole including both teachers and students. Precisely, the sample is composed of 30 students and 53 teachers. Following the aims of the research, the students are asked to answer questionnaires (pre-experiment questionnaire, mid-experiment questionnaire, post-experiment questionnaire) and also take part of the research quasi-experiment, whereas the teachers are invited to answer a questionnaire only.

As the researcher is teaching the subject of "Research Methodology" at the Department of Larbi Ben M'hidi University for second year LMD (Licence-Master-Doctorate) students, she has randomly chosen one of her groups to be the sample of the study. For the sake of the quasi-experiment, the group which contains 30 students has been equally divided into a control group (15 students) and experimental group (15 students).

The researcher has deliberately chosen to divide a group of 30 students into control and experimental groups in order to reach a condensed number of students for the treatment period and avoid the challenge of managing the students in the online environment. Many researchers in the field of online teaching including BL recommend using a small number of students for issues of management. Poe and Stassen (2002) support the idea of limiting the number of students in an online setting by arguing that:



many sources stress that quality teaching online requires smaller student/faculty ratios than in traditional classes. For example, a typical literature course with an enrollment of 24 might be limited to 15-18 in an online course. [...]Online, attentiveness must be tangible, and may involve more effort than in a face-to-face setting. These considerations imply an inherent limitation of online class size; size is determined by the amount of effort required to form a “community of learners”. (p.19)

The previous argument suggests that in the case of large-sized classes, sub-groups are created and taught online whether successively or simultaneously (synchronously). In this realm, Kelly (2008: 8) add that :

when there are more than 25 learners who are required to participate in an online course, the discussion boards and chat rooms can become overwhelming for students and difficult to manage for the instructor. Use the virtual groups you create to help manage interaction by assigning each group its own set of discussion boards.

In addition to the previous arguments, Palloff and Pratt (1999) advise using an online class size of 15 to 20 members. In the present case, a group of 15 students seems to be more manageable and suitable for the implementation of the BL experiment.

The test that the students are asked to accomplish must be one level beyond their cognitive knowledge, i.e. (i+1) level (Krashen, 1985). Nonetheless, the students must also have some background knowledge so that the test instruction is neither too easy nor too difficult, but ‘comprehensible’. Therefore, in order to ensure that the students have the proficiency needed to answer the pre-test, the researcher reviewed the program used in their first year “Research Methodology” and also relied on the results obtained from the pilot study. In particular, the researcher found that the students are taught in their first year two to three sessions about borrowing techniques. According to the researcher, these sessions are enough to suggest that the students are -to some extent- familiar with borrowing techniques.

Regarding the academic writing criteria required in the test, the students have been taught some of them in the subjects of “Written Expression” and “English Grammar”. Reference here is given to “concision”, “objectivity”, “coherence, and cohesion”, and “analytical skills”.

Concerning the sampling of the teachers, the Department of English consists of 53 teachers. In order to reach a representative sample, the researcher has considered taking all the teachers holding different academic degrees ranging from Master to Post-Doctorat degree, different teaching experiences, and different ages. In such a way, we guarantee avoiding the bias that can emerge from the differences between the young generations which may be more knowledgeable with technology than the elder ones, and between those who have more teaching experience and therefore might have had more chances to use web-based technology than those who are still novice in teaching methodologies.

### **3.2. Research Methods and Instruments**

In the present research, both *the exploration and quasi-experimental methods* are used. Each method is explained in terms of its aims and its research tools. Likewise, the aims and the use of each research tool are clarified.

#### **3.2.1. Exploration Method**

The exploration method is conducted by two means of research. These include the Checklist of Academic Writing Component and the questionnaire. Two types of questionnaires are used; the students’ and the teacher’s questionnaire.

##### **3.2.1.1. Checklist of Academic Writing Components**

Emanating from how scholars in the literature describe “academic writing” as a unique genre of writing, the researcher has considered developing a Checklist of Academic Writing Component (see Chapter Three, pp.128-130). The Checklist has three aims:

- ❖ To distinguish whether there is a comprehensive and effective program to academic writing at the Algerian universities. To do so, the researcher compares between the checklist of academic writing and the currently used programs of "Research Methodology" for first, second, and third year at the University of Larbi Ben M'hidi (see Chapter Six, pp.252-253).
- ❖ To gain a better understanding of how to teach academic writing comprehensively and assist instructors in creating a comprehensive program that, hopefully, guarantees the students' well-developed writing abilities.
- ❖ Since the present research aims at investigating the effect of BL on “academic writing”, it is necessary to confirm dealing with the “true” meaning of academic writing. In other words, it is from this checklist that the researcher deduces another condensed Checklist Designed for Experiment Implementation and develops the writing test and its target structures.

### **3.2.1.2. Students' Questionnaires: Description and Aims**

The students' questionnaire will be of three phases; *a pre-experiment questionnaire, a mid-experiment questionnaire and a post-experiment questionnaire*. The former aims at understanding the students' perceptions of using BL, their level of motivation, and their academic writing abilities before the experiment while the second and the latter aim at understanding their reflection about the effect of using BL on their motivation and their academic writing within and after the experiment.

#### **3.2.1.2.1. Pre-Experiment Questionnaire**

The pre-experiment questionnaire includes 36 questions and it is divided into six sections : “Background Information”, “Students' Level of Motivation and Academic Writing Proficiency”, “Students' Attitudes Toward Current Teaching Practices”, “Students' Readiness to Blended Learning Experience”, “Students' Readiness to Use Facebook as a Pedagogical Tool”, and “Further Suggestions” (see Appendix I-1). 7 questions are open-ended which require the

students to give useful explanations, opinions, and suggestions that are useful for the researcher to make refinement to the BL experiment and fulfill the students' needs and preferences.

In order to guarantee that all the students hand back the pre-experiment questionnaire, the researcher devoted 30 minutes class-time for the completion of the questionnaire. She also provided the students with explanations when needed. All in all, the students did not find any difficulty in answering the questions as most of them were closed items and no ambiguity of items was manifested. It has to be mentioned that the questionnaire items were revised in the pilot study that will be presented in the next sections. All the students have returned the questionnaire, i.e. 100 % .

The pre-experiment questionnaire aims at investigating the students' perceptions before conducting the experiment about their :

- *Level of Motivation and Academic Writing Abilities.*
- *Attitude towards how academic writing is taught.*
- *Readiness to the BL experience.*

According to the first aim, if the students' level of motivation and academic writing abilities tend to be low, the researcher would check whether incorporating BL within the treatment period would make any progress. The second and third aims serve as needs analysis as they help to feed the researcher with understanding the students' learning needs and delivery preferences in learning « academic writing » as well as their extent readiness to learn in a BL context. If the students consider current practices of teaching academic writing to be adequate and that they are not ready to learn in a BL environment, then we cannot suggest adopting BL in our educational context. In regard to the second aim, the students are asked to give their opinions about how the writing skill in general is taught to them *whether in relation to the writing elements taught in the program of "Research Methodology" during their first year, namely, "note-taking", "paraphrasing", and "summarizing", or in relation to any*

*subjects that incorporate teaching the writing skill such as “Written Expression”, and therefore, requires the students to engage themselves in the act of composing with the teacher revising their products.*

#### **3.2.1.2.2. Mid-Experiment Questionnaire**

The mid-experiment questionnaire includes four sections : “Assessing Students’ Motivation”, “Attitudes toward the Way “Methodology” is Taught”, “Assessing Blended Learning”, and “Further Information” (see Appendix I-2). The first three sections are organized in terms of long tables in addition to 4 open-ended questions.

Similar to the pre-experiment questionnaire, the researcher devoted 30 minutes class-time for the completion of the mid-experiment questionnaire in order to ensure the response of all the students. It was a quick and a simple process to answer the questionnaire as most of the questions required the students to show the extent of their agreement or disagreement by ticking the right column. In addition, the students did not find the items to be ambiguous. All of them have returned the mid- questionnaire, i.e. 100 % .

The pre-experiment questionnaire aims at investigating the students’ perceptions within the experiment (during the treatment period) about their :

- *Current level of motivation.*
- *Attitude towards how “Methodology” is being taught during the previous weeks.*
- *Overall perception regarding the BL experience.*

Motivation is proved to be a fluctuating concept that changes according to different factors that can emerge from within the individual or from outside resources (Dornyei, 2001). Therefore, as the first aim indicates, it is better to investigate it not only before and after conducting the experiment ; but also within the experiment. In this way, investigation assists

in providing the researcher with insights about what elements related to the BL method affects learners' motivation whether positively or negatively.

The second aim of the mid-experiment questionnaire is useful in indicating how 'Research Methodology' is being taught during the experiment (five sessions after conducting the experiment). Here, assessment is related to the way academic writing is being taught with reference given to the ten constructs.

The last aim helps is assessing the BL design itself, checking whether the design follows the principles stressed in the literature, and refining it when it is needed.

### **3.2.1.2.3. Post-Experiment Questionnaire**

The post-experiment questionnaire is divided into four sections: "Assessing Students' Motivation Students", "Academic Writing Proficiency", "Attitudes Towards Blended Learning", and "Further Suggestions". Most of the questions are presented in the form of tables (three tables) in which the students are required to tick the appropriate boxes and provide explanations for their choices (see Appendix I-3).

In order to ensure that all the students answer and return the post-experiment questionnaire, the researcher decided to provide them a week to return the questionnaires. This is because the students were at the period of exams of the first semester and it was not possible to gather them together within a 30 minutes class time as with the procedure followed with the previous questionnaires. According to the researcher, this was suitable to the nature of the post-experiment questionnaire which might take some time to fill it in especially for the part of « explanations » which are needed after ticking each item in the three tables. All the students have returned the mid- questionnaire, i.e. 100 % . By asking the students to hand the questionnaires to the administration, we guaranteed the full reception of post-experiment questionnaires, i.e. 100 % .

The post-experiment questionnaire aims at investigating the students' perceptions after the experiment about their:

- *Current level of motivation*
- *Current academic writing proficiency*
- *Attitudes towards the BL experience.*

The first and second aims serve to check the effect of BL on the students' motivation and academic writing proficiency by drawing a comparison between the level investigated before and after the experiment. The last aim serves to provide us with feedback from the students about any useful alterations in the BL design that they consider would have been more effective and which therefore would be useful to recommend their integration when designing BL courses.

### **3.2.1.3. Teachers' Questionnaire: Description and Aims**

The teacher questionnaire is divided into five sections : "Background Information", "Teachers' Perceptions of Blended Learning Approach", "Teachers' Experience with Blended learning Approach", "Adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian context using Facebook", and "Further Suggestions" (see Appendix II). The questionnaire contains 48 questions with 7 open-ended ones in which the teachers are asked to give useful explanations, opinions, and suggestions about the issues in question.

Since the researcher has considered taking into account all the teachers at the English Department of Larbi Ben M'hidi University, she has relied upon a colleague teacher and the administration to take the questionnaires and distribute them. The teachers take a period of a week at most and hand them back to the administration. Following this procedure, 44 out of 53 teachers returned the questionnaires, i.e. 83.01 % respectively.

The teacher's questionnaire aims at investigating the following issues :

- *The teachers' perceptions about BL.*
- *The teachers' experience with BL.*
- *The teachers' attitudes towards incorporating BL in their teaching context.*

The first aim enlightens the researcher with the extent knowledge that the teachers hold about the BL approach. It helps us to investigate whether the teachers fully conceive the true rationale behind BL (as opposed to any type of learning that might blend different learning approaches and tools, distance learning, or e-learning). Knowing about these perceptions is important as it explains the adequate or inadequate applications of BL. If these perceptions are proved to be inadequate, the present research is an attempt to explain the concept thoroughly in a precise and clear framework.

The second aim serves to answer the second research question '*What methodology do they use? Do they use BL?*' It helps to differentiate whether the teachers incorporate BL in their teaching and whether it is used adequately following its rationale.

The third aim is beneficial in showing the teachers' attitudes towards incorporating BL in the Algerian context. It is necessary to know whether the teachers endorse or refute the idea of adopting BL in the Algerian context and understand the reasons behind their perspectives. Whatever the standpoint that the teachers hold in this regard, we assume that BL can be suitable to the Algerian context just like any other educational setting and we take the initiative of conducting a constructivism-based BL experiment at Larbi Ben M'hidi University.

### **3.2.2. Quasi-Experimental Method**

The quasi-experimental method imply the implementation of an experiment with the experimental group using constructivism-based BL approach through the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016 in the subject of "Research Methodology". The experiment is applied



on the students' sample described earlier at the Department of English of Larbi Ben M'hide University.

During the treatment period which lasts ten weeks (ten sessions) , each lecture is divided into one session for instruction about related principles and concepts, and another for assignments to be done by the students. To apply BL on the experimental group, sessions related to the theoretical part, i.e. teaching about theoretical concepts, are conducted in FtF environment. The practical part of the lecture, however, i.e. the related activities- are carried out in a virtual environment using a Facebook Group. The control group, however, will receive all sessions in a physical classroom environment. It must be noted that the students of both groups will be instructed using the same learning content concerning both lecturing and activities sessions. The only difference is on "how" the instruction will be carried out. This is because the present research work is based on the "replacement model" of BL. This model only replaces some of the face-to-face classroom meetings with online interactive activities instead of designing extra teaching elements as in the "supplemental model" for instance. The schematic representation of the research design is as follows :

<b>Phase one</b>	<b>Phase two</b>	<b>Phase three</b>
<b><u>Pre-test</u></b> <b>(composition writing test)</b>	<b><u>Treatment Period</u></b> <b>(10 weeks/10 sessions/1st semester)</b>	<b><u>Post-test</u></b> <b>(composition writing test)</b>

However, the program that is taught during the implementation of the experiment is composed not only of the currently used program of second year students at the subject of “Research Methodology” but also some elements related to academic writing criteria : “objectivity”, “formality”, “concision “, “structural skills”, “analytical skills”, and “research skills”. An extensive explanation of the experiment implementation is presented in Chapter Six.

### **3.3. The Pilot Study**

This section proceeds with an explanation of the rationale and aims of conducting the pilot study. It also defines briefly validity and reliability. After that, it presents a detailed analysis of the pilot study results in relation to each research instrument.

#### **3.3.1. Description of the Pilot Study**

The pilot study was carried out in the Department of English at Larbi Ben M'hidi University during the academic year 2014/2015, semester one. Similar to the main study, the sample included 30 students and divided into a control (15 students) and experimental groups (15 students) in which the latter was taught using the constructivism-based BL approach in the subject of "Research Methodology".

#### **3.3.2. Aims of the Pilot Study**

A pilot study is defined as “a small-scale test of the methods and procedures to be used on a large scale ....” (Porta, 2008 : 215). Its purpose, according to Leon, Davis, and Kraemer (2011), is ‘to examine the feasibility of an approach that is intended to be used in a larger scale study’ (para.1) rather than being “a hypothesis testing study’ (para.2). In other words, pilot study is a trial study that aims at investigating the likelihood success of the approach intended to be used in the main study including the research design, instruments used, and assumptions made prior to the main study. The results, therefore, are taken into account only for testing these issues as an attempt to overcome any expected problems and not to test the main hypotheses. Simon (2011) adds that even when the pilot study brings no changes to the overall study design, this must be reported as well. Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight (1996:137) stress the importance of conducting pilot studies stating that:

You may think that you know well enough what you are doing, but the value of pilot research cannot be overestimated. Things never work quite the way you envisage, even if you have done them many times before, and they have a nasty habit of turning out very differently than you expected.

The argument that Blaxer and his colleagues forward is supported by an extensive literature that reveals various advantages of pilot studies. According to Simon (op.cit), for example, a pilot study aims at checking: clarity of instructions, how skilled technicians are during the procedure, the wording of instruments, reliability and validity of results, and efficacy of statistical and analytical procedures.

In the present research work, the pilot study aims at :

- *Testing the validity and reliability of data collection instruments .*
- *Reviewing the BL design and if any problems encountered.*
- *Testing the assumptions made prior to the research.*

The first aim is concerned with the validity and reliability of research instruments, namely questionnaires and the writing composition test. In regard to the questionnaires, only questions with long tables and scales are pilot-tested whereas direct single questions are judged reliable and valid according to the aims of the questionnaires.

According to the second aim, the whole BL design is reviewed regarding any problems and challenges encountered while conducting the experiment. A whole consideration was given to the different elements of BL design principles and components.

The last aim is concerned with testing the assumptions made prior to the research and presented in section “statements of the problems”. As we assume that the students’ academic writing proficiency and motivation are low and that BL is suitable to the Algerian context as any other educational setting, the pilot study tests these assumptions and render them into the following questions : *‘are academic writing proficiency and motivation of the students low ? is BL suitable in our educational setting ?’* Answering the last question depends upon the second aim when the BL design is tested. If the experiment occurred with no detrimental obstacles, then we might suggest that the BL approach is suitable for the Algerian context. Achieving all these aims in the pilot study is helpful to ensure *the feasibility* of the present research before indulging in the main study.

### **3.3.3. Conceptualizing Validity and Reliability**

Before we turn our focus to the results reached in the pilot study, we first define the terms “validity” and “reliability” and explain the way we conceptualize them in the present research.

#### **3.3.3.1. Reliability**

Reliability is generally defined as the stability of a measurement under different conditions where similar results must be obtained (Nunnally, 1978 in Drost, 2011). In other words, reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable with different persons and under different conditions. However, this definition specifies only one type of reliability which is *external reliability*. Nunan (1992 :14) provides two understandings of the concept in his definition of reliability as « the consistency and replicability of research ». In such a definition, reliability is understood in two ways : whether in terms of *the consistency* of a measurement over re-analysing the obtained data , or the stability of a measurement over *replicating* the research to other circumstances. While the second conceptualization matches the definition of reliability previously stated in which subsequent replications of the original research are needed, the first identifies what is termed *internal reliability* which is related to within-the-test items consistency found in the original research. Nunan ( *ibid*:14) describes the difference between these types of reliability stating that :

Internal reliability refers to the consistency of data collection, analysis and interpretation. External reliability refers to the extent to which independent researchers can reproduce a study and obtain results similar to those obtained in the original study.

Branching from these types of reliability, four sub-types are developed and deemed appropriate to specific research conditions. These are Inter-Rater Reliability, Test-Retest Reliability, Parallel-Forms Reliability, and Internal Consistency Reliability. Despite

the different ways to approach reliability, the present pilot study focuses on *internal consistency reliability*. As the label indicates, *it measures internal reliability and determines how well items in the test are related so that they together contribute to measure the same construct, characteristic or behaviour*. Therefore, it is more suitable to measure instruments that are presented in the form of scales and sub-scales which collectively measure a single construct.

Our decision to test such reliability other than the others was found to be suitable to the nature of the research data collection instruments. Once checking the students' mid-experiment questionnaire (section one, two, and three), and the writing composition test and its assessment rubric, one would notice that these instruments are presented in the form of scales -tables for the case of the mid-experiment questionnaire and a scale of a number of academic writing criteria and sub-criteria for the case of the writing test. Testing how much items within these scales and sub-scales « hang together » to measure the construct in question is found necessary to the present research.

### **3.3.3.2. Validity**

Validity refers to “the extent to which a piece of research actually investigates what the researcher purports to investigate” (Nunan, op.cit,p. 14). In other words, it is concerned with the extent to which the research results and interpretations reflect the concept under study. In our case, there is a need to validate the relationship between the data instruments used (questionnaires and writing test) and the variables of the study, i.e. “blended learning”, “motivation”, and “academic writing”.

Similar to reliability, validity is classified into different types among which these are the most widely used in research : construct validity, content validity, and criterion-related

validity because as Kaplan and Saccuzo (2013 : 135) argue, “most aspects [of validity] can be seen in terms of these categories”.

By definition, construct validity refers to “the degree to which test scores can be interpreted as reflecting a particular psychological construct” (Furr and Bacharach, 2014, p.201) , content validity refers to ‘the extent to which questions and tasks in an assessment represent all important aspects of the target construct’ (Young, So, and Ockey, 2013, p.5), and criterion-related validity tend to « correlate scores obtained on a given test with performance on a particular criterion or set of relevant criteria » (Carmines and Zeller, 1991, p.19). When comparing between the definitions of construct and content validity, we do not find much difference. Both types serve to check whether the research tests, measurement, instruments adequately represent the theoretical understandings of the concept under study so that they will be measuring what they are supposed to measure. In order to do so, it is important that a clear definition of the research constructs is set before developing the measuring instruments. These constructs must be made more concrete through operationalizing them into measurable sets of criteria. While construct validity seems to stress the term “construct”, the true operationalization of the construct is conducted within content validity. This is because the last is more centered around how well the items developed within a research instrument adequately measure the intended construct.

Despite the counterclaims for setting boundaries between validity types and probably overemphasizing the value of construct validity in comparison to the other types, the present pilot study tests only content validity. Such a decision does not only follow the previously stated argument stressing the importance of content validity but it is derived from other reasons.

First, although construct and content validity resemble in the ultimate objective of showing the relationship between theory and measurement, construct validity bases its

evidence from related studies which used similar measurements of the same construct. In the present research, we doubt the existence of any instruments that are identical to the ones developed by the researcher given the way academic writing and motivation are defined and their underlying criteria which are selected in relation to the program that is taught during the treatment period (borrowing techniques). Therefore, no comparison can be made possible.

Second, criterion-related validity does not suit all research conditions (Kaplan and Saccuzzo, *op.cit*). It requires testing the performance of a criterion which is claimed as well-established in the literature. In our case, however, academic writing and motivation variables are proved to be complex concepts where no unified definitions are provided. This fact led the researcher to develop both the concepts in question and instrumentation.

Finally, the present research seems to require most content-related validity evidence. Most of the data collection instruments are subjected to a scale of items, namely, the writing test and the students' mid-experiment questionnaire and post-experiment questionnaire. As a result, one might also argue against the length of question items inserted in each table in the questionnaire sections, the choice of the academic writing criteria taken together to measure a single construct: « academic writing », the instructions, and the scoring rubrics.

Many researchers agree that content validity can only be qualitatively assessed and no statistical instrument is yet developed. Bohrnstedt (1983 as cited in Al-Mannai, 1992:8) for instance comments that « there is no rigorous way to assess it ». In order to validate the content of the data collection instruments used in the present research, we relied heavily on the domain of literature relevant to the research variables and the students' quality answers and their perspectives. Using these information, we address the following issues :

*For the writing composition test :*

- *Selection of academic writing criteria and sub-criteria.*
- *Type and level of difficulty of the text used in the test.*
- *Clarity and representativeness of the test instruction.*
- *Time allowed for accomplishing the test.*
- *Scoring rubric.*

*For the questionnaires :*

- *Selection of the questionnaire items.*
- *Clarity and avoiding redundant items.*
- *Time allowed for completing the questionnaires.*

### **3.3.4. The Pilot Study Results**

The pilot study findings cover three main areas: the validity and reliability of research instruments, the BL design, and the underlying assumptions of the present study.

#### **3.3.4.1. Validity of Instruments**

Two research instruments are used in the present study and they are tested for validity, namely, the writing test and the questionnaire (both the students' and the teachers' questionnaires).

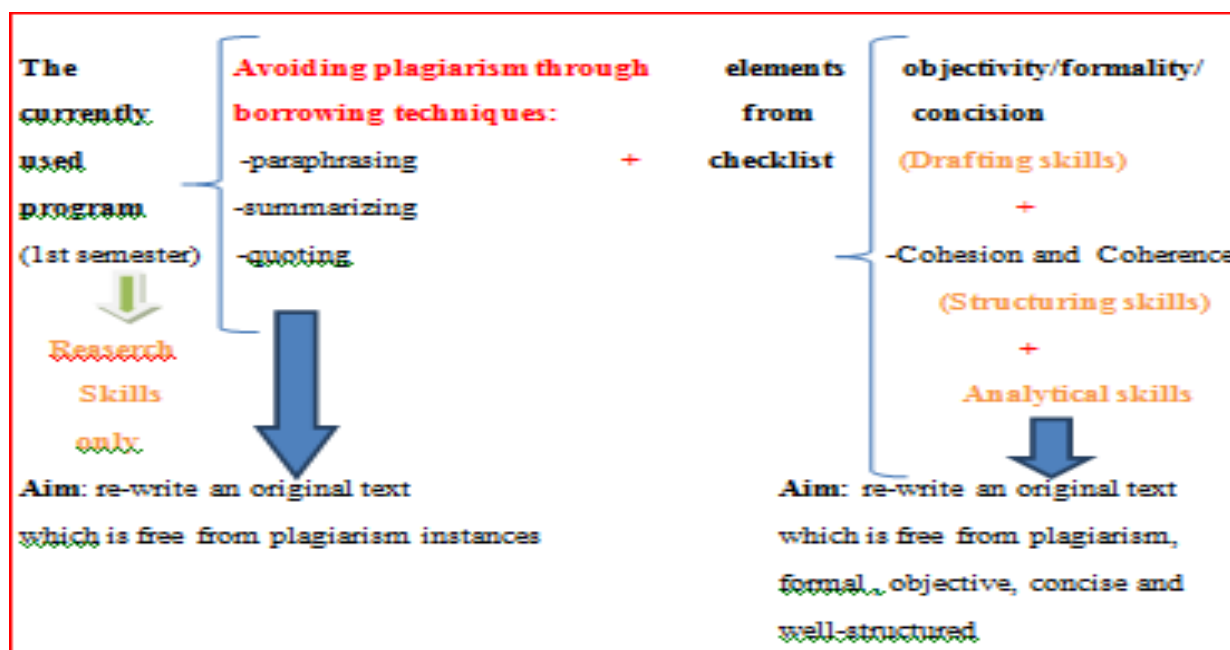
##### **3.3.4.1.1. Validity of the Writing Test**

Testing the validity of the writing test has revealed the following :

- *Selection of the target academic writing criteria and sub-criteria* : The issue to be discussed here is the representativeness of these criteria to the construct of « academic writing » and representativeness of sub-criteria for each major criterion. It has to be reminded that in any research, there is no complete representativeness of the theoretical constructs under investigation. A test is taken to be representative in relation to the way it is approached in the research. This goes also with the fact that the students are restricted with specific time limits to answer a test and also with their background knowledge and what they have learnt



during the treatment period. The present research provides an operational definition of the concept “academic writing” upon which a checklist is developed. The checklist is developed prior to the pilot study through considering both the the features of academic writing that are emphasized in the literature and the currently used program in the subject of « Research Methodology » for the first semester as presented in the following scheme :



**Figure8 : Rationale behind the Program of Research Methodology Used in the Experiment**

As such the target structures of the test reflect the checklist taught to the students during the treatment period and they include the following:

<b>Academic Writing Features (General Criteria)</b>	<b>Target Structures (Sub-Criteria)</b>
<b>Objectivity</b>	Present Simple (reporting verbs)
	Active Voice (signal phrases)
	Objective Analysis of The Quote
	Neutral Description of The Passage (summarizing/paraphrasing)
<b>Formality</b>	Formal Reporting Verb (signal phrase)
	Formal Signal Phrase Model
	Formal Synonyms (paraphrasing)
	Formal Analysis (of the quote)
<b>Concision</b>	Complex Noun Phrases (author’s credentials)
	Avoiding Unnecessary Words/Sentences
	Simplifying and Combining Structures
	Avoiding Wordiness
<b>Structural skills/ Cohesion and coherence</b>	Coherent Quote with Ellipsis (coherence)
	Re-ordering Ideas and Retaining Meaning (coherence/paraphrasing)
	Coherent Passage Using Link Sentences
	Avoiding Run-On Sentences Using Cohesive Devices
<b>Analytical skills</b>	The Quote is Followed with an Analysis
	Extracting Main Ideas from The Passages
<b>Research skills/ Plagiarism</b>	In-text Citation and Punctuation
	No Copy and Paste

**Table 8: Academic Writing Criteria and Sub-criteria used in Pre-test and Post-test**

Giving a close look at Table 8, we find that both criteria “analytical skills” and “research skills” to include only two sub-criteria in each whereas the other major criteria include four sub-features. Here, it is important to mention that this selection has not been made haphazardly. As previously stated, the selection of the sub-criteria must be chosen carefully so that they reflect the program taught to the students during the experiment and also before it-so that the students will be able to answer the pre-test.

Following this rationale, we found that the program used during the experiment necessitates only two sub-criteria for these two major criteria in comparison to the others. Taking the case of “analytical skills”, we found that only two ways exist –in the context of ‘borrowing techniques’-to show an analysis; either when analyzing a quote (quoting) or analysing a passage by extracting its main ideas (summarizing). *Analytical skills cannot*

include any other way of analysis when the task is to practice borrowing techniques-and if any other way exists, it is not included in the program. Nevertheless, such a selection necessitated the researcher to use a statistical procedure that is discussed in *scoring rubric validity*. A thorough explanation of the rationale behind the selection of all criteria and sub-criteria is presented in Chapter Three (see pp. 130-134).

- *Type and level of difficulty of the texts:* The term “texts” in this context refer to the passages and the quote used in the test. They are authentic as they were taken from articles published in the *Arab World English Journal*. The relevant sources are attached to each passage (see Appendix III). The order of paragraphs, however, is changed with deleting some sentences to simplify the task of the text comprehension, summarizing the passages, and due to the test time limits. The topic of passages which is “web-based learning” belongs to the field of Didactics. We find the type of English used in this field to be easily understood given the linguistic content they contain with vocabulary related to general English as opposed to other fields such as Civilization and Literature which include complex specialized vocabulary.

Nevertheless, level of difficulty was assessed by a grading rubric. After finishing the pre-test of the pilot study, the students were asked to grade the difficulty of the texts by filling in a grading rubric that ranged from 1 (simple) to 10 (difficult). Counting the number of students who rated the difficulty of passages and the quote as 5 or less, the results indicate that the majority of the students consider the texts easy as shown in the following table:

<b>Level of difficulty</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N of students with 5 or less
<b>Passage one</b>	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	2	5/10
<b>Passage two</b>	2	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	8/10
<b>Quote</b>	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	7/10

**Table 9: Difficulty Level of Texts**

- *The test instruction format and representativeness:* The instruction of the test is : « *compose a formal, concise objective, meaningful, and well-structured essay of 15 lines in which you combine information from the three sources by summarizing the passages and shortening the quote* ». Reviewing the instruction leads to two observations. First, the instruction leads to an « essay » type of answer which is seemingly the most suitable to our objectives. According to Reiner, Bothell, Sudweeks and Wood (2002, 10), ‘essay questions provide an effective way of assessing complex learning outcomes’ such as to synthesize ideas, to organize and express ideas and evaluate the worth of ideas. Likewise, in the test, the students are asked to combine (*synthesize*) information from passages by *summarizing* them and it all requires *organization*.

Second, some would criticize the length of the instruction. In response to such a view, Reiner et al. (ibid) believe that the longer the instruction is, the “more focused” it is. They also add that more structure helps to avoid the problem of students’ responses containing items that were not meant to be assessed. According to them, the researcher must ensure that the instruction reflects the objectives of the test and that it allows for the intended output to be assessed. In our case, the objective of the test is to investigate the students’ academic writing proficiency which is operationally defined as –formal, concise, objective, meaningful, and well-structured. Consequently, an instruction such as “*compose a formal, concise objective, meaningful, and well-structured essay of 15 lines in which you combine information from the three sources*” would seem sufficient. However, adding the part “*by summarizing the passages and shortening the quote*” is necessary to ensure that the students are going to compose the sub-criteria intended for measurement. If the students combine sources without using summarizing (and paraphrasing) skills, they would either use the passages as a block quote or include short quotes. Therefore, we would never be able to measure what we intend to measure i.e. analytical skills of extracting main ideas, formality, concision...etc. The same

is true if the students do not shorten the quote and no use of ellipsis to check coherence takes place. It should be reminded that summarizing includes the use of paraphrasing techniques such as synonyms, changing word order and order of ideas when necessary. The only difference is that “paraphrasing does not aim to shorten the length of a text, merely to restate the text” (Bailey, 2003, p.21).

- *The test instruction clarity* : After completing the pre-test, the students were asked to grade the clarity of instruction from 1 (very clear) to 10 (very unclear).The grading revealed that most of the students (21 out of 30) understood exactly what they were asked to do as presented in the following :

Level of clarity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N of students with 5 and less
N of students	9	5	0	2	5	1	0	1	4	3	21/30

**Table 10: Clarity of Instruction**

In addition to the students’ feedback, analysing the quality of their answers revealed that the output was related to the objectives of the test. Although the majority of the students obtained low scores in the pre-test, their answers were attached to the objectives of the test as most of them were trying to gather information from the sources provided by summarizing the text, condensing the quote, and keeping an academic style. Even during the test, only few students asked for explanations.

- *The time for accomplishing the task was sufficient.* The students were given 120 minutes to complete the task (two hours) which is considered the maximum time that can be allowed for any test . A post-talk with them also revealed their satisfaction with quantity of time provided.
  - *Scoring rubric validity* : There are two main approaches to scoring : analytical scoring and holistic scoring. The present research follows “*analytical scoring*” which assesses

“whether specific characteristics are present or absent in a response” rather than estimating “one general ability score”. Using this scoring method justifies our choice to calculate not only major criteria but also the sub-criteria. While calculating major criteria provides us with interpretation of any detected improvement in the students’ academic writing proficiency as a whole, calculating the sub-criteria provides more analysis to what feature in particular the students is more or less efficient. For each sub-criterion, we attribute a scoring scale from 0 to 2 in which “0” refers to the absence of a certain feature, “1” means that the feature is not been properly used, and “2” means that the feature is well employed.

For such a scoring to be objective and unambiguous, we decided to provide explanations of what 0, 1, and 2 scores mean for each sub-criterion ( see Appendix IV). If we take the example of the sub-criterion “active voice” and check the explanation of its scoring, we find that analyzing the use of the active voice is attached only to signal phrases (not to all sentences). As such, if the student uses no signal phrase with active voice, he obtains “0” score, if the active voice is wrongly formulated or some signal phrases are in active but others are left in passive voice, he gets “1” score, and if all signal phrases are in active voice, he gets “2” score. Only the scoring of “neutral description of the passages” and “objective analysis of the quote” take a scoring of either “0” or “2”. This is because we consider that one can either be neutral or biased but not in between. The students are expected to summarize by re-stating the major points of texts and any attempt to project oneself is a way to bias. The same scoring applies for setting an objective analysis in which one can either be objective or subjective.

Among all academic writing criteria taken into account, formality is the most problematic for assessment. Although many researchers tend to differentiate between formal and informal language according to the existence or non-existence of some linguistic features, there exists no single rule or a well-established guide through which one can decide whether a

*word* is taken as formal or informal. Therefore, the scoring of the sub-criteria underlying formality is operationalized with careful considerations especially those of “*formal reporting verbs*”, “*formal synonyms*”, and “*formal analysis*”.

In order to decide whether a reporting verb is formal or not, we limited the analysis to the following attributes: it must be “*precise*” not a general verb such as “say”, “think” or “talk”, “*strong*” i.e. not a phrasal verb, and “*Latin*” not of an Anglo-Saxon origin. Out of the reporting verbs the student uses in his/her essay, the informal ones are then calculated and the score is attached depending on the percentage: if it is below 40 % one gets “0” score, if it ranges between 40 % to 60 % one gets “1” score, and if it exceeds 60 % one gets “2” score.

As for the sub-criterion ‘formal synonyms’, considerations are directed not only to the synonyms added by the student but also his/her own vocabulary that has no particular synonym in the original text. In other words, although we expect learners to rely heavily on synonyms as a paraphrasing strategy taught during the treatment period, there is a possibility that the learner changes completely the original word choice where few words are found to be synonyms to the original (which evidently requires highly writing proficiency). There exists no precise rule to judge a word as formal or informal. It is generally believed that “words derived from French or Latin have been considered more formal than those derived from the language of the Anglo-Saxons” (Cory, 1999, p.14). Many equivalent words are generally compared by their origins; however, this is not sufficient to judge formality where the latter is perceived differently across fields and contexts. Many examples justify this statement. The verb ‘to try’, for example, derives from an Anglo Saxon origin but it is frequently used and less accepted in academic papers as compared with the verb ‘to attempt’. Likewise, the intensifier ‘actually’ derives from a French origin but it is used more in oral conversational language.

Due to the bias that might occur from considering word-origin alone, the researcher bases her analysis of formality (also in *formal analysis*) on the following qualities:

The word/expressions is either:

- Of Old English Vs Latin word-origin.
- It is a contraction or an abbreviation (ex: ‘won’t’ Vs ‘will not’ /’etc’ Vs ‘and so on’)
- Belongs to conversational language. (ex: ‘actually’, sooner or later’, ‘well’, ‘just’).
- It is a weak or a strong verb. This refers to (1) avoiding phrasal verbs and (2) ‘to have’ and ‘to be’ verbs.
- It is a personal pronoun (informal).
- It is an informal intensifier such as ‘really’ and ‘very’ .
- It is vague such as ‘big’ (how big it is?), ‘say’ (does he agree, disagree, illustrate?).
- It is subjective such as ‘good’, ‘bad’, and ‘great’.

These are then counted using the same procedure previously explained. For an objective analysis of formality, the researcher used the following dictionaries:

- *Online Etymology Dictionary* (showing word Latin and Germanic origins).
- *Chambers’ Universal Learners’ Dictionary* (refers to formal/informal words/expressions)
- *Merriam-Websters’ Dictionary of Synonyms* (refers to synonyms appropriate in a given context with explaining the differences between them).
- *The Synonym Finder* (thesaurus of synonyms with different meanings of the same word).
- *The Academic Word List 2000 (AWL)*. (Contains words most frequent in academic disciplines).
- *Cambridge Advanced Learners’ Dictionary*. (Refers to words, expressions, idioms, colloquial and formal language).
- *Oxford American Writers’ Thesaurus of English*. (Contains academic words needed for writers).
- *Pocket Oxford American Dictionary and Thesaurus*. (Refers to formal and informal words/expressions).
- *The student Writers’ Guide to Avoiding ‘Dead Words’*. (Cautions the students to avoid ‘dead words’ in English).

Another issue to refer to in this realm is that in comparison to all major criteria which contain four sub-criteria, criteria “analytical skills” and “research skills” include only two sub-criteria (for issues of representativeness). In doing so, these two criteria take a total score of 60 whereas the other criteria have a total score of 120. Although these criteria are proved to be theoretically valid, their representation statistically must also be made clear.

*Only for purposes of clarity of representation and interpretation, we tend to ‘duplicate’ the*



scores obtained within these two major criteria along with the original score since the total score of 120 is the double of 60. If we supposedly have a score of '26' for criterion "analytical skills", i.e. 26 out of 60 –as a total score- this would equally mean 52/180. Simply put, when calculating the mean of 26 as out of 60 or 52 as out of 180 we find the

$$\text{same mean : } \frac{100 \times 26}{60} = \frac{100 \times 52}{120} = 43.33 \%$$

*These duplicated scores however are not calculated so that the total mean of all criteria means will not include any bias. They are only inserted to make the interpretation of results more easily perceived.*

#### **3.3.4.1.2. Validity of Questionnaires**

After the students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire are pilot-tested, we gathered the following results:

- *Clarity and non-redundancy of items*

A post-talk to the students after each questionnaire as well as the analysis of their answers proved that question items were clear enough. Few comments were raised about the length of the mid-experiment questionnaire. As a result, the researchers re-visited the questionnaire items and attempted to make it as brief as possible by removing any redundant items which are meant to measure the same construct.

- *Additions*

Some items are added to the pre-experiment questionnaire based on the students' answers in "Others" sub-section. The researcher found some of the students' ideas inspiring and sometimes repeatable by many of them. Examples of those are Q5, Q8, and Q33.

- *Time*

A post-talk to the students after the pre-experiment questionnaire and mid-experiment questionnaire proved that 120 minutes were sufficient enough whereas a period of a week left for filling the post-experiment questionnaire is considered as more than sufficient.

- *Selection of Questionnaire items*

Decisions about the validity of the questionnaire items follow judgments of the supervisor and the aims of the questionnaire stated earlier. Instead of revealing the rationale behind selecting each question on its own right, we draw the attention solemnly to the rationale behind items included within a single question to show their content validity in representing the construct in question. Reference is given to questions presented in the form of tables (scales) found in the mid-experiment questionnaire and post-experiment questionnaire.

In the mid-experiment questionnaire, Section one “Assessing Students’ Motivation”, motivation is being operationally defined in terms of nine constructs which relate it to BL setting. Specifically, these constructs are developed in relation to motivation theories discussed in chapter two, namely, “attribution theory”, “self-determination theory”, and “goal-orientation theory” and elements from BL, namely, socialization, private chat, cost of education, flexibility, e-learning, self-regulation. They represent: (1) *perceived comfort* (2), *perceived social presence* (3), *perceived usefulness* (4), *perceived support* (5), *perceived self-efficacy* (6), *perceived self-regulation* (7), *perceived autonomy* (8) *perceived learning goals* (9), *perceived enthusiasm in the physical setting*. To guarantee their representativeness to “motivation” in the confinements of the previous constructs, the items are developed according to the following rationale:

- (1) Perceived comfort: it is related to “attribution theory” and “anxiety”, and it encompasses “Q1” (*to what extent is the teaching tool/Facebook a comfortable setting?*),

- “Q2”(to what extent does “the private evaluation” raise the students’ comfort?), “Q3”(to what extent does “addressing concerns” privately to the teacher serve in raising the students’ comfort?)
- (2) Perceived social presence: it is related to the notion of “relatedness” in SDT and “cooperation” in “goal-achievement theory” and in opposition to e-learning”. It encompasses “Q4” (does learning through Facebook serve in raising the communication between the teacher and the learners?)
- (3) Perceived usefulness: it is related to “value expectation” in expectancy-value theories and encompasses “Q5” (to what extent is Facebook useful as a teaching tool?), “Q6”(to what extent are the online sessions useful regarding their benefit of “cost of education”?), “Q7”(to what extent are the online sessions useful regarding “the flexibility” they offer?).
- (4) Perceived support: in opposition to e-learning (isolation) and in relation to “attribution theory’ .It encompasses “Q8”(to what extent do the online sessions support the students academically, affectively, and technically?).
- (5) Perceived self-efficacy: it is related to “self-confidence” and “attribution theory” and encompasses “Q9”(to what extent do the students feel confident to participate on Facebook when everything is public?), “Q10”(do modeling strategies raise the students’ self-confidence?).
- (6) Perceived self-regulation: it is related to “SDT” and “self-regulation”, and it encompasses “Q11” (to what extent does learning through self-paced objects raise the students’ self-regulation?), “Q12” (to what extent does online learning raise punctuality and self-discipline?).
- (7) Perceived autonomy: it is related to “SDT” and encompasses “Q13” (does the students’ motivation to participate in the online sessions emerge from within?), “Q14” (to

*what extent does allowing the students to generate spontaneous comments raise their autonomy?).*

(8) Perceived learning goals: it is related to notion of “efforts”, “mastery goals” and “goal-achievement theory”, and it encompasses “Q15” (*to what extent are the students encouraged to generate well-thoughtful contributions?*), “Q16” (*to what extent do the online sessions encourage the students to consider that self-improvement follows a trial and error process?*).

(9) Perceived enthusiasm in the physical setting: it is related to the fact that in BL, the physical setting must also be motivating as the online setting. It encompasses “Q17” (*is there an interactivity between the teacher and the students in the physical setting?*), “Q18” (*to what extent are the physical lectures interesting for the students?*).

In the mid-experiment questionnaire, Section two “Attitudes Towards How Methodology is Taught”, the objective is to assess how academic writing is taught in the BL setting. In order to do so, we relied heavily on two sections; “academic writing in a BL environment” and “advantages of blended learning in relation to academic writing” which both emphasize the existence of certain elements for a better acquisition of academic writing. A synthesis of these elements has led to extracting the following constructs: (1) teacher feedback, (2) peer feedback, (3) internal feedback, (4) metacognition/critical thinking, (5) cognitive presence/community of inquiry, (6) computer-generated feedback, (7) sufficient time, (8) extra materials/sources, (9) unlimited accessibility of input, (10) memorization of input. To validate the representativeness of the items included within each of these constructs, we provide the following rationale:

(1) Teacher feedback: “Q19” (*was it sufficient during the treatment?*).

(2) Peer feedback: “Q20” (*was it sufficient during the treatment?*).

(3) Cognitive presence/community of inquiry: It encompasses “Q21” (*to what extent do the community’s suggestions lead to self-recognition?*), “Q22” (*to what extent do the*

- community's suggestions broaden the students' understanding?), "Q23" (to what extent does the community of inquiry encourage the spirit of respecting and valuing others' opinions?).
- (4) Metacognition/critical thinking: It encompasses "Q24" (to what extent does the openness of Facebook encourage self-critique/self-evaluation?), "Q25" (to what extent do the online sessions improve the students' analytical/critical skills toward others' answers?), "Q26" (to what extent were the online activities cognitively challenging?).
- (5) Internal feedback: "Q27" (to what extent do the self-reflective questions, i.e. formative feedback encourage self-revision and self-awareness?).
- (6) Sufficient time: it encompasses "Q28" (was the time sufficient for the students to think about a question?), "Q29" (was the time sufficient for the students to raise questions?).
- (7) Unlimited accessibility of input: "Q30" (to what extent does it help in keeping the students in touch with the lectures?), "Q31" (to what extent does it help in memorizing input?).
- (8) Extra materials: "Q32" (to what extent does providing extra materials during the online sessions increase understanding?).
- (9) Computer-generated feedback: it encompasses "Q33" (in relation to consulting different websites), "Q34" (in relation to using Grammar Checker).

In the mid-experiment questionnaire, Section three "Assessing Blended Learning", 14 constructs are chosen in a way that they together constitute the most important "ingredients of blended learning. These constructs are deduced from the sections 'Ingredients of Blended Learning' and 'Blended Learning Design Guidelines (see Chapter One, p.32). They represent: (1) the students' preparedness, (2) active learning/learner-centeredness, (4) socialization as against e-learning, (4) discipline, (5) role of the instructor, (6) both types of communication must exist "synchronous/asynchronous", (7) self-paced objects must be available, (8) It must offer extra feedback, (9) extra sources, (10) organization Vs chaos,

(11) workload not too heavy, (12) integration between FtF and online lecture, (13) accessibility issue. To validate the representativeness of the items included within each of these constructs, we provide the following rationale:

- (1) The students' preparedness: "Q35" (are students prepared technically, psychologically, and academically prior to the experiment implementation?).
- (2) Discipline: "Q36" (to what extent were the students disciplined online?).
- (3) Active learning/learner-centeredness: "Q37" (to what extent were the sessions student-centered?), "Q38" (to what extent was effort required?).
- (4) Socialization: "Q39" (to what extent did socialization take place?).
- (5) Role of the instructor: "Q40" (the extent of her preparedness for the online sessions), "Q41" (the extent to which she provides feedback).
- (6) Synchronous communication: "Q42" (the extent of which it took place)
- (7) Asynchronous communication: "Q43" (the extent of which it took place through E-mail), "Q44" (the extent to which it took place through asynchronous evaluation of peers' written drafts).
- (8) Accessibility: "Q45" (the extent of which it was easy).
- (9) Organization: "Q46" (the extent of which the online sessions were organized)
- (10) Integration: "Q47" (the extent of integration between both learning modes)
- (11) Workload: "Q48" (the extent of which the workload was appropriate)
- (12) Extra feedback: "Q49" (the extent of which it has been offered)
- (13) Extra source materials: "Q50" (the extent of which they have been offered)
- (14) Self-paced learning: "Q51" (the extent of which it has been allowed).

As for the post-experiment questionnaire Q4, Q6, Q7, the researcher attempted to gather all aspects of BL as discussed in chapter one and divide these aspects along the questions according to their aims. As Question 4 aims at investigating what feature in BL

affects the students' motivation the most, we included items that are related only to the constructs of BL that are related to motivation. They are: privacy (feature of Facebook), online interaction, cost of education, flexibility, support, responsibility and self-discipline, autonomy, effort required, and the physical setting. Q6, on the other hand, aims at investigating what feature in BL served in improving the students' academic writing the most. Accordingly, we included items underlying the constructs of BL that are related only to academic writing. These are : Teacher feedback, peer feedback, constructive discussion, self-assessment, self-awareness, analytical skills, time provided, accessibility, level of memorization, extra documents, use of websites, and the use of Grammar Checker. Finally, Q7 aims at gaining the students' feedback about what needs to be improved in the BL course they experienced. Subsequently, the researcher attempted to include any aspect of BL that a designer can play a role in.

In the teacher questionnaire, Q20 aims at assessing the teachers' attitudes towards BL using Facebook in the form of a table that is divided into four elements. The Researcher aimed to investigate the teachers' attitudes towards (1) necessity of adopting BL to the Algerian context, (2) the utility of using Facebook as a pedagogical tool (3), the likelihood of raising the students' motivation through BL, and (4) the likelihood of improving the students' academic writing proficiency through BL. Within elements (3) and (4), items underlying the constructs of BL that are related only to both academic writing and motivation are taken into account as was the case for the mid-experiment questionnaire-sections one and two.

#### **3.3.4.2. Reliability of Instruments**

As mentioned earlier, testing reliability for the present research means testing the instruments containing scales. Therefore, the results pertaining to the writing test and the mid-experiment questionnaire are the focus of this sub-section.

#### 4.3.4.2.1. Reliability of Writing Test

In order to calculate « reliability », it was necessary to use “Cronbach’s Alpha” which was popularized by Cronbach (1951). It is intended to measure the consistency of an instrument that includes a SCALE rather than having a dichotomous answer of “Yes”, or “No”. It is best suited for measuring the reliability of questionnaires and any other tests which includes scales. We have chosen to use Cronbach’s Alpha in testing the reliability of the writing test as it includes different scales (academic writing criteria and sub-criteria) to collectively measure academic writing. We also used Cronbach’s Alpha in testing the mid-experiment questionnaire as it includes three sections presented in the form of tables which include five points scales of agreement.

According to Nunnally (1978 in Drost, op.cit), *if the Alpha is .70 this is taken as sufficient for a test to be taken as reliable*. A comprehensive analysis of the test has required the researcher to gather the students’ answers of the pre-test in the pilot study and calculate Cronbach’s Alpha for each academic writing criterion, i.e. “objectivity”, “formality”, “concision”, “structuring skills”, “analytical skills”, “research skills” to check the internal consistency of the items included within each and then the overall internal consistency reliability taking all criteria together. The results are presented as follows :

- a. Objectivity : *The alpha is .744*
- b. Formality : *The alpha is .851*
- c. Concision : *The alpha is .745*
- d. Structuring skills (cohesion/coherence) : *The alpha is .753*
- e. Analytical skills : *The alpha is .852*
- f. Research Skills : *The alpha is .932*

*All the previous results of the Alpha are above .7 which indicates that the items (sub-criteria ) included within each criterion are consistent together.*



Once taking all these criteria together, an overall reliability of the test is calculated and an alpha of .703 is found as presented in the following table. We therefore, can judge the test to be reliable.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.703	.701	20

### **3.4.2.2. Reliability of Students' Mid-Experiment Questionnaire**

Unlike the other questionnaires, the mid-experiment questionnaire includes three sections presented in the form of tables rather than separate closed items. The sections are Section one “Assessing Motivation”, Section two “assessing academic writing”, Section three “assessing blended learning”. As a result, it is adequate to calculate the reliability of these sections statistically using Cronbach’s Alpha to check whether the items included within each section truly measure what they intend to measure. This is similar to the way the writing test is pilot-tested. Using SPSS, the results found are :

- ❖ Section one : Assessing Students' Motivation) :The alpha is ,713
- ❖ Section two : Attitudes toward how Methodology is taught:The alpha is ,712
- ❖ Section three : Assessing Blended Learning: The alpha is ,713

### **3.3.4.3. Review of The Blended Learning Design**

To answer the question “is BL suitable for the context of this study?” and investigate any problems with the design of the method, the researcher summarized the main observations she made during the pilot study and the modifications she considered afterwards. These concern many of the issues pertaining to the success of BL design as shown in the following table :

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Observations and/or modifications</b>
<b>Technical issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Facebook was an easy application for use (familiarity).</li> <li>-The teacher considered using Skype (as a guide) along with FB but the students preferred to use FB alone.</li> </ul>
<b>Disipline/online class management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To ensure regular presence, the teacher gave the students freedom to choose the suitable time (weekends)</li> <li>-The students are told that their absence from the online session is equivalent to their absence in the physical session.</li> <li>-The students showing online without getting involved in the lecture are not acknowledged as present.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The teacher made sure that only those having Internet at home or via wireless device to join the experiment in order to avoid problems of accessibility.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-While commenting (answering), there was some kind of chaos as it was not clear to whom a comment is sent, so the teacher reminded the students of selecting the targeted student while commenting (through Tag Function).</li> <li>-The teacher at the first session, reminds the students of refreshing the page each time to see what the teacher posts or check notifications and he uses sometimes the technique of tagging.</li> <li>-The teacher as a guide (set time limits for discussion, for answering, monitors discussions)</li> <li>-The teacher considered modeling the best answer strategies for the students to imitate and learn how to provide the best and informative comments.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher's preparedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Although it was the first attempt to teach online, the researcher did not find any obstacles with using Facebook Group as a teaching tool.</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback/support/ motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The students used private chat regularly with the teacher for asking questions whether related to technical, personal, or academic issues.</li> <li>-The use of pseudonyms helped the students to judge and comment on each other, and accept criticism in public (they even judged the teacher's answers).</li> <li>-The students showed the desire to manage the group (be given the function of a group manager) and they posted many useful links and e-documents about the topics covered and education in general.</li> <li>-Researcher observed a good volume of posts and replies.</li> <li>-The online session was more flexible in time and space.</li> </ul>
<b>Asynchronous communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Peer-evaluation of the students' texts as a homework created some kind of chaos when the students were given freedom to choose the text they want, so researcher decided to assign for each student a specific classmate.</li> </ul>
<b>Constructivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-While commenting, the students are asked to provide a thoughtful contribution rather than a response that might add nothing to students' knowledge: " I agree with u", "I think your text is correct" ( provide reasons)</li> <li>-The teacher plays the role of a guide to follow a learner-centered approach (after the discussion, the teacher provides his/her feedback).</li> <li>-In order to generate spontaneous responses, the teacher at first sessions reminds the students of commenting on each other, but then they had the habit of discussing without being asked to do so.</li> <li>-The students are told that posts and replies will be assessed for both quantity and quality of the posts just like participation in FtF settings.</li> <li>-Following formative feedback (self-reflective questions and peer assessment)</li> <li>-While summarizing or paraphrasing, the students committed spelling and grammar mistakes so researcher encouraged the use the Grammar Checker Tool of Facebook.</li> </ul>

**Table 11 : Blended Learning Design Issues in the Pilot Study**

*In general, the teacher's observations prove the suitability of using BL to the context of this study for three reasons. First, the students were familiar with using Facebook and found it easy to follow the progress of the lesson ; the reason why they preferred using it alone without the necessity to hear the teacher's instructions through Skype. Second, when the teacher modified the online discipline rules such as following the students' timing preferences and equating online participation with physical participation in addition to emphasizing the quality of a constructive discussion, the students showed better online behaviours that resulted in constructive learning. Third, the students were inherently motivated towards learning in Facebook given its anonymity, the privacy of sending messages, and Like and Comment, and Posting features.*

Although no serious obstacles occurred, the students' answers were somehow chaotic both during the asynchronous and synchronous discussions and found a difficulty following the teacher's instructions. This was expected as learning via Facebook was a new experience for the students and it drew the researcher's attention to emphasize using certain features (Tag feature when posting and commenting, notification feature to receive alerts of posts and replies), set time limits for discussion and prefer following the students' spontaneous and free suggestions only during the synchronous discussion. Some absences also occurred when some learners accessed the sessions from a cyber-café office and witnessed connection problems. To guarantee the students' presence in the online sessions and make sure they can ideally follow the progress of activities, the researcher considered including in the experiment only the students who have Internet either through Wifi or 3G and 4G networks.

#### **3.3.4.4. Testing The Research Assumptions**

During the pilot study, the researcher observed the following :

- ❖ The students' academic writing proficiency is low.
- ❖ The students' motivation is intermediate.
- ❖ BL is suitable for the context of this study.

Although the pilot study does not aim to test the hypotheses, the results obtained can confirm the assumptions made prior to the research. After calculating the control and experimental groups' pre-test results, *the researcher found that the students' academic writing proficiency is low whereas their motivation is intermediate*. In particular, the analysis of Q4 and Q7 of the pre-experiment questionnaire showed that 73.33% of the students acknowledge having low/very low/ intermediate level of academic writing proficiency and the half i.e. 53.33% having between high and very high motivation. Although the level of motivation is not found to be low, an intermediate level also necessitates improvement. In addition, results of the pre-test manifested serious problems of the majority of the students in writing academically with a mean of 192/600.

As far as the third assumption is concerned, BL occurred with no detrimental problems that could hinder the process of learning. On the contrary, the students enjoyed to use Facebook while learning which was manifested through their enthusiasm to join the online lectures- especially the first time they were told about them, their sustained presence for the online lecture through the treatment period, the quantity of posts and comments suggested in the group page, and their constant suggestions to the researcher to make some changes within the online courses. The researcher concluded therefore that BL is suitable for the context of this study.

## **Conclusion**

Stated briefly, the present research uses two methods of investigation; the exploration and the experimental method. The methods are planned carefully to accommodate the objectives of this research. Through piloting, reliability and validity of research instruments, the convenience of the BL methodology, as well as the research assumptions are confirmed. Significant elements of the writing test and the questionnaires' items-mainly sections including scales- are found to be valid in relation to the research objectives and the students'

comprehension level and they were internally reliable. The BL method and design are also found to be suitable to the context of this study for no detrimental obstacles were faced and slight modifications were added.

## **Chapter Five: Experiment Rationale and Implementation**

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## **Introduction**

The theoretical framework of the study requires an experimental design as well as its practical implementation. Accordingly, the chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section recapitulates the rationale underlying the experiment in relation to the issues raised in the theoretical chapters. The theoretical framework is discussed from two perspectives; ‘the know-what’ component which identifies the instructional content of the experiment and the ‘the know-how’ component which defines the methodology chosen for instruction. The second section presents in details the implementation of the experiment in terms of the lesson plans’ instructional activities, procedures, and learning objectives.

### **1.1. Rationale of the Experiment**

This section explains the theoretical basis behind the design of the quasi-experiment. It describes, first, the learning content taught to the students during the treatment period. Then, it explains the instruction used to teach both the control and the experimental group.

#### **5.1.1. Content of the Experiment (The -Know-What)**

By explaining the content of the experiment, we refer to the activities and lessons incorporated during the treatment period. In other words, we refer to the Know-What side of the experiment integration. Since the present work is directed to investigate academic writing and its practical validation is applied on the subject of “Research Methodology”, the content must reflect how academic writing is operationalized in the present research. As explained in chapter four, and particularly while discussing the validity of the writing test, the operational definition of academic writing is translated in the Checklist of Experiment Implementation which integrates the present program of the subject of “Research Methodology”-first semester- and some of the elements of academic writing presented in chapter two ; namely, objectivity, formality, concision, coherence/cohesion, and analytical skills.

The adequate reflection of these academic writing features in the experiment necessitates a careful selection of instructional content and activities. The selected content, lesson themes/topics and learning objectives reflect both the themes and objectives of the currently used program of second year and the objectives of the Checklist of Experiment Implementation. This integration serves to accomplish the general aim of *'improving the students' academic writing skills when using their own words during the process of conducting a research'*. Details about instructional activities, the students' and the teacher's roles, and types of online questions are presented within the discussion of the lesson plans. The content of the exercises are generally adopted from different scholars whereas their format-the instruction and layout- and sample answers are designed by the researcher.

The content of the experiment is the same taught to both experimental and control groups. The difference lies in the way learning is delivered using either traditional learning or BL method (i.e. The Know-How).

### **5.1.2. Design of the Experiment (The-Know-How)**

Explaining the design of the experiment entails presenting the "Know-How", i.e. the method used to teach the experimental group. As stated in earlier in this research, the experiment follows a constructivism-based BL approach in the subject of "Research Methodology". Its treatment lasts for 10 weeks (10 sessions) which constitute the first semester of second year program (when excluding Winter holidays and sessions of evaluation tests and their corrections).

In order to adequately apply the constructivism-BL method in a motivating setting, it was necessary to reflect the tenets of the related theories, namely, constructivism-writing theory, motivation (SDT, GOT, and attribution theory), and BL methodology. These principles are included within each relevant chapter and altogether constitute the following :



- **Blended Learning Tenets : (following a replacement model)**

*Complementarity between FtF and online settings (each lecture is followed by activities session), simple and pedagogically-driven technology (Facebook), support, students' centeredness, autonomy, collaboration, extra feedback (human/computer-generated feedback), extra time, active learning/knowledge centeredness, synchronous/asynchronous/self-paced learning, summative/formative assessment. (see Chapter One, p 32)*

- **Constructivism Tenets : (Piaget's cognitive and Vigotsky's social constructivism)**

*Teacher is a monitor/facilitator, metacognition/reflection, learner centeredness, knowledge construction/exploration, collaboration/social negotiation/scaffolding, learning is developmental, tolerating errors. (see Chapter Three, p 151)*

- **Motivational Theories Tenets :**

*Self-determination theory (social presence, cognitive presence, self-regulation, autonomy, ), goal-orientation theory ( Mastery learning goals/effort, cognitive presence ), and attribution theory ( comfort, usefulness, self-efficacy ) (see Chapter Two, p94).*

These methods/theories (and as argued earlier in this research) share most of their principles as presented in table 12:

<b>Blended learning Tenets</b>	<b>Constructivism tenets</b>	<b>Motivation Tenets</b>
learner' centeredness	Learner-centeredness/ The teacher as a monitor	Self-regulation
autonomy		autonomy
collaboration	Collaboration/ social negotiation	Social presence
Extra feedback	scaffolding	
Active learning/ knowledge centeredness	Metacognition/ exploration Knowledge construction	Mastery learning goals/ effort/ cognitive presence
Academic, affective, and personal support	Tolerating errors	Comfort/self-efficacy/ usefulness
Formative/ summative feedback	Reflection/awareness/self- analysis	

**Table 12 : Comparing Blended learning, Constructivism, and Motivation Tenets**

The consistency that is set between these principles highly reveals the suitability of applying constructivism and motivational theories in a BL environment. These principles together act as a basis for the foundation of both the Constructivism-based General Lesson Plan as well as the lesson plans designed for the whole academic semester.

Although the previous theories play an essential part in the design stage of the BL lesson plans, the researcher considered adding Muilenburg, and Berge (op.cit) types of “*online discussion questions*”, and “*bloom’s taxonomy*”. Muilenburg, and Berge’s (op.cit) “online discussion questions” include “interest-getting and attention-getting questions”, “diagnosing and checking questions”, “recall facts or information questions”, “managerial questions”, “structure and direct learning questions”, “allow expression of affect questions”, and “encourage higher level thought processes questions”. Adding these features was necessary to ensure, first, the organization of the online content, i.e the easiness of following the online instructions, and second, that the online instructional activities encourage higher-ordered thinking/metacognition as stated by Churches (op.cit) (see Chapter One, p.43).

Further detailed decisions (and hints) in relation to managing the students, learning time, applying learner-centeredness, setting a community of inquiry and more are mentioned in Chapter One, pp 51-57. These decisions along with the previous principles are represented in the General Lesson Plan. This plan provides a general framework on the basis of which subsequent lesson plans are organized and shows how BL components are organized. Basically, the course is delivered by means of two session types: a physical session (which constitute the theoretical part) and an online session conducted in a Facebook Group (the practical part). Each learning objective is achieved by a physical “lecturing” session and an online “activities” session. During the physical session, the teacher provides the students with instructions about related principles and concepts whereas the online session includes assignments to be accomplished by the students.

However, the general plan does not include specificities of lesson development. In addition to that, Bloom's taxonomy does not necessarily follow a sequential order as it is presented in the general plan. The teacher can, for example, ask comprehension questions after higher process questions when he finds that the students still do not grasp the feedback which leads them to move back again to the stage of understanding.

## **5.2. Implementation of the Experiment**

Underlying this sub-section, a thorough description of the experiment lesson plans is presented. Ten lesson plans -ten sessions- are devised for teaching the subject of 'Research Methodology' to second year students during the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016 (see Appendix VI). Every subsequent physical and online session, i.e. *lecture and activities session*, teach similar topics (learning themes) and serve similar objectives. Further information about the academic writing components added, the instructional activities used and their aims, roles of the teacher and the student, and timing and learning procedures are explained in details. The answers of the activities are found in Appendix VII.

There are a few points to emphasize about the content of these lesson plans:

- ❖ There is an emphasis on the quality of learning rather than quantity of content. In other words, the program must not be overloaded with questions and statements to be discussed. It is more significant to focus on the quality of the discussion that is raised per question. For this purpose, in each exercise the researcher eliminates the number of statements that the students are required to answer (3 or 4 statements for exercises that needed more time to think and discuss) while she raises the time of discussion for each statement (answering each statement separately).
- ❖ It is not necessary to literally follow every single step in the lesson plans. For example, using attention-getting questions in the introduction phase depends on the students' extent

of comfort with the online tool. If the students gained confidence, the instructor can drop the use of these types of questions and start directly with recall questions (in our case, the instructor dropped their use after the second online session). The same applies for asking comprehension-checking and affect questions and allowing the students to address their concerns via private chat which they all depend on the students' performance and needs during a session. For example, when the teacher feels a lack of understanding, when an exercise was highly difficult, or when a lack of interaction occurs.

- ❖ Depending on the nature of the exercise, the teacher decides about the time provided. An exercise which requires the students to engage in writing –by applying the different academic writing features- is provided more time than exercises which require the students to simply judge or alter simple elements.

#### **5.2.1. Physical Lecture One/ Online Activities Session One (Week One/Two)**

- **Topics (themes):** General introduction to plagiarism (definition, examples, types, why and how to avoid it, common knowledge).
- **General Learning Objective:** *‘Students will be able to identify a plagiarized corpus and its type, differentiate it from common knowledge, and state the strategies used to clean it from plagiarism’.*

- **Academic writing features added from the Checklist:** No feature is added because the students at this stage are only introduced to the notions of plagiarism where they will be ‘identifying’, ‘differentiating’ and ‘stating’ but they are not yet taught how to re-write (or correct) a plagiarized corpus. In other words, the students are not yet engaged in the process of writing to incorporate the academic writing features of the checklist.

## **a. Physical lecture One (Week One)**

### **Introduction: (10 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the students recall their background knowledge about plagiarism given that they have been introduced to it during their first year.
- *To raise the students' enthusiasm in the physical setting*, the teacher interacts with the students about their own experiences with conducting research.

### **Progress: (70 minutes)**

- After the previous discussion, *the teacher presents various definitions of plagiarism and its different types*. The teacher provides examples of types of plagiarism and interacts with the students on the type of plagiarism detected in each example. While doing so, *the teacher intends to raise students' motivation in class and at the same time addresses social and cognitive presences*. Then, the teacher maintains the interaction by discussing with the students the reasons behind committing and avoiding plagiarism.
- *The teacher explains strategies to avoid plagiarism by referring to borrowing techniques*. *In order to attract students' attention and raise their motivation*, the teacher provides real examples of her own experiences when doing research or cases of students who have been found committing plagiarism together with the subsequent punishments, types of unintentional plagiarism, strategies the teacher has went through while conducting research, and future benefits of developing borrowing techniques.
- *The teacher mentions what to cite and what not to cite with reference to common knowledge* and *interacts with the students* by encouraging them to provide their own examples.

**Closure: (10 minutes)**

- The teacher provides the students with time to ask their own questions or address their misunderstandings by allowing peers to intervene and provide the right answer. As such, the teacher allows for *social and cognitive constructions* to take place.
- The teacher supports the students with PDF files about topics covered to be read at home as further exploration. These *self-paced objects* help in encouraging the students to be *self-regulated and responsible* of their own learning. She also encourages them to be self-inquisitive and not to bind themselves to these learning materials.

**b. Online Activities Session One (Week Two)**

**Introduction/warming up: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher draws the students' attention by posting a welcoming message on the group page that tags all members of the group.
- To raise the students' comfort, self-confidence, and establish a social presence, the teacher posts an '*attention-getting question*' such as "*if you own by now one million dollars, what is the first thing that you would do?*" After participating in this socially-oriented discussion, the students will be *psychologically ready to engage in pedagogical activities*.

**Development: (110 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher posts a '*recall question*' about the previous lecture (5 minutes). An example is to ask "*based on the previous lecture, who can define plagiarism and common knowledge, and provide one example of each?*" While answering such a question, the teacher encourages the students to establish a spontaneous/ autonomous discussion by reminding them to comment on each other answers in case they considered them incorrect. This is to engage the students in *social*

and cognitive constructions with the teacher's monitoring. Then, the teacher provides her feedback.

- *The teacher posts :*

**Exercise One: Indicate with Yes or No if you need to cite each example below and explain your choice:**

- 1. Copied phrases from the original text with quotations marks around these phrases.**
- 2. You are doing a research paper and you are writing about your own experiences.**
- 3. There is a really good quotation you want to use, but it is way too long. So you leave some of it out.**
- 4. Paraphrase or summarize the ideas from two separate sources linking them together using your own words and mentioning the sources.**
- 5. Mention a fact which is commonly known.**

➤ **Task aim:** To identify the cases of plagiarism.

➤ **Task Timing:** It takes around 25 minutes (5 minutes for the discussion of each example).

➤ **Task procedure:**

- The teacher reminds the students to provide their comments spontaneously (feel as if the teacher is absent). The teacher posts each time a sentence and the students answer in the comment bar.
- **Spontaneous Discussion training:** the teacher selects a wrong answer and asks the student who typed it a self-assessment question like “what do you think about your answer? Is it correct? Why?” and asks a peer-assessment question that is directed to all the students like “Do you think his/her answer is correct? Why? Re-correct it. This procedure is used if the students still experience hesitation to participate and it continues until they build the habit of expressing their opinions spontaneously. However, if the students start a spontaneous discussion, the teacher must follow with monitoring. The teacher can also use private chat to encourage the students privately. At the end of the

discussion, the teacher summarizes it by showing areas of agreement/disagreement and provides the answer. While doing so, the teacher engages the students in cognitive/social constructions of knowledge, raises their critical thinking, and applies cognitive, social and teaching presences.

Either the discussion is directed by the students spontaneously or by the instructor, the students are engaged in a discovery learning as emphasized by constructivism and mastery goals. This is because when the teacher asks the students self and peer-assessment questions, she does not mention the mistake but she lets them to discover these mistakes using their own efforts. The same procedure is true when the students add spontaneous feedback to their peers when no correct answer is yet confirmed by the teacher. In doing so, the students take some control over learning (learner-centeredness), are free to state their opinions, gain self-confidence, are present socially and cognitively, and develop their critical and analytical thinking skills toward the self and others. Meanwhile, the teacher monitors discussion, and then provides her feedback (teacher presence).

- Before moving to the next activity, the instructor can spend 5 minutes in asking either a *comprehension-checking question* (if the students still have a difficulty) such as “*can you re-state cases of when to cite and when not to cite?*” or a *managerial question* such as “*does anyone have a problem answering or reading others’ posts/answers or any other problem? Use private chat to tell me about any problems encountered so far*”. By using private chat, the students will be more comfortable and more self-confident with addressing their problems. Their sense of socialization will also increase by being supported academically, affectively, and technically.
- The teacher posts:



**Exercise two: Determine whether the student uses and cites information from the original passage properly or not. If Yes suggest an alternative”.**

**Original source :**

The demand for personal freedom, which had been the chief cause of revolt, was for the moment crushed. The Parliament of November gratefully confirmed the King’s repeal of the liberating charters. A unanimous vote of county and town members together contradicted all rumours that the emancipation of the serfs was seriously considered by Parliament. The Rising had failed. But the process of manumission, which had been going on for so long, continued steadily during succeeding generations. Under the Tudors the last remains of serfage were swept away, and in James the First’s reign it became a legal maxim that every Englishman was free. It must remain a matter of opinion whether this process was accelerated or retarded by the Peasants’ Rising; it is impossible to apply hard facts to the solution of such a problem.

**Source: George Macaulay Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe, 1368- 1520 (1899; reprint, New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 253.)**

**(1)-Student paper:** The events that followed the Peasant’s Rising crushed the chief cause of the revolt: the demand for personal freedom.

**(2)-Student paper:** Trevelyan found it difficult to determine the effect that the Peasant’s Rising had on the development of freedom in England.

**(3)- Student paper:** Although freedom did not come all at once for England’s serfs, George Trevelyan claims in England in the Age of Wycliffe, 1368–1520, that manumission “continued steadily during succeeding generations.”

**(4)- Student paper:** According to George Trevelyan (1899/1963), a vote confirming the King’s repeal of the liberating charters “contradicted all rumours that the emancipation of the serfs was seriously considered by Parliament” (p. 253).

**(5)- Student paper:** The idea that all Englishmen were born free did not become a common belief until the reign of James the First, according to Trevelyan (1899/1963).

**(6)- Student paper:** Although the actions of the King and Parliament after the Peasant’s Rising denied freedom to England’s serfs, serfdom nevertheless continued to erode. By the reign of the Tudors, it had disappeared completely, and by the time of James the First, all Englishmen considered themselves free. The role played by the Peasant’s Rising in this transition remains unclear.

- **Task aim:** To differentiate between plagiarized and non-plagiarized writing and correct plagiarized ones.

- **Task Timing:** It takes around 60 minutes (10 minutes for each extract of a student paper).
- **Task procedure:**
  - The teacher posts each time a sentence with its source. While the students are thinking about its answer, she uploads useful links to vocabulary websites in case the students had a difficulty understanding some vocabulary in the text and encourages them to share any websites they are using. Ex: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com>  
<http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/> This is an example of computer-generated feedback which serves as a simultaneous extra feedback / support offered by BL. It also teaches the students to be self-regulated as they take the responsibility to search on these websites by themselves.
  - In order to encourage *social and cognitive constructions (and motivational presences) and spending effort*, the teacher uses the previously mentioned *spontaneous discussion training*. Another strategy that can be used to organize a constructive discussion is to select for each student a peer to comment on his/her answer and suggest alternatives (by order when every peer discussion is public to all members). In this realm, the teacher emphasizes providing deep suggestions/corrections. At the end, the teacher monitors each discussion and provides his/her final feedback.
  - The teacher can again invite the students to ask him/her any questions in private chat (5 minutes).
  - The teacher posts:

**Exercise Three: Which of the following student's papers does not constitute plagiarism? Explain**

**Original text**

“Having a home is a basic human need; we all need somewhere to live. For a society a continuing problem of homelessness is an indictment of the ability of that society to meet the welfare needs of all its citizens. Yet homelessness remains a significant problem in affluent, welfare, Britain at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with hundreds of people sleeping rough on the streets of towns and cities every night because they do not have a home of their own to go to” (Alcock 2003, p. 73).

**Student's Paper (01)**

“Having a home is a basic human need; we all need somewhere to live” (Alcock 2003, p. 73). However, as Alcock (2003) points out, despite the fact Britain is a wealthy society with an established welfare state, there are still many homeless people living on our streets.

**Students' Paper (02)**

Having a home is a basic human need; we all need somewhere to live. (Alcock 2003, p. 73). However, even in affluent, welfare Britain, there are still hundreds of people sleeping rough.

- **Task Aim:** To critically judge a written input as consisting plagiarism or not.
- **Task Timing:** It takes at least 15 minutes (5 minutes reading and answering and 10 minutes discussion).
- **Task Procedure:**
  - The teacher posts each time an original text with its source along with two draft essays and the students compare the drafts and decide which one does not include plagiarism instances.
  - *Following the same previous spontaneous discussion training*, the students engage in cognitive and social constructive discussions by commenting on each other answers, and

answer self-reflective and peer-assessment questions; all of which is followed by the teacher's monitoring and feedback.

**Closure: (5 minutes)**

- To increase the students' self-confidence, the teacher uses *modeling strategy* by stating the names of those who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a model to the rest of the group members.
- The teacher asks the students '*affect questions*' such as "*to what extent do you think this online session is motivating and useful? Give me your opinions*".
- The teacher encourages the students to *upload any related E-articles or PDFs* in the group page at their own pace, and consult the group and the E-mail for any announcements. This serves to encourage *self-paced learning*, provides the students some *freedom* to take part in the teaching process and more importantly it directs the students to be more *self-regulated* when searching by themselves and reading extra sources.

**5.2.2. Physical Lecture Two/ Online Activities Session Two (Week Three/ Four)**

- **Topics (themes):** Teach the first borrowing technique: "Quoting"

*Definition* of a quotation, *reasons* for quoting, *when* to quote (limit the use of quotes), a brief reference to *in-text citation* rules for short and long quotes , punctuation (mainly *ellipsis and brackets*) in quoting, *avoid dropping* long quotes, and *objective analysis* of a quote.

- **General Learning Objective:** 'Students will be able to *quote* without committing *plagiarism*, *condense* quotes coherently using ellipsis, and *analyse* long quotes using a *formal* and *objective* language'.

- **Academic writing features added:**

“*Coherence*” (coherent quote with ellipsis), “*formality*” (formal analysis of long quotes), and “*objectivity*” (objective analysis of long quotes).

**a. Physical Lecture Two: (Week three)**

**Introduction: (10 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher reminds the students of the previous lecture that there are three borrowed techniques that can be used to avoid plagiarism; one of them is “quoting”.
- *To raise the students’ enthusiasm in the physical setting*, the students interact with the teacher by mentioning the cases they have ever used quotes in writing and how and when they used it.

**Development: 75 minutes**

- *To interact with the students*, the teacher asks them to define quotation and state its importance in relation to academic writing before providing the definition. She provides two examples of quotes: one which copies the original source and another which puts the copied material between quotation marks. *To maintain the students’ engagement*, the teacher can ask the students to compare between them (in terms of punctuation and in-text citation).
- The teacher stresses that the use of quotations must be limited and mentions accordingly the cases in which quotes are preferred.
- The teacher, then, writes on the board a long and a short quote and asks the students to differentiate between them. After that, she refers to the definition of a long quote and briefly to Modern Language Association (MLA) in-text citation rules.
- While explaining *punctuation in quotations and mainly ellipsis*, the teacher emphasizes the idea that *ellipsis must be used in a way that the quote is still coherent in itself and in*

*maintaining the overall text coherence. In this sense, 'quote coherence' refers to both (1) the quote's internal coherence where it fulfills a semantically complete thought and (2) to the coherence of the quote to the overall context (previous context).* The misuse of ellipsis occurs by either omitting important information or adding unrelated information to the quote which both distort the quote coherence. To illustrate the coherent use of ellipsis, the teacher provides two examples; one which uses ellipsis coherently and another with an incoherent use of the ellipsis and asks the students to judge the coherence of both examples with peers assessing each other. As such the teacher engages the students in *cognitive and social constructions (and applies motivational presences).*

- The teacher emphasizes *The Quote Sandwich Rule: "Context + Quote + Explanation"* which states that long quotes must be followed by an analysis in addition to being related to the previous information. In order to engage the students in *social and cognitive construction* and encourage them to make *efforts*, the teacher provides an example of a quote sandwich and asks the students to explain the quote's topic and how the author embeds it within the overall context and follow it with an interpretation.
- The teacher stresses the use of *formal language when analyzing a quote*. The teacher stresses eight characteristics which differentiate between formal and informal language (see Chapter Four, p.188) and illustrates them with some examples. She provides the students with lists for further reading (see Appendix VIII).
- *The teacher stresses objectivity while analyzing a quote*. She points specifically to two important aspects: (1) *avoiding the use of personal pronouns* and using third person or inanimate agent while analyzing. Ex: "Chomsky's point of view is considered very important....." not "I consider Chomsky's perspective important", and (2) *avoiding subjective evaluations* such as "right/wrong or good/bad", and use careful evaluations instead (eg. useful/inadequate). The teacher provides the students with examples.

**Closure: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher provides the students with time to ask their own questions or answer the teacher's questions and allows peers to intervene to provide the right answer. As such, the teacher allows for *social and cognitive constructions* to take place.
- The teacher *supports* the students with PDF files about '*using ellipsis*', '*formal*', and '*objective writing/ analysis*' to be read at home as further exploration. These *self-paced objects* help in encouraging the students to be *self-regulated and responsible* of their own learning.
- The teacher reminds the students to comment spontaneously when learning online and that they should not fear making mistakes which are part of the learning process. She also reminds them that online participation is evaluated equally to classroom participation and that those who offer deep suggestions/answers will be highly scored.

**B . Online Activity Session Two (Week four)**

**Introduction: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher draws the students' attention by posting a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group.
- *To raise the students' comfort, self-confidence, and establish a social presence*, the teacher posts an 'attention-getting question' such as "*if you wake up by the year 3000, what is the first thing that you would notice?*"

**Development: (110 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher posts a '*recall question*' about the previous lecture (5 minutes). An example is to ask "*based on the previous lecture, who can define short and long quotes and state the different punctuation marks that we can insert in them?*" While answering, the students post their answers and provide their spontaneous comments with the teacher's monitoring. The teacher then selects the best

answer among those of the students. As such, *social, cognitive, and teacher presences can take place.*

➤ The teacher posts:

**Exercise One: Re-write sentences (1),(2) , (3), (4), and (5) from the text, taking into consideration punctuation (quotation marks, ellipsis, brackets, colon) and citation (author and page)”.**

Below is a passage from "Three Hours to Save Your Life" found in 1999 issue of the magazine : Reader's Digest by Malcolm McConnell, page 35.

**(1) While not all brain attacks can be treated, clotbusting drugs and surgical techniques can save lives or prevent loss of neurological function. (2) Meanwhile, scientists are testing chemicals to counteract the otherwise irreversible self-destruction of brain cells following a stroke. (3) The need for these therapies is critical. (4) Some 560,000 Americans annually suffer ischemic strokes, while about 140,000 are afflicted with hemorrhagic strokes, which are caused by a ruptured blood vessel in the brain. (5) Someone suffers a brain attack every 53 seconds, and every 3.3 minutes someone dies from one.**

Each sentence of the text is numbered as a separate quote.

*1-Re-write the quote sentences (1) by removing all the words before "clotbusting."*

*2-Quote sentence #3, adding the words "for treating strokes as they occur" after the word « therapies », and adding [sic] somewhere. You decide where to put it.*

*3- Quote sentence 5, removing all words after 53 seconds.*

*4-Start quoting from sentence 1 to sentence 5.*

➤ **Task aim :** *'to train the students to quote correctly without committing plagiarism'.*

➤ **Tak Timing :** It takes around 20 minutes (5 minutes per each question)

➤ **Task procedure:**

- For the five questions raised in the exercise, the teacher does not ask the students to answer them at once but separately where each question is posted alone with the text (5 minutes each). This is to allow an organized and focused discussion of answers.
- While the students are thinking about the exercise, the teacher reminds them to check the files uploaded on the group page about citing quotations as a reminder. These files act as *an academic support* for the students and also encourage them to be more *self-regulated*. The teacher also raises the students' comfort by reminding them to address their problems



via private chat in case they experienced any problems (connection, digital, or pedagogical).

- The teacher posts each time a quote sentence and the students post their answers. To engage the students in *social and cognitive constructions (and social, cognitive and teaching presence) and challenging activities (effort)*, the teacher *either* selects an answer and asks the rest of the group peer-assessment questions *or* selects for each answer a peer to comment (using self and peer-assessment questions). The teacher follows any spontaneous discussion arises, monitors discussion and provides her final feedback.
  - Before moving to the next activity, the instructor can spend 5 minutes in either asking a *comprehension-checking question* (if the students still have a difficulty) such as **“Do you have any questions?”** *or* invite the students to address any questions through private chat.
- The teacher posts:

### **Exercise Two:**

**A- Using the information you learnt about ‘ellipsis’, decide whether the following students’ quotes are coherent or not. Explain**

**Tip: quote coherence refers to the meaning of the quote itself and its relation to the previous context.**

**1-**It is unfortunate that the small sample and the questionable quality of the data leave this theory completely unsupported. The theory is plausible and provocative. The experimental design is excellent, and if-and only if-Jones and Brown can supply a new, reliable data set with the same outcome, the results will revolutionize the way we view the brain. --Jane Doe, 2008, p. 456 (original)

**Student quote :** In his criticism of Jones and Brown’s data and results, Doe (2008 :456) states that ‘it is unfortunate that the small sample and the questionable quality of the data leave this theory completely unsupported. The theory is plausible and provocative. The experimental design is excellent, ... the results will revolutionize the way we view the brain’.

**2- Students’ quote use :** The disadvantages of bottled water are emphasized by Kane. As

he argues, “bottled water is wasteful, is harmful for both the environment and the community, that it represents a multibillion-dollar advertising scheme to swindle the citizens of the developed world out of their money and that Monmouth College students don’t much care for Monmouth’s tap water.”

**3-**Although initial studies suggest that the use of BL approaches is valuable and even may enhance learning outcomes relative to purely classroom-based learning environments, how characteristics of these new hybrid learning formats may interact with participants to produce learning outcomes remains somewhat of a mystery. Hwang and Arbaugh, 2009, p.281.

**Student quote :** According to Hwang and Arbaugh (2009 :281), ‘although initial studies suggest that the use of BL approaches is valuable and even may enhance learning outcomes relative to purely classroom-based learning environments, how characteristics of these new hybrid ... remains somewhat of a mystery’. (careless)

**B. Condense the following quotes using ellipsis :**

**1-**In his article “Comparison of Eleven Major Learning Styles Models” , DeBello (1990 :205) writes that ‘**of key importance to the theoretical structure of the model is the tenet that individual styles must be assessed and that, if a learner is going to have the best opportunity to learn,** instructional techniques must be used that are congruent with each student’s style’.

**2-** Stressing the immoral act of killing mammals, Benson argues that : ‘people surveyed around the world now correctly understand that whales **are intelligent, social mammals, not fish and if hunted** , must receive instant painless death’.

- **Task aim:** The exercise is divided into two parts. The aim of the first part is to encourage the students to critically reflect upon the coherence of quote integration by referring either to its internal coherence or to its coherence to the overall/previous context. The objective of the second part is to train the students to use ellipsis coherently by keeping only needed information without distorting its meaning.
- **Task timing:** It takes around 50 minutes (10 minutes per each).

➤ **Task procedure:**

- As a kind of a *computer-generated feedback*, the teacher reminds the students of visiting and *uploading any useful links of Vocabulary websites* to check for any ambiguous vocabulary.
- The teacher posts each instance of quotation use separately. For each quote use, the teacher provides the students enough time to think, discuss together and provide feedback. *Following the previous spontaneous discussion training*, the teacher encourages the students to provide social and cognitive constructions with the teacher's monitoring. Using self- assessment strategies, he asks "what do you think about your quote? is it grammatical? Is it meaningful? Is it related to the previous context mentioned in the signal phrase? Does it include unrelated information?" Does it miss required information? To guarantee that peers are providing well-thoughtful recommendations, he asks "Do you think your peer's quote is internally coherent?" what about its relation to the signal phrase? why? If no, suggest a way to make it sound coherent.
- The instructor can spend 5 minutes in either asking a *comprehension-checking question* or an affect question "*Did you consider the session motivating? Do you have any comments about the session?*"

➤ The teacher posts:

### **Exercise Three**

**A-Write an analysis for the following quote. Make sure the analysis is formal and objective.**

**Tip: in formality avoid contractions and formal vocabulary and in objectivity avoid subjective expressions/words such as “wrong” and personal pronouns.**

Rodriguez and Bellanca (2006:135) describe the school sharing behaviours of students in urban area writing : “In some urban classrooms, children arrive without any notion of sharing behavior. If they have grown up as street survivors, without strong early mediation for sharing, they may come to school ready to do battle to the death”.

**B- The following is a subjective analysis of a quote. Re-write it to make it sound objective :**

According to me, Americans do not agree whether the death penalty is a bad idea or not. Some people don't think that death penalty is human, while a couple of conservators think that it's fair killing a murderer ever if he is under 18 years old. I believe the death penalty is good to stop kids from killing one another.

- **Task aim:** The exercise is divided into two parts. The aim of the first part is to train the students to write a formal and objective analysis of a long quote (where contractions, informal vocabulary, subjective statements and personal pronouns are avoided). In the second part, the students re-write ready-made informal and subjective analyses into a more formal and objective tone and indirectly extract the informal and subjective clues of an analysis.
- **Task Timing:** 30 minutes (15 minutes per each)
- **Task procedure:**
  - *To emphasize computer-generated feedback, the teacher posts useful links to Vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check any ambiguous words in the quote. He also reminds*

the students to activate the *Spelling Checker* of Facebook to check their writings before posting them.

- Using previous spontaneous training discussion, the students engage in *social and cognitive constructions of knowledge (cognitive and social presence)* and spend more effort when trying to analyze others' answers, provide reasons for their suggestions, and assess their own writings judged by others. While providing their suggestions, the students and the teacher attempt to ameliorate answers in terms of *understanding the quote, formality and objectivity*. The teacher monitors discussion, posts the best answer as the model answer and provides her final feedback.

**Closure: (5 minutes)**

- To increase the students' self-confidence, the teacher uses *modeling strategy* by stating the names of those who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a model to the rest of the group members.
- To encourage *self-paced learning and asynchronous communication*, the teacher reminds the students to check the group page within the week in order to download the files of quotation exercises as homework and post their answers as files to the group. Each student is asked to choose one of his/her peer's answer file and comment on it in the comment bar in a separate file. In a separate file, the teacher corrects each file which contains both the original student's answer and the peer's comment. As such, the students provide their *cognitive constructions* in an asynchronous way and they become *more self-regulated/responsible*. The teacher also reminds them to consult their E-mail messages for any announcements or to address any questions.

### 5.2.3. Physical Lecture Three/ Online Activities Session Three (Week Five/ Six)

- **Topics (themes): Using “Signal Phrases”**

(*Defining* signal phrase, *signal phrase models*, *formal* reporting verbs, *active voice* in signal phrases, *present tense* in reporting verbs, *complex noun phrases* for author’s credentials, and *adding context* in signal phrases ).

- **General Learning Objective:**

Students will be able to *introduce* borrowed information using a language that is formal, objective, and concise, and *embed* its context.

- **Academic writing features added:**

“*formality*” (formal signal phrase models and formal reporting verbs), “*objectivity*” (active voice and present simple tense in signal phrases), “*concision*” (complex noun phrases in authors’ credentials), and “*coherence*” (adding context in signal phrases).

#### a. Physical Lecture Three: (Week Five)

##### **Introduction: (5 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher reminds the students that whenever we borrow an idea we need to cite the author and page and that citing the author can be introduced at the beginning or at the end.
- The teacher introduces to the students the theme of the lecture (signal phrase).

##### **Development: (80 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental and interactive*, the teacher asks the students to define a signal phrase depending on their background knowledge (last year). The teacher then, provides a definition stating that a signal phrase “at least” contains the author’s name and a reporting verb and provides her examples.

- While explaining its importance in relation to avoiding dropped information, the teacher *emphasizes using the signal phrase instead of the parenthetical citation in order to maintain the flow of ideas.*
- To write academically, the teacher emphasizes that *signal phrases must be formal.* First, she states that a signal phrase should be varied and goes beyond the subject/verb structure in order to *avoid monotony.* The students are provided with a list of different models of signal phrases (and E-documents) which include changing language structure and style to create a more formal academic language. Examples of formal expressions: “In the words of”, “with reference to”, “author states that”, “as stated by..”, “according to”. Second, the teacher emphasizes using *formal reporting verbs that are suitable for the context of the information and the author’s stance.* In this regard, the teacher emphasizes that the verb must be ‘*precise*’ and not vague/general such as “to say” as compared with “to argue” or “to deny” which can be used when the author is defending or denying a certain point of view; ‘*strong*’, i.e. a single-word verb rather than a phrasal verb (ex: ‘to talk about’ Vs ‘to discuss’); and ‘*Latin*’ rather than old English-origin. The students are provided with lists and E-documents for illustrations.
- The students and the teacher *discuss together* the function/ meaning of each reporting verb and the differences between formal and informal verb equivalents (one-word verbs Vs phrasal verbs and Latinate verbs Vs old English verbs).
- To write academically, the teacher emphasizes that *signal phrases must be objective referring to two writing features.* First, she states the importance of using *the present simple tense* for reporting verbs to stress reliability of the sources used. The present is used however unless the date of the declaration of the quote is stated and if the MLA style is used. Second, the teacher stresses using *the active voice* using a signal phrase as the latter serves more to coherent writing and due to the arguments raised in favor of

“active voice” in adding objectivity and concision. In order to explain these features, the teacher provides the students with examples.

- To write academically, the teacher emphasizes that *signal phrases must be concise*. First, the teacher draws the students’ attention to the importance of *mentioning the author’s credentials* in reinforcing the reliability of sources. To write concisely, the students are taught to use *complex noun phrases* to condense these credentials. This noun phrase is placed before the subject rather than in a separate clause that goes between commas. The first reason for using a noun phrase is its advantage in concision. The second reason is that introducing a clause between two commas reveals that information is additional and optional; what is termed “non-defining relative clause”. For example, it is more concise to write “The president of the human cloning foundation and a supporter of cloning George Smith argues that...” not “George Smith, who is a supporter of cloning and the President of the Human Cloning Foundation, argues that...” The second sentence is wordy and makes the credentials optional rather than being important for source credibility.
- *To interact with the students*, the teacher writes on the board examples of using author’s credentials and the students change it by using a complex noun phrase.
- To write academically, *the teacher emphasizes coherence-and avoiding dropping information- while adding borrowed information to previously mentioned information*. For coherent writing to be achieved, the teacher stresses the importance to interweave the “*context*” of previous information either within the signal phrase using two suggested ways: (1) adding a complete or a partial sentence followed by colon or comma, or (2) adding a statement that ends with “that”, or adding an extra link sentence before the signal phrase.



- The teacher writes on the board some examples of signal phrases with the context between parentheses and the students interweave the context using the strategies suggested using different style. To engage the students in *social and cognitive constructions*, the teacher allows peers to correct one another and suggest alternatives.

**Closure: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher provides the students with time to ask their own questions or answer the teacher's questions with allowing peers to intervene to provide the right answer. As such, the teacher allows for *social and cognitive constructions* to take place.
- The teacher supports the students with Pdf files about the topics covered to be read at home as further exploration. These *self-paced objects* help in encouraging the students to be *self-regulated and responsible* of their own learning. (see Appendix VIII)

**b. Online Activities Session Three (Week Six)**

**Introduction: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher draws the students' attention by posting a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group.
- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher posts a 'recall question' about the previous lecture. An example is to ask "*based on the previous lecture, who can define the signal phrase, state when to use it, and what does it consist of?*" The students' post their answers and provide their spontaneous comments (peer feedback) with the teacher's monitoring. The teacher then selects the best answer among those of the students. As such, *social, cognitive, and teacher presences can take place*.

**Development: (110 minutes)**

- The teacher posts:

### **Exercise One:**

**Re-write the following borrowed ideas by correcting any mistakes in SIGNAL PHRASES. Try to vary the model of signal phrases.**

**Tip: In signal phrase consider (1) author's credentials, (2) the reporting verb tense , and (3) the voice used.**

1-Sigmond Freud argued that 'dreams are the royal road to the unconscious' (12).

2-Alex Kane, who is a writer who contributes in MC Courier, states that 'bottled water is wasteful is harmful for both the environments and...?'

3- Iris Chang, who is a historian from Chinese and American origins, illustrated the full scope of the... massacre by important statistics.

4- It is said that "It was a night made for hard thoughts" (93). (the author is Gene)

- **Task aim: 'to train students to write formal, concise, and objective signal phrase'.**
- **Task Timing: it takes 15 minutes.**
- **Task procedure:**
  - The teacher posts each time a borrowed idea including a signal phrase and the students correct its mistakes and post their answers.
  - To engage the students in social and *cognitive constructions and encourage them to spend effort (active learning)*, the teacher encourages them to initiate a spontaneous discussion following the previously mentioned *spontaneous discussion training*. If the teacher is to direct assessment questions to the students about a particular wrong answer, she points that there is a mistake but she does not mention what the mistake is (i.e. in verb tense, voice, or credentials) and she lets the students discover it and correct it accordingly. The teacher keeps on using private chat to encourage the students to participate.
  - Before moving to the next activity, the instructor can spend 5 minutes in either asking a *comprehension-checking question* (if the students still have a difficulty) or a *managerial question* such as "*does anyone have a problem answering or reading others'*

*posts/answers or any other problem? Use private chat to tell me about any problems encountered so far*". By using private chat, the students will be more comfortable and more self-confident with addressing their problems. Their sense of socialization will also increase by being supported academically, affectively, and technically.

- The teacher posts:

**“Exercise Two: Fill in the blanks in each of the following signal phrases with a suitable reporting verb. Make sure it is formal and explain your choice”.**

**1. Donnie Chen (2012) ..... drug traffickers as ‘the greatest threat to public safety’ due to their massive arsenal of weapons and increasing willingness to use them.**

**2. A 2011 British Commission Report ..... City officials for waiting too long to report the increased bacteria levels in the water.**

**3. A 2004 Harvard study.....that drinking coffee may indeed have health benefits (Thomes and Van Dyck).**

**4. Both Bernard (2003) and Kin (2005).....the need for more research before drawing any conclusions.**

**5. The article.....the qualities of a good American housewife in the 1950’s.**

**6. Chomsky .....whether privileged elites should dominate mass communication and ‘deceive the stupid majority’.**

➤ **Task aim: ‘to train the students to use formal reporting verbs in context’**

➤ **Task timing: it includes 30 minutes (5 minutes per each)**

➤ **Task procedure:**

- The teacher posts each time a borrowed information with a signal phrase where a reporting verb is missing.
- *As a type of computer-generated feedback and to increase sources*, the teacher reminds the students of checking the Pdf files of formal reporting verbs uploaded on the Group page. She also posts website links of vocabulary and asks the students to share any useful vocabulary-defining websites to search for any ambiguous verbs.

- While posting their answers, the teacher encourages the students to engage in a constructive discussion when they provide suggestions on their peers' answers followed by the teacher's monitoring and feedback (according to the previous spontaneous discussion training).
- The teacher posts:

**Exercise Three:**

**Reminder: In addition to using signal phrases, information should be put in CONTEXT to be related to previous ideas.**

**Fill in the blanks to provide a context to the following quotes/paraphrase in their signal phrases or as separate sentences. Sometimes the context is mentioned between parentheses.**

**Tip : Read carefully for a better understanding, then embed an informative sentence, clause or a phrase to the signal phrase or add a separate sentence.**

1- Smith..... :

*'An assignment which asks you to do some library research to write on a topic may be called an essay, a paper, a research essay, a research paper, a term assignment, or a term paper. The terminology is not necessarily consistent: a term paper may tend to be a longer paper written in advanced courses, but not necessarily. You may be assigned a specific topic or asked to choose your own from subjects relevant to the course.'* (225)

2-*John Doe (2006 :75).....and considers those who argue in favor of increasing the speed limits claiming that it helps us eliminate any risk chances on the road and reach our destinations faster to ignore the fact that higher speed causes higher-speed accidents. (rejecting an argument)*

3- Twenge.....  
He states: "They are less likely to work hard today to get a reward tomorrow— an especially important skill these days, when many good jobs require graduate degrees" (157). (about the present generations)

4- John Brown states "God never intended for man to participate in his acts of creation. He will never condone our interference in his plan for us" (235). (a debate in which the quote of John Brown contradicts a previously mentioned quote of Smith)

- **Task aim :** ‘to train the students to avoid dropping borrowed information through embedding them within the overall context’.
- **Task timing :** it includes 60 minutes (15 minutes each)
- **Task procedure :**
  - The teacher provides each time *a dropped quote or a paraphrase* (sometimes with the context mentioned between parentheses) and asks the students to contextualize them. The suggested sources include using an embedded sentence, clause or a phrase within the signal phrase or adding a separate sentence.
  - The teacher reminds the students of consulting *websites* for checking the meaning of ambiguous terms and understanding the quote and its context.
  - Using the previously mentioned spontaneous discussion training, the students initiate social and cognitive constructions (social and cognitive presences) with the teacher’s monitoring (teacher presence) and be engaged in challenging activities (active learning). Peer’s and the teacher’s assessment can include the tense and choice of the reporting verb, the voice used, and formal and objective style.

**Closure: (5 minutes)**

1. To increase the students’ self-confidence, the teacher uses *modeling strategy* by stating the names of those who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a model to the rest of the group members.
2. The teacher reminds the students to check the correction files of the quotation homework posted in the Group. She also reminds them to consult their *E-mail messages as a kind of asynchronous communication* to check any announcements or to address any questions.

#### 5.2.4. Physical Lecture Four/ Online Activities Session Four (Week Seven/ Eight)

- **Topics (themes): Teach the second borrowing technique “Paraphrasing”**

(Defining paraphrasing, when to paraphrase, techniques of paraphrasing: using *synonyms*, *changing word class*, *changing word order/ Grammar*, *simplifying and combining structures*, *changing the order of ideas and retaining meaning*).

- **General Learning Objective:**

Students will be able to *paraphrase* in a language that is free from *plagiarism*, *formal*, *objective*, *concise*, and *coherent*.

- **Academic writing features added:**

“*Objectivity*” (neutral tone while paraphrasing), “*formality*” (formal synonyms), “*concision*” (simplifying structures), and “*coherence*” (changing order of ideas and retaining meaning).

##### a. Physical Lecture Four (Week Seven)

###### **Introduction: (10 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher reminds the students of the previous lecture that there are three borrowed techniques that can be used to avoid plagiarism; the second one is “paraphrasing”.
- *To raise the students’ enthusiasm in the physical setting*, the students interact with the teacher by mentioning the cases they have ever changed the original wordings of a given text and explain how and when they used this strategy.

###### **Development: (70 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental and interactive*, the teacher asks the students to define “paraphrasing” based on their background knowledge (last year). The teacher, then, provides the definition and shows the importance of paraphrasing in relation to academic writing.

- Because learning is developmental, teacher reminds the students that similar to “quoting”, paraphrasing also requires citation of the author and page number and therefore requires a signal phrase which has to be formal, objective and concise (as taught in earlier sessions).
- The teacher cites the cases in which paraphrasing must be used and provides examples.
- *As a part of objective writing*, the teacher emphasizes the fact that paraphrasing entails *neutrality* when no personal opinion or alterations of the original meaning are tolerated.
- *In order to paraphrase a passage/sentence/phrase in an academic way, the teacher has to teach the following paraphrasing strategies.* As a first step, the students are taught to change original vocabulary using *synonyms which have to be formal*. Since most of the students do not have a rich vocabulary repertoire, the researcher has provided them lists of synonymous words and expressions. The lists include formal alternative words and expressions which are frequently used in academic writings. (See Appendix VIII). In addition to changing the original vocabulary, three strategies are emphasized to change the original structure. The first strategy is *to simplify and combine structures*. The students are taught that changing vocabulary is not enough. The original structure must also be changed otherwise ‘patchwork paraphrasing’ will occur. The students need to simplify structures by eliminating any elaborative language or wordiness and emphasizing the core meaning. After simplification, they are taught the strategy of ‘combining two sentences in one sentence’. Both simplification and combination of structures help achieving concision and avoid wordiness where the authors’ ideas are still presented. The second strategy is *to change word order and word class*, for example, from N to Adj, from Adj to Adv and alter between passive/active voices, or change the order of words, for example, from S +V+Adv+ Adj structure to Adj+S+V+Obj. The third strategy is that *of changing order of ideas and retaining meaning* (mainly in paragraphs). The teacher stresses the fact that ideas should not be followed in the same order of the

original passage because this is a type of plagiarism called “style plagiarism”. The students, however, must change the order *in a way that the meaning is not distorted*. Therefore, they have to understand the original passage and make sure their ideas are coherent first, and reflect the original meaning.

- *To interact with the students*, the teacher writes one example per strategy on the board and the students discuss together with suggesting better alternatives (synonyms, word order/class, simplifying and combining structure, and order of ideas).
- The teacher insists on using the techniques altogether since using one strategy on its own consists plagiarism. Using synonyms alone, for example, is still considered plagiarism.

**Closure: (10 minutes)**

- The teacher provides the students with time to ask their own questions or answer the teacher’s questions with allowing peers to intervene to provide the right answer. As such, the teacher allows for *social and cognitive constructions* to take place.
- The teacher *supports* the students with Pdf files about the topics covered (techniques of paraphrasing and formal language) to be read at home as further exploration. These *self-paced objects* help in encouraging the students to be *self-regulated and responsible* of their own learning.

**b. Online Activities Session Four (Week Eight)**

**Introduction: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher draws the students’ attention by posting a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group.
- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher posts a ‘recall question’ about the previous lecture. An example is to ask “*based on the previous lecture, who can define paraphrasing, state when to use it and mention its techniques?*” While answering such a question, the students post their answers and provide their spontaneous comments (peer



feedback) with the teacher's monitoring. The teacher then selects the best answer among those of the students'. In doing so, *social, cognitive, and teacher presences can take place.*

**Development: (110 minutes)**

- The teacher posts:

**Exercise One: Suggest formal synonyms for the words in italics:**

1-The press *mirrored* the living culture of *everybody*, it *was able* to *affect* opinion and *emphasize* existing attitudes, *but* it did not *come up with* new forms of entertainment.

2-In the modern world our thinking is *in most cases* *sent* by speech. *But*, At the university, you are *asked to* to *do a lot of* your thinking *by* writing.

3- The number of international students in American Universities has *gone up*, *dramatically*. Many studies *like* this one *points out* that these students do not *get* the language support they *need*. This has *set off both* faculty and staff members who have been *trying out* several models and *figuring out best* method of refinement.

- **Task aim:** 'to train the students on using formal synonyms when paraphrasing'.
- **Task timing:** It takes 30 minutes (10 minutes each)
- **Task procedure:**
- Each time, the teacher provides the students a sentence with words in italics and asks them to suggest synonyms. The sentences contain formal as well as some informal words generally included in the list provided to the students (ex: phrasal verbs, both Latinate and Anglo-Saxon origin words, vague words).
- *As a type of computer-generated feedback*, the teacher provides the students with useful links to vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words and asks them to share whatever vocabulary sites they know.

- While answering, the teacher engages the students in *social and cognitive constructions of knowledge and active learning* following the previously mentioned spontaneous discussion training. As such, the students decide whether their peers suggested words are formal or not and provide formal alternatives. The teacher monitors and posts the best formal answer as a model for the group.
  - *To increase the students' self-regulation*, the teacher suggests on the students to open a separate Word File in which they type and save the vocabulary they have learnt from their peers and the teacher.
- The teacher posts:

**Exercise Two:**

**Paraphrase the following pair sentences by following two steps:**

**Step1: Simplify structure of the pair sentences by *first* eliminating elaborative language/ or wordiness and *then* combine sentences together.**

**Tip: Focus on the core meaning.**

**Step2: Now, change the simplified structure by *either* re-ordering clauses/phrases *or* changing word order and class. (choose only one strategy)**

**1-Teaching Sociology reminds us in each issue that** sociology instructors need not follow the traditional teaching model of lecturing **to a captive audience**. Fiction, film, and music are popular cultural media **that have been suggested as means** for establishing links between sociology and the “real world” **outside our classrooms** (Laz 1996; Loewen 1991; Martinez 1995; Pescosolido 1990).

2. Moreover, when learning any foreign language, culture plays a **very significant role in the process of learning that language**. Culture is **now considered to be** one of the elements that are **said to be** inseparable from language. 155 2015 Ahmed Khadidja

**3-Most teachers, if not all, agree that students, at least in theory, should be able to take charge** of their own learning **at some point**. Others **just** feel it is not worth it because students will remain dependent on teachers and textbooks.

- **Task aim: ‘to train the students to paraphrase pair sentences using an alternative and condensed structure’**
- **Task timing: It takes 45 minutes (15 per each)**

➤ **Task procedure**

- The teacher and the students discuss and solve each pair sentence separately by moving along the first and second steps (5 minutes for each pair sentence). In the first step, the students are required to condense the pair sentences by *first* eliminating any elaborative language or wordiness and emphasizing core meaning and *then* combining sentences together into one sentence. In the second step, they change the simplified structure by *either* re-ordering clauses/phrases *or* changing word order and class.
  - *As a type of computer-generated feedback*, the teacher provides the students with useful links to vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words.
  - *To engage the students in constructive discussions (maintain their social and cognitive presences) and encourage them to spend efforts*, the teacher follows the previous discussion training. Within the discussion, the teacher can ask self-assessment questions such as “what changes you think have brought? What elaborative words have you omitted? What are the key words? Is your paraphrase grammatical and concise enough? and peer-assessment questions such as “Do you think his/her sentences are grammatical and concise? Why? What words can be removed? Would you suggest an alternative?” The discussion is followed by the teacher’s monitoring and her final feedback (teacher presence).
  - Before moving to the next activity, the instructor can spend 5 minutes in either asking a *comprehension-checking question* or a *managerial question*.
- The teacher posts:

**Exercise Three : Using both strategies of (1) changing original syntax into concise version and (2) formal vocabulary in addition to (3) changing order of ideas (sentences) paraphrase the following paragraph:**

Tip: make sure that: (1) signal phrase is concise, formal, and objective (3) use a formal and neutral style (2) keep the paragraph coherent.

“There has been a dramatic increase in the number of Australian children taking an interest in cooking in the last two years. Researchers speculate that this may be due to the rising popularity of reality based cooking shows aimed at a young audience. These shows often feature children who are very skilled at preparing, cooking and presenting food. The shows present the idea that the levels of skill such children possess in the kitchen can be reached by any child, as long as they are determined and have family support. Cooking products and games have also started to line the shelves of toy stores. These products are frequently packaged so as to reinforce their links to the popular television shows and the promise of success and celebrity status such shows confer upon the child who cooks.” (McGuinness, 15, 2011)

- **Task aim: ‘to train the students to paraphrase a paragraph using a condensed, formal, objective, and coherent style’.**
- ❖ The researcher has chosen only one passage for this activity because emphasis is cast on the quality of the constructive discussion, on giving the students much time thinking about the activity and on their understanding rather than on the quantity of questions. This decision is held mainly following the difficulty of the task itself which requires the students to pay attention to different issues at the same time which also require remembering aspects taught during previous sessions (paraphrasing strategies; changing order of ideas; concision, formality, and objectivity in the signal phrase; formal and objective writing).
- **Task timing:** It takes 30 minutes.

➤ **Task procedure:**

- The teacher posts the paragraph with its source.
- *As a type of computer-generated feedback and extra source*, the teacher provides the students useful links to vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words (in order to paraphrase). She also reminds the students of using Spelling Checker to revise their spelling and Grammatical mistakes before posting their texts.
- In this particular activity and because the texts written by the students are long and reveal different writing features, the teacher has preferably decided to choose by herself an answer or two (a text) on which to start the spontaneous discussion by means of self and peer-assessment questions. The questions and the students' comments (*social and cognitive constructions*) cover all academic writing features required by the activity (in relation plagiarism, formality, objectivity, and concision) when the rest of the group provide their viewpoints, explain them, and ameliorate accordingly. As such, the students engage in *active learning where they develop their analytical and critical thinking and spend more efforts*.

**Closure: (5 minutes)**

6. To increase the students' self-confidence, the teacher uses *modeling strategy* by stating the names of those who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a model to the rest of the group members.
7. To encourage *self-paced learning, increase the students' self-regulation and provide more support*, the teacher encourages the students to upload any useful links in relation to paraphrasing, formal and concise tips. *As a type of asynchronous communication*, she reminds them to consult their E-mail messages for any announcements.

8. The teacher reminds the students to check the group page within the week in order to download the files of paraphrasing exercises as homework and post their answers as files to the group. Each student is asked to choose one of his/her peer's answer file and comment on it in the comment bar in a separate file. In a separate file, the teacher corrects each file which contains both the original student's answer and the peer's comment. As such, the students provide their asynchronous *cognitive constructions* and they become *more self-regulated/responsible*.

#### 5.2.5. Physical Lecture Five/ Online Activities Session Five (Week Nine/ Ten)

- **Topics (themes): Teach the third borrowing technique “Summarizing”**

(*Defining summarizing, drawing similarities/ differences between summarizing and paraphrasing, when to summarize, strategies of summarizing: skimming and scanning, how to be selective/ teach analytical skills, using one's own voice/paraphrasing, re-ordering ideas with keeping meaning, using cohesive devices*).

- **General Learning Objective:**

Students will be able to *summarize* using a language that is free from *plagiarism, formal, objective, concise, coherent, and well-structured*.

- **Academic writing features added:**

*Most of academic writing features added in these sessions are derived from the previous sessions about signal phrases and paraphrasing. This is because summarizing includes the use of both paraphrasing and a signal phrase.*

*“Analytical skills”* (extracting only main ideas while summarizing), *“objectivity”* (neutrality while summarizing/objective signal phrase), *“formality/concision”* (formal and concise signal phrase/formal and concise paraphrasing), *“coherence”* (re-ordering

ideas and retaining meaning in paraphrasing), “*cohesion*” (using cohesive devices while summarizing).

#### **a. Physical Lecture Five (Week Nine)**

##### **Introduction: (10 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher reminds the students of the previous lecture that there are three borrowed techniques that can be used to avoid plagiarism; the third one is “summarizing”.
- *To raise the students’ enthusiasm in the physical setting*, the students interact with the teacher by mentioning the cases they have ever summarized a given text and explain how and when they used the strategy of summarizing.

##### **Development: (70 minutes)**

- *Because learning is developmental and interactive*, the teacher asks the students to define “summarizing” based on their background knowledge (last year and high school studies).
- Because learning is developmental, the teacher reminds the students that similar to “quoting” and “paraphrasing”, “summarizing” requires citation of the author and page number and therefore requires a signal phrase which has to be formal, objective and concise (as taught in earlier sessions).
- Since summarizing and paraphrasing might seem similar to the students, a distinction is needed referring both to similarities and differences. The teacher has to provide examples and *interact with the students* by letting them draw the differences and similarities.
- The teacher states the cases in which summarizing have to be used in comparison to quoting and paraphrasing.

- *In order to summarize a passage/paragraph /chapter in an academic way, the teacher stresses the following points:*
- ❖ The first point is skimming and scanning strategies of reading. Before explaining this point, *the teacher interacts with the students* by asking them to explain what makes a good summary according to their own experiences (which is careful reading). Based on their background knowledge, the students also define “skimming” and “scanning”. Then the teacher cites the use of both strategies with examples. *To maintain the students’ engagement and attention*, the teacher refers to her own experiences (and strategies used) as a former student with skimming and scanning when asked to summarize literary works or books/chapters of a certain subject. These strategies hold as first step of summarizing technique “to cover for the meaning of a text/ understand the text”.
- ❖ After understanding what the passage is about, the students have to be taught the second step which is “analytical skills”. By analyzing the passage, the students highlight key vocabulary and key points and differentiate between major and minor /supportive ideas. *To engage the students*, the teacher provides an example of a text and the students select the main ideas and details.
- ❖ The third strategy is *using one’s own voice* while summarizing. In other words, after analyzing the passage and setting key points aside, the students are simply going to “paraphrase” the main ideas using their own style. In this regard, the teacher reminds the students that their language must be *formal, objective, and concise both in the paraphrase and in the signal phrase* as seen in previous lectures. She also reminds them to revise the Pdf files concerning tips about formal and concise language.
- ❖ The next point to emphasize is “*neutrality*”. The teacher reminds the students to keep a neutral description of author’s main ideas without involving their own points of view (similar to paraphrasing). *To engage the students*, the teacher provides two examples of



summarized texts with asks the students to decide which one is neutral and which one is subjective giving reasons.

- ❖ Another point to recall the students' knowledge about is “*re-ordering ideas and ensuring a meaningful corpus*” while summarizing to avoid style plagiarism (similar to paraphrasing).
- ❖ The last point to emphasize is using “*cohesive devices*” while summarizing to make sure that there is a smooth transition between ideas. The students are given a list of commonly used cohesive devices (formal) with some examples of coherent/non-coherent writings which they have discussed with the instructor.

**Closure: (10 minutes)**

- The teacher provides the students with time to ask their own questions or answer the teacher' questions with allowing peers to intervene to provide the right answer. As such, the teacher allows for *social and cognitive constructions* to take place.
- The teacher *supports* the students with Pdf files about the topics covered (techniques of summarizing, neutrality, and cohesive devices) to be read at home as further exploration. These *self-paced objects* help in encouraging the students to be *self-regulated and responsible* of their own learning.

**b. Online Activities Session Five (Week Ten)**

**Introduction: (5 minutes)**

- The teacher draws the students' attention by posting a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group.
- *Because learning is developmental*, the teacher posts a 'recall question' about the previous lecture. An example is to ask “*based on the previous lecture, who can define summarizing, state when to use it and mention its techniques?*” (5 minutes). While answering such a question, the students post their answers and provide their spontaneous

comments (peer feedback) with the teacher's monitoring. The teacher then selects the best answer. As such, *social, cognitive, and teacher presences can take place.*

**Development: (110 minutes)**

- The teacher posts:

**Exercise One: The following paragraph centers around three (03) ideas. Summarize it and make sure to use (1) cohesive devices and (2) change the order of ideas.**

1-The main objective of note taking is to capture the essential points of the lecture and keep a record of the main ideas, which the student later uses for revision, particularly for examination purposes or to write a summary or a report based on the notes. Taking notes during a lecture is a highly demanding skill and creates problems for students who are learning English as a second or foreign language for academic purposes. For students, participation in lectures requires active listening and effective note-taking skills. Training students to take notes during lectures is an important component of the English for Academic purposes curriculum in preparing them for their future academic classes.

**Source : Yasemin Kirkgoz 2010**

- **Task aim: 'to train the students to summarize using a cohesive and coherent style'.**
- **Task timing: 30 minutes.**
- ❖ Again, to emphasize the quality of interactions and due to the nature of the task itself, the teacher decided to use only one text.

**Task procedure:**

- The teacher posts one text with its source.
- *As a type of computer-generated feedback*, the teacher provides the students useful links to vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words.
- *To engage a social and cognitive constructions (social and cognitive presences) and encourage learners to spend effort (active learning)*, the teacher selects one or two of the students' answers and asks self-assessment and peer assessment questions. Peers provide recommendations (on removing details, using cohesive devices, re-ordering ideas with

coherence, in-text citation, using formal and objective signal phrase, formal vocabulary).

The teacher monitors discussion and provides her feedback (*teacher presence*).

➤ The teacher posts:

**Exercise Two : The following text is excerpted from a study of Al-Musalli (2013) which refers to a program called ‘Lecture Note Taking Driving Licence’. Summarize the text following this guide :**

**1-Summarize the first paragraph in one sentence (one key idea)**

**2-Summarize the second paragraph in one sentence (one key idea)**

**3-Summarize the third paragraph in 5 sentences.**

Tip: Use in-text citation, changing original structure and use formal vocabulary.

The fundamental theory behind Lecture Note Taking Driving Licence provides intensive tailor-made training in NT skills at the initial stages of the students’ transition from school to university rather than following the more common prolonged training using commercial NT and study skills books developed for a more general audience, which in most cases are useful for teachers more than students.

This programme was developed at Sultan Qaboos University. The students were all Omani Arab learners at the Language Center, who were involved in different English foundation courses before joining their colleges at the university, where the language of instruction is English. The programme was tested on three groups of students who had very little or no instruction in NT at school.

The focal aspect of the programme is the teacher’s involvement in developing the learners’ NT skills in a quick fashion with emphasis on learners’ autonomy. The teacher’s role is not traditional. Instead of simply lecturing on NT, the teacher is involved in the actual writing and shaping of notes through providing demonstrations on how to take notes. Such demonstrations involve: (a) sharing and discussing sets of ready-made notes on the topic of the lecture with the students, (b) taking notes with the students from a recorded lecture on the board, and (c) taking notes from a recorded lecture on the board while the students are busy taking notes and discussing the different notes. The common advantages of these three activities are: to give students examples of how notes on the same material can look and stress certain points in the material that they might have not picked. The advantage of the latter two activities is to show students that NT requires a lot of effort and imagination. **Source: Al-Musalli, 2013,**

- **Task aim: ‘to train the students to summarize a study by eliminating extra details and emphasize the information that serve one’s paper’**
- **Task timing: 60 minutes.**
- **Task procedure:**
  - The students are asked to answer each paragraph separately following the guide. The teacher devotes 20 minutes for each paragraph (answer and discussion).
  - *As a type of computer-generated feedback*, the teacher posts a reminder to the students to use the feature of spelling checker to check for their spelling mistakes before posting their summaries; to consult the PDF files uploaded on the group page about summarizing, formal and concise language; and to use the Vocabulary websites to check ambiguous words.
  - *To launch a constructive discussion*, the teacher selects some of the texts posted by the students and posts assessment questions such as “*what do you think is successful about this draft? Is the citation mentioned? Is your signal phrase objective, concise, and formal? Is the summary formal? Can we simplify structure better than this? Are there any details that need to be omitted? Do you think this word (a given word) is formal?* Peers answer in the comment bar and are asked to give their opinions and suggest any ameliorations concerning any of the previous factors. The teacher monitors discussion and provides her feedback.
  - Before moving to the next activity, the instructor can spend 5 minutes in either asking a *comprehension-checking question* or a *managerial question*.
- The teacher posts:

**Exercise Three : Imagine you are required to write a research about note-taking (NT) and you need to use the previous two sources.**

**Instruction : Add ‘ a link sentence’ to combine the previous summaries of both sources into one coherent text. Then use a second link sentence to relate your text to one’s previous ideas.**

**Method of answer : write only the first and second link sentences in the comment bar.**

**Tip : Define the general idea of the first and second source to come up with suitable link sentences.**

**Source one :**

The main objective of note taking is to capture the essential points of the lecture and keeps a record of the main ideas, which the student later uses for revision, particularly for examination purposes or to write a summary or a report based on the notes. Taking notes during a lecture is a highly demanding skill and creates problems for students who are learning English as a second or foreign language for academic purposes. For students, participation in lectures requires active listening and effective note-taking skills. Training students to take notes during lectures is an important component of the English for Academic purposes curriculum in preparing them for their future academic classes.

**Source : Yasemin Kirkgoz 2010**

**Source two :**

The fundamental theory behind Lecture Note Taking Driving Licence provides intensive tailor-made training in NT skills at the initial stages of the students’ transition from school to university rather than following the more common prolonged training using commercial NT and study skills books developed for a more general audience, which in most cases are useful for teachers more than students.

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➤ **Task aim: ‘ to train the students to keep coherence when combining sources’**

- **Task timing:** it takes 15 minutes (5 minutes to create the two link sentences and 10 minutes for discussion)
- **Task procedure:**
  - The teacher posts again the previous two texts with their sources.
  - *To launch a constructive discussion*, the teacher selects some of the answers posted by the students and poses assessment questions such as “according to you, what is the general idea of the first and second sources? And asks peers ‘do you agree with your peer’s answer? Why? Then what do you think about the link sentence he used to combine sources? Do you have an alternative? What about the link sentence to introduce the student overall text? Does it really fit with the sources’ themes? Are there any in-text citation mistakes? Peers provide their opinions and suggestions while the teacher monitors discussion and provides her feedback.
- **Closure: (5 minutes)**
  - To increase the students’ self-confidence, the teacher uses *modeling strategies* by stating the names of those who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a model to the rest of the group members.
  - To encourage *self-paced learning*, *increase the students’ self-regulation and provide more support*, the teacher encourages the students to upload any useful links in relation to summarizing, formal and concise tips. *As a type of asynchronous communication*, she reminds them to consult their E-mail messages for any announcements.
  - The teacher reminds the students to check the correction files of paraphrasing exercises. She also reminds them to check the group page within the week in order to download the files of summarizing exercises as homework and post their answers as files to the group. For each student, the teacher appoints a particular peer on which to analyse and correct his/her draft answer. In a separate file, the teacher corrects each file which contains both the original

student's answer and the peer's comment. As such, the students provide their asynchronous *cognitive constructions* and they become *more self-regulated/responsible*.

### **Conclusion**

The experiment content and design aim largely to reflect the objectives of the present study with reference to applying the tenets of the research main theoretical variables: BL, motivation, and academic writing. The treatment period lasted for ten weeks (ten sessions). Every two subsequent sessions serve a common learning objective in which the first is delivered in a physical setting whereas the second is delivered online through a Facebook Group. The instructional content, themes, and activities, in every session, center on 'borrowing techniques'-quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing-with integrating some elements of academic writing from The Checklist of Experiment Implementation designed by the researcher. The design and order of activities and online discussions attempt to reflect constructivism, BL, and Garrison et al. (op.cit) online presences using Bloom's taxonomy and Muilenburg and Burge's (op.cit) Online Discussion Questions.

## **Chapter Six: The Exploration Study Results**

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## **Introduction**

For the sake of objectivity, any exploration study must be evaluated in a way or another by the use of measurement instruments. In the present chapter, the exploration study consisted of distinguishing whether there is a comprehensive program of academic writing at Larbi Ben M'hidi University. It also relied on investigating the students' level of motivation and their academic writing proficiency before, within, and after the experiment implementation, and exploring the teachers' conceptions, use, and attitudes towards using BL. It was evaluated by the Checklist of Academic Writing, the students' questionnaires, namely, the pre-experiment, the mid-experiment, and the post-experiment questionnaire, and the teachers' questionnaire.

### **6.1. Checklist of Academic Writing: Results and Discussion**

Once comparing between the Checklist of Academic Writing (see Chapter Three, pp128-130) and the current programs of "Research Methodology" for first, second, and third (see Appendix IX), one can notice that the programs followed are to a great extent far beyond the standards of academic writing as pointed out by researchers in the field.

Before presenting the results, we must first clarify the aim of the checklist and the objective of the subject of 'Research Methodology'. On the one hand, and as explained in Chapter Three (pp.125-126), the checklist aims to provide a framework about how to teach academic writing comprehensively with reference to its main characteristics and skills. In doing so, academic writing comprises sentence-related concerns to more stretched passages (paragraphs and essays). On the other hand, the objective of the subject of 'Research Methodology' –as being compared with that of 'Written Expression' (see Chapter Two, pp.80-81)- is to teach students the methodology required to conduct an academic research including teaching an *advanced type of academic writing*. Consequently, and in comparison with the checklist, the program must include not only 'research skills' (how to search for

documents, note-taking, borrowing techniques) but also ‘drafting skills’ (*how the students’ own style is academic rather than personal*, i.e. their own style is objective, formal, and concise). As for ‘structural and analytical skills’-skills needed to any novice writer and used in any type of writing- the subject of ‘Written Expression’ seems more targeted towards teaching them (coherent, structural and reasonable writing).

The previous comparison between the aims of both the checklist and the subject of ‘Research Methodology’, suggests to eliminate ‘structural and analytical skills’ from the comparison between the program used and the checklist since these skills are already taught in the subject of ‘Written Expression’. However, we consider that these skills should at least be referred to while teaching borrowing techniques because it is still important for any piece of writing to be structural and reasonable (see how structural skills are incorporated in the program of ‘Research Methodology’, pp.132-133).

In sum, the comparison led us to distinguish that the focus of these programs is limited to the *"research skills"* only, and even within these skills no reference is given to *"the metadiscourse features"* that writers manifest in their research works. In specific terms and in comparison with the checklist, we consider the following:

- The program of 1<sup>st</sup> year refers to "reading strategies", "note-taking", to some extent "critical thinking", and borrowing techniques. In the unit entitled "critical thinking", the objective is to raise the students' critique toward a specific situation, anticipating its causes and consequences, and suggesting possible solutions. However, the students are not given opportunities to describe a situation, argue its occurrence, and analyze its possible consequences using the written form such as writing descriptive, analytic, and argumentative essays. In other words, the students are not engaged in "critical writing". *Depending on the instructor*, borrowing techniques are embedded in the program but not in a detailed manner.

That could take a period of three sessions in which the students are introduced to these strategies and given some activities to apply them.

- The program of 2<sup>nd</sup> year includes a detailed explanation and practice of borrowing techniques with in-text citations for the first semester while the second semester is concerned with 'bibliography referencing systems' and 'source cards and note cards'.
- The program of 3<sup>rd</sup> year refers to all steps of conducting a research work from generating research questions to conducting a complete research and interpreting its findings. As a result, no reference is given to "research skills" mentioned in the checklist.

In short, the curriculum which is used to teach "research methodology" for undergraduate students throughout the three years of study does not reflect the conceptions and the components of academic writing that researchers in the field make reference to. The curriculum focuses only on some elements of "*research skills*", and discards any reference to "*drafting skills*" and "*structural and thinking skills*" which are proved to be essential components of academic writing.

## **6.2. Students' Questionnaires: Results and Discussion**

Three types of questionnaires are distributed on the experimental group -15 students- who are second year students at the Department of English of Larbi Ben M'hidi University during the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016. These are: the pre-experiment questionnaire, the mid-experiment questionnaire, and the post-experiment questionnaire.

### **6.2.1. Pre-Experiment Questionnaire**

The pre-experiment questionnaire is administered on the experimental group before implementing the experiment. All its question items are provided in Appendix I-1. The results are provided below.

### 6.2.1.1.Pre-Experiment Questionnaire Results

#### Section I : General Information

##### Q1-Gender

Options	N	%
a-Male	6	40
b-Female	9	60
Total	15	100

Table13: Students' General Information

##### Q2- Status

Options	N	%
a-Employee	4	26.66
b-Non-employee	11	73.33
Total	15	100

Table 14: Students' Status

To answer Q1 and Q2, the results from tables 13 and 14 reveal that the sample of students is to some extent homogeneous with respect to gender and that only 4 students are “employees”. The term “employee” in this context refers to the situation of a student who studies and works at the same time. These students are ‘male’ and have a part-time job. Their situation (similar to many others) obliges them to be absent in some sessions. We stress the importance of this issue and propose using BL in which the students can choose the time suitable for them to attend the online sessions. These four students were satisfied enough with changing some physical sessions to the online setting.

#### Section II: Students' Level of Motivation and Academic Writing Proficiency

##### Q3-To what extent you think motivation is important to learn English?

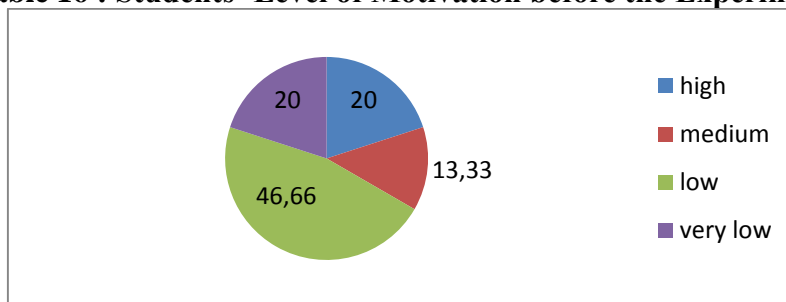
Options	N	%
a-To a great extent	11	73.33
b-To some extent	4	26.66
c-Not important at all	0	0
Total	15	100

Table 15: Students' Attitudes towards Importance of Motivation

**Q4-How do you rate your current level of motivation to study this subject?**

Options	N	%
Very high	0	0
a-high	3	20
b-medium	2	13.33
c-low	7	46.66
d-Very low	3	20
Total	15	100

**Table 16 : Students' Level of Motivation before the Experiment**



**Figure 9: Students' Level of Motivation before the Experiment**

To answer Q3 and Q4, the results from tables 15 and 16 show that the majority of the students (73.33 %) consider that motivation is to a great extent important to learn English and that their motivation is low ('low' /46.66 %) and 'very low' ,20 %), i.e. 66.66 % all-together. These results confirm the necessity to implement BL *-at least to improve the students' motivation towards learning the subject of 'Research Methodology'*.

**Q5-What factors affect your motivation?**

Options	N	%
a-the content of the subject you learn	3	20
b-the type of interactions allowed in class	3	20
c-the type of activities you do	1	6.66
d-the physical environment in which you study	5	33.33
e- the level of your classmates	0	0
f-the teacher's behaviour	1	6.66
a-c-d	1	6.66
a-d	1	6.66
Total	15	100

**Table17: Factors Affecting Students' Motivation**

To answer Q5, table 17 shows that ‘the physical setting’ takes the highest percentage of 33.33% followed by ‘the content of the subject’ and ‘types of interactions’ (20%). Both ‘physical conditions’ and ‘the content of the subject’ are mentioned twice again in “a-c-d”, and “a-d”. These factors are therefore the ones that most affect the students’ motivation. A better interpretation, however, is drawn when taking the answers of *only* those who have ‘low’ and ‘very low’ motivation , i.e. the 66.66 % (10/15). Their answers demonstrate the reasons behind their low motivation. Among these students, 50% attribute their low motivation to the physical environment, and 30 % to communication types allowed in class.

The first factor suggests that the classroom physical conditions are either *unattractive* including sitting arrangements and crowdedness or *improper* for learning as they do not fulfill the students’ physiological needs (heating, light, noise...etc). The second, emphasizes that the type of communication is either solemnly Teacher-Student (T-S) with little students’ engagement or that even when attempting to create an active learning, the communication among the students is ill-organized. The absence of such motivating types of communication is probably due to the time and space constraints stated as problems in the present paper. The instructor cannot devote extra time to engage the students in an active discussion and finds it difficult to reach well-structured discussions with the space constraints encountered.

**Q6-How important is academic writing in comparison to other language skills?**

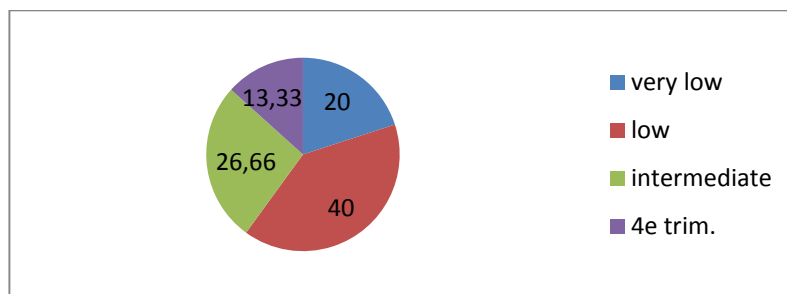
<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-very important</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>b-important</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33.33</b>
<b>c-somehow important</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>d-not important</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 18: Students’ Attitudes towards the Importance of Academic Writing**

**Q7- How do you rate your academic writing proficiency?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-Very low</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>b-Low</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>c-Intermediate</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26.66</b>
<b>d-high</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>e-Very high</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 19: Students’ Academic Writing Proficiency before the Experiment**



**Figure 9 : Students’ Academic Writing Proficiency before the Experiment**

To answer Q6 and Q7, the results from tables 18 and 19 and figure 9 show that the majority of the students perceive academic writing as ‘very important’ (40 %) and ‘important’ (33.33 %) to their overall English proficiency, i.e. 73.33 % all-together and consider their academic writing proficiency as ‘very low’ 20% and ‘low’ 40%, i.e 60 % together. This result provides us with a preliminary idea which suggests that the students’ academic writing is low. It is only after analysing the scores of the pre-test, that this information can be confirmed.

**Q8-What factors affect your academic writing proficiency?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-time provided for accomplishing the writing task</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26.66</b>
<b>b-level of difficulty of the writing assignment</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>c-the type of feedback you receive (peer Vs teacher feedback)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>d-the learning resources the teacher provides you</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>e-type of assignment you do (collaborative Vs individual)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>a-d-e</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>c-e</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 20: Factors Affecting students’ Academic Writing Proficiency**

To answer Q8, table 20 shows that the highest percentage goes to option “c” ( 40%) followed by “a” (26.66%). Both are repeated once in “a-d-e”, and “c-e”. These results emphasize the importance of ‘feedback’ and ‘time’ factors in affecting academic writing. A better interpretation is gained when taking together the answers of those having low and very low writing proficiency as it explains the factors that affect s their writing proficiency *negatively*. Among these students, 55.55 % (5/9) attribute the latter to the type of feedback they receive, 22.22 % (2/9) to the time provided for accomplishing the writing task, and 22.22 % (2/9) to the learning resources available.

### Section III: Students' Attitudes Toward Current Teaching Practices

#### Q9- How much time do you generally spend on writing activities?

Options	N	%
a-Less than 30m	2	13.33
b-30m to 1h	9	60
c-1h to 1h :30m	4	26.66
d-More than 1h :30m	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 21 : Time Students Generally spend on Writing Activities**

#### Q10-Do you think that the time available in class is sufficient to solve writing activities?

Options	N	%
a-Yes	6	40
b-No	9	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 22 : Students' Attitudes about Time Spent on Writing Activities**

To answer Q9 and Q10, the results from tables 21 and 22 show that the majority (60 %) of the students report spending a time that ranges from 30 minutes to an hour on writing activities and that they consider time provided in class for accomplishing activities to be insufficient. In other words, most teachers who teach the subject of ‘Research Methodology’ devote a whole session to activities and some others divide it between lecturing and practicing exercises but they do not usually devote a time more than 90 minutes as *no student reported the teacher spending more than 90 minutes on writing activities*. Furthermore, the amount of the time provided is taken to be insufficient which explains the students’ choice of “time



factor” in affecting their low academic writing proficiency. We, therefore, expect that maximizing the time on writing activities in BL can be satisfying for the students.

**Q11- If your answer is NO, How much time do you need to solve your writing activities?**

In answering such a question, 5 students described the situation of some teachers who devote the last 45 minutes of the session to activities which is considered insufficient. According to them, it would be better if the teacher devotes the whole session for activities.4 other students reported that a session of 90 minutes is insufficient because teachers are unable to manage the time. Some of their comments are:

-‘Our teacher used to give us many activities and for each activity he gives us 10 to 15 minutes to solve it then he provides the answer without explaining well’.

-‘the teachers must provide us more than one session for activities because sometimes students ask questions and the teacher answer them and this takes from our time so we find the teacher getting quick while answering the rest of questions’.

- ‘the activities that we do in one session are not enough, we always ask the teacher for more practice but he never does’.

*From these comments, we deduce that a time of 90 minutes or less is not sufficient and affects quality of feedback and number of activities devoted.*

**Q12--Have you been given sufficient feedback on your writings?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	5	33.33
b-No	10	66.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 23 : Students’ Attitudes towards Feedback received on their Writings**

**Q13-What type of feedback?**

Options	N	%
a-Teacher feedback	10	66.66
b-Peer feedback	3	20
a-b	2	13.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 24: Type of Feedback Received in a Physical Classroom**

To answer Q12 and Q13, the results from tables 23 and 24 show that 66.66 % of the students consider the feedback received to be insufficient and that they used to receive only the teacher feedback. These results can be interpreted in two ways. The teacher feedback is in itself insufficient given the time constraints reported in previous questions. In a time of 90 minutes or less, even if the feedback (answer) is provided after accomplishing the activities, the instructor cannot explain it thoroughly, discuss it with students and guarantee all students' understanding. The second interpretation is the absence of peer feedback and little attempt to engage the students in structured collaborative discussion. By structured, we emphasize the collaboration that is monitored by the instructor. Without monitoring the students' collaborative work, the instructor is far from knowing whether each participant is doing his/her "share" of the work.

**Q14-Have you been given opportunities to assess your own writing?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>86.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 25: Students' Self-assessment Opportunities in a Physical Setting**

To answer Q14, the results from table 25 demonstrate that almost all the students (86.66%) report having no opportunity to assess their own writings. Conversely, during the course of writing, the students must hold a critical stand towards their drafts; they must know their strengths and weaknesses. To improve this internal feedback, the students must be encouraged to assess their own writings first before others provide them with feedback.

**Q15-What type of classroom communication is allowed?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Teacher-Student Communication</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>86.66</b>
<b>b-Student-student communication</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>a-b</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 26: Type of Communication Allowed in Physical Classroom**

To answer Q15, the results from table 26 demonstrate that almost all the students (86.66%) report having T-S type of communication and even when student-student (S-S) communication is mentioned, it is stated along with T-S as “a-b”. This result suggests that the students have been taught using a teacher-centered pedagogy in which the teacher is the source of all information. As BL is by nature “learner-centered”, we suggest an increase in S-S type of communication.

**Q16-Were the learning resources provided by the teacher sufficient for you?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>53.33</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table27: Students’ Attitudes towards Learning Resources in Physical Classroom**

**Q17-Did your teacher encourage you to consult further resources?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 28 : Teacher’s Encouragement to Students to Consult Further Resources**

To answer Q16 and Q17, the results from tables 27 and 28 reveal two important findings. First, there is no significant difference between those who consider that the resources provided are sufficient (53.33 %) and those who report the opposite (46.66 %). The subjects are not unified in their opinions regarding this issue. This suggests that some teachers are better dedicated than others in assisting the students with different kinds of sources. We stress the importance of availability of writing resources since it is reported in Q8 as being one of the reasons behind their low motivation. Even if learning resources in the physical setting are taken to be sufficient for some of the students, we suggest that BL can still offer extra resources. The second finding (in Q17), however, shows that almost all student, i.e. 80 % report their teacher’s encouragement to consult further resources. We deduce that although not all teachers provide the students with needed resources, they remind them of being self-responsible and self-inquisitive.

**Q18-Were you satisfied with the way writing skill is taught?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	6	40
b-No	9	60
Total	15	100

**Table 29: Students' Satisfaction with the Current Practices of Teaching Writing****Q19-Whatever the answer, please give the reason**

To answer Q18, the results from table 29 show that the majority of the students (60 %) are not satisfied with the way the writing skill is taught. In their justifications (Q19), most of the students who answered “no” referred to the lack of sufficient opportunities to practice writing and receive feedback and this was mainly due to time constraints. Their comments are:

- *'in Written Expression, the teacher does not make us practice all types of writing we learn and even when we make an exercise the time is not sufficient for us to answer'.*

- *'we sometimes write essays but the teacher does not read them'.*

**Section IV: Students' Readiness to Blended Learning Experience****Q21-How do you rate you computer skills?**

Options	N	%
a-poor	0	0
b-moderate	3	20
c-good	7	46.66
d-excellent	5	33.33
Total	15	100

**Table 30 : Students' Computer Skills****Q22-How do you rate your skills in surfing on the Internet?**

Options	N	%
a-poor	0	0
b-moderate	1	6.66
c-good	11	73.33
d-excellent	3	20
Total	15	100

**Table 31 : Students' Internet Use Skills**

To answer Q21 and Q22, the results in tables 30 and 31 show that the majority of the students have good skills in using the computer and in Internet surfing. In table 29, the

students' answers center on 'good' with 46.66% and 'excellent' with 33.33%. Only 3 students reported having moderate computer skills while no student reported having poor knowledge of these skills. Additionally, almost all the students, i.e. 73.33 % have good skills in surfing on the Internet. These results confirm that the students are unlikely to face any problem with using the Internet or computers when participating in the experiment.

**Q23-How many hours per day you stay connected to Internet?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-less than one hr</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b-from 1-3hrs</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>c-from 3 to 5hrs</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>d-more than 5hrs</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>66.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 32: Student Frequent Use of Internet**

Results show that the majority of the students, i.e. 66.66 % connect for more than five hours per day. This is very important as it confirms that Algerian students belong to the Net Generation students who are constantly using the Internet for different purposes. Therefore, it is our duty as teachers to turn the use of Internet to pedagogical purposes.

**Q24-Have you been taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 33: Students' Experience with Online learning**

**Q25- If Yes, describe**

To answer Q24, the results from table 33 show that no student in the sample has ever been taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment. In other words, the subjects are new to the BL method. Since no student was taught in an online environment, no description was provided in Q25.

**Q26-If you are to study a course online, can you easily access Internet when it is needed ?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	12	80
b-No	3	20
Total	15	100

**Table 34 : Students' Accessibility to Online Courses**

**Q27-If No, explain why**

**Q28-How do you access Internet?**

Options	N	%
a-home	9	60
b-Internet café	2	13.33
c-university library	0	0
Others	4	26.66
Total	15	100

**Table 35 : Students' Means of Accessing Internet**

To answer Q26 and Q28, the results from table 34 and 35 show that almost all the students (80%) can easily access the Internet to participate in the online course and the access of 60 % of them can be reached from Home using WIFI connection. Those in the “other” option mentioned their ability to connect from their wireless devices (mobile phones, tablets, Ipads) which all contain 3G/4G networks. These results solve the issue of accessibility at least for the majority of them. The 3 students who answered ‘no’ to Q26, i.e. they cannot access the Internet to access the online course stay at the university residence and explained their answer in Q27 stating that they can access only at a specific time from a cyber-café. When the teacher negotiated with the students about the time of the online sessions, she made sure that the time is convenient for these students.

### **Section V: Students' Readiness to Use Facebook as a Pedagogical Tool**

**Q29-Do you have an account on Facebook?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	13	86.66
b-No	2	13.33
Total	15	100

**Table 36: Students' Ownership of a Facebook Account**

**Q30-How often do you connect to Facebook?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-never</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>b-rarely</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>c-sometimes</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26.66</b>
<b>d-often</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>e-very often</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 37 : Students' Frequent Use of Facebook****Q31- Do you consider Facebook an easy application to use?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 38 : Students' Attitudes towards Easiness of Facebook Use**

To answer Q29, Q30, Q31, the results from tables 36, 37, and 38 show that almost all the students, i.e. 86.66 % have an account of Facebook, the majority of them often connect to Facebook ('very often', 46.66 % and 'often', 20 %) and that all of them, i.e. 100% consider Facebook an easy application. Answers to these three questions confirm the students' familiarity and frequent use of Facebook as a social networking site. Therefore, it becomes arguable to suggest exploiting Facebook for more educational purposes. Its perceived easiness by the student also reveals that they are unlikely to face any difficulty using Facebook during the experiment.

**Q32-For what do you use Facebook?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-Post/ or read posts for fun</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33.33</b>
<b>b-Post/ or read posts that educate you</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>c-play online games</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>d-listen/download music</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>e-watch/download videos/episodes</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>f- watch/download educational videos</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26.66</b>
<b>g-online text chatting</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>h-online video chatting</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>a-g</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>a-c-d-g</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>a-b-c-g</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 39 : Students' Aims behind Using Facebook**

The results from table 39 show that option ‘*Post/ or read posts for fun*’ takes the highest percentage (33.33 %) followed by ‘*online text chatting*’ (26.66 %). Both are repeated again three times in ‘a-g’, ‘a-c-d-g’, and ‘a-b-c-g’. These findings suggest that most of the students use Facebook to ‘enjoy posting’ and ‘text chatting’. If we shed the light on educational objectives of using Facebook in options ‘b’ and ‘f’ we find that only 3/15 students have chosen the first option while no student has chosen the second. *The situation therefore confirms that the students generally use Facebook for social and entertainment rather than educational purposes.* It is true that Facebook is primarily been founded for strengthening social relations but we emphasize that these social relations must not be aimless but beneficial to one another. We, therefore, tend to emphasize the pedagogical/educational side of Facebook use.

**Q33-Will you be willing to study the course of Methodology on a Facebook Group?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>66.66</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33.33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 40: Students’ Willingness to Study the Subject on a Facebook Group**

**Q34-Why?**

To answer Q33, the results from table 40 show that the majority of the students, i.e. 66.66 % are willing to study the course of ‘Research Methodology’ on a Facebook Group. In their justifications (Q34) , some (4) explained their answer by perceiving Facebook a comfortable social setting, while others (6) expressed their enthusiasm for experiencing an online course on Facebook for the first time. Those who said “no” stated their concerns about what they are supposed to do in online courses as they never experienced it before.

**Q35-If you have any concerns about the course that you will take on Facebook, please write them down.**

The students mentioned few concerns. Only 2 students re-mentioned their concerns towards the way online lectures will be progressed on Facebook. They were also wondering



about the time issue of the online sessions and of their roles on Facebook. However, it has to be mentioned that the researcher provided the students with web-etiquette rules and explained everything about what they are supposed to do before engaging in the BL experiment.

## **Section VI: Further Suggestions**

### **Q36-Do you have any further suggestions?**

Although no useful suggestions have been proposed by the students, some students were enthusiastic to participate in the experiment. One student, for instance, have proposed administrating the group on Facebook while another suggested using her group page for the course. Another student stated knowing some useful pages on Facebook and Web-pages which can improve one's writing.

#### **6.2.1.2.Summary of Findings**

A summary of the major findings of the pre-experiment questionnaire is to be made with regard to each section.

##### **❖ *In relation to the students' level of motivation and academic writing proficiency***

- *The majority of the students have a low motivation towards learning the subject of 'Research Methodology'. This is being attributed mainly to the physical setting which is either unattractive or not satisfying the students' physiological and social needs, and types of communication allowed in class which are found to be basically T-S.*

- *Level of academic writing proficiency of the majority of the students is below the average. The main reasons are related to "type of feedback", "time provided for accomplishing writing tasks", and "learning resources available" in the physical setting.*

##### **❖ *In relation to the students' attitudes towards the current teaching practices***

- *The teachers generally spend a time of 90 minutes or less on writing activities. Such a time range is found by the majority to be insufficient.*

- *Feedback on the students' writings is considered insufficient by the majority.*
- *Few self-assessment opportunities were allowed in a traditional classroom.*
- *Only Teacher-Student communication is allowed in a traditional classroom.*
- *Despite teachers' encouragements for the students to consult further resources, half of the students consider learning resources available in class to be insufficient.*

- All in all, the students are *not satisfied* with the way the writing skill is taught. The main reasons behind this stand are *lack of practice, lack of feedback, and time constraints*.

❖ ***In relation to the students' readiness to the blended learning experience***

- *The majority of the students are technically ready to take part in the experiment due to their good computer and Internet surfing skills.*

- *The majority spend more than 5 hours per day connected to the Internet which facilitates the possibility of exploiting this time to pedagogical purposes.*

- *No student has been taught a course or a partial of it online.*

- *All the students can easily access the online sessions.*

❖ ***In relation to the students' readiness to use Facebook as a pedagogical tool***

- *Almost all the students are familiar with Facebook.*

- *Almost all the students connect to Facebook very frequently.*

- *All the students consider Facebook an easy application.*

- *The majority of the students do not use Facebook for pedagogical aims.*

- *The majority of the students are willing to study the course on Facebook Group.*

## **6.2.2. Mid-Experiment Questionnaire**

Given that the treatment period consisted of ten sessions, the mid-experiment questionnaire was administered on the experimental group after the fifth session. All its question items are provided in Appendix I-2. Since the first three sections of the questionnaire include items that together aim to test one single construct, each item's result is interpreted in relation to the relevant construct it represents.

### **6.2.2.1. Mid-Experiment Questionnaire Results**

#### **Section I: Assessing Students' Motivation**

The results of this section are presented in the following table and classified according to 'perceived comfort', 'perceived social presence', 'perceived usefulness', 'perceived support', 'perceived self-efficacy', 'perceived self-regulation', 'perceived autonomy', 'perceived learning goals', and 'perceived enthusiasm in the physical setting':

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
<b>Perceived comfort</b>					
1-In the online session, I felt <b>comfortable</b> with using <b>Facebook</b> as a teaching tool	53.33	33.33	00	13.33	00
2-In the online course, <b>private chat</b> made me more <b>comfortable</b> since the teacher <b>evaluated my progress privately</b> without a free pf criticism.	6.66	26.66	20	46.66	00
3-In the online session, <b>private chat</b> made me more <b>comfortable</b> as I could <b>address my concerns</b> to the teacher at any time.	73.33	20	00	6.66	00
<b>Perceived social presence</b>					
4-The online session raises my wiliness to <b>communicate</b> and negotiate with others	66.66	20	6.66	6.66	00
<b>Perceived usefulness</b>					
5- <b>Facebook Group</b> is a <b>useful</b> virtual space for learning.	33.33	40	20	6.66	00
6-I found the online session <b>useful</b> since it reduced the <b>cost of education</b> to me.	13.33	53.33	13.33	6.66	13.33
7-I found the online course <b>useful</b> since I did not <b>need to travel</b> to attend it.	80	20	00	00	00
<b>Perceived Support</b>					
8-During online session, I felt I am <b>supported</b> academically, affectively, and technically.	20	46.66	00	20	13.33
<b>Perceived self-efficacy</b>					
9-In the online session, I felt <b>confident</b> to participate (to answer teacher's questions and comment on my peer's answers)	53.33	26.66	6.66	13.33	00
10-In the online session, the teachers <b>modeled best answer strategies</b> and this raised my <b>self-confidence</b> .	13.33	20	13.33	40	13.33
<b>Perceived self-regulation</b>					
11-The online session encouraged me to <b>learn independently</b> and be responsible on my own learning	26.66	53.33	00	20	00
12-The online session taught me <b>punctuality and self-discipline</b> (checking Group updates, to be on-time for the course...)	46.66	33.33	00	6.66	13.33
<b>Perceived Autonomy</b>					
13-I participated in online sessions <b>following my own decision</b> .	73.33	26.66	00	00	00
14-I believe that allowing me to generate spontaneous comments raises my freedom	20	40	00	00	00
<b>Perceived Learning goals</b>					
15-In the online session, students generate spontaneous but <b>well thoughtful contributions</b> .	26.66	26.66	00	33.33	13.33
16-I believe that <b>efforts</b> lead to self-improvement through <b>trial-error process</b> .	33.33	53.33	6.66	00	6.66
<b>Perceived enthusiasm in physical setting</b>					
17- <b>During in-class lecture</b> , teacher <b>interacted with students</b> through question and answer patterns.	40	40	00	20	00
18- <b>During the in-class lecture</b> , teacher <b>drew my attention</b> through real-life examples.	26.66	33.33	6.66	13.33	20

**Table 41 : Assessing Students' Motivation during the Experiment**

- **Perceived Comfort**

Results of Q1 reveal that almost all the students consider Facebook a comfortable teaching tool as 53.33 % of them “strongly agree” and 33.33 % “agree” with the statement.

Results of Q2 reveal that approximately half of the students (46.66 %) “disagree” with the idea that private evaluation through private chat raises their comfort. This goes in opposition to our expectations. The students’ appreciated public than private criticisms. They wanted to show the strength of their replies in front of their classmates and the teacher and it encouraged them to supply further comments. The students clearly enjoyed showing their “comments” to public audience. Further, some subjects who are found to be introvert considered the private chat to be a good means for saving face and this is what explains the 26.66 % and 6.66 % percentages of “agree” and “strongly agree”, respectively.

Results of Q3 reveal that the majority of the students (73.33 %) “strongly agree” that addressing concerns through private chat during the online sessions raises their comfort.

- **Perceived Social Presence**

Results of Q4 reveal that almost all the students consider the online sessions to increase their willingness to communicate and negotiate with others (66.66 % “strongly agree” and 20 % “agree”). The students’ rate of interaction with one another was noticeable by the number of comments they raised and rate of private messages researcher received in private chat.

- **Perceived Usefulness**

Results of Q5 reveal that the majority of the students consider Facebook useful as a pedagogical tool. In particular, 40 % “agree” with the statement and 33.33 % “strongly agree”.

Results of Q6 reveal that the majority of students consider the online sessions useful because they reduce the cost of education (53.33 % “agree” and 13.33 % “strongly agree”).

The students in this regard seem to appreciate the situation of not being obliged to pay for the photocopies of activities and their answers, posted lectures and further e-documents.

Results of Q7 reveal that all the students (100 %) consider the online sessions to be useful since they do not need to travel to attend them. Among the 15 students, 4 students live far from the province of Oum El Bouaghi, namely Meskiana, Ain beida, Ain kercha, and Ben babouch. Due to the fact that they are employees (pre-experiment questionnaire, Q2), they are obliged to travel back and forth each day to attend their university sessions. Therefore, changing some sessions into the online setting has increased these students' sense of usefulness toward the online sessions as it saved their time and effort. Besides, taking the case of the students who stay at the university residences and the fact that the physical session takes place on Sunday at 8:00 am, most of them either attend the session late or absent it (they leave these residencies on Thursday and return back on Sunday). The remaining students seem to have enjoyed participating in these sessions while sitting at comfort in their homes.

- **Perceived Support**

Results of Q8 show that the majority of students were supported academically, affectively, and technically (46.66 % “agree” and 20 % “strongly agree”). Such a result confirms how synchronous teacher and peer feedback covers for the shortcoming of e-learning when the students feel isolated due to the absence of any synchronous support. On the opposite, the majority felt the sense of socialization as revealed in Q4 through instant communication. They also could address their concerns through private chat as found in Q3.

- **Perceived Self-efficacy**

Results of Q9 reveal that the majority of the students felt confident to participate in the online sessions (53.33 % “strongly agree” and 26.66 % “agree”). This result seems to correlate with the notion of comfort that was reported in Q1, Q2, and Q3.

Results of Q10 reveal that half of the students do not consider “modeling best answer strategies” to raise self-confidence (40 % “disagree” and 13.33 % “strongly disagree” i.e. 53.33 % altogether). Although this result refutes the importance of ‘vicarious experience’ which is emphasized by attribution theory, it does not suggest that these strategies decrease the students’ self-confidence since the latter is already proved to be high in the previous question. According to the researcher, these strategies served more in organizing the online sessions than to self-confidence.

- **Perceived Self-regulation**

Results of Q11 reveal that the online sessions encourage the majority of students to learn independently and be responsible of their own learning (53.33 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”). In other word, reading the uploaded e-documents, searching websites during the online sessions, keeping attention of the session progress and others’ comments and answers were beneficial in raising the students’ self-regulation and responsibility.

Results of Q12 reveal that almost all the students consider the online sessions to teach them punctuality and self-discipline (46.66 % “strongly agree” and 33.33 % “agree”). Through checking the Group updates, be on time for the online course, and performing one’s role during the online course, the students become more punctual and self-disciplined.

- **Perceived Autonomy**

Q13 result reveals that all the students (100 %) participated in the online sessions following their own decision. Although this result is expected, the aim is to stress that students’ motivation must emerge from within rather than being imposed from an outside source.

Q14 result shows that the majority of the students consider that allowing them to generate spontaneous comments raises their freedom (40% “agree” and 20% “strongly agree”).

- **Perceived Learning Goals**

Results of Q15 reveal that half of the students perceive the contributions generated during the online sessions to be thoughtful (26.66 % “strongly agree” and 26.66 % “agree” i.e 53.33 % altogether). This holds that a good proportion of them also consider that the opposite is true. *The researcher considers these controversial standpoints to truthfully describe the situation of the online sessions.* It is true that, during the online sessions, the communication was high, however, not all the students were providing “deep” comments. Although the instructor was continuously stressing the quality over the quantity of suggestions (and attributing it some additional marks), some students still provide non-constructive feedback. She attributes the situation to the fact that the students are not used to engage themselves in *educational discussions* through Facebook which necessitate cognitive presence but generally to *social discussions* which are more geared towards showing one’s social belongingness. The instructor, however, assumes that with more practice, the students will pay more attention to the quality of their response.

Results of Q16 reveal that almost all the students consider that efforts lead to self-improvement through a trial-error process (53.33 % “agree” and 33.33 % “strongly agree”). As explained in the previous question, the researcher constantly reminds the students of generating “well-thoughtful contributions”. In doing so, he emphasizes that errors are natural steps towards learning so as to encourage the students to participate and not to fear public criticism.

- **Perceived Enthusiastic in the Physical Setting**

Results of Q17 reveal that the majority of the students are satisfied with the teacher’s interactions with them during the physical lectures (40 % “strongly agree” and 40 % “agree”). Results of Q18 show that the attention of the majority of the students is raised during the physical lectures (33.33 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”). The results on both

questions are to be attributed to the teacher's attempts to ameliorate the physical sessions (see Chapter Two, pp 107-108).

## **Section II: Attitudes toward how Methodology is taught**

The results of this section are presented in the following table and classified according to 'the teacher feedback', 'peer feedback', 'cognitive presence/community of inquiry', 'metacognition/critical thinking', 'internal feedback', 'sufficient time', 'unlimited accessibility of input', 'memorization of input', 'extra materials/resources', and 'computer-generated feedback':



<b>Statements</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Teacher feedback</b>					
19-During the online session, I received sufficient <b>feedback from my teacher.</b>	53.33	33.33	00	13.33	00
<b>Peer feedback</b>					
20-During the online session, I received sufficient <b>feedback from my classmates.</b>	26.66	33.33	6.66	20	13.33
<b>Cognitive presence/ community of inquiry</b>					
21-Receiving other's <b>suggestions</b> on my writings (answers) increased my <b>awareness of my mistakes.</b>	40	53.33	00	00	6.66
22-Reading other's <b>posts broadened my understanding</b> to new perspectives	73.33	13.33	00	6.66	6.66
23-My online experience encouraged me <b>to value</b> perspectives other than my own	20	60	6.66	13.33	00
<b>Metacognition/ critical thinking</b>					
24-The fact that my suggestions were seen by everyone encouraged me to be <b>critical about what I propose before posting.</b>	26.66	46.66	6.66	20	00
25-The online session has sharpened <b>my analytical skills</b> of analyzing and evaluating	60	33.33	00	6.66	00
26-I found the online <b>activities intellectually challenging</b>	66.66	26.66	6.66	00	00
<b>Internal feedback</b>					
27-Asking me <b>self-reflective questions</b> encouraged me to <b>revise</b> my answers before posting them	26.66	33.33	20	13.33	6.66
<b>Sufficient time</b>					
28-I was generally given <b>enough time</b> to think and <b>answer</b> questions posted	26.66	53.33	6.66	00	13.33
29-I was generally given <b>enough time to ask</b> questions	13.33	20	6.66	26.66	26.66
<b>Unlimited accessibility of Input</b>					
30-I could always be up-to-date with online sessions since they are accessible any time anywhere.	93.33	6.66	00	00	00
<b>Memorization of input</b>					
31-I could <b>memorize information</b> better since online discussions are accessible online any time anywhere.	26.66	46.66	6.66	6.66	13.33
<b>Extra materials/ resources</b>					
32-Availability of <b>e-documents</b> increased my understanding of the course concepts	33.33	33.33	26.66	13.33	00
<b>Computer-generated Feedback</b>					
33-Accessibility of <b>websites</b> during the online session helped me clarifying ambiguous concepts (vocabulary) related to activities.	33.33	40	00	20	6.66
34-During the online session, using <b>grammar checker</b> encouraged me to <b>revise my writings</b> before posting them	6.66	26.66	6.66	40	20

**Table 42: Students' Attitudes towards how 'Research Methodology' is Taught during the Experiment**

- **Teacher Feedback**

Results of Q19 reveal that almost all the students received sufficient feedback from the instructor. In specific, 53.33 % “strongly agree” and 33.33 % “agree” with the statement.

- **Peer Feedback**

Results of Q20 reveal that the majority of the students received sufficient feedback from their peers. When taking together the 33.33 % who “agree” and the 26.66 % who “strongly agree”, we find a percentage of 60 %. The remaining 40 %, however, is still a significant proportion that must not be underestimated. The fact that some of the students reported not receiving much peer feedback is probably affected by the first two sessions when most of them were reluctant to take any initiative to comment on their peers’ answers. It was only after the teacher asks them to do so that the students react. Thereafter, with the teacher stressing “spontaneity”, the students gradually generated spontaneous and constructive comments.

- **Cognitive Presence/Community of Inquiry**

Results of Q21 reveal that almost all the students (except one) consider receiving other’s suggestions to increase their awareness of mistakes (53.33 % ‘agree’ and 40 % ‘strongly agree’). Such a result confirms the contribution that teacher and peer feedback play in relation to internal feedback and self-awareness.

Results of Q22 reveal that almost all the students consider reading others’ comments to broaden their understanding (73.33 % ‘strongly agree’ and 13.33 % ‘agree’).

Results of Q23 reveal that the majority of the students regard the online experience as encouraging them to value perspectives other than their own (60 % ‘agree’ and 20 % ‘strongly agree’). Such a result suggests how the online sessions were successful in creating a community of inquiry when all members value and respect others’ opinions/criticisms.

- **Metacognition/Critical Thinking**

Results of Q24 reveal that the majority of the students become more critical about what they propose before posting it given that their suggestions were public (46.66 ‘agree’ and 26.66 ‘strongly agree’). It seems that ‘the openness’ of commenting and posting urges the students to check their contributions closely for any mistakes before posting them. The researcher felt a good sense of social presence when all the students wanted to impose their social identity. As such, the students paid much attention to their responses in order to eliminate others’ negative criticisms.

Results of Q25 reveal that almost all the students (except one) consider the online sessions to sharpen their skills of analyzing and evaluating (60% ‘strongly agree’ and 33.33% ‘agree’). These results stress the importance of the online sessions in raising the students’ higher ordered skills of analysing, evaluating, and criticizing. Importance is either attached to the self-assessment and peer-assessment questions that encourage the students to evaluate their own or peer’s responses, or to the session activities which require them to analyse a posted text.

Results of Q26 reveal that all the students (100 %) consider online activities intellectually challenging (73.33 % ‘strongly agree’ and 26.66 % ‘agree’). Obtaining such a result confirms that type of online activities encourages constructive discussion to take place.

- **Internal Feedback**

According to the result of Q27, the majority of the students report that self-reflective questions helped them in revising and correcting their answers (33.33 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”, i.e. 60 % altogether). This shows the effectiveness of self-reflective questions in improving the students’ internal feedback and generating immediate self-correction.

- **Sufficient Time**

Results of Q28 reveal that the majority of the students consider the time provided for thinking and answering questions and activities sufficient (53.33 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”).

Results of Q29 reveal that the majority of the students consider the time provided for asking the teacher comprehension questions and receiving feedback to be sufficient. In specific, 33.33 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”, i.e. 60 % together.

- **Unlimited Accessibility of Input**

Results of Q30 reveal that all the students (100 %) could always be up-to-date with the online sessions due to their unlimited accessibility (93.33 % “strongly agree” and 6.66 % “agree”). Such a finding suggests that unlimited accessed input can also be a solution to the students who absent some online sessions as they can check the Group page at any time.

- **Memorization of Input**

According to Q31 results, ‘unlimited accessibility of input’ during the online sessions helped the majority to better memorize (46.66% “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”).

- **Extra Materials/ Resources**

Results of Q32 reveal that the majority of the students consider uploaded e-documents to increase their understanding of the course concepts. (33.33 % “strongly agree” and 33.33 % “agree”).

- **Computer-Generated Feedback**

Results of Q33 reveal that the majority of the students consider accessibility of Websites during the online sessions to help them solve the activities (40 % “agree” and 33.33 % “strongly agree”).

Results of Q34 reveal that the majority of the students consider that using “Grammar Checker” does not encourage them to revise their writings before posting (40 % “disagree”

and 20 % “strongly disagree”). Such a result opposes our expectations especially that Grammar Checker is useful in revising a writing corpus for any spelling and grammatical mistakes. Two interpretations can be suggested: the majority of our subjects are *either* giving much importance to mistakes in relation to borrowing techniques and academic writing features than to Grammar and spelling, *or* that their writing proficiency is far beyond issues of Grammar and spelling. This led the researcher to deduce that “Grammar Checker” might be of better use in teaching subjects that focus on “English Grammar” and writing mechanisms.

### **Section III: Assessing Blended Learning**

The results of this section are presented in the following table and classified according to ‘students’ preparedness’, ‘discipline’, ‘learners’ centeredness’, ‘active learning’, ‘socialization’, ‘instructor’s role’, ‘synchronous/asynchronous communication’, ‘accessibility’, ‘organization’, ‘integration’, ‘workload’, ‘extra feedback’, ‘extra sources’, and ‘self-paced learning’:

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
<b>Students' Preparedness</b>					
35-Teacher explained from the beginning <b>what is expected of me</b> during online lectures.	13.33	46.66	6.66	26.66	6.66
<b>Discipline</b>					
36-During online session, <b>discipline</b> was highly observed	20	26.66	6.66	33.33	13.33
<b>Learner's centeredness</b>					
37-During online session, I felt that online discussions <b>were developed by students than</b> teacher	26.66	53.33	00	20	00
<b>Active learning</b>					
38-The online session encouraged me exploit much <b>effort</b>	40	33.33	13.33	6.66	6.66
<b>Socialization</b>					
39-I felt that I am a <b>member of a community</b>	26.66	60	00	6.66	00
<b>Instructor role</b>					
40-The instructor was <b>well-prepared</b> for each online session.	40	60	00	6.66	00
41-The instructor provided <b>meaningful and timely feedback</b> .	33.33	53.33	00	6.66	6.66
<b>Synchronous/asynchronous communication</b>					
42-The instructor and classmates were easy to get in touch with <b>during the online session</b> .	53.33	40	00	6.66	00
43-I was given the chance to communicate with my instructor through <b>e-mails</b> at times <b>beyond</b> that of the sessions.	80	6.66	13.33	00	00
44-I was able to suggest and <b>evaluate some of my classmates</b> answers at times <b>beyond</b> that of the sessions	13.33	33.33	6.66	20	26.66
<b>Accessibility</b>					
45-I had no difficulty <b>accessing the online session</b> .	40	53.33	00	6.66	00
<b>Organization</b>					
46-I could <b>follow the structure and development</b> of the online session.	20	40	6.66	26.66	6.66
<b>Integration</b>					
47-Online activities and in-class lectures <b>were relevant to each other</b> .	73.33	26.66	00	00	00
<b>Workload</b>					
48-The blended learning experience had an <b>appropriate workload</b> .	13.33	26.66	00	46.66	13.33
<b>Extra feedback</b>					
49-The blended learning experience provided extra feedback.	40	46.66	6.66	6.66	00
<b>Extra sources</b>					
50-The blended learning experience provided extra source materials.	26.66	40	00	20	13.33
<b>Self-paced learning</b>					
51-I was asked to do <b>additional readings or homeworks</b> at times beyond that of the lectures.	86.66	6.66	6.66	00	00

**Table 43: Assessing Blended Learning during the Experiment**

- **Students' Preparedness**

Results of Q35 that the majority understood exactly what is expected from them during the online sessions (46.66 “agree” and 13.33 “strongly agree” i.e. 60 % together). This confirms that the instructor’s explanation and provision of web-etiquette rules were useful to ensure the students’ readiness to take part of the experiment.

- **Discipline**

Results of Q36 reveal that approximately half of the students report discipline to be highly observed during the online sessions (26.66 % “agree” and 20 % “strongly agree” with the statement, i.e. 46.66 % together). This result accurately describes the situation of the first two online sessions in which some students did not commit themselves to connecting on the exact time specified for the online session. In addition to that, some of the students kept online without getting involved in the discussions as an attempt to avoid being nominated as absentee. However, it must be mentioned that after the second online session, instructor considered offering extra marks to the students who participate both for quality and quantity of contributions and cautions the students that an online presence without participation is equal to an absence. After that, the subjects became more serious in both their punctuality and participation.

- **Learner's Centeredness**

Results of Q37 reveal that the majority felt online discussions to be developed by the students than the teacher (53.33 % “agree” and 26.66% “strongly agree”). The students have sensed this given the high percentage of the social presence they maintained, the high communication, and the teacher’s constant encouragements to take responsibility over online discussions, and despite hesitating a bit at the beginnings of the experiment.

- **Active Learning**

Results of Q38 reveal that the majority consider the online sessions to encourage them exploit much effort (40 % “strongly agree” and 33.33 % “agree”). Such a result coincides with the result obtained from Q confirming that the activities are challenging.

- **Socialization**

Results of Q39 reveal that almost all the students felt they are members of a community (60 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”).

- **Instructor Role**

Results of Q40 reveal that all the students (100 %) regard the instructor as being well-prepared for the online sessions where 60 % “agree” and 40 % “strongly agree”.

Results of Q41 reveal that almost all the students report that the instructor has provided them with meaningful and timely feedback (53.33 % “agree” and 33.33 % “strongly agree”).

- **Synchronous/Asynchronous Communication**

Results of Q42 reveal that almost all the students (except one) could easily get in touch with peers and the instructor (53.33 % “strongly agree” and 40 % “agree”).

According to Q43 results, almost all the students could easily communicate online with the instructor asynchronously through E-mail (80 % “strongly agree” and 6.66 % “agree”).

Results of Q44 reveal that only half of the students could evaluate some of their peers’ answers online at times beyond that of the sessions (33.33 % “agree” and 13.33 % “strongly agree”, i.e 46.66 %). Such a low percentage is explained by the fact that some students posted their homeworks on the group page as an *Image file* to avoid the burdon of re-typing them on Word resulting in an unclear image to read and evaluate. The teacher, therefore, stresses posting *Word files* especially that using Word helps refining Grammar and spelling mistakes.



- **Accessibility**

Results of Q45 reveal that almost all the students (except one) consider accessing the online sessions to be easy (53.33 % “agree” and 40 % “strongly agree”).

- **Organization**

Results of Q46 reveal that the majority could follow the structure and development of the online course (40 % “agree” and 20 % “strongly agree”). The other 40 % of the students who hold a differing perspective only needed practice of refreshing each time the Group page to see further posts and comments. The state of the Internet connection also played a role in being up-to-date with the sessions’ progress. The researcher expected these problems to emerge, and accordingly he made sure that the subjects have a good connection. Nevertheless, loss of Internet sometimes occurred though goes unnoticed.

- **Integration**

Results of Q47 reveal that all the students (100 %) consider online activities and the physical lectures to be relevant to each other (73.33 % “strongly agree” and 26.66 % “agree”).

- **Workload**

Results of Q48 reveal that the majority consider the BL experience to have a heavy workload (46.66 % “disagree” and 13.33 % “strongly disagree” i.e. 60 % together). Such a result opposes our expectations and is justified by two possible reasons. First, the students did not get used to have a session for more than 90 minutes as found in the pre-experiment questionnaire (Q9). Second, the students might have been influenced by what other groups are studying in the subject of “Research Methodology” given that experiment adds further elements to the currently used program. However, we consider the program taught to be based on logic and theory and considered necessary to adequately teach borrowing techniques.

- **Extra Feedback**

Results of Q49 reveal that almost all the students agree that BL experience provided them with extra feedback (46.66 % “agree” and 40 % “strongly agree”). A comparison of this result to the one obtained from the pre-experiment questionnaire “Q12” reporting insufficient feedback during traditional sessions confirms that BL is better at increasing the amount of feedback.

- **Extra Learning Sources**

Results of Q50 reveal that the majority agrees that BL provided extra source materials (40 % “agree” and 26.66 % “strongly agree”). It has to be reminded that in the pre-experiment questionnaire (Q16) the students were not unified in their attitude towards the availability of learning resources in the traditional classroom.

- **Self-Paced Learning**

Results of Q51 reveal that almost all the students (except one) reported doing additional readings or homeworks at times beyond that of the lectures (86.66 % “strongly agree” and 6.66 % “agree”). Although such a result was expected it was important to stress the availability of self-paced learning in the BL experiment.

**Q52-How often were u absent from the online sessions so far?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-very often</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b-often</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>c-sometimes</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>d-occasionally</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>e-never</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 44: Students’ Punctuality in Attending Online Sessions**

**Q53-What was the reason?**

To answer Q52 and Q53, the results from table 44 show almost all the students, i.e 80 % were never absent in the online sessions. This confirms the students’ seriousness as well as

motivation towards participating in the online sessions. The students who reported attending all online sessions justified their answer stating that they enjoyed the sessions mainly the interaction patterns through commenting which is seemingly something new to them. Other students enjoyed the fact of attending a session without being obliged to go to the university. Another student describes the intimacy between the teacher and the student during the online sessions stating that *“it was a good feeling to see the teacher on Facebook online and he comments and presses “Like” on our answers”*.

**Q54-Did you experience any obstacles while learning in a blended learning environment?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26.66</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>73.33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 45: Obstacles Students Experienced during the Experiment**

**Q55-Explain your choice**

To answer Q54, the results from table 45 show that the majority of the students, i.e. 73.33 % did not experience any obstacles while learning in a BL environment. Only 2 students among those who reported having no obstacles while learning in a BL environment explained their answer by referring to the easiness of access to the online sessions and of getting in contact with the teacher and peers. The other 4 students who reported facing obstacles referred to one main issue which is “Internet connection loss” during the online sessions which hinders them from following the progress of the session.

**Q56-Are you willing to continue learning this subject using blended learning?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 46: Students’ Willingness to Continue Learning through Blended Learning**

### **Q57-Explain your choice**

To answer Q56, results from table 46 show that all the students, i.e. 100 % are willing to continue learning the subject using BL. In explaining their answer to the previous question, some students stated their extent joy they experienced during the online sessions while others mentioned the flexibility that the online sessions offer. Some of their comments are:

-*'I really enjoy solving the activities on Facebook with my friends commenting on my answer'*.

-*"I like the online sessions because I don't need to go to the university"*.

-*'I liked the idea of expressing my ideas by comments and wait for the others to see it and reply to it'*

### **Section IV: Further Suggestions**

#### **Q58-Are there any suggestions for improving the course?**

No useful suggestions have been raised by the students.

#### **6.2.2.2. Summary of Findings**

A summary of the major findings of the mid-experiment questionnaire is to be made with regard to each section.

##### **❖ *In relation to assessing the students' motivation***

- Almost all the students were *comfortable* with using Facebook. Except for introvert ones, the students were still feeling comfortable –and preferred more- public than private evaluations.
- The majority of the students perceive the *usefulness* of using Facebook as a teaching tool, the cost of education, and flexibility that online sessions offer.
- As opposed to e-learning, the majority report being *supported* academically, affectively, and technically due to the synchronous communication the socialization they felt.
- *The self-efficacy* for most of the students is proved to be high.
- The majority of the students' *self-regulation* was high during the online sessions.

- The *perceived autonomy* of the majority of the students is high. Allowing the students to decide about their participation in the experiment, the time of the online sessions, generating spontaneous online discussions have all served to raise their sense of autonomy.
- Almost all the students follow *mastery goals* although further practice is needed as the half of them report not generating well-thoughtful contributions during online sessions.
- The majority find the *physical lectures to be enthusiastic* given the interactions and attention-raising topics the teacher used.

*Taking all these constructs together, along with the fact that only few absences are detected during the experiment, we deduce that BL increases the students' motivation.*

❖ ***In relation to assessing the students' attitudes towards how the subject is taught***

- *Teacher feedback* is found to be sufficient by the majority of the students.
- *Peer feedback* is found to be sufficient by the majority.
- Almost all the students felt belonging to a community of inquiry which increases their understanding the course concepts, i.e. *they were cognitively present*.
- The “openness” of Facebook, the challenging activities, and constructive discussions raise most students' *critical thinking skills* towards the self and others.
- For the majority, self-reflective questions encourage *internal feedback*.
- The majority consider *the time* of answering and asking questions to be sufficient.
- All the students could be kept *up-to-date with activities sessions and the majority could memorize information better* due to unlimited accessibility of input.
- The majority perceive the effectiveness of e-documents.
- The majority conceived the usefulness of *computer-generated feedback* only in terms of searching websites during but not for the use of Grammar Checker.

*Taking all these constructs together, we deduce that the practices applied in BL, mainly the online component, serve to improve the students' academic writing proficiency.*

❖ ***In relation to assessing blended learning***

- The majority of the students *were ready* to take part in the experiment.
- The students were not unified in their attitude towards *online discipline* which was likely influenced by problems encountered during the first two sessions.
- According to the majority, BL experience has followed *a learner-centered pedagogy*.
- The majority consider the online sessions to encourage them to be *active learners*.

- Almost all the students felt a good sense of *socialization/ social presence*.
- According to the majority, *the instructor played her role as required*.
- BL experiment included both *synchronous and asynchronous modes of communication* which are found to be easily organized except for evaluating peers' homeworks asynchronously which have been refined later.
- Almost all the students (except one) consider *accessing the online sessions* to be easy.
- The majority of the students found online courses to *be organized and easy to follow*.
- All the students confirm *the integration* between BL online and offline learning modes.
- The majority consider the BL *workload* to be heavy despite the theoretical basis that suggests the opposite.
- BL *increases the amount of feedback* better than in the physical sessions.
- *BL is proved by the majority of the students to provide extra resources*.
- Almost all the students follow *self-paced learning* by doing additional readings or homeworks at times beyond that of the lectures.

*Taking all these constructs together, we deduce that the BL design was applied according to the rationale stated in the literature. "Online discipline" and "asynchronous homeworks" are two issues that needed further practice and refinement within the remaining sessions. The session "overload" is considered theoretically suitable despite the students' negative standpoints. In addition to that, the majority of the students experienced no obstacles during the BL experiment.*

### **6.2.3. Post-Experiment Questionnaire**

The post-experiment questionnaire is administered to the experimental group after the implementation of the experiment. All its question items are provided in Appendix I-3. The results are provided below.

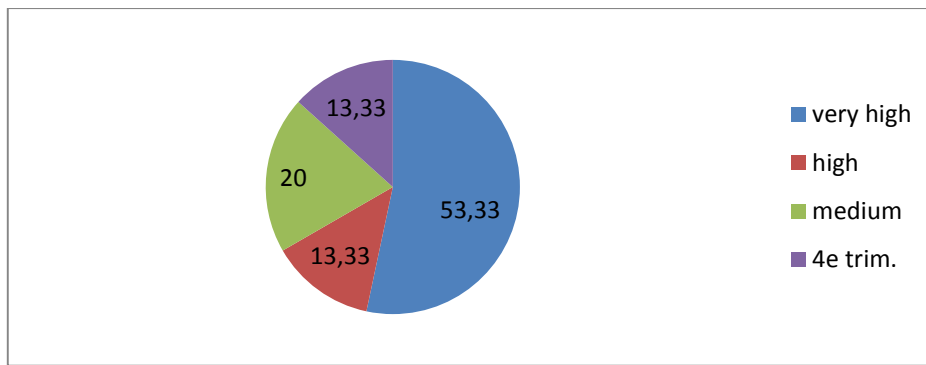
### 6.2.3.1. Post-Experiment Questionnaire Results

#### Section I : Assessing Students' Motivation

**Q1-How do you rate your current level of motivation towards learning the subject of Research Methodology?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-very high</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>53.33</b>
<b>b-high</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>c-medium</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>d-low</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>e-very low</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table47: Students' Level of Motivation After the Experiment**



**Figure 10 :Students' Level of Motivation after the Experiment**

To answer Q1, the results from table 47 and figure 10 show that the majority of the students have a high motivation towards learning the subject. (53.33% 'very high' and 13.33% 'high', i.e. 60 % together). Once comparing between the motivation rate reported in the pre-experiment questionnaire "Q4" and the one reported here, we find that in the pre-experiment questionnaire, the students' motivation was low for 66.66 % of the students with only 20% having a high motivation. This comparison suggests to a great extent the effectiveness of BL on increasing the students' motivation. However, we need to ensure that the improvement in motivation is due to BL not any other factor. This is the aim of the following question.

**Q2 : To what extent did Blended Learning increase your motivation toward learning the subject of Research Methodology ?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-to a great extent</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>73.33</b>
<b>b-to some extent</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>c-not at all</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 48: The Effect of Blended Learning on Motivation**

**Q3- Explain your choice**

To answer Q2, the results from table 48 reveal that the majority of the students (73.33 %) report that BL has served ‘to a great extent’ in increasing their motivation towards learning the subject. This percentage includes both students who reported having high and medium motivation. This suggests that even those who still have medium motivation are –at least- more motivated to learn the subject than before (having low motivation). In *other words, BL stands as the main reason behind their high level of motivation. This confirms the extent to which BL had satisfied the students’ learning needs and preferences as opposed to traditional methods.*

Here, the students’ explanations (in Q3) have also served in justifying the increase of their motivation. Only 8 students among those who reported ‘great’ and ‘some’ extent of BL contribution offered explanations. They all referred to BL. One of them stated the difference between how learning in an online setting affected her perceptions toward the subject. She wrote, *‘I used to hate the subject before because the activities were boring, I didn’t even understand why we are learning it but this year I liked solving the activities online and this changed my mind about the subject’*. Another one wrote, *‘because I like Facebook too much so I liked the experience of learning this subject there and I hope the teacher of next year will do the same’*. The student who reported no contribution at all of BL to her motivation explained this by the nature of the program of Research Methodology itself. She stated that *“learning online was funny but I hate the lessons of this subject’*.



**Q4-Specify with (√) and explain the aspects of blended learning that motivated you to learn the subject of ‘Research Methodology’:**

Options	N	%
a-the level of privacy that Facebook provides	0	0
b-the level of interaction that online sessions provide	2	13.33
c-the cost of education required by the online sessions	4	26.66
d-the level of flexibility that online sessions provide	0	0
e-the level of academic, personal and technical <i>support</i> during the online sessions	0	0
f-the level of responsibility and self-discipline gained in the online sessions	0	0
g-the level of autonomy supported by the online sessions	0	0
h-the level of effort required by the online sessions	0	0
I-the level of interaction gained in the physical sessions	0	0
b-g	1	6.66
a-d	2	13.33
b-d-e	1	6.66
b-c-d	2	13.33
a-b-d-f	1	6.66
b-c-d-g	1	6.66
a-d-e-f	1	6.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 49: Aspects of Blended Learning which Motivates Students**

As we can see from table 49, the students were very distinct in their answers. Nevertheless, options “b”, “d” and “c” are the most frequent. When taking into account, how many times “b”, “c” and “d” are repeated in “b-g”, “a-d”, “b-d-e”, “b-c-d”, “a-b-d-f”, “b-c-d-g”, and “a-d-e-f” along with their separate results, we find that “b” and “d” are repeated 8 times, i.e. chosen by 53.33 % of the students. “c” is repeated 7 times, i.e. chosen by 46.66 %. In other words, interaction, flexibility and cost of education are considered the main motivating features of BL.

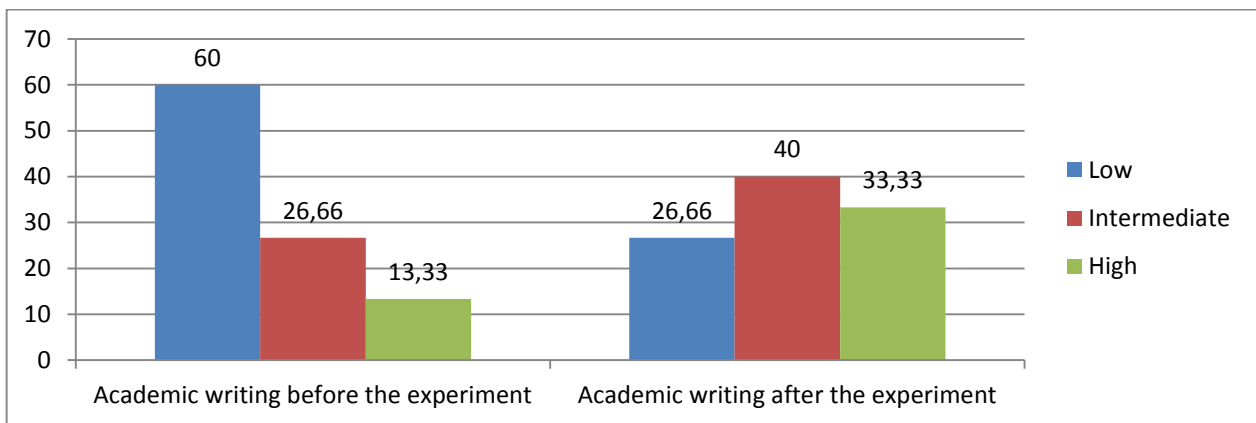
## **Section Two : Assessing Students’ Academic Writing Proficiency**

**Q5-How do you rate your academic writing proficiency ?**

Options	N	%
a-very low	1	6.66
b-low	3	20
c-intermediate	6	40
d-high	5	33.33
e-very high	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 50 : Students’ Academic Writing Proficiency after the Experiment**

Table 50 shows that 33.33 % consider their academic writing proficiency as ‘high’, 40 % as ‘intermediate’ and 26.66 % as basically low (taking together ‘low’, i.e 20 % and ‘very low’, i.e. 6.66 %). Having a proportion of 33.33 % for the students with ‘high’ writing proficiency is low. Nevertheless, a comparison with how the students reported their writing proficiency in the pre-experiment questionnaire “Q6” shows a significant improvement as presented in the following figure:



**Figure 11: Academic Writing Proficiency Before and After the Experiment**

The previous figure clearly manifests a progress in the three writing proficiency ratings. A percentage of 60 % for the students with low proficiency is reduced to 26.66 % whereas both percentages of the students with ‘intermediate’ and ‘high’ proficiency are raised : from 26.66 % to 40 % for intermediate and 13.33 % to 33.33 %. Such a progress, however, is based on the students’ own perceptions towards their academic writing. *Unlike motivation which is an internal construct where no one can better judge it but the person himself, it would be erroneous to eliminate judgments about the students’ academic writing proficiency to the students’ perspectives.* We still need to conduct the pre-test and post-test to verify these judgments.

**Q6- Specify with a (√) and explain aspects in blended learning that served to increase your academic writing proficiency?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a- the level of <i>instant teacher feedback</i> during the online sessions</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b- the level of <i>instant peer feedback</i> during the online sessions</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>c- the level of <i>constructive/thoughtful discussion</i> during the online sessions</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>d- the extent to which the online sessions encourage <i>self-assessment</i></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>e- the extent to which the online sessions lead to <i>self-awareness</i> of mistakes</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>f- The extent to which the online sessions develop the analytical skills of analyzing and evaluating</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>g- the extent to which <i>time was sufficient</i> to answer and ask questions</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>h- The <i>accessibility</i> of the online lectures and discussions anytime anywhere.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>I- <i>the level of memorization</i> of information taught online</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>J- The availability of <i>extra documents</i> such as uploading e-documents</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>k-the use of <i>websites</i> during the online sessions.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>l-the use of ‘Grammar Ghecker’ feature for self-revision</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b-c</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>c-j</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>a-b-h</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>c-h-j</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>a-f-j</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>a-b-c-h</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>c-d-e-f</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>a-c-h-j</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>c-d-e-h-j</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>b-c-d-g-j-l</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>a-b-c-e-g-j-k</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 51: Aspects of Blended Learning which Increase Students’ Academic Writing**

Table 51 shows that the students have distinct answers. Nevertheless, options “c”, “a” and “b” are the most frequent followed by options “j” and “h”. When taking into account how many times these options are repeated, we find: “c” repeated 10 times i.e. chosen by 66.66 %, “a” 8 times, i.e. 53.33 % , “b” 8 times , i.e. 53.33 %, “j” 7 times, i.e 46.66 % , and “h” 6 times, i.e. 40 %. In other words, the students consider ‘constructive discussion’, ‘teacher feedback’, and ‘peer feedback’ to be the main features of BL that serve to increase their academic writing followed by ‘extra documents’ and ‘unlimited accessibility’. These results re-emphasize the importance of applying constructivism in BL and synchronous

communication where an instant discussion takes place. Relying on self-paced learning, as in the case of e-learning, is not sufficient and does not reflect the rationale behind BL.

### Section Three : Attitudes Towards Blended Learning

**Q7-If you are given the choice to change or improve the blended learning method you experienced this semester, select the elements in question and provide explanations:**

Options	N	%
a-the teaching tool (Facebook)	0	0
b-online discipline	0	0
c-online discussions	2	13.33
d-autonomy provided to students	0	0
e- Organization of content online	0	0
f-Types of questions asked online	0	0
g-the role of the instructor online	0	0
h-the role of the students online	0	0
j-the use of E-mail	1	6.66
k- The timing and the quantity of time provided online	0	0
l-the use of websites	0	0
m-the use of Grammar Checker	0	0
n- the use of self-pacedobjects	0	0
o-types of communication online	0	0
p- The integration between the physical lectures and the online sessions	0	0
q-interaction in the physical lectures	0	0
No answer	12	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 52: Students' Opinions about Improving the Blended Learning Experience**

#### Q8-Explain your choice

The results from table 52 show no much feedback from the students as only 3 out of 15 students answered the question. Among all BL characteristics, these students referred only to two elements : 'online discussions', and 'use of E-mail'. In their explanations (Q8), the two students who selected 'online discussions' suggested using an oral conversation using Skype Conference in order to render the session more realistic. However, oral means are more suitable when teaching oral skills and not when investigating writing proficiency. The researcher also prefers to avoid the problem of having students answering in an oral instead of

a written form. In addition, the pilot study indicated that the students were not in need for Skype but considered Facebook to be sufficient for them to follow the instructions. The students who chose using E-mail suggested eliminating it as the students can still rely on the Facebook Group for any updates. Although this claim seems to be logical, we considered adding E-mail because BL requires the use of both synchronous and asynchronous tools.

#### **Section four : Further Suggestion**

##### **Q9-Do you have any further suggestions ?**

Students contributed no useful suggestions.

##### **6.2.3.2.Summary of Findings**

A summary of the major findings of the post-experiment questionnaire is to be made with regard to each section.

##### **❖ In relation to assessing the students' motivation**

In comparison to the students' low level of motivation which is reported in the pre-experiment questionnaire, the majority of students are highly motivated to learn the subject of "Research Methodology". Such a significant improvement is basically attributed to BL, mainly, the interaction patterns of the online sessions and its flexibility and cost of education.

##### **❖ In relation to assessing the students' academic writing proficiency**

In spite of the fact that the students' academic writing proficiency is still low, it has known a significant improvement in comparison to the state reported in the pre-experiment questionnaire. Such a result provides us with a preliminary idea which suggests the usefulness of BL in improving academic writing. Three main factors served to increase the students' academic writing: 'constructive discussions', 'teacher feedback', and 'student feedback'.

##### **❖ In relation to assessing Blended Learning**

In general, the students have positive attitudes towards the BL experiment.

### 6.3. Teachers' Questionnaire: Results and Discussion

The questionnaire is distributed on all the teachers of English who teach at the English Department at Larbi Ben M'hidi University-53 teachers- during the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016. 44 out of 53 teachers handed back the questionnaires, i.e. 83.01% respectively. All the questionnaire items are found in Appendix II.

#### 6.3.1. Teachers' Questionnaire Results

##### Section one : Background Information

##### Q1-Gender

Options	N	%
a-Male	13	29.54
b-Female	31	70.45
Total	44	100

Table 53: Teachers' Background Information

##### Q2-Age :

Options	N	%
a-From 23-35	34	77.27
b-More than 35	10	22.72
Total	44	100

Table 54 : Teachers' Age Average

##### Q3-Highest Level of Education

Options	N	%
a-BA	3	6.81
b-Master	12	27.27
c-Magister	24	54.54
d-Doctorat	5	11.36
Total	44	100

Table 55 : Teachers' Level of Education

##### Q4-Teaching Experience

Options	N	%
a-from 1-5 years	21	47.72
b-from 6-10 years	15	34.09
c-more than 10 years	8	18.18
Total	44	100

Table 56: Teacher's Teaching Experience

The Results from tables 53, 54, 55, and 56 show, first, that the majority of the teachers, i.e 72.72 %, are female and that 77.27 % of them are aged between 23-35 years. This indicates that the youth generation of the teachers is the most prevailing at the department of English. Second, the most prevailing educational degree among the teachers is that of “Magister” with 54.54% while nearly half of them (47.72 %) are still novice with a teaching experience from 1 to 5 years. The remaining half of the teachers is considered expert with a percentage of 18.18 % of teachers with an experience of more than 10 years. While aiming to check the teachers’ experience and adequate use of BL, we need to have a representative sample including both novice and expert teachers.

**Q5-How do you rate your skills in surfing on the Internet**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-poor</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.63</b>
<b>b-moderate</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>c-good</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40.90</b>
<b>d-excellent</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20.45</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 57: Teachers’ Skills of Internet Use**

To answer Q5, the results from table 57 show that the majority of the teachers are good at surfing on the Internet. In particular, 40.90 % are “good” while 20.45 % are excellent, i.e. 61.63 % together.

**Q6-Do you have a Facebook account?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>86.36</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.63</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 58 : Teachers’ Ownership of Facebook Account**

To answer Q6, the results from table 58 show that the majority of the teachers (86.36%) have a Facebook account. Such a result confirms that, similar to the students, most Algerian teachers are familiar with Facebook. Therefore, integrating Facebook (other than any

other web-based interface which might require technical training) in BL seems to be easy for both the teachers and the students.

**Q7-How many hours per day you stay connected to Internet?**

Options	N	%
a-less than one hr	5	11.36
b-from 1-3 hrs	17	38.63
c-from 3 to 5 hrs	13	29.54
d-more than 5 hrs	9	20.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 59: Teachers’ Frequent Use of the Internet**

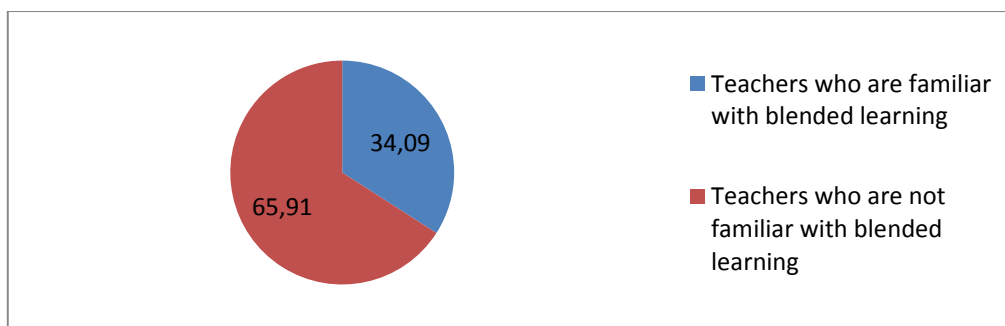
To answer Q7, the results from table 59 show that the majority of the teachers daily surf on the Internet from 1 to 3 hours (38.63%) and from 3 to 5 hours (29.54%), i.e. 68.18% together. Considering this result together with those obtained from “Q5/Q6”, we notice that most teachers are not only familiar with Facbook and Internet but also spend a good time surfing on the Internet. We will then check whether the teachers have ever used the Internet (and Facebook) for pedagogical purposes.

**Section two: Teachers’ Perceptions of The Blended Learning Approach**

**Q8-Is this the first time you read about the blended learning approach?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	29	65.91
b-No	15	34.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 60: Teachers’ Familiarity with Blended Learning**



**Figure 12 : Teachers’ Familiarity with Blended Learning**



**Q9-If no, according to you, which of the following situations refers to blended learning**

Options	N	%
<b>a- Incorporating technology in the physical classrooms such as showing students a video to explain a specific aspect/subject.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b- Dividing a course into an online lecture when all students are being online at the same time and another lecture in the physical classroom.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33.33</b>
<b>c- Using different methods of learning inside the classroom such as audio-lingual and the communicative method.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.33</b>
<b>d-In addition to the physical lecture, the teacher uses a specific online application (eg. Website) in which he posts useful documents, course schedule, due dates while students join at any time to check them</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>53.33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 61: Teachers' Conceptions of Blended Learning**

To answer Q8 and Q9, the results from tables 60 and 61 and figure 12 demonstrate that the majority of the teachers (65.91%) are not familiar with the BL approach and that a significant proportion do not conceive the true meaning of BL. This indicates that BL is new to the Algerian context. As table 61 manifests, among those who answered “No”, i.e. they are familiar with BL, 53.33% chose answer “d” while the correct answer is “b”. As stated in the literature, BL is a *principled* approach that goes beyond the mere addition of an online component to serve administration purposes and considers adding principles of learner-centeredness, collaboration, “constructivist learning”...etc (case of “d”). In addition, BL is almost understood in the confinements of the replacement model where instant interaction/socialization takes place.

**Q10-Based on your knowledge, can you state the difference between blended learning, e-learning, and distance learning?**

Only 6 teachers from those who reported knowing the BL approach responded to this question and 4 teachers explained the difference quite correct.

### Section three: Teachers' Experience with Blended learning Approach

**Q11-Have you ever taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 62: Teachers' Experience with Online Teaching**

**Q12-If no, why not**

Options	N	%
<b>a- I doubt the success of online teaching in Algerian context (Internet connection, passive students,...).</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>57.57</b>
<b>b- I consider myself not prepared technically.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12.12</b>
<b>c- I am accustomed to the methods being used.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.03</b>
<b>d- I don't know much about teaching online (managing time, managing a virtual classroom, encouraging interactive setting...)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27.27</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 63: Reasons behind Teachers' Non-Use of Online Teaching**

To answer Q11 and Q12, the results from tables 62 and 63 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e. 75 % have never taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment and that they either doubt the success of online teaching in their educational context or they lack the proficiency needed to teach online. As shown in table 63, option 'a' takes the highest percentage (57.57 %) followed by option 'd' (27.27%). Such a result confirms again that BL is new to our educational context despite its expansion worldwide. In response to the teachers' cautions, the researcher suggests that it is high time to treat our educational context like any other context where online teaching methods are under practice. This suggestion follows the recent improvements in the quality of Internet services. We also assume that using Facebook (where teachers and students join virtually from home) facilitates the integration of BL more than any other tool that might require institutions to offer specialized physical facilities. As for the proficiency required for designing BL, the present work aims also to offer the teachers with guidelines and lesson plans that can be used and ameliorated.

**-If Yes: Q13-was the objective of the course to teach academic writing?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>63.63</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36.36</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 64: Academic Writing and Teachers' Use of Online Teaching**

The results of table 64 show that among the 11 teachers who reported teaching a course or a partial of it online, 63.63 (7 teachers) mentioned that the object was to teach academic writing.

**Q14-Was the online component interactive?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>72.72</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27.27</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 65: Extent to which Teachers' Online Component is interactive**

**Q15-Explain your choice**

To answer Q14, the results from table 65 show that 72.72 % of the teachers report that the online component was interactive. The teachers who answered “no” explained that the online component was used to post useful documents for students in the form of lectures and activities for self-study. 63.64 % answered “Yes”, and mentioned using Facebook and Skype either to create more social relationships with students or to teach students who needed more explanation. Only 2 teachers have reported using Moodle to give lectures in Ethnography and Drama. However, even though acknowledging having an interactive online component, the teachers did not follow the true principle of BL which is ‘social constructivism’ which necessitate an “instant” interaction that is understood according to the replacement model (see pages18- 19). Besides, the uploaded lectures and the interactions are not considered officially as integrated parts of the whole course as it is the case with BL where the online component replaces some physical sessions.

**Q16-Was the online component learner-centered?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-Yes</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36.36</b>
<b>b-No</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>63.63</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 66: Extent to which Teachers' Online Component is Learner-Centered**

**Q17-Explain your choice**

To answer Q16, the results from table 66 show that only 36.36 % of the teachers report that the online component was learner-centered. Those who answered “Yes” explained their answer by considering that allowing students the freedom to upload and contact their teachers at the time they find convenient to be more student-centered as it is the case for Moodle for example.

**Q18-If you ever taught a *writing course* in a partial online setting, what were your reasons for choosing to add an online component?**

Options	N	%
<b>a-to increase students' motivation</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b-to improve students' academic writing proficiency</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>c-to add extra writing activities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>d-to be up-to-date with current teaching practices</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18.18</b>
<b>e-because the time allowed in the classroom is not enough</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>f-because it is difficult to create a learner-centered, interactive environment in the classroom.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>b-c-d</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>a-d</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>b-d-e</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18.18</b>
<b>b-c-d-e</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>b-c-e-f</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18.18</b>
<b>a-d-e</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 67: Teachers' Reasons for Using Online Teaching**

Results from table 67 are distinct to a great extent. Counting the frequency (F) of each option alone, we find options “d”, “b”, and “e” to be the most frequently used by the participants. In particular,  $F(d) = 9$  i.e. chosen by 81.81 %,  $F(b) = 6$  i.e. 54.54 %,  $F(e) = 5$ , i.e. 45.45 %. In other words, the majority of instructors who reported teaching a course online have chosen to add the online component (1) to keep up-to-date with current teaching practices, (2) improve students' academic writing proficiency, and (2) maximize the time

available in the physical classroom. These three reasons are interpreted as follows. First, the high frequency of option “d” reveals the positive attitude of these teachers towards endorsing new teaching methods. Second, the result of option “b” is found to be logical given that the objective of the online component used by the majority of these 11 teachers was to teach academic writing (Q13). The third reported reason re-emphasizes the problem of time constraints in the physical setting and confirms the teachers’ struggle with finding a solution to it. In sum, the majority of the teachers who added an online component to their teaching curriculum intended to *keep up-to-date with current teaching practices, improve the students’ academic writing proficiency, and maximize learning time of the physical classrooms.*

**Q19-Please state the challenges or frustrations you faced while teaching online**

Only 3 teachers answered this question and they all referred to the problems of Internet connection that they faced during online teaching and the students’ lack of discipline.

**Section four: Adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian context using Facebook**

**Q20- Show your agreement with the following statements by putting a tick in “Yes” or “No” columns**

Results of Q20 are presented in the following table and classified according to ‘necessity of BL’, ‘Facebook utility’, ‘BL and motivation’, ‘BL and academic writing’:

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Necessity of Blended Learning</b>		
21-Traditional methods alone are not very useful these days.	63.63	36.36
22-There is a need to combine online and offline teaching methods to cope with the evolving needs of Net Generation students.	88.63	11.36
<b>Facebook Utility</b>		
23-Facebook is an easy application to use.	93.18	6.81
24-Facebook can be effectively used for pedagogical purposes.	43.18	56.81
<b>Blended learning and Motivation</b>		
25-Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' <i>comfort</i> .	84.09	15.90
26-Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' willingness to <i>communicate</i> with peers and the instructor.	77.27	22.72
27- Conducting part of sessions online is <i>useful</i> since it <i>reduces the cost of education</i> for learners and teachers.	79.54	20.45
28-Conducting part of sessions online is <i>useful</i> due to the <i>flexibility of time and space</i> they offer.	95.45	4.54
29-Using Facebook may help teachers to <i>support students academically, affectively, and technically</i> more than in traditional classes.	27.27	72.72
30- Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' <i>self-confidence</i> (to answer teacher's and peers' questions through commenting)	81.81	18.18
31- Online sessions may encourage learners <i>to learn independently and be responsible</i> on their own learning	63.63	36.36
32- Online sessions may teach students better <i>punctuality and self-discipline</i> (checking Group updates, e-mail updates, to be on-time for the course...)	31.81	68.18
33-Online sessions may encourage students to <i>make much effort</i> than in traditional classes.	38.63	31.36
<b>Blended Learning and Academic Writing</b>		
34- Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may help teachers <i>provide feedback</i> for each student better than in physical classroom (private chat and commenting)	86.36	13.63
35- Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may encourage students to provide <i>peer-feedback</i> through commenting.	65.90	34.09
36- Reading others' posts and receiving others' suggestions on one's writing on Facebook Group may result in a true <i>community of inquiry</i> .	84.09	15.90
37- The fact that students' writings are seen by everyone in a Facebook Group may encourage them to <i>be critical</i> about what they write before posting.	70.45	29.54
38-Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may improve <i>students' analytical skills of analyzing and evaluating</i> .	68.18	31.81
39-Online sessions may provide <i>enough time</i> for students to discuss and think about questions.	90.90	9.09
40-Using Facebook Group, students <i>can memorize information</i> better since online discussions are accessible online any time anywhere.	14.90	59.09
41-The possibility of posting <i>e-documents online</i> may increase students' understanding of the course concepts.	95.45	4.54
42-The simultaneous accessibility of <i>websites</i> during the online session may help students clarifying ambiguous concepts (eg: vocabulary).	72.72	27.27
43-Using grammar checker feature of Facebook may encourage students <i>to revise their writings</i> before posting them.	61.63	38.36

Table 68 : Teachers' Attitudes towards Adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian Context Using Facebook

- **Necessity of Blended Learning**

Results of Q21 reveal that 63.63% of the teachers agree that traditional methods alone are not very useful these days. Q22 results reveal that 88.63% of the teachers agree that there is a need to combine online and offline teaching methods to cope with the evolving needs of students.

- **Facebook Utility**

Q23 result reveals that the majority of the teachers, i.e. 93.18% agree that Facebook is an easy-to-use application. Results of Q24 reveal that only 43.18% of the teachers consider Facebook to be effectively used for pedagogical purposes. The researcher attributes this attitude to a general absence –at the level of the Algerian educational setting- of any tested and applied learning approaches that incorporate the use of Facebook. It is only after testing the pedagogical utility of Facebook that one can describe the constraints and propose related solutions.

- **Blended Learning and Motivation**

Because the items included here represent nearly the same motivation constructs of the student's mid-experiment questionnaire section, a comparison is drawn between the teachers and the students' responses for each question.

Results of Q25 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e 84.09% consider that using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' comfort. It is to be reminded that this attitude is confirmed by the students themselves in the mid- experiment questionnaire "Q1".

Results of Q26 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e 77.27% consider that using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' willingness to communicate with peers and the instructor. The teachers seem to hold identical insights with the students "Q4".

Results of Q27 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e 79.54% state that conducting part of sessions online is *useful* since it *reduces the cost of education* for the students and the teachers. The same attitude is reported by the students in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q6.

Results of Q28 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e 95.45% consider that conducting part of sessions online is *useful* due to the *flexibility of time and space* they offer. Again, such a view is similar to the one reported by the students in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q7.

Results of Q29 reveal that only 27.27% agree that using Facebook may *support students academically, affectively, and technically* better than in traditional classes. Such a view contradicts that of the students' ( Q8) and also the teachers' responses to previous questions. The researcher suggests that the teachers might have perceived the usefulness of Facebook only on the psychology of the student by increasing his/her comfort with the tool, the flexibility and the cost it reduces, and strengthening the communication among students. On the other hand, they seem not to endorse the academic support that Facebook might offer.

Results of Q30 reveal that the majority of teachers, i.e 81.81% agree that using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' *self-confidence* to participate. In the mid-experiment questionnaire, the majority of the students confirmed such a view in Q9.

Results of Q31 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e 63.63% agree that the online sessions may encourage students *to learn independently and be responsible* of their own learning. Such an opinion is also held by the students as reported in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q11.

Results of Q32 reveal that only 31.81% of the teachers agree that the online sessions may teach better students punctuality and self-discipline. This goes in opposition with what



the students reported in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q12. Such a result reflects the teachers' concerns over maintaining discipline during the online sessions. Although the majority of the teachers agree that the online sessions encourage independent learning, they assume that students will be more negligent and careless due to the absence of the teacher's role. In this sense, the students are not considered self-regulated but self-taught using self-paced objects with no monitoring. However, in a synchronous type of online learning, the teacher is present and performs his/her role as in the physical setting.

Results of Q33 reveal that only 38.63% agree that the online sessions may encourage students to *make much effort* more than in traditional classes. Such a view also reflects the teachers' attitudes considering that students in the online sessions are self-taught. In this way, the fact that students are truly making efforts to accomplish learning tasks is questionable due to the absence of the teacher who encourages and monitors these efforts. Stated earlier, using synchronous constructive discussions encourages the students to make more efforts as confirmed by the majority of the students in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q15.

- **Blended Learning and Academic Writing**

Results of Q34 reveal that the majority of the teachers (86.36%) agree that conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may help the teachers *provide feedback* for each student better than in physical classroom. Such a view is similar to what the students' reported in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q19, but contradicts the teachers' responses to Q29 in which only a few agreed on 'the academic' support that Facebook might increase. The researcher explains this contradiction by the possibility that the teachers when answering Q29 did not have much idea about how Facebook can support students academically. On the other hand, Q34 clarifies this issue by emphasizing private chat and commenting.

Results of Q35 reveal that the majority (65.90%) agree that conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may encourage students to provide *peer-feedback* through

commenting. This view consents with the result of Q20 in the students' mid-experiment questionnaire.

Results of Q36 reveal that the majority (84.09%) agree that reading others' posts and receiving others' suggestions on one's writing on Facebook may result in a true *community of inquiry*. This view is confirmed by the students in the mid-experiment questionnaire in Q21, 22, and 23.

Results of Q37 reveal that the majority of the teachers (70.45%) agree that when students' writings are seen by everyone in a Facebook Group, it may encourage them to *be critical* about what they write before posting. Equally, results of Q38 demonstrate that the majority of the teachers (68.18%) agree that conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may improve *students' skills of analyzing and evaluating*. *These results show that, similar to the students' answers in the mid-experiment questionnaire-Qs 24-25, the teachers agree that Facebook increases students' critical thinking skills towards the self and others.*

Results of Q39 reveal that almost all the teachers, i.e. 90.90% agree that the online sessions may provide *enough time* for students to discuss and think about questions. These teachers confirm the usefulness of online teaching in overcoming the time issue faced in the physical setting which is also stressed by the few teachers who experienced online teaching (see Q18), and by the students (pre-experiment questionnaire, Q10).

Results of Q40 reveal that, unlike the students' answers to Q31, only 14.90% of the teachers agree that students *can memorize information better* on Facebook Group due to its unlimited accessibility. In contrary to what the teachers think, the students seem to enjoy more reading information on a screen than on papers which facilitates the process of revision.

Results of Q41 reveal that almost all the teachers, i.e. 95.45% agree that posting *e-documents online* may increase students' understanding of the course concepts. In other words, the teachers perceive the usefulness of extra learning sources in the online setting on

students' cognition. This holds true for the students as well (in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q32).

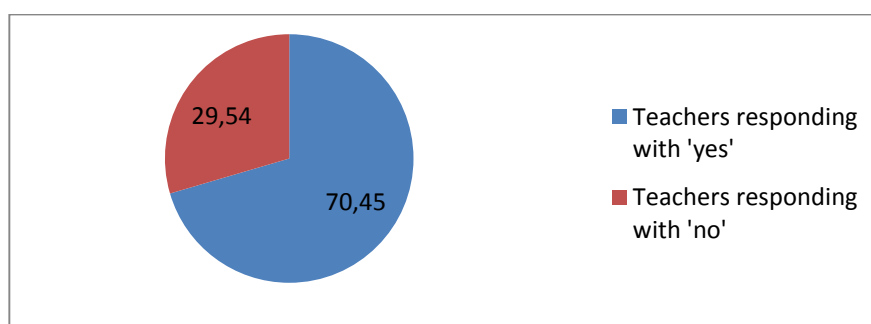
Results of Q42 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e. 72.72% agree that the simultaneous accessibility of *websites* during the online sessions may help students clarifying ambiguous concepts. Such a view is confirmed by the students' answers in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q33.

Results of Q43 reveal that the majority of the teachers, i.e. 61.63% agree that using Grammar Checker may encourage students *to revise their writings* before posting them. The teachers' view opposes that of the students' which is reported in the mid-experiment questionnaire, Q34. As explained earlier, the use of Grammar Checker is probably of less use to the students due to their proficiency level or the nature of activities they are asked to accomplish.

**Q44-Will you be willing at any stage in your teaching span to integrate Facebook as a teaching tool?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	31	70.45
b-No	13	29.54
Total	44	100

**Table 69 : Teachers' Attitudes towards Integrating Facebook in Teaching**



**Figure 13 : Teachers' Attitudes towards Integrating Facebook in Teaching**

**Q45-Explain your choice**

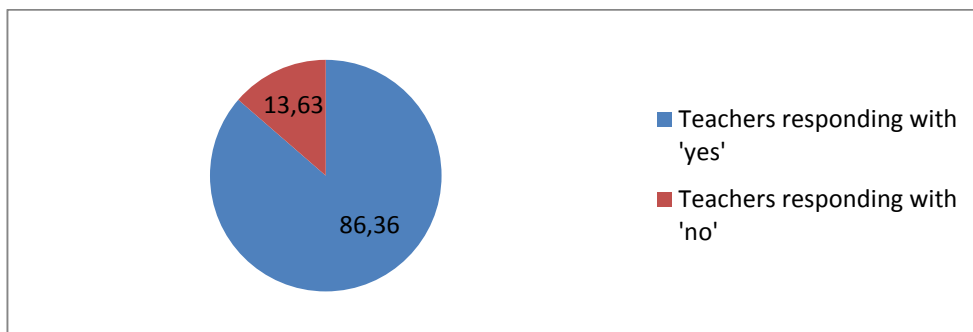
To answer Q44, the results from table 69 and figure 13 show that 70.45 % are willing to integrate Facebook as a teaching tool at any stage in their teaching span. Such a result

confirms the teachers' positive attitudes towards using Facebook as a pedagogical tool. Among those who answered "Yes", some explained their choice stating the benefits of Facebook to enhance the social interactions between students and improve their motivation. Others mentioned the fact that most students are familiar with Facebook and more attracted to online-based teaching than traditional classes. A teacher stated that "*Facebook could be the right solution for better teaching if students showed more maturity and responsibility*". Some of those who answered "no" referred to the inappropriateness of Facebook to teaching. A teacher wrote "*I do not think that Facebook as a teaching tool would be considered a 'serious' tool by present learners*".

**Q46-Will you be willing at any stage in your teaching span to integrate any online tool into your teaching?**

Options	N	%
a-Yes	38	86.36
b-No	6	13.63
Total	44	100

**Table 70 : Teachers' Attitudes towards Adopting Blended Learning**



**Figure 14 : Teachers' Attitudes towards Adopting Blended Learning**

**Q47-Explain your choice**

To answer Q46, the results from table 70 and figure 14 show that the majority of the teachers (86.36 %) are willing to integrate any online tool into their teaching. Some of those who answered "Yes" explained their choice by mentioning the necessity to be up-to-date with the most innovative technological tools such as "skyping" "emailing" and "website platforms" while others added the necessity of acquiring the professional knowledge of designing online

lectures. Those who answered “no” cautioned against problems than can arise from applying online teaching methods on Algerian students giving way to existing constraints at the level of the Algerian individual himself and the Internet.

### **Section Five: Further Suggestion**

#### **Q48-Do you have any further suggestions?**

Some of the teachers expressed their optimism towards incorporating Facebook as a teaching tool. Others cautioned against incorporating technology given the problems encountered in the Algerian context. A teacher, for instance, referred to *'lack of tools/means, lack of maturity, lack of appropriate e-learning process'*. In response to problems of lack of means, we chose Facebook due to its familiarity, free access, and easiness. As far as students' maturity, we propose the teacher to play his/her role as required.

#### **6.3.2. Summary of Findings**

A summary of the major findings of the teachers' questionnaire is to be made with regard to each section.

##### **❖ In relation to the teachers' perceptions of Blended learning approach**

*The majority of the teachers are not familiar with BL which confirms that the concept is still new to our educational context. Even those who reported knowing it, do not adequately conceive its true rationale. Most of them referred to it as e-learning or mode three in which it serves only administrative functions.*

##### **❖ In relation to the teachers' experience with Blended learning approach**

- Despite the fact that most teachers are familiar with Facebook, are good at surfing on the Internet and spend a good time connected to it, *few teachers attempted to use the Internet for pedagogical purposes.*

- The teachers are reluctant to use online teaching because *they doubt the success of online teaching in the Algerian teaching context or because they lack the proficiency needed to teach online.*

- *The online component that was added by the few teachers did not follow the true principles of BL. Specifically, it did not include an “instant” constructive interaction with students as the replacement model suggests and it was not learner-centered.*

- The few teachers who added an online component to their teaching curriculum intended to *keep up-to-date with current teaching practices, improve the students’ academic writing proficiency, and maximize learning time of the physical classrooms.*

❖ **In relation to the teachers’ attitudes towards adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian context using Facebook**

- *The majority are aware of the importance of going beyond traditional methods by interweaving the benefits of online teaching.*

- The majority of the teachers consider Facebook an easy application, however, *only a few consider that it is suitable for teaching.*

- Similar to the students’ viewpoints, *the majority of the teachers consider that BL can raise students’ motivation.* However, unlike the students’ answers, few teachers consider that learning in Facebook provides *more academic, affective, and technical support, encourages much effort, and leads to better discipline.* The teachers, then, *perceive the usefulness of Facebook only on the psychology of the student but doubt its ‘academic’ efficiency probably because they understand BL in the confinement of e-learning where asynchronous learning takes place without the simultaneous presence of the instructor’s monitoring.* However, the students have confirmed in the mid-experiment questionnaire that BL raised their self-regulation, discipline and punctuality, and encouraged them to follow mastery goals.

- *Similar to the students’ answers, the majority of the teachers consider that BL (using Facebook) can improve students’ academic writing proficiency.* In particular, they consider that

it raises teacher feedback, peer feedback, critical thinking skills, computer-generated feedback, results in a true community of inquiry, and provides enough learning time and resources.

- *The majority of the teachers are willing to integrate Facebook or any other useful online tool at any stage in their teaching span.*

## **Conclusion**

Findings obtained from the exploratory type of investigation encourage the implementation of BL in our educational setting. On the one hand, the comparison between The Checklist of Academic Writing and the currently used programs reveals that these programs are not comprehensive; therefore, necessity calls for integrating significant elements of what constitutes 'academic' writing. On the other hand, the difference between the students' answers in the pre-experiment questionnaire and post-experiment questionnaire in addition to their positive responses in the mid-experiment questionnaire highly suggest the usefulness of BL to their motivation and academic writing skills. Furthermore, the teachers' attitudes towards implementing BL cannot be discarded. Despite their doubts of the success of adopting BL and using Facebook in teaching, they generally accept the idea that BL can bring positive results to students' motivation and academic writing proficiency.

## **Chapter Seven: The Experimental Study Results**

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## **Introduction**

The present chapter is divided into two major sections which are devoted to a thorough analysis of the experimental study findings. To reach a complete understanding of the study results, both quantitative and qualitative types of analysis are conducted and presented successively in sections one and two. On the one hand, the quantitative analysis examines the scores obtained from the pre-test and post-test of both the control and the experimental groups with drawing an intra-group and inter-group comparison. The qualitative analysis, on the other hand, investigates the quality of the participants' academic writing productions in order to deduce the factors behind their low or high levels of achievement; therefore, it provides more valid results.

### **7.1. Quantitative Analysis of the Experimental Study Results**

In this type of analysis, the sample's achievements in the pre-test and post-test are analysed and compared using numerical representation. As explained in chapter four, the major academic writing criteria are divided into further sub-criteria for purposes of *valid representativeness and scoring* (see pp.180-182) and also for *gaining better insights* of the academic writing features (within the major criteria) where the students are more or less proficient. For this reason, the results are analysed in relation to both the general and the sub criteria.

#### **7.1.1. Analysis of Control Group and Experimental Group Pre-test Results**

This sub-section presents the results of both the control and experimental groups in the pre-test with drawing a comparative analysis.

##### **7.1.1.1. Control Group Pre-test Results**

Control Group pre-test results of the major criteria are presented in the following table :

Evaluative Criteria	1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Totals	Means for each Criterion
Objectivity	0	6	2	5	2	3	4	3	3	8	0	3	0	3	3	45	37.5
Formality	1	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	3	1	4	2	1	1	23	19.16
Concision	3	0	2	3	0	2	4	2	0	0	1	1	3	2	3	26	21.66
Cohesion/Coherence	3	3	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	3	3	2	4	2	0	31	25.83
Analytical skills	0	4	2	1	1	1	4	0	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	24/60 48/120	40
Research skills	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	2	1	2	2	21/60 42/120	35
Participant(s) total scores	8	17	11	12	5	10	18	8	9	18	7	14	12	11	10	170	28.33
Participant(s) total Means	20	42.5	27.5	30	12.5	25	45	20	22.5	45	17.5	35	30	27.5	25		

**Table 71 : Control Group Pre-test Results at the Level of the General Criteria**

When taking all criteria together, one deduces that the control group total scores and means are below average. The total score obtained is 170/600 and the total mean is 28.33 %. The academic writing criterion that got the lowest mean is “formality” with a mean of 19.16 % whereas the criterion that got the highest mean is “analytical skills” with 40 %. All other criteria got the low means as follows: “concision” with 21.66 %, “cohesion/coherence” with 25.83 %, “research skills” with 35 %, and “objectivity” with 37.5 %.

A more detailed analysis of the control group pre-test scores-*with the sub-criteria scores and means*- is presented in the following table :

<b>Evaluative Sub- criteria</b>	<b>#1</b>	<b>#2</b>	<b>#3</b>	<b>#4</b>	<b>#5</b>	<b>#6</b>	<b>#7</b>	<b>#8</b>	<b>#9</b>	<b>#10</b>	<b>#11</b>	<b>#12</b>	<b>#13</b>	<b>#14</b>	<b>#15</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Means of Sub-Criteria</b>
<b>Present Simple (reporting verbs/signal phrase)</b>	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	7	23.33
<b>Active Voice (signal phrase)</b>	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	10	33.33
<b>Objective Analysis of The Quote</b>	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	8	26.66
<b>Neutral Description of The Passage (summary)</b>	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	20	66.66
<b>Formal Reporting Verbs (signal phrase)</b>	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	13.33
<b>Formal Signal Phrase Model</b>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	10
<b>Formal Synonyms (paraphrasing/summarizing)</b>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	7	23.33
<b>Formal Analysis of the Quote</b>	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	9	20
<b>Complex Noun Phrase (author's credentials)</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.33
<b>Avoiding Unnecassary Words/Sentences</b>	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	12	40
<b>Simplifying and Combining Structures</b>	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	7	23.33
<b>Avoiding Wordiness</b>	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	6	20
<b>Coherent Quote with Ellipsis</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	5	16.66
<b>Re-ordering Ideas and Retaining Meaning</b>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	8	26.66
<b>Coherent Passage Using Link Sentences</b>	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	8	26.66
<b>Avoiding Run-On Sentences Using Cohesive Devices</b>	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	10	33.33
<b>The Quote is Followed with an Analysis</b>	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	12	40
<b>Extracting Only Main Ideas from The Passage</b>	0	2	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	12	40
<b>In-Text Citation and Punctuation</b>	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	10	33.33
<b>No copy and Paste</b>	1	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	11	36.66
<b>Participant(s) Total Scores</b>	8	17	11	12	5	10	18	8	9	18	7	14	12	11	10	170	28.33
<b>Participant (s) Total Means</b>	20	42.5	27.5	30	12.5	25	45	20	22.5	45	17.5	35	30	27.5	25		

**Table 72 : Control Group Pre-test Results at the Level of the Sub-Criteria**

From Table 72, we can see that only one sub-criterion got a mean above the average which is “neutral description” with a mean of 66.66 % which is related to the “objectivity” criterion. Approximate average means are those of “avoiding unnecessary words/sentences” related to “concision”, “quote followed with analysis” , and “extracting only main ideas” related to “analytical skills” with similar means of 40 %. The sub-criterion that got the lowest mean is that of using “complex noun phrase” which is related to “concision” with a mean of 3.33 %. All other sub-criteria are below average as shown on the previous table.

### 7.1.1.2. Experimental Group Pre-test Results

Experimental Group pre-test results of the major criteria are presented in the following table :

Evaluative Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Total Scores	Criteria Means
Objectivity	5	2	4	2	3	6	1	4	2	0	2	5	0	4	4	44	36.66
Formality	2	1	1	1	3	1	4	2	0	3	1	0	2	3	2	26	21.66
Concision	2	3	0	3	2	4	1	0	1	2	3	3	2	0	2	28	23.33
Cohesion/Coherence	3	4	0	1	3	0	2	1	1	1	3	4	2	4	0	29	24.16
Analytical skills	1	0	2	0	3	2	2	3	0	3	1	2	1	3	3	26/60 52/120	43.33
Research skills	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	21/60 42/120	35
Participant(s) total scores	15	11	8	9	16	15	11	11	5	10	11	15	8	16	13	174	29
Participant(s) total Means	37.5	27.5	20	22.5	40	37.5	27.5	27.5	12.5	25	27.5	37.5	20	40	32.5		

**Table 73 : Experimental Group Pre-test Results at the Level of the General Criteria**

When taking all the criteria together, table 73 shows that the experimental group total scores and means are below the average. The total score obtained is 174/600 and the total means is 29 %. The criterion that got the lowest mean is “formality” (21.66 %) whereas the criterion that got the highest mean is “analytical skills” (43.33 %). All other criteria got the means as follows : “concision” with 23.33 %, “cohesion/coherence” with 24.16 %, “research skills” with 35 %, and “objectivity” with 36.66 %.

Experimental Group sub-criteria pre-test scores are presented in the following table:

The Sub- Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Totals	Means
<b>Present Simple (reporting verbs/signal phrase)</b>	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	11	36.66
<b>Active Voice (signal phrase)</b>	1	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	9	30
<b>Objective Analysis of Quote</b>	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	6	20
<b>Neutral Description of the Passage</b>	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	18	60
<b>Formal Reporting Verbs</b>	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	6	20
<b>Formal Signal Phrase Model</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	13.33
<b>Formal Synonyms (summarizing/paraphrasing)</b>	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	9	30
<b>Formal Analysis of the Quote</b>	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	7	23.33
<b>Complex NounPhrases (author's credentials)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Avoiding Unnecassary Words/Sentences</b>	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	0	13	43.33
<b>Simplifying and Combining Structures</b>	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	8	26.66
<b>Avoiding wordiness</b>	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	7	23.33
<b>Coherent Quote with Ellipsis</b>	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	7	23.33
<b>Re-ordering Ideas and Retaining Meaning</b>	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	5	16.66
<b>Coherent Passage Using Link Qentences</b>	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	9	30
<b>Cohesive Devices</b>	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	8	26.66
<b>The Quote is Followed by an Analysis</b>	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	12	40
<b>Extracting Only Main Ideas from The Passage</b>	1	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	14	46.66
<b>In-Text Citation and Punctuation</b>	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	10	33.33
<b>No Copy and Paste</b>	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	11	36.66
<b>Participant(s) Total Scores</b>	15	11	8	9	16	15	11	11	5	10	11	15	8	16	13	174	29
<b>Participant (s) Total Means</b>	37.5	27.5	20	22.5	40	37.5	27.5	27.5	12.5	25	27.5	37.5	20	40	32.5		

**Table 74 : Experimental Group Pre-test Results at the Level of the Sub-Criteria**

As Table 74 shows, we can notice that only one sub-criterion got a mean above the average which is “neutral description” (60 %) which is related to “objectivity” criterion. Approximate average means are those of « avoiding unnecessary words/sentences » that is related to “cohesion/coherence” (43.33 %) “quote followed with analysis” (40 % ), and “extracting only main ideas” (46.66 % ) that is related to “analytical skills criterion”. One sub-criterion had a ‘0’ mean is that of using “complex noun phrases” that is related to “concision criterion”. All other sub-criteria are below average as it is shown on the previous table.

### 7.1.1.3. Comparative Analysis of Control and Experimental Group Pre-test Results

A comparison between the means of both the control and experimental group major criteria is presented in the following table :

<b>Academic Writing Criteria</b>	<b>Control group pre-test means</b>	<b>Experimental group pre-test means</b>	<b>Diff in %</b>
<b>Objectivity</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>36.66</b>	<b>2.24</b>
<b>Formality</b>	<b>19.16</b>	<b>21.66</b>	<b>12.24</b>
<b>Concision</b>	<b>21.66</b>	<b>23.33</b>	<b>7.40</b>
<b>Coherence/Cohesion (structural skills)</b>	<b>25.83</b>	<b>24.16</b>	<b>6.66</b>
<b>Analytical skills</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>43.33</b>	<b>8.00</b>
<b>Plagiarism/ Research skills</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total means</b>	<b>28.33</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2.32</b>

**Table 75 : Comparative Analysis of Control and Experimental Group Pre-test Results**

From the results shown on table 75 above, we highlight the following points:

- ❖ The total means of academic writing obtained for both Control and Experimental Groups are below average (the control group means is 28.33% the experimental group mean is 29 %). *The mean obtained for the experimental group consent with how the students reported their academic writing proficiency level in the mid-experiment questionnaire (when 60% reported having low and very low academic writing proficiency). The results also*

*confirm the necessity of implementing BL as a tested solution that might improve the students' writing proficiency.*

- ❖ *There is no significant difference (df, henceforth) between the total means of both groups. The difference in percentage (df) between the total means-when taking all criteria together- is df=2.32 %. This suggests that both groups are at the same level of proficiency.*
- ❖ *There is no significant difference between the means of each major criterion of both groups. Actually, no difference is detected at all in the mean of “research skills” (df=0). A low difference obtained in the means of all other criteria : “objectivity” (df=2.24 %), “formality” (df=12.24%), “cohesion/coherence” (df=6.66%) “concision” (df=7.40%), and “analytical skills” (df=8%).*
- ❖ *Both groups scored the lowest mean in “formality” criterion and highest mean in “analytical skills”. This is an important result as it emphasizes the difficulty of “formality” criterion and the easiness of “analytical skills” to the students. The researcher attributes the lowest percentage in “formality” to the complex task of writing a formal language as shown from the literature and especially the absence of any subject at the Algerian universities that teaches formality to students in comparison to other criteria. The highest percentage of “analytical skills” is probably attributed to the students' familiarity with “summary strategies”, i.e. how to extract main ideas and analyse texts as being taught –and practiced-in the subject of Written Expression or even in the preceding years (pre-university studies) how to summarize.*

A comparison of the sub-criteria results is presented in the following table:

<b>Academic writing Sub-Criteria</b>	<b>Control Group Pre-Test Means</b>	<b>Experimental Group Pre-Test Means</b>	<b>Diff in %</b>
<b>Present Simple (reporting verbs/signal phrase)</b>	30 %	36.66 %	<b>19.98 %</b>
<b>Active Voice (signal phrase)</b>	33.33 %	30 %	<b>10.51%</b>
<b>Objective Analysis of Quote</b>	26.66 %	20 %	<b>28.54%</b>
<b>Neutral Description of The Passage</b>	66.66 %	60 %	<b>10.51%</b>
<b>Formal Reporting Verbs (signal phrase)</b>	13.33 %	20 %	<b>40.02%</b>
<b>Formal Signal Phrase Model</b>	10 %	13.33 %	<b>28.54 %</b>
<b>Formal Synonyms (paraphrasing/ summarizing)</b>	26.66 %	30 %	<b>11.78 %</b>
<b>Formal Analysis of The Quote</b>	20 %	23.33 %	<b>15.37%</b>
<b>Complex Noun Phrases (author's credentials)</b>	3.33 %	0 %	<b>200%</b>
<b>Unnecessary Words/Sentences</b>	40 %	43.33 %	<b>7.99 %</b>
<b>Simplifying and Combining Structures</b>	23.33 %	26.66 %	<b>13.32 %</b>
<b>Avoiding Wordiness</b>	20 %	23.33 %	<b>15.37%</b>
<b>Coherent Quote with Ellipsis</b>	16.66 %	23.33 %	<b>33.35 %</b>
<b>Re-ordering Ideas and Retaining Meaning (summarizing)</b>	26.66 %	20 %	<b>28.54 %</b>
<b>Coherent Passage Using Link Sentences</b>	26.66 %	30 %	<b>11.78 %</b>
<b>Avoiding Run-on Sentences Using Cohesive Devices</b>	23.33 %	23.33 %	<b>0 %</b>
<b>The Quote is Followed with an Analysis</b>	40 %	40 %	<b>0 %</b>
<b>Extracting Only Main Ideas from The Passage</b>	40 %	46.66 %	<b>15.37 %</b>
<b>In-text Citation and Punctuation</b>	33.33 %	30 %	<b>10.51 %</b>
<b>No Copy and Paste</b>	36.66 %	40 %	<b>8.71 %</b>

**Table 76 : Comparative Analysis of Control and Experimental Groups Pre-test Scores in the Sub-Criteria**



The interpretation of the results shown on table 76 reveals the following points:

- ❖ Although the lowest major criterion mean for both groups is that of “formality”, *both groups had the lowest mean for the sub-criterion “complex noun phrases” which is related to “concision”* ; the CG (3.33%) and EG (0%). Both groups had a single highest mean in the sub-criterion « neutral description » which is related to “objectivity” : CG (66.66 %) and EG (60 %) although the highest mean found in major criteria was that of “analytical skills” rather than “objectivity”. As stated earlier, the task of applying “analytical skills” seems to be a less demanding task compared to “objectivity” which requires applying four sub-criteria. However, when taking the sub-criterion of “neutral description” alone, we find that its mean is higher than any other mean underlying “analytical skills” sub-criteria. This suggests that extracting main ideas is more difficult than maintaining a neutral description.
- ❖ For both groups, the means of all other sub-criteria are below the average.

### 7.1.2. Analysis of Control Group and Experimental Group Post-test Results

This sub-section presents the results of both the control and experimental groups in the post-test with drawing a comparative analysis.

#### 7.1.2.1. Control Group Post-test Results

The Control Group post-test results of the major criteria are presented in the following table :

Evaluative Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Totals	Criteria Means
Objectivity	5	4	2	8	0	5	3	4	4	7	2	1	6	4	3	58	48.33
Formality	5	3	2	4	0	3	0	1	2	2	1	1	3	5	1	33	27.5
Concision	6	2	3	4	1	5	4	2	3	4	1	3	5	2	5	50	41.66
Cohesion/ Coherence	7	4	3	5	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	4	2	1	45	37.5
Analytical skills	4	3	3	4	0	4	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	3	37/60 74/120	61.66
Research skills	2	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	27/60 54/120	45
Participant(s ) total scores	29	17	15	28	5	21	14	12	13	20	9	10	23	18	16	250	41.66
Participant(s ) total Means	72.5	42.5	37.5	70	12.5	52.5	35	30	32.5	50	22.5	25	57.5	45	40	41.66	

**Table 77 : Control Group Post-test Results in the Major Criteria**

When taking all these criteria together, table 77 shows that control group total scores and means are below the average. The total score obtained is 250/600 and the total mean is 41.66 %. Through comparing these result with the ones obtained in the pre-test, we find a considerable improvement –though they are still low- in both total mean and score (from 170 to 250 and 28.33 % to 41.66 %).

An improvement is also detected in the means of each major criterion. Considerable improvement is found in “*formality*” from 19.16 % to 27.5 %, ‘*concision*’ from 21.66 % to 41.66 % “*structural skills*” from 25.83 % to 37.5 %-which are all still low. Other criteria have approximated the average : “*objectivity*” from 37.5 % to 48.33 %, and “*research skills*” from 35 % to 45 % while ‘analytical skills’ increased above the average from 40 % to 61.66 %. Similar to the pre-test, the criterion of “formality” still obtains the lowest mean (27.5 %) and the criterion of “analytical skills” obtains the highest mean (61.66 %).

Control Group sub-criteria post-test results are presented in the following table :

<b>Academic Writing Sub- criteria</b>	<b>#1</b>	<b>#2</b>	<b>#3</b>	<b>#4</b>	<b>#5</b>	<b>#6</b>	<b>#7</b>	<b>#8</b>	<b>#9</b>	<b>#10</b>	<b>#11</b>	<b>#12</b>	<b>#13</b>	<b>#14</b>	<b>#15</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Means of Sub-Criteria</b>
<b>Present Simple (reporting verbs/signal phrase)</b>	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	12	40
<b>Active Voice (signal phrase)</b>	2	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	1	14	46.66
<b>Objective Analysis of Quote</b>	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	10	33.33
<b>Neutral Description of The Passage (summary)</b>	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	22	73.33
<b>Formal Reporting Verbs (signal phrase)</b>	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	9	30
<b>Formal Signal Phrase model</b>	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	13.33
<b>Formal Synonyms (paraphrasing/summarizing)</b>	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	9	30
<b>Formal Analysis of The Quote</b>	2	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	11	36.66
<b>Complex Noun Phrases (author's credentials)</b>	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	9	30
<b>Avoiding Unnecassary Words/Sentences</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	19	63.33
<b>Simplifying and Combining Structures</b>	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	11	36.66
<b>Avoiding Wordiness</b>	2	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	11	36.66
<b>Coherent Quote with Ellipsis</b>	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	10	33.33
<b>Re-ordering Ideas and Retaining Meaning</b>	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	26.66
<b>Coherent Passage Using Link Sentences</b>	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	14	46.66
<b>Avoiding Run-On Sentences Using Cohesive Devices</b>	2	1	2	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	13	43.33
<b>The Quote is Followed with an Analysis</b>	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	22	73.33
<b>Extracting Only Main Ideas from The Passage</b>	2	1	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	15	50
<b>In-text Citation and Punctuation</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	14	46.66
<b>No copy and Paste</b>	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	13	43.33
<b>Participant(s) Total Scores</b>	29	17	15	28	5	21	14	12	13	20	9	10	23	18	16	250	41.66
<b>Participant (s) Total Means</b>	72.5	42.5	37.5	70	12.5	52.5	35	30	32.5	50	22.5	25	57.5	45	40	41.66	

**Table 78 : Control Group Post-Test Results at the Level of the Sub-Criteria**

From Table 78, we can notice that three sub-criteria have means above the average : “neutral description” which already had an above-average means in the pre-test-slightly increased from 66.66 % to 73.33 %, ‘quote followed with analysis’ increased from 40% to 73.33%, and ‘avoiding unnecessary words/sentences’ from 40% to 63.33%. The criterion that had approximate average mean in the pre-test slightly increased, namely, ‘extracting only main ideas’ (50%) related to ‘analytical skills’. Other sub-criteria increased from low to approximate average means : ‘active voice’ from 33.33 to 46.66 %, ‘objective analysis of the quote’ from 26.66 to 33.33% and ‘in-text citation and punctuation’ from 33.33 % to 46.66 %, ‘avoid run-on sentences’ from 33.33 % to 43.33%, and ‘no copy and paste’ from 36.33% to 43.33%. The sub-criterion “complex noun phrases” had a considerable increase from 3.33% to 30%. Only the sub-criterion “re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning” had the same mean as in the pre-test (26.66 %). *All in all, we can say that –except for three sub-criteria- the overall sub-criteria means are between low and approximate average levels with a remarkable improvement compared to the pre-test results.*

### 7.1.2.2.Experimental Group Post-test Results

Table 79 presents the experimental Group post-test results of the major criteria :

Evaluative Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Totals	Criteria Means
Objectivity	6	7	8	5	5	8	6	5	8	5	5	8	1	8	7	92	76.67
Formality	5	6	6	2	7	8	6	6	6	5	4	6	2	6	6	81	67.5
Concision	6	7	8	5	5	5	6	7	6	6	5	7	6	5	6	90	75
Cohesion/ Coherence	6	5	4	4	5	7	6	7	6	3	5	4	6	4	7	79	65.83
Analytical skills	4	4	3	1	4	4	4	3	4	4	1	4	2	4	3	49/60 98/120	81.66
Research skills	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	4	41/60 82/120	68.33
Participant(s) total scores	30	32	31	19	29	35	31	31	33	25	23	32	19	29	33	432	72.00
Participant(s) total Means	75	80	77.5	47.5	72.5	87.5	77.5	77.5	82.5	62.5	57.5	80	47.5	72.5	82.5	72.00	

**Table79 : Experimental Group Post-test Results of The Major Criteria**

When taking all these criteria together, we notice that experimental group total scores and means are above the average. The total score obtained is 432/600 and the total mean is 72 %. Once comparing these results with the ones obtained in the pre-test, we find an outstanding improvement in both as they changed from low to high levels (from 174 to 432 and 29 % to 72%).

A significant improvement is also detected in the means of each major criterion: all means have increased to above the average: “*objectivity*” from 36.66 % to 76.67%, “*formality*” which had the lowest mean of 21.66 % raises to 67.5%, “*concision*” from 23.33 % to 75 %, “*structural skills*” from 24.16 % to 65.83 %, “*analytical skills*” from 43.33% to 81.66%, and “*research skills*” from 35% to 68.33%.

The Experimental Group sub-criteria post-test results are presented in table 80 below :

Academic Writing Sub- Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	Totals	Means
<b>Present Simple (reporting verbs/signal phrase)</b>	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	0	2	2	23	76.66
<b>Active Voice</b>	0	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	25	83.33
<b>Objective Analysis of Quote</b>	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	20	66.66
<b>Neutral Description of The Passage</b>	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	24	80
<b>Formal Reporting Verbs</b>	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	20	66.66
<b>Formal Signal Phrase Model</b>	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	2	1	18	60
<b>Formal Synonyms</b>	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	22	73.33
<b>Formal Analysis of The Quote</b>	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	2	0	1	2	21	70
<b>Complex Noun Phrases</b>	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	24	80
<b>Avoiding Unnecassary Words/ Sentences</b>	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	25	83.33
<b>Simplifying and Combining Structures</b>	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	21	70
<b>Avoiding Wordiness</b>	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	20	66.66
<b>Coherent Quote With Ellipsis</b>	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	0	2	24	80
<b>Re-ordering Ideas and Retaining Meaning</b>	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	18	60
<b>Coherent Passage Using Link Sentences</b>	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	2	2	0	1	2	1	2	19	63.33
<b>Avoiding Run-On Sentences Using Cohesive Devices</b>	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	2	1	2	18	60
<b>The Quote is Followed with an Analysis</b>	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	24	80
<b>Extracting Only Main Ideas from The Passage</b>	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	25	83.33
<b>In-text Citation and Punctuation</b>	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	21	70
<b>No Copy and Paste</b>	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	20	66.66
<b>Participant(s) total scores</b>	30	32	31	19	29	35	31	31	33	25	23	32	19	29	33	432	72
<b>Participant (s) total means</b>	75	80	77.5	47.5	72.5	87.5	77.5	77.5	82.5	62.5	57.5	80	47.5	72.5	82.5		

**Table 80 : Experimental Group Post-test Results at the Level of the Sub-Criteria**

From table 80, we notice that all the sub-criteria are above the average with slight differences (*considerable* high means of 80% and 83.33%, and *acceptable* high means of 60%, 63.33%, 66.66%, and 76.66%). In particular, the sub-criterion “neutral description” which was the highest mean in the pre-test has considerably increased from 60% to 80%. The criteria that had approximate average means in the pre-test have significantly increased to become high means, namely, ‘avoiding unnecessary words/sentences’ related to ‘concision/coherence criterion’ (43.33% to 83.33%) and ‘quote followed with analysis’ (40% to 80%) and ‘extracting only main ideas’ (46.66% to 83.33%) related to ‘analytical skills criterion’, and ‘no copy and paste’ (36.66 % to 66.66%). All other sub-criteria which obtained low means in the pre-test have increased to high means; for instance, ‘present simple’ has increased from 36.66% to 76.66%, and the sub-criterion “complex noun phrases” which had the lowest mean in the pre-test with a ‘0’ mean has considerably increased to 80%.

*Briefly, the experimental group achieved a significant increase in the post-test in both all major criteria and sub-criteria.*

### **7.1.2.3. Intra-Group and Inter-Group Comparative Analysis between Control and Experimental Group Results**

In order to check whether the experimental group achieved significantly higher scores than the control group- *and test the second research hypothesis-*, we tend, to present amounts of increase (decrease or stability) in criteria means between the pre-test and post-test results within the same groups (*Intra-group comparison*), on the basis of which we create an inter-group comparison of overall achievement.

All results obtained in relation to general criteria are presented in the following table:

General Evaluative Criteria	Control Group Results			Experimental Group Results		
	Pre-test means	Post-test means	Diff in %	Pre-test means	Post-test means	Diff in %
Objectivity	37.5	48.33	28.88	36.66	76.67	109.13
formality	19.16	27.5	43.52	21.66	67.5	211.63
concision	21.66	41.66	92.33	23.33	75	221.47
Structural skills (cohesion/coherence)	25.83	37.5	45.18	24.16	65.83	172.47
Analytical skills	40	61.66	54.15	43.33	81.66	88.46
Research skills (plagiarism)	35	45	28.57	35	68.33	95.22
Participants total means						
Criteria total means	28.33	41.66	47.05	29	72	148.27

**Table 81 : Comparative Analysis of Control and Experimental Groups Post-test and Pre-test Results**

Table 81 shows clearly that the post-test total mean of the experimental group is significantly higher than the post-test total mean of the control group. Furthermore, all the major criteria means of the experimental group are significantly higher than those of the control group. Three major criteria means of the experimental group are approximately the double of those of the control group, namely, ‘formality’ (CG : 27.5% Vs EG : 67.5%), ‘concision’ (CG :41.66 % Vs EG :75%), and ‘structural skills’ (CG :37.5 % Vs EG : 65.83%).

Such an *inter-group comparison* is more manifested when observing the amount of increase that both groups experienced from the pre-test to the post-test, i.e. *an intra-group comparison*. Although the control group made a remarkable increase in all the criteria, the amount of increase found in the experimental group in terms of all the criteria is significantly higher. If we take the example of ‘objectivity’, we find that the control group improved with 28.88 % while the experimental group improved with 109.13%.

Taking into account these results along with the fact that in the pre-test both groups had low means in all criteria with no significant difference, *we confirm that the constructivism-based BL methodology improves the students’ academic writing proficiency.*



However, we must note that although the experimental group have significantly improved in comparison to the pre-test achievement and scored high means, they are still not fully proficient in writing academically which explains the total mean of 72% (than 100%). The students still have some deficiencies regarding some criteria and we assume that having criteria means such as 65.83% for ‘structural skills’, 67.5% for ‘formality’, and 68.33% for ‘research skills’ can still be better improved. Likewise, we appreciate the efforts that the majority of participants in the control group made in order to achieve some improvement, which is sometimes taken as acceptable when two criteria increased beyond the average and the rest approximated the average.

*The comparison of sub-criteria between both groups is better addressed in the qualitative analysis of results for the detailed information they convey about the students’ quality of their academic writing essays.*

## **7.2. Qualitative Analysis of the Experimental Study Results**

In addition to the quantitative measures reached so far, the qualitative analysis is used to serve two main objectives ; first, *to analyse the students’ writing productions in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the differences between the participants’ achievements in both groups* and, second, *to highlight the qualities of BL that lead the Experimental group to outperform the control group*. Therefore, in the first sub-section, a ‘general’ comparative analysis of academic writing sub-criteria in both pre-test and post-test is presented along with deducing the factors-pertaining to the experimental study- underlying the experimental group outperformace. The second sub-section validates the analysis with examining ‘in details’ some examples of the participants’ productions using the participants’ individual scores. In this type of analysis, *the sub-criteria are found to be more useful than the general criteria in clarifying the students’ writing deficiencies or success.*

### **7.2.1. General Comparative Analysis of Academic Writing Productions between Control and Experimental Groups**

Through this section, a comparative qualitative analysis between the participants' writing productions is thoroughly examined. Reference is given to the major writing strengths and weaknesses of both groups. Subsequently, the researcher deduced some of the factors that explain the students' low or high achievements (*Check the enclosed CD that contains the writing productions of the 30 participants in both the pre-test and the post-test*).

#### **7.2.1.1. Comparative Analysis at the Level of the Pre-test**

The quantitative analysis of the control and the experimental group scores in the pre-test revealed that both groups achieved '*low and approximately similar means*' in all sub-criteria except for 'neutral description' which is related to the 'objectivity' criterion (CG :66.66%/ EG :60%). Through correcting the participants' answers in the pre-test, the researcher noticed '*remarkable deficiencies*' in the students' academic writings for both the control and the experimental group. She addresses and explains the occurrence of these academic writing deficiencies as follows :

- *Complex noun phrase (the lowest mean)* : Only one student (CG#4) among all participants used this sub-criterion. There are different reasons for such a result : for the majority, some did not mention the author at all (in-text citation) whereas others who mentioned the author did not use his/her credentials which suggests that '*the students are not aware of the importance of adding 'author's credentials' in making sources more reliable*'.
- *Neutral description (the highest mean)* : The researcher attributed the easiness that the students experienced with 'maintaining a neutral description of the passage' –as opposed to 'extracting main ideas' -to their familiarity with the summarizing technique taught in the subject of 'Written Expression' when '*they are usually asked to condense a written corpus rather than add personal judgments or give an analytical stance*'.

- *Present simple* : (EG :36.66% , CG :23.33%). The majority of the students in both groups used the past simple tense for reporting verbs in signal phrases (eg.said or talked about). This implies that *'although the students have been taught in Grammar how to conjugate verbs in the present tense, they are unaware of its importance for objectivity' (to stress that information is true and remains true).*
- *Active voice* : (EG :30%, CG : 33.33%). The majority of the students among those who added a reporting verb used the passive voice (eg. It is said that) either before or after the borrowed information. After discussing within the lectures, *'the students acknowledged being taught that active voice is used in informal speech like speaking whereas passive voice is used in formal speech'*. Deciding on whether to use active or passive voice in academic writing is found to be a debatable matter. In addition, the researcher considers that although the author can be mentioned at the end of the borrowed material, it is better to mention him at the beginning using a signal phrase in order to link ideas and avoid dropping borrowed materials.
- *Objective analysis of the quote* : (EG :20%, CG :26.66%). The majority of the students did not add any analysis after the quote. *'This entails that despite having a background knowledge about borrowing techniques as derived from their first year, the students do not know that long quotes must be followed by an analysis'*. Some of the few who analysed the quote used personal pronouns such as *"I think , I believe"* instead of third person/inanimate agents (eg. The author believes, the quote indicates..), whereas some others used subjective evaluations such as *"it is right"...or "the Internet is amazing"*.
- *Formal reporting verbs* : (EG :20%, CG :13.33%). The researchers observed that the most frequently used reporting verbs -by the few students who mentioned the author- are "said" , "told", and "talk about" which are all informal terms.
- *Formal signal phrase model* : (EG :13.33%, CG :10%). The researcher observed that there were few attempts to vary the signal phrase models (7 students out of 30) as the

majority of the students who mentioned the author were stick to only one signal phrase model either (sub+verb+that) or (it is +verb+that).

- *Formal synonyms* : (EG :30%, CG :23.33%). Such low percentages reflect the fact that even when the students attempted to summarize and extract main ideas, the majority kept the words in the selected sentences (of the main ideas) without change. Even when change occurred, most of these students used informal words such as (help instead of assist/get instead of obtain/thought instead of perceived).
- *Formal analysis of the quote* : (EG :23.33%, CG :20%). Having said that the majority of students added no analysis at all after the quote, a few of those who analysed the quote have used informal words (nouns, verbs, and contractions).
- *Unecessary sentences/phrases* : CG (40 %), EG (43.33%). Some students in both groups used fancy sentences and empty words that add no value to the meaning of the sentence (e.g. ‘even’, ‘actually’). *The students probably think that these sentences would add a more formal tone ; thus resulting in wordiness.*
- *Simplifying and combining structures* : (EG : 26.66%, CG :23.33%). Because the aim of the majority was to reach a summarized text, *most students cut and paste the passage by taking main ideas and copy their sentence without reducing their length.*
- *Avoiding wordiness* : (EG : 23.33%, CG : 20%). While summarizing, almost all the students keep the redundancy found in the passages as it is without concising it. Some students are found to add their own wordiness when using their own style (eg. he thought and believed that.....).
- *Coherent quote with ellipsis* : Both groups had low means (EG : 23.33%, CG : 16.66%). The majority of the students used the ellipsis to shorten the quote but the quote did not include a grammatically and semantically complete thought.

- *Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning* : Both groups had low means (EG : 16.66%, CG : 26.66%). The majority of the students who tried to summarize follow the order of the ideas of the original passage. Out of 30, only 5 students change the order adequately (score '2') while 3 students changed order of one sentence or two (score '1').
- *Coherent passage using link sentences* : Both groups had low means (EG: 30%/ CG: 26.66%) because the majority did not use link sentences to move from one idea to another and sustain the flow of ideas. The three resources were sometimes summarized in separate paragraphs. In other words, *the students do not pay attention to coherence unless they are asked to-as in the subject of 'Written Expression' when asked to write a coherent essay.*
- *Avoid run-on sentences using cohesive devices* : (EG : 26.66%, CG : 33.33%). The majority of the students did not make use of cohesive devices to link sentences which suggests that they do not conceive the idea that the subjects are attached to each other. Reference here is given to the subject of 'Written Expression'. In other words, similar to coherence, *the students would use cohesive devices only when they are asked to -the case of 'Written Expression'.*
- *No copy/cut and paste* : (EG : 36.66%, CG : 36.66%). Although some of the students attempted to summarize, and extract main ideas, they copied the sentences as they are. Others who did not commit a total copy of sentences, still copied sentence clusters resulting in a cut-and-paste plagiarism. *As it was clearly manifested, the students' primary aim was to 'reach a shorter passage' relying on the original style rather than using their own style.*

#### **7.2.1.2.Reasons/Factors behind Participants' Low Achievement in the Pre-test**

Level of accomplishment in the pre-test has demonstrated that both *the Control and Experimental Group participants have serious academic writing deficiencies (qualitatively) with no significant difference (quantitatively).* Such poor writing performance is highly attributed to the following reasons :

(1)-*No subject is targeted towards teaching these criteria*

There exist no subject at our universitites that teach the following criteria :

*-Formality* : The fact that explains the students' tendency to use informal vocabulary wherever they used their own voice. The students either did not pay attention to their language formality-assuming they have better academic vocabulary- or their vocabulary is rather poor. It should be noted that the students' informality does not include slang language (for it is more an attribute of native speakers) but using much of anglo-saxon word-origins and conversational language. *-Concision* : the students are generally taught how to write a well-structured essay (in Written Expression) but their main problem lies in writing long esseys- as in exam answer- as they think that the more they write the better mark they will obtain. No reference is given to how to make writing concise and precise by eliminating redundancy and repetition.

*-Objectivity* : the students are generally taught how to write different types of essays (cause/effect, compare/contrast, ...etc) but they are not taught how to maintain an objective tone or how to analyse other writings' with neutral voice.

2)-*The absence of academic writing aspects in the program of 'Research Methodology'- first year (the case of the study sample)*

Because there is no subject targeted towards teaching 'formality' 'concision' and 'objectivity', we suggest that the subject of 'Research Methodology' is the one that requires teaching these notions. However, the comparison between the Checklist of Academic Writing and the curenly used program of 'Research Methodology' revealed that the program used for 2<sup>nd</sup> year-semester 01- is centered around borrowing techniques where an emphasis is placed on avoiding plagiarism and using one's own voice i.e. *research skills*-including 'copy-paste' and 'in-text citation'. Many of the other sub-criteria underlying formality, objectivity, concision, cohesion and coherence *are not included in the program*, namely, 'active voice',

'objective analysis', 'formal synonyms', 'formal analysis of the quote', 'complex noun phrase', 'avoid wordiness', 'coherent passage using link sentences', 'avoid run-on sentences' or *at least are not directly taught as strategies of keeping an objective, formal, and coherent writing* as it is the case with 'present simple', 'formal reporting verbs', and 'coherent quote with ellipsis'.

Although the sample participants are taught borrowing techniques during their first year, their poor performance is to be attributed to the number of the required academic writing criteria that they had no/or little instruction about.

*(3)- the students' inability to internalize the rules*

Due to the few practice opportunities, little feedback provided, and time constraints as reported by the students in the pre-experiment questionnaire (Qs10,12,14, pp.256-257), the students did not internalize even the rules of borrowing techniques that are included in the program of first year as the majority of them committed the following mistakes:

-'few usage of synonyms'; 'no analysis after the quote'; 'copied or cut and pasted the passages, not simplified and combined structures which are important strategies of paraphrasing'; 'kept the original order of ideas'; 'made many in-text citation and punctuation mistakes', and added 'no formal reporting verbs' and 'no signal phrase'.

*(4)- the students attach no consistency to 'the subjects' they learn*

The students learnt in the subject of 'Written Expression' -and pre-university studies- structural and thinking skills which underlie 'avoid run-on sentences' (cohesive devices) and 'extracting only main ideas' (summarizing), 'coherent passage using link sentences' (topic sentence, transitional sentences). Student should use these skills whenever they are required to compose an academic text. However, the students seem to hold importance to these skills only when they are directly obliged to apply them (in an exam/test of Written Expression).

### **7.2.1.3. Comparative Analysis at the Level of the Post-test**

It should be reminded that the quantitative analysis of both the control and experimental scores in the post-test reveal that both groups witnessed an increase from the pre-test to the post-test. However, *the significant increase achieved by the experimental group is higher than the increase detected by the control group in all the sub-criteria.* As a reminder of the quantitative results of both groups in the post-test, table 82 below draws a comparison of achievement at the sub-criteria on the basis on which all the subsequent results mentioned in this section are derived:



<b>Evaluative Sub-Criteria</b>	<b>Control Group Post-test Means</b>	<b>Experimental Group Post-test Means</b>	<b>Diff in %</b>
<b>Present simple (reporting verbs/signal phrase)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>76.67</b>	<b>91.67</b>
<b>Active voice (signal phrase)</b>	<b>46.66</b>	<b>83.33</b>	<b>78.58</b>
<b>Objective analysis of quote</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>66.66</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Neutral description of the passage (summary)</b>	<b>73.33</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>Formal Reporting verbs (signal phrase)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>66.66</b>	<b>122.2</b>
<b>Formal Signal phrase modal</b>	<b>13.33</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>350.11</b>
<b>Formal synonyms (paraphrasing/summarizing)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>73.33</b>	<b>144.43</b>
<b>Formal analysis of the quote</b>	<b>36.66</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>90.94</b>
<b>Complex noun phrases (author's credentials)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>166.66</b>
<b>Unnecessary sentences</b>	<b>63.33</b>	<b>83.33</b>	<b>31.58</b>
<b>Simplifying structures</b>	<b>36.66</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>90.94</b>
<b>Avoiding wordiness</b>	<b>36.66</b>	<b>66.66</b>	<b>81.83</b>
<b>Coherent quote with ellipsis (shortening quote)</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>140.02</b>
<b>Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning (summarizing)</b>	<b>26.66</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>125.05</b>
<b>Coherent passage using link sentences</b>	<b>46.66</b>	<b>63.33</b>	<b>35.72</b>
<b>Avoid run-on sentences using cohesive devices</b>	<b>43.33</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>38.47</b>
<b>The quote is followed by an analysis</b>	<b>73.33</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>9.09</b>
<b>Extracting only main ideas from the passage</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>83.33</b>	<b>66.66</b>
<b>In-text Citation and punctuation</b>	<b>46.66</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50.02</b>
<b>No copy and paste</b>	<b>43.33</b>	<b>66.66</b>	<b>53.84</b>
<b>Participant (s) / Criteria total means</b>	<b>41.66</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72.82</b>

**Table 82: Comparative Analysis of Control and Experimental Groups Post-test Results in the the Sub-Criteria**

- *Present simple:* (CG : 40%/EG :76.67%) Although the control group had a remarkable improvement in applying the present simple (from 23.33% to 40%), the mean of this sub-criterion is still low. Despite the easiness of applying this criterion as opposed to the other sub-criteria-*since it does not require an intense practice such as 'formality' or 'concision' but only remembering to conjugate reporting verbs into the present simple tense-* many students in the control group fail to apply it and resort to the past simple tense or forget to put the third singular 's'.
- *Active voice :* The control group made a considerable increase of 39.99% which made the sub-criterion to approximate the average (46.66%). Still though, the level is very low compared with the one reached by the experimental group (83.33%). While correcting the students' post-test answers, the researcher observed the control group participants' preference to mention the author at the end of the borrowed material between parentheses rather than introduce it within a signal phrase. Although using a parenthetical citation is an acceptable way of citing the author-mainly in quotations- the researcher insisted (during sessions) on using a signal phrase model following an active voice . The researcher interpretes this tendency to the majority of the control group participants to avoid the burdon of finding formal reporting verbs and interweave the context of bororowed information to previous ideas. *This suggests that, unlike the experimental group participants, the majority of these students seem not to have improved their abilities to use 'formal reporting verbs' and 'using link sentences' where signal phrases carry contextual information.*
- *Neutral description of the passage:* There is no significant difference between the students' result in the post-test regarding this sub-criterion (EG : 80%, CG :73.33%). In addition, the experimental group rate of increase between the pre-test and post-test is only slightly higher than that of the control group (CG :10.06%, EG :33.33%)- as compared with

difference with the other criteria. As found in the pre-test, the majority of the students in both groups faced no difficulty in keeping a neutral tone while summarizing as both groups obtained means above the average in this sub-criterion (EG :60%, CG :66.66%). Through more practice within the activities sessions, both groups considerably improved though with no significant difference.

- *Formal reporting verbs* : (CG : 30% / EG : 66.66% ) As mentioned earlier, the majority of control group students preferred using parenthetical citation format. This has led some of them to avoid mentioning reporting verbs while others have used reporting verbs in a passive voice along with the parenthetical citation of the author. Except for CG#1, CG#9, those who used reporting verbs kept on using informal ones such as « said » as it was the case in the pre-test. The few others, who attempted to use more formal equivalents were heavily relying on the verb ‘to argue’ which was sometimes used inconveniently and where alternative verbs could have been better suitable (CG#6, CG#13). Although the experimental group participants experienced some fails in using formal reporting verbs, they were more successful in avoiding informal reporting verbs (‘said’ ‘talk’, ‘tell’) by using formal alternatives and more cautions about the suitability of the verbs to the context.

- *Formal signal phrase model* : (CG :13.33% /EG :60%) In relation to this sub-criterion, some students in the control group who used parenthetical citation, did not at all use signal phrases. Others who used signal phrases -unlike the experimental group- used the same signal phrase model (author+verb+ that) with only few who made other structuring formats. This suggests that the students did not internalize the rule, i.e they forget to change the signal phrase model to reveal a more formal academic tone.

- *Formal synonyms* : (CG :30% /EG :73.33%) the students in the control group who committed copy-paste plagiarism did not use synonyms resulting in ‘0’ score (except for #8 who changed a few words with synonyms), others who attempted to use their own style failed

to choose formal equivalents resulting in score '1' and only one student (#14) obtained a '2' score. . Specifically, the majority of the students used phrasal verbs (e.g. go on/bring about/end up) and weak verbs (e.g. to make/to get/to have), old English word-origins (e.g. to help/so/a lot/like), and vague words (thing, hate, to like, good). On the other hand, experimental group participants have better avoided phrasal verbs, weak verbs, and vague words and they were more careful to choose words from latin-origin words as 7 students had a '2' score.

- **The quote is followed by an analysis /Formal analysis of the quote/objective analysis**

Although the majority of control group students (11 students) added an analysis after the quote, 5 out of these 11 students had a semi-formal analysis. Their problem was mainly with using some colloquial English, contractions, and phrasal verbs. Similar to our interpretations to the results of the control group in the sub-criterion 'formal synonyms', the researcher owes the students' inability to eliminate these informal cues to the insufficient constructive feedback and not revising or uploading the Pdf files which contain lists of formal words. As for the objectivity of the analysis, 6 out of the 11 students who analysed the quote failed to add an objective analysis. The major (and sometimes the 'only') problem with their analyses is the use of personal pronouns (rather than subjective statements). Taking the case of the experimental group participants, the majority successfully avoided using personal pronouns.

- *Complex noun phrases* : (CG :30% /EG :80%) Although this sub-criterion can be easily grasped by the students as compared to other sub-criteria, many students in the control group did not mention at all the authors' credentials- for both who used parenthetical citation or citing the author at the beginning- (except four students #1, 6#, 10#, #13,#15).

- *Avoiding unnecessary words/sentences* : (CG : 63.33% /EG :83.33%) Although both groups scored higher than the average, the students in the experimental group seemed to have paid more attention to eliminating unnecessary words and sentences than did the control group. The students in the control group had not probably been serious to revise lists of unnecessary words and sentences for the low motivation they exhibit. Also , the teacher's online comments on the students' answers, self-assessment and peer assessment questions which center around this sub-criterion were probably more efficient than the physical discussions where few feedback is suggested.
- *Simplifying and combining structures* : (CG : 36.66% /EG : 70%) Three of the control group students committed copy and paste plagiarism (#2, #6, #8). The others attempted unsuccessfully to simplify structures ; although they used so often their own style, they kept sentences rather wordy and uncombined. On the contrary, none of the experimental group participants committed direct plagiarism (copy and paste) and some had successfully simplified structures with keeping correct meaning-but still not in all attempts.
- *Avoiding wordiness* : (CG :20% /EG :66.66%) In the control group 3 students had a score of '2' (#1, #4, #6) and 7 students had a '0' score. The '0/1 score' students either kept the redundancy found in the text as it was as they provided synonyms of all redundant words and others added their own redundant words/expressions. The experimental group was in general more successful in eliminating the existing redundancy and keeping their own style concise as five students obtained a score of '2' (#2, #3, #6, #8, #12) and none got a '0' score.
- *Coherent quote with ellipsis* : (CG :33.33% /EG :80%) The majority of the students in the control group either do not insert an ellipsis at all while condensing the quote or they used it but left out the remaining text to be semantically incomplete while only 3 students (#1, #4, #13 )could use the "ellipsis" adequately. Both these shortcomings suggest that the students

forgot the role of using "ellipsis" in quotes and did not pay the required attention to keep the quote both grammatically and semantically complete.

- *Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning* : (CG :26.66% /EG :60%) Regarding this sub-criterion, the control group achieved no difference in the mean between the pre-test and post-test (26.66# in both). This is because, in addition to achieving some increase, the control group participants also made some decrease or kept at the same level of the pre-test achievement. If, for example, we take participant 4#, we observe that in the pre-test he obtained '2' while in the post-test he decreased to '1'. Others who experienced no progress (such as 7#) still did not use the strategy at all. The control group participants who witnessed some progress are very few and they still did not reach coherence for all uses of this strategy (score '1'). On the other hand, except two (EG#10, EG#13), the experimental group participants attempted to use the strategy which suggests how these students memorized the rule of changing the order to avoid 'style plagiarism' and they were better successful (although not all) in maintaining coherence and using it for all the original passages.

- *Coherent passage using link sentences* : (CG : 46.66% /EG : 63.33%) Only three students succeeded in adding a link sentence with every signal phrase they added (#1, #2, #10). The others included those who preferred to use 'parenthetical citation' as a strategy to avoid the use of link sentences where the context of the previous and following ideas are introduced within a signal phrase to maintain the flow of ideas. Although the students have learnt how to avoid dropping borrowed materials using link sentences, they seem to find it difficult to understand ideas presented and show the relationship between them. Some others used a signal phrase in its minimum structure where no context was embedded.

- *Avoiding run-on sentences using cohesive devices* : (CG :43.33%/EG: 60%) The majority of the students in the experimental group (except #3,#10) remembered to use cohesive devices to maintain cohesion between the ideas –though still not used in all required

writing contexts- whereas 7 students in the control group did not use at all cohesive devices, i.e they forgot their importance in keeping a cohesive text. Although no specific activities were devoted to teach these devices –given that they already studied/study it in the subject of ‘Written Expression’- but the teacher reminded them of using it while summarizing/paraphrasing; experimental group outperformed the control group in the improvement detected from the pre-test to the post-test.

- *Extracting only main ideas from the passage* : (CG :50%/EG :83.33%) The majority of the students in the control group failed to extract all main ideas of the passage while summarizing as 4 out of 15 students re-mentioned all the ideas of the texts including the details- in which one of them (#8) copied the text as it was- while 7 students skipped some important ideas. All the students in the experimental group, however, attempted to summarize and extract main ideas as none of them re-stated all the ideas of the text (the major and the details), i.e. no one took a score of ‘0’ and 10 out of 15 succeeded in mentioning only and all the main ideas of the texts, i.e. obtained a score of ‘2’.

- *In-text citation and punctuation* : (CG :46.66%/EG :70%) The struggle of both groups in applying this sub-criterion is with ‘punctuation’ more than with ‘mentioning the author’s name’ as the majority of the students mentioned the author either at the beginning of the borrowed material (experimental group) or in a parenthetical format (control group). Punctuation is concerned with both quoting –when the students were asked to condense the quote which required them to use ellipsis, colon, page number, full stop before the page number, no quotation marks- and summarizing/or paraphrasing when they used parentheses and comma or colon for page number and year of publication- depending on whether they used the MLA or APA (American Psychological Association). The students in control group made several mistakes with punctuation mainly with the quote when the majority condensed the quote without using the ellipsis as mentioned earlier together with other punctuation

mistakes. While the experimental group also had punctuation mistakes, these were fewer compared with those committed by the control group as 6 students (#1,#7,#8,#11,#12,#15) had no mistakes at all with punctuation as they obtained a score of '2'.

- *No copy/cut and paste* : (CG : 43.33%/EG : 66.66%) When comparing the achievement of the experimental and the control group in this sub-criterion, we find that, on the one hand, 4 students out of 15 (#2,#6,#8,#9) in the control group made a direct plagiarism of the texts- despite mentioning the author and extracting main ideas- where sentence clusters are copied and very few words were changed. The remaining students have succeeded but equally failed in many occasions to use their own words (paraphrase) and copied some phrases. In the experimental group, on the other hand, we find that 5 students out of 15 (#2,#5,#6,#9,#15) perfectly paraphrased the texts using their own words as they obtained a score of '2' while no student directly copied the whole texts, i.e. no one obtained a score of '0'.

#### **7.2.1.4. Factors behind Experimental Group Outperformance in the Post-test**

*An observation* of the physical and online sessions together with *the questionnaires'* results served to attribute the experimental group outperformance in the post-test to the following factors :

##### *1)-State of Motivation*

During the treatment period, the researcher observed differing engagement patterns between control and experimental group participants especially during the activities sessions that required the students' constant engagement. The students in the control group were generally reluctant to engage in the discussions spontaneously-except for a few of them. Although the teacher attempted to apply the discussion method, it was difficult to create a community of inquiry. The situation of these students was probably owed to their *tiredness* given that the sessions took place at 8 :00 am and some of them live far from the



Wilaya/province of Oum El bouaghi. *The unattractive or dissatisfying physical setting* was another reason following the students' usual complaints about the cold room, crowdedness and the lack of order in sitting arrangements due to the insufficient number of chairs (where more than 2/3 students sat together in the same table). This chaos and the noise rising from the corridors definitely interrupted the smooth of the lecture, the students' concentration, and the ability to hear one another. As revealed in the pre-experiment questionnaire, types of communication and feedback rate can be decreased due to these physical factors. The last probable reason for the students' lack of motivation concerns introvert students who avoided participation for *fearing public criticism* (losing face).

Experimental group participants, on the other hand, showed more engagement rate. From the very beginning, these students showed high enthusiasm to participate in the study. Although interaction increases only after the third online session (for it was their first time learning online, the students were willing to learn and conform to the online rules set by the instructor resulting in high quantity of interaction patterns revealed in the number of comments and replies they generated (see Table 83). The mid-experiment questionnaire also confirmed the positive attitudes that the students held towards using Facebook as a teaching tool as well as the comfort and joy they experienced (private chat, anonymity). The students even posted different learning documents (pdfs, weblinks, images, videos) beyond the session time which revealed that their responsibility and self-regulation was high (as found in the mid-experiment questionnaire). The students' high motivation was also reflected on their learning behaviours during the physical lectures as they seemed more attentive to the teacher and more inquisitive.

## *2)-Learning Flexibility*

Place and time constraints were important factors to emphasize. Because the session of 'Research Methodology' took place at 8 :00 a.m, it was difficult for control group students

who lived far to reach the university which results in the students' absences so often or the students' tiredness and less concentration. Experimental group, however, experienced no difficulty in accessing the online activities session as it was arranged on Friday at their convenient time. Control group seemed also to experience difficulties in uploading the pdf files (for formal reporting verbs lists, formal Vs informal equivalents lists, concise language and objectivity tips) immediately in class while the experimental group could upload them directly from the Facebook Group. Another significant issue was that the time allowed in the physical session (an hour and a half) was not sufficient in comparison with the time allowed online.

### *3)-E-feedback and sources*

The experimental group participants seemed to have more advantages than the control group students for receiving E-feedback and online sources :

-Extra learning documents were uploaded on the Facebook Group by instructors and peers beyond the session time.

-Consulting word-processing applications and online websites during the activities assisted the students in revising and editing their productions.

-Sharing different websites that allowed the students to enrich their vocabulary repertoire (formality), improve their objective writing, help avoiding Grammar mistakes.

-Activities discussions could be revisited at any time.

### *4)- Level of Feedback and constructive discussions*

The difference in the students' *motivation, learning flexibility and quantity of resources* determined to what extent the participants in both control and experimental groups internalized the rules and improved their self-monitoring strategies while writing academically.

The low level of motivation the control group manifested caused them to be both ‘cognitively’ and ‘socially’ absent and made it difficult for the community of inquiry to occur. During the course of solving the activities, it was noticeable that some students were heavily relying on their partners to accomplish the work required. When the students’ spontaneous initiative arises, the time available was not an advantage : it did not allow all the students to write their answers on the board ; to ask the students enough self-assessment and peer-assessment questions ; to allow students to ask and answer questions ; to provide feedback and make sure that every student had understood it (timing issue is also stressed in the pre-experiment questionnaire). Writing the students’ answers and suggestions on the backboard (for discussion) was also time-consuming.

Contrarily, the high motivation of the experimental group and their willingness to learn how to use Facebook in a pedagogical manner encouraged them to provide feedback to one another (by replying on one another comments and answers), to spontaneously answer others’ misunderstandings and inquiries, and to ask the instructor questions whenever they felt a lack of understanding. They definitely enjoyed the Comment, Like, and Tag features. Timing of the online sessions was sufficient enough and the students often stated that they ‘did not feel the time pass quickly’. This comment describes a situation similar to ‘flow’ which represents a the highest state of intrinsic motivation where someone is deeply emersed in a task, highly concentrated, and loses self-consiousness due the pleasure he experiences. Learning place was obviously not an issue as the participants were joining the sessions while sitting at their homes. Furthermore, the students did not only rely on the instructor’s learning resources as it was the case with control group but could share and upload further online resources. The quantity of interaction occuring on the Facebook Group in *Comments Number (CN)* and *Private Chat Messages (PM)* is shown in the following table :

<b>Weeks/ Sessions</b>	<b>Week 1 / Session 1</b>	<b>Week 2 / Session 2</b>	<b>Week 3/ Session 3</b>	<b>Week 4/ Session 4</b>	<b>Week 5/ Session 5</b>
<b>CN From Instructor</b>	98	162	176	197	192
<b>CN From Learners</b>	122	174	158	182	176
<b>PM</b>	52	19	12	09	13

**Table 83 : Quantity of Interaction Occuring on the Facebook Group**

Calculating the number of comments was a manual operation. It divides the total number of comments based on the origin of the comment- *whether it is from the instructor or the learner*- and considers the comments provided on all the questions raised during an online session. Private Chat Messages (PM) were counted using Mauf application. They concern the messages that were sent *from the students as a whole to the instructor during the session*. The messages that were sent beyond the session or those that could have been transmitted among the students during or beyond the session could not be possibly calculated.

As table 83 demonstrates, *CN was the lowest during the first session whereas PM has the highest number during the first session*. As stated earlier in this research, the participants did not know at the first session how to use Facebook pedagogically. The students kept asking or answering some questions privately instead of writing their answers in the comment bar.

Another remark to emphasize is that *during the first session the CN from the instructor is higher than the CN from the learners*. In order to ensure that BL is following a learner-centered method-*with the aim to have the learners' contributions (CNs from the learner) higher than the instructor's contributions (CNs from instructor)*- the instructor guided the students during the following physical session to use the Comment feature adequately by answering and raising their questions in public and feeling free to reveal their opinions about their peers as if the teacher was absent (similar to commenting on any other post on Facebook). The instructor's guidance was fruitful : *during the second online session, the students' CN was higher than PMs and approximate to the CN from the the instructor wheares in all other subsequent sessions (starting from session 3), the learners 'contributions*

*became higher than the contributions of the instructor (CN from the learners is higher than CN from the instructor) where the instructor intervenes only when necessary.*

The quantity of CNs AND PMs is useful in confirming the students' *social presence* during the online sessions. In other words, the students were confident enough to maintain their role in Facebook Group as a learning community. However 'the quality' of comments must also be emphasized to reveal the students' *cognitive presence*. For this aim, we present a few examples of the students' comments :

All of the previously stated factors have determined the participants' increase or decrease of their *internal feedback, self-monitoring and internalization of the rules*. Thus, the majority of control group students (as opposed to the experimental group) are found to :

*-Forgot the rules of/or did not revise: applying the present simple tense despite its easiness ; using cohesive devices ; keeping coherence while using ellipsis in quotes, adding an analysis after a long quote, avoiding personal pronouns, integrating authors' credentials, re-ordering ideas with coherence, and changing signal phrase model.*

*-Not improved their formal academic vocabulary ; their paraphrasing skill of simplifying and combining structures ; their skill to avoid wordiness ; extracting only main ideas ; contextualizing information using link sentences.*

To sum up the discussion around the comparison between both groups' achievements in the post-test in relation to the sub-criteria, we argue that the main factor behind the experimental group higher significant improvement is *the BL implemented design*.

### **7.2.2. Validating Qualitative Comparison with Examples and Exceptions**

In order to validate the qualitative comparison of results, some examples of students' writing productions must be analyzed. The selection of these examples is not haphazard but it is based on the control and experimental group participants' individual scores. Unlike the

comparison of criteria and sub-criteria results, comparing participants results provides more insights towards their increase and decrease rates and provides an overall overview of achievement which is useful in the quantitative analysis. Tables 84 and 85 represent the participants' individual scores with increase and decrease rates (diff in %) :

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15
Pre-test	20	42.5	27.5	30	12.5	25	45	20	22.5	45	17.5	35	30	27.5	25
Post-test	72.5	42.5	37.5	70	12.5	52.5	35	30	32.5	50	22.5	25	57.5	45	40
Diff in%	262.5	0	36.36	133.33	0	110	-22.22	50	44.44	11.11	28.57	-28.57	91.66	63.63	60

**Table 84 :Comparison of Control Group Participants' Results**

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15
Pre-test	37.5	27.5	20	22.5	40	37.5	27.5	27.5	12.5	25	27.5	37.5	20	40	32.5
Post-test	75	80	77.5	47.5	72.5	87.5	77.5	77.5	82.5	62.5	57.5	80	47.5	72.5	82.5
Diff in %	100	190.9	287.5	111.11	81.25	133.33	181.81	181.81	560	150	109.09	113.33	137.5	81.25	153.84

**Table 85 :Comparison of Experimental Group Participants' Results**

Both the preceding tables lead us to conclude the following points of comparison:

- On the one hand, the majority of control group students improved their writing proficiency from the pre-test to the post-test except for two students who witnessed a decrease (CG#7 and CG#12 with decrease rates of -22.22 and -28.57) and one student remained at the same level of achievement (CG#2 with df=0%). On the other hand, all experimental group participants witnessed an improvement in their writing proficiency (no decrease rates).
- The increase that the majority of the participants witnessed in both groups is largely different-sometimes is it 'considerable' (e.g. CG#1 and EG#2) and sometimes it is only 'a slight' increase (e.g. CG#11). This fact caused a high discrepancy between both groups in achievement levels (low/average/high) in the post-test :

- For the control group : -The majority (8 students) obtained *low* means
  - 5 students (#2, #6, #10, #13, #15) obtained *average* means.
  - 2 students have (#1, #4) obtained *high* means
- For the experimental group : -The majority (12 students) obtained *high* means.
  - 3 students (#4, #11, #13) obtained *average* means.
  - No student obtained *low* mean.

*The overall framework of achievement comparison then suggests that the majority of experimental group participants increased to high means whereas the majority of control group students, though slightly increased, are still having low or approximate-average means (except 2 students with high means (CG#1, CG#4). These findings also imply that BL is an important factor behind the experimental group outperformance.*

The previous comparison of participants' individual results highlighted specific writing productions as worthy of comparative analysis. Therefore, to validate the results reached so far, three examples of binary contrastive analysis are chosen.

#### **7.2.2.1.Example 1 : CG#13 Vs EG#6**

The comparison between CG#13 and EG#6 pre-test and post-test scores is presented in the following table :

Sub-criteria	CG#13 Pre-test scores	EG#6 Pre-test scores	CG#13 Post-test scores	EG#6 Post-test Scores
Present simple	0	2	0	2
Active voice	0	2	2	2
Objective analysis of quote	0	0	2	2
Neutral description	0	2	2	2
Formal reporting verbs	0	0	1	2
Formal signal phrase model	0	0	0	2
Formal synonyms	0	1	0	2
Formal analysis of the quote	2	0	2	2
Complex noun phrase	0	0	2	0
Unnecessary word/sentences	2	2	2	2
Simplify structures	1	1	1	1
Avoid wordiness	0	1	0	2
Coherent quote with ellipsis	2	0	2	2
Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning	0	0	0	2
Coherent passage using link sentences	0	0	0	2
Cohesive devices	2	0	2	1
Quote with analysis	2	0	2	2
Extracting only main ideas	0	2	0	2
In-text citation and punctuation	0	1	1	1
No copy and paste	1	1	2	2
Participants total scores	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>35</b>
Participants total means	<b>30</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>57.5</b>	<b>87.5</b>

**Table 86 : Quantitative Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Results of Control Group #13 and Experimental Group #6**

The previous table indicates that both CG#13 and EG#6 have *low and 'approximate'* total means (CG#13 : 30% / EG#6 :37.5%) in the pre-test. In the post-test, however, there is a considerable difference in total means as EG#6 increased to reach a high mean-and the best total mean in the whole sample-of 87.5% whereas CG#13 improved but still reach an average mean of 57.5%. The comparison between these two participants is important *to illustrate* the general situation of our sample- where *a participant in the experimental group outperforms a student in the control group in the post-test after having similar low means in the pre-test.*

The writing productions of CG#13 and EG#6 in the pre-test and post-test and their detailed analysis are presented in Appendix X. The analysis is summarized as follows:



➤ **EG# 6 pre-test analysis**

**Strengths : ✓ (score '2')**

- Using an in-text citation by mentioning the author adequately.
- Using active voice in all signal phrases.  
E.g. 'The author bahloul speaks about the study...'
- Using present simple adequately for all reporting verbs.
- Adequately extracting main ideas.  
E.g. Removing details about the sample in the original text: 'out of 630 students enrolled... instructions system'.
- Successfully avoiding unnecessary words/phrases.
- Style is neutral for no use of subjective opinions or personal pronouns.

**Weaknesses : ✗ (score '0' or '1')**

- No analysis is added to the quote (no objectivity or formality of analysis is analysed).
- Cut and paste plagiarism as she copied some original phrases.  
E.g. '*the convenience of time and place*' or '*success in doing the activities*'.
- No link sentence is used where necessary; therefore, lack of coherence. The student moves from the first text to the second to the quote-which they have different themes-without using a link sentence or a phrase. In the student's words, she directly continues '*and resources was felt. [first text] Authors Al-Momani, Hussin, Hamat say that...*'.
- All reporting verbs are informal.  
E.g. '*speak about*' is a phrasal verb and '*say*' is vague and informal.
- Followed the original order of ideas (style plagiarism)
- No use of cohesive devices.
- No credentials.
- Keeping some wordiness and redundancy of the original texts.  
E.g.1. '**to predict and estimate...**'. Origin: '*to expect and estimate...*'.  
Precise and concise: choosing either '**predict**' or '**estimate**'.  
E.g.2: '*better and easier*' (same as origin)  
Precise and concise to write either 'efficient' or 'easier'.
- In some occasions, not simplifying and combining structures as need be.  
E.g.1 '*The author bahloul speaks about the study conducted at the university of Batna (Department of foreign languages). the aim was to improve students' skills in English*'. The student would simply condense the two sentences in one sentence where she mentions the place and aim of the study.  
*Better*: 'the autor speaks about the study conducted at batna university which aims at improving students' English skills'.  
E.g.2: '*Almost all universities like the online teaching method. Progress reports can be stored and reached by mobile unit that is better and easier in downloading as laptops*'. By relating the cause to the consequence, it becomes:

*Better* : The majority of universities adopt online teaching where progress reports can be stored by mobile providing easier downloading similar to laptop.

- Not changing signal phrase model/always using ‘the sub+verb+that’ structure.
- Semi-formal style. Examples of informal words : ‘good, like, made, trouble’.
- Punctuation mistakes in the in-text citation (year, page,...etc).

➤ **CG#13 pre-test analysis**

**Strengths** : ✓ (score ‘2’)

- Added an analysis after the quote where the analysis is formal.
- Using cohesive devices adequately (either changing the original cohesive devices or adding his own).
- Using the ellipsis coherently to condense the quote.
- Successfully avoiding unnecessary words/ phrases
- No use of link sentences (lack of coherence)

**Weaknesses** : ✗ (score ‘0’ or ‘1’)

- No use of in-text citation/not attributing information to original author. He also did not use any signal phrase neither in active nor passive voice. For that, no reporting verbs and credentials are used-where present simple and formality is to be analysed.
- Extensive use of wordiness and redundancy (either keeping original wordiness or adding his own). E.g.1 : doing the activities ‘again and again’ (redundant legalism)  
Better : doing the activities repeatedly/ repeating the activities.  
E.g.2 : ‘And the last thing’ (wordiness) → Better : and ‘lastly’.  
E.g. 3 : ‘to build and develop’ (same as origin) ► Better : either ‘to build’ or ‘develop’
- The analysis is not objective (using personal pronouns ). The students starts his/her analysis with ‘I also agree that...’.
- Fails at extracting main ideas. He mentioned details and discarded an important idea which is the aim of the study (‘to improve students’ skills in English’).
- Copied some phrases. E.g. ‘choose and prefer’ smartphones....
- The tone is subjective for using personal pronouns while summarizing. Examples : ‘our world’, ‘we should predict’, and ‘they say that’.
- An informal writing style. Examples of informal words : ‘the last thing’, ‘getting’, ‘good’, ‘that’s’, and ‘doing’.
- Followed the original order of ideas (style plagiarism)
- In some occasions, not simplifying and combining structures as need be.  
E.g : Web-based learning support was good for learners. This happened mainly for vocabulary learning.  
Better : Web-based learning supported learners especially in vocabulary learning.  
(two sentences in one sentence).

The comparative analysis of CG#13 and EG#6 pre-test answers suggest that both participants have strengths and weaknesses in their academic writing proficiency. They also differ at the majority of these areas. While EG#6 ‘succeeds’ mainly in attributing the information to its original author (though with no punctuation), maintaining a neutral tone, extracting main ideas, and using signal phrases with active voice, he/she ‘fails’ in writing coherent and cohesive essay, adding an analysis to the quote, and using formal reporting verbs. The opposite is true for CG#13 who, unlike EG#6, ‘fails’ at giving credit to original authors, avoiding personal pronouns (maintaining a neutral tone), writing a coherent essay, extracting main ideas, and using a formal –or at least semi-formal vocabulary whereas he ‘succeeds’ in adding a formal analysis after the quote and maintaining a cohesive essay. The strengths suggest that both participants internalized some of the rules of borrowing techniques taught during their first year (adding an analysis after quotes, using ellipsis in a quote, using an in-text citation, summarizing, and using signal phrases). The weaknesses, however, reveal that the participants either did not internalize the rules of the previous year or they are not taught some aspects of academic writing required for the test. *Importantly, despite the difference in sub-criteria accomplishment, the essays of CG#13 and EG#6 ‘equally’ include many writing deficiencies (weaknesses are more than strengths) which results in having similar low total means.*

➤ **EG#6 post-test analysis**

**Strengths :** ✓ (score ‘2’)

- Coherent essay for the adequate use of link sentences.  
*E.g.1 :* ‘Among the different researchers who support web-based learning is author Bahloul’. The student introduces his essay with this sentence to link the first text (borrowed information) to the overall theme of research which is ‘web-based learning’.  
*E.g. 2 :* ‘Al-Momani also support the use of smartphones’. A link sentence to relate the quote to the second passage and introduce its theme.
- Using active voice in all signal phrases.

- Using the present simple tense and formal reporting verbs in all signal phrases.  
*E.g.1* : ‘Kent, agrees with the idea...’ *E.g. 2* : ‘As they argue,...’
- The style is neutral (no subjective opinions and no personal pronouns).
- Successfully attributing information to its original author.
- The analysis of the quote is formal and objective.
- Successfully avoiding unnecessary words/ sentences.
- Changing the original order of ideas coherently. (three attempts to change order).
- Changing signal phrase model.  
*E.g.1* : ‘*As the authors argues, ...*’  
*E.g. 2* : ‘*Kent agrees with the idea when he writes*’
- The style is formal. Examples of formal words : ameliorate, assist, manifest, dominate.
- The quote is condensed coherently using ellipsis.
- Successfully changing the original style and no copy paste instances.
- Successfully avoiding wordiness.  
*E.g.1* : in all circumstances. *Original* : in every single issue and matter  
*E.g.2* : the majority of universities are found to support online learning.  
*Original* : most universities around the world prefer online method of teaching
- Successfully extracting main ideas.

**Weaknesses : ✘ (score ‘0’ or ‘1’)**

- No credentials.
- In some occasions, not using cohesive devices.  
*E.g.* ‘*At last, learning was taken to be flexible, they appreciated the timing and place and considered the multiple resources suitable*’. In this sentence, the student uses a comma which makes it a run-on sentence. To correct the sentence, either a cohesive device is used at the beginning of a new sentence or condensing the two sentences in one sentence.  
**Better** : ‘*At last, learning was taken to be flexible. Consequently, students appreciated the presentation of the topics’ summaries on the web and considered the timing and place and the multiple resources suitable*’.  
**Or** : ‘*At last, learning was considered flexible as students appreciated the summaries found on the web and suitability of time, place and multiple resources*’
- Lack of punctuation (year, page, and so on)
- In some occasions, not simplifying and combining structures as need be.  
*E.g.*: *At last, learning was taken to be flexible, they appreciated the timing and place and considered the multiple resources suitable.* (not relating illustration to main idea in one sentence)  
**Better** : *At last, students considered learning to be flexible due to the availability of topic’s summaries on the web and suitability of time, place, and resources.*

➤ **EG#13 post-test analysis**

**Strengths : ✓ (score '2')**

- Using active voice in all signal phrases.
- The quote is followed by an objective and formal analysis.
- The style is neutral (avoiding personal pronouns)
- Successfully avoiding unnecessary words/sentences.
- The quote is condensed coherently using ellipsis.
- Adquately using cohesive devices where required.
- Successfully changing the original style and no copy paste instances.
- Adequately using credentials.

**Weaknesses : ✗ (score '0' or '1')**

- No simple present for the reporting verb ( 'argued').
- Among the reporting verb 'argue' is used twice. One of its uses is nt suitable to the context of the sentence (Bahloul, A (2004) argued the study...).
- Keeping same signal phrase model.
- The style is informal. Many informal vocabulary is used (e.g. everything, kept, excited, something, like, getting quick, said, felt).
- An Excessive use of wordiness and redundancy (either keeping the original wordiness or adding his/her own).  
E.g. 1 : 'Vocabulary was *the area the most affected* and *it happened by* doing the tasks...'.  
Original : '*especially*' has changed into '*the area the most affected*' which is rather wordy. '*and it happened by*' can be concisely changed into '*through*' or '*by*'.  
Better : 'vocabulary was *highly* improved *after/through* practicing the tasks...'  
E.g. 2 : 'having data and knowledge....' Original : 'gain data and new knowledge...'.  
Better : avoid redundancy and choose either obtaining 'data', or 'knowledge'.
- In some occasions, not simplifying and combining structures as need be.  
E.g. : 'this kind of support helped motivation. technology made them happy about the course and they kept excited when practicing same tasks'.  
Better : 'this kind of support motivated students as they enjoyed using technology when practicing same tasks'.
- No use of link sentences/lack of coherence.
- Failed at extracting main ideas (mentioing details and removing main idea 'the aim of study')
- In-text citation mistakes. E.g. Behloul, A. (2004)... and not mentioning the author of the quote.
- Keeping the original order of ideas (style plagiarism)

As mentioned earlier, the writing proficiency of both CG#13 and EG#6 improved from the pre-test to the post-test where the increase reached by EG#6 is considerably higher than that reached by CG#13 (EG#6 from low to high; CG#13 from low to average). The analysis of the CG#13 post-test shows ameliorations in the comparison to the pre-test :

- attributing the information to its origin author (though not in all occasions)
- avoiding copy-paste plagiarism and using his/her voice.
- using signal phrase following active voice
- avoid personal pronouns while summarizing and in the analysis of the quote (neutral style and objective quote)

However, through casting the light on the sub-criteria in which both CG#13 and EG#6 achieved low scores in the pre-test (i.e. '0' or '1'), we notice EG#6 outperformance in the post-test :

	<b>CG#13 :</b>	<b>EG#6 :</b>
<i>Avoiding wordiness</i>	No progress achieved (from '0' to '0') Writing is wordy	progress from '1' to '2'. Writing is concise.
<i>Formal reporting verbs</i>	A progress from '0' to '1' (not all verbs)	A progress from '0' to '2' (all reporting verbs are formal)
<i>Change signal phrase model</i>	No progress (from '0' to '0')	a progress from '0' to '2'
<i>Re-order ideas coherently</i>	No progress achieved (from '0' to '0') (following original order)	A progress from '0' to '2' (changing order coherently)
<i>Coherence/ link sentences</i>	No progress ( from '0' to '0') writing lacks coherence	A progress from '0' to '2' Writing is coherent
<i>Formal synonyms</i>	No progress achieved (from '0' to '0') Writing is informal	A progress from '1' to '2' writing is formal

The outperformance of EG#6 after obtaining a similar low pre-test mean with CG#13 implies that BL served in maximizing the student's ability to internalize the rules (not forgetting to change original order, to use link sentences), improved his self-editing strategies as he/she pays due attention to (wordiness and redundancy, to differ the signal phrase model) and enhanced his formality (score '2' in reporting verbs, synonyms, and analysis of the

quote). The factors pertaining to this progress is attributed to the previously mentioned factors where the quantity and quality of constructive discussions and feedback is high. The absence of these factors in the traditional method did not permit CG#13 to internalize the rule and improve his writing abilities as required.

### 7.2.2.2.Example 2 : CG#1 Vs EG#4

The comparison between CG#1 and EG#4 pre-test and post-test scores is presented in the following table :

Sub-criteria	CG#1 Pre-test	EG#4 Pre-test	CG#1 Post-test	EG#4 Post-test
Present simple	0	0	1	2
Active voice	0	0	2	1
Objective analysis of quote	0	0	2	0
Neutral description	0	2	0	2
Formal reporting verbs	0	0	2	1
Formal signal phrase model	0	0	0	0
Formal synonyms	1	1	1	1
Formal analysis of the quote	0	0	2	0
Complex noun phrase	0	0	2	1
Unnecessary word/sentences	1	1	1	2
Simplify structures	1	1	1	1
Avoid wordiness	1	1	2	1
Coherent quote with ellipsis	0	0	2	2
Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning	0	0	1	1
Coherent passage using link sentences	1	0	2	0
Cohesive devices	2	1	2	1
Quote with analysis	0	0	2	0
Extracting only main ideas	0	0	2	1
In-text citation and punctuation	0	1	1	1
No copy and paste	1	1	1	1
Participants Total scores	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>19</b>
Participants total means	<b>20</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>72.5</b>	<b>47.5</b>

**Table 87 : Quantitative Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Results of Control Group #1 and Experimental Group #4**

According to the previous table, CG#1 and EG#4 obtained similar low means in the pre-test (CG#1 :20%/EG#4 :22,5%) whereas in the post-test, both participants witnessed an improvement. However, the increase reached by CG#1 is considerably higher than that of EG#4. CG#1 obtained a high mean of 72.5% whereas EG#4 obtained only an approximate-

average mean of 47.5%. Not only CG#1 obtain a high mean in the post-test, but also CG#4 (70%). This comparative observation seems to contradict the results reached so far and the research hypothesis stating that BL is the factor behind the experimental group outperformance.

Despite it is an exception-given that only two participants in the experimental group (#4 :47.5% and #13 :47.5%) had lower means if compared individually with control group participants (#1 :72.5%, #4 :70%, #6 :52.5%)- it must be taken into account to answer the following question : *If BL is the reason behind experimental group outperformance, what leads a participant in the control group to outperform a participant in the experimental group?*

To answer this question, a qualitative comparison of both participants' answers in the pre-test and post-test is conveyed. The answers and correction of CG#1 and EG#4 in the pre-test and post-test are presented in Appendix X. The analysis of their answers is summarized as follows :

➤ **CG#1 pre-test analysis**

**Strengths : ✓ (score '2')**

- Adequately using cohesive devices.

**Weaknesses : ✗ (score '0' or '1')**

- Inadequately using in-text citation. Although trying to mention original authors, many mistakes are committed : **E.g1:** (Bahloul, A) (2004), Almomani, A Hussin, & Hamat :2015) **E.g2 :** (Kent,D.B. 2010).
- Using a parenthetical citation instead of a signal phrase. Therefore, all of the following sub-criteria are not used (active voice, reporting verb, credentials).
- No analysis is added to the quote (no formality and objectivity of the quote are tested).
- Writing is subjective. Adding personal opinions. E.g.1 : 'that's the reason of its expansion use'. E.g2 : 'this is becoming so obvious'.
- Mentioning details.
- Only one link sentence is used (*'After speaking about the importance of smartphones, we refer to Gloster'*).
- Writing is semi-formal. Examples of informal words : **so, that's, actually, get, let.**
- Following the original order of ideas.



- In some occasions, not simplifying and combining structures as need be.  
E.g: *The world is developing very fast with the big number of technologies that made achieveing knowledge faster. This is becoming so obvious as people now know exactly how to use technology leading them to use their smartphone in every matter and issue which we can say that soon online reading will be popular.* (We can combine both sentences in one sentence by removing details and wordiness).  
Better : *Online reading is becoming popular due to the fast expansion of technologies that increased people’s familiarity and use of smartphones to their daily activities.*
- In some occasions, keeping or adding wordiness.  
E.g1 : ‘the aim to develop the learner’ skills in English **and let them continue their studies**’.  
*Original* : the main aim of the course is to help students improve their overall proficiency in the English language **which will enable them to follow their departmental courses with ease**.  
*Better* : ‘the aim is to develop the leaners’ skills in English’. It is more concise and precise because it goes without saying that the students would be able to follow their studies if they improve their English skills.  
E.g2 : ‘every **matter and issue**’. *Better* : choosing either ‘**matter**’ or ‘**issue**’.
- Using some unnecessary words such as the intensifiers ‘**so**’ and ‘**very**’, ‘**just**’ (when used as adverb to replace ‘only’), and ‘**even**’ (when used as adverb not adjective).
- Copy-paste some phrase clusters. Examples : ‘**in recalling the vocabulary**’, ‘**flexibility of learning**’ and so on.

➤ **EG#4 pre-test analysis**

**Strengths** : ✓ (score ‘2’)

- Style is neutral (no subjective opinions or personal pronouns)

**Weaknesses** : ✗ (score ‘0’ or ‘1’)

- An attempt to use parenthetical citation but with mistakes.  
E.g. *(Al Moman A, Hussin, S, & Hamat A in 2015).*
- Copy-paste some phrases. Examples : ‘**get bored of doing**’, ‘**flexibility of learning**’.
- Using passive voice and infomal reporting verbs (‘**said by**’).
- An informal reporting verb is used twice (**to say**).
- Past simple used for reporting verbs.
- Writing lacks coherence/no link sentences (each text is summarized separatly).
- Sometimes not using cohesive devices where required.

E.g. 1 : *web-based learning was good for motivating students. students didn’t get bored of doing the same thing . This is a run-on sentence, the student can either combine both sentences in one sentence or use a cohesive device instead of the comma.*

Better : *web-based learning was good for motivating students as they didn’t get bored of doing the same thing.*

- No analysis is added to the quote (no formality and objectivity to analyse).
- Using some unnecessary words/phrases (*'in fact', 'it seems that', 'really'*).
- Using a semi-formal style. Examples of informal words (good, help, a lot, thing, saw).
- No credentials.
- Sometimes not simplifying and combining structures where required.

E.g : ...*flexibility of learning was helpful. In fact, students saw the topics on the web-page as a summary and the good time, place and resources available to them.*

Better : Learning flexibility was an advantage due to the availability of the summarized online lectures, suitable time, place and resources. (two sentences in one sentence).

- Sometimes not avoiding wordiness as required.

E.g : this device is really ***better and effective***. Better : either '***better***' or '***effective***' .

- Mentioning details and skipping important ideas.

The analysis of the answers of CG#1 and EG#4 in the pre-test indicate that the writing proficiency of both participants is very low as they succeeded in fulfilling only one sub-criterion (for CG#1 'the use of cohesive devices' and for EG#4 'keeping a neutral tone'). The writing deficiency areas are largely similar in both participants' productions. Differences include three areas : neutrality, ; use of cohesive devices, and use of reporting verbs.

### ➤ CG#1 post-test analysis

**Strengths : ✓ (score '2')**

- All signal phrases are in active voice.
- The analysis of the quote is formal and objective.
- Using credentials concisely (*'the university English teacher Behloul'*).
- Writing is coherent/using link sentences adequately.  
E.g : *The first example of web-based learning is the use of smartphones.* (to link the first text to the second)
- Adequately using cohesive devices.
- Two phrases are copied (*'EFL university programs', 'flexibility of learning'*).
- Using formal reporting verbs (*report, believe, argue*).
- Adequately condensing the quote using ellipsis.
- Successfully avoiding wordiness. E.g : *'the majority of universities go for online teaching because remarks about any development...'*  
Original : 'most universities around the world prefer online method of teaching between students and their teachers due to time and duties where all the progress reports...'
- Adequately extracting main ideas.

**Weaknesses : ✘ (score '0' or '1')**

- Only for one verb, the student seem to forget to add 's' to the verb (*report*).
- Writing is not neutral. The student uses subjective statements (*'this opinion is absolutly right', 'now everyone owns a smartphone'*).
- Using the same signal phrase model (sub+verb+that).
- Style is semi-formal. Examples of informal words/expressions (*fed up, like that, go for, done*).
- A weak attempt to change original order (changing order of web-based learning advantages).
- In some occasions, not simplifying and combining structures where required.  
E.g: *the majority of universities go for online teaching because remarks about any development are kept in new application. The development is reached by mobile phones similar to PCs.*  
Better : the majority of universities choose online teaching because any development report can be kept in new appmication *and* reached by smartphones similar to computers. (combining two sentences in one sentence).
- Mistakes in in-text citation. E.g. '*Kent argue that*' (not mentioning the year).
- Using unnecessary word/sentences. Examples (*actually, absolutely, very*).

➤ **EG#4 post-test analysis**

**Strengths : ✔ (score '2')**

- All reporting verbs are in the present simple.
- Writing is neutral (no subjective opinions or personal pronouns).
- Successfully avoiding unnecessary words/expressions.
- Adequately condensing the quote using ellipsis.

**Weaknesses : ✘ (score '0' or '1')**

- Complex noun phrase wrongly formulated for credentials: [*The english instructor at the university of Batna since 1998 Behloul (2004)*].
- Using signal phrase with active voice for the texts whereas using a parenthetical citation for the quote.
- No analysis is added to the quote (no formality or objectivity of the quote to analyse).
- Using two reporting verbs where one is not appropriate to the context (Behloul (2004) *declares* that a study happened at the university of Batna.
- Keeping the same signal phase model (sub+verb+that).
- Writing lacks coherence/no link sentences are used.
- Copy-paste some phrases. E.g. Web-based learning added to **students' learning**.  
Original : web-based learning support contributed to **students' learning**.
- Mistakes in in-text citation. E.g. (*Kent p :2010*).
- In some occasions, cohesive devices are not used where required.
- In some occasions, structures are not simplified where required.

E.g : *Web-based learning, assisted students' motivation. They felt good about the course and did not hate doing the exact tasks which gives great motivation.*

Better : web-based learning increased students' motivation as they revealed positive attitudes towards the course and the activities. (two sentences in one).

- In some occasions, wordiness is not avoided.

E.g : '*selects and favors* using mobiles' Original : '*choose and prefer* to use ....'

Better : either '**choose/select**' or '**prefer/favor**'.

E.g2 : This means is *the top and the greatest*. Better : this means is *the most effective*.

- Writing is semi-formal. Examples of informal words : *thought, keep up, felt good, dealt with, get, big*.
- A weak attempt to change order (information about the sample precedes the aim of the study).
- Mentioning the details (of the study sample).

In comparison to the pre-test, the analysis of CG#1 and EG#4 writing productions in the post-test demonstrates EG#4 ameliorations in mainly four areas:

- Using an in-text citation with signal phrases (with mistakes and not in all occasions).
- Using the present simple tense for reporting verbs.
- Avoiding unnecessary words/sentences.
- Using ellipsis coherently when condensing the quote.

However, through casting the light on the sub-criteria in which both CG#1 and EG#4 achieved low scores in the pre-test (i.e. '0' or '1'), we notice CG#1 outperformance in the post-test in the majority of these criteria:

	<b>EG#4 :</b>	<b>CG#1 :</b>
<i>Active voice</i>	A progress from '0' to '1' (Parenthetical citation for the quote)	A progress from '0' to '2'. (using signal phrases)
<i>Formal reporting verbs</i>	A progress from '0' to '1' (not all verbs)	A progress from '0' to '2' (all reporting verbs are formal)
<i>Complex noun phrase</i>	A progress from '0' to '1' (not correctly formed)	A progress from '0' to '2'
<i>Coherence/ link sentences</i>	No progress achieved (from '0' to '0') writing lacks coherence	A progress from '1' to '2'  Writing is coherent
<i>Avoid wordiness</i>	No progress achieved (from '1' to '1') Writing is wordy	A progress from '1' to '2'  writing is concise
<i>Extracting main ideas</i>	A progress from '0' to '1' (keeping some details)	A progress from '0' to '2' (no details)
<i>Formal/objective analysis/ Quote with analysis</i>	No progress achieved (from '0' to '0') (no quote is added)	A progress from '0' to '2' (in the three sub-criteria)

In general, the essay of CG#1 is more academic than that of EG#4. The main deficiency of EG#4 essay is that it is extremely wordy which explains why it is longer than the essay of CG#1 despite adding no analysis to the quote. The student was overusing substituting synonyms as a paraphrasing strategy as he was substituting every word with a synonym while neglecting concision (simplification and avoid wordiness). Contrarily, CG#1 eliminated wordiness and simplified structures resulting in a shorter essay despite adding an analysis to the quote. It is also more coherent and cohesive whereas no linkage is found between the ideas of EG#4 neither grammatically (cohesion) nor semantically (coherence). In addition, CG#1 was more successful in summarizing the text, and using formal reporting verbs and signal phrases than EG#4. One main sub-criterion in which EG#4 had successfully employed and outperformed CG#1 is 'neutrality' as the latter added many subjective statements.

To understand the reasons leading CG#1 to outperform EG#4 despite not having been using BL, it is important to describe the participants' learning behaviours. Unlike the majority

of control group participants who lacked motivation to learn, few participants including CG#1 revealed high motivation towards the subject of ‘Research Methodology’. It was sufficient to observe the positive learning behaviour of CG#1 especially during physical activities sessions. CG#1 was generally serious and hard-working as he exhibited high rates of participation and spontaneous interactions with peers and the instructor when solving exercises. The student was also highly inquisitive as he kept raising several questions and requested the instructor to suggest or provide him with useful learning materials and sources.

Such a positive behaviour is probably ascribed to two main factors. *First, the instructor’s efforts to maintain an interactive setting during the physical sessions undoubtedly affected the students’ motivation to learn.* In particular, the instructor’s emphasis on using the discussion method during the physical activities sessions and ameliorate the lecture method played a significant role in changing the passivity of some students and creating an interactive setting. In an attempt to generate the students’ cognitive and social presences, the instructor was constantly encouraging the students to participate, negotiate and provide multiple perspectives, to be more inquisitive, self-study, and take responsibility and at the same time raised the students’ interests through informal interactions that included humour and sharing the students’ experiences (see Chapter Two, pp.104-108) for more about discussion and lecture method). In addition, the instructor emphasized the instrumental value of learning the subject of ‘Research Methodology’ which increased the students’ value expectations of the themes and activities used (see Chapter Two, pp.79-81). Moreover, the inclusion of academic writing features (criteria and sub-criteria) to the currently used program (borrowing techniques) had certainly increased the value of the subject due to their significance in improving the students’ writing (according to the literature).

Second, the participant positive learning behaviour in class suggests that he was a self-regulated and autonomous learner. In other words, the student did not only depend on the

instructor to provide him with knowledge but he likely made his own endeavors to collect information and spent efforts for self-improvement. Similar to the overall Net Generation learners, this participant is undoubtedly consulting the Internet for further resources and practicing further exercises (especially having an inquisitive learning style). He could also be using Facebook (given its familiarity) to discuss the subject themes with peers and other instructors –though not as pedagogically organized as in BL.

CG#1 positive learning behaviours in and out of class together with the instructor's effort spent during the semester had certainly increased him/her chances to internalize the rules and improve his writing and self-editing abilities.

On the other hand, EG#4 did not manifest the required learning behaviours during online activities sessions. The participant interacted (comments either as an answer or feedback to others) only with the instructor's request but hardly initiated any spontaneous replies. Nonetheless, researchers identified the type of online learners with low or no online participation rate as 'invisible or witness learners' (e.g. Beaudoin, 2002 ; Ebner and Holzinger, 2005 ;Chen and Chang, 2011). According to these researchers, the quantity of online interactions does not necessarily reflect effective learning and high comprehension level. For this reason, an 'invisible' learner is not manifesting a negative learning behaviour. Through observing (witnessing) other's feedback and interaction, this student is still internally interpreting and analysing these information exchanges (internal feedback) though *silently*. In other words, this type of learner is *autonomously active*. However, the low achievement of EG#4 suggest that the student's autonomous rate of learning was not sufficient as compared with visible online learners. This was noticed in the quality of her online contributions as they were generally superficial and not constructive (e.g. Yes/No answers or ill-considered answers). Such a situation suggests that BL -or specifically learning on Facebook- did not suit the participant's learning style. But the facts that the student did not address any issue for

lack of understanding and was not highly disciplined in both settings (delays on the online session and some absences from the physical lecture) suggests that her only objective (and motivator) toward learning in Facebook is to avoid absences in the physical session (TD marks) due to distance issues rather than enjoying a new type of information exchange through posting and commenting. Therefore, she did not take BL, and in general her studies, seriously.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up the discussion around the quantitative and qualitative comparison of control and experimental groups, it can be argued that apart from the few exceptions which contradict the second research hypothesis-where two participants in the control group (*CG#1 ; CG#4*) reached high means and three participants in the experimental group (*EG#4 ;EG#11 ;EG#13*) obtained approximate average means which are lower or closer to some participants in the control group- *BL improves the students' academic writing proficiency*. Both the obtained results and the quality of the students' productions clearly affirms an outstanding improvement in the academic writing criteria and individual means in favor of the Experimental group.



## General Conclusion

We have attempted throughout this research to investigate the effects of BL on two main variables : ‘motivation’ and ‘academic writing’. Based on the literature that was raised worldwide in favor of using BL especially regarding motivation and the writing skill, it has been hypothesized that using BL in our educational context –and specifically at higher education-can improve the students’ motivation and academic writing proficiency.

It was important as part of this research to define and distinguish the academic writing genre from any other type of writing. In more specific terms, a comparison was drawn between the general aims of ‘Research Methodology’ and ‘Written Expression’ where it was considered that the former is more targeted towards teaching the students writing that is needed in highly academic contexts instead of teaching basic writing mechanisms. ‘Research Methodology’ prepares higher education students to write academic papers such as dissertations and theses which involve synthesizing, condensing and analysing research using an academic language- *according to this research, a language that is formal, objective, concise, structural and analytical and one which conforms to the standards of academic research integrity.*

Following the previous conceptualization of academic writing, two checklists have been developed. On the one hand, The Checklist of Academic Writing served to guide the teachers towards a comprehensive program of teaching academic writing that could be embedded along the three years study of ‘Research Methodology’ giving reference to the most important features of ‘academic’ writing that are emphasized in the literature. On the other hand, The Checklist of Experiment Implementation provided an adequate program to teach ‘borrowing techniques’ to second year students during the first semester. It involved a careful and well-considered selection of academic writing features which were found to highly fit with the aims of teaching borrowing techniques. It was implemented in the

experiment in order to confirm dealing with the “true” meaning of academic writing, i.e investigating what the research is supposed to investigate (content validity). It served to identify learning content, the writing composition test, and academic writing criteria and sub-criteria.

The development of The Checklist of Academic Writing served as an impetus to distinguish whether there is a comprehensive program to teach academic writing at the Algerian universities –taking the case of Larbi Ben M’ehdi University- and therefore answers the first research question. After comparing the checklist with the currently used programs of ‘Research Methodology’ along the three years of undergraduate teaching, it was found that the program followed does not reflect the conceptions and the components of academic writing that are emphasized by researchers in the field. It focuses only on some elements of *"research skills" (how to quote, paraphrase and summarize without committing plagiarism)*, and discards any reference to maintaining formal, objective, concise, well-structured and analytical writing style.

Researching the literature about motivation and writing theories revealed that both concepts are largely open to different-if not divergent-conceptualizations. To limit the scope of the study and especially to confirm creating a ‘motivating’ and ‘constructive’ BL methodology, it was important to thoughtfully select motivation and writing theories that best fit with the BL framework. The implementation of *the constructivism writing theory* in its both directions ‘the social and the cognitive’ in conjunction with the social-cognitive motivation theories-*attribution theory, goal-orientation theory, and self-determination theory*- within the BL design rendered BL more pedagogically-driven, learner-centered, collaborative, autonomous, and supportive. In such a way, a motivating community of inquiry would be established where the three online presences take place.

After casting emphasis on the theoretical framework of the present research, the researcher conducted both qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation to check the research hypotheses. As it was assumed that the teachers do not use BL to teach academic writing, it was important to check this assumption, investigate its reasons, and gain an insight into the teachers' attitudes towards adopting BL to the Algerian learning situation (second research question). The questionnaires' findings indicate that only few teachers from the sample attempted to implement some web applications during their teaching span as a type of BL. However, none of them applied BL adequately as the majority do not conceive the true rationale of BL and its effective implementation. Those few teachers were either using Internet for administrative functions or as supplemental source of information. However, significant principles of BL (replacement model) were lacking, mainly, instant interaction/communication, constructive feedback, teacher presence, and students' social and cognitive presences. Despite the general absence of using BL (or approximate online methods), the majority of the teachers consider that BL can improve students' motivation and academic writing and they are aware of the importance of going beyond the traditional methods. They also agree that using Facebook in teaching can be a motivating source for students. Such a controversy between the teachers' attitudes and actual practice reflects their doubts of the success of BL in our educational setting.

However, the present research findings in relation to the students' level of motivation and academic writing skill suggest a considerable improvement owing to the BL methodology. In other words, both the research hypotheses are confirmed. While teaching through BL, the teacher noticed the students' high enthusiasm to learn through Facebook which was reflected in the quantity of interactions (comments and private chat messages) they generated. Their online presence was also reflected in their learning behaviours during the physical lectures where the students were highly inquisitive. Such an observation was confirmed by the students' answers

in the questionnaires. Motivation towards learning the subject of ‘Research Methodology’ increased considerably for the majority of the students after conducting the BL experiment (from low to high levels) mainly due to some features of the online component such as the high interaction patterns, space and time flexibility and reduced cost of education.

The students’ significant improvement in academic writing was first revealed in the mid and post-experiment questionnaires giving priority to the increased rates of ‘constructive discussions’, ‘teacher feedback’, and ‘student feedback’. The students were cognitively present in both learning settings mainly during the online sessions -where active discussion was more needed- and felt a sense of a community of inquiry. The availability of e-documents, unlimited exposure to the discussions and answers on the Facebook Group, the increased time, the challenging activities, and reflective questions were all positive factors which increased the students’ understanding of the course concepts and improved their critical thinking towards the self and others.

Through comparing the pre-test and post-test results of both the control and the experimental groups, the students’ answers in the questionnaires were confirmed. Although the academic writing proficiency of both groups improved from the pre-test to the post-test- after scoring an approximate low mean in the pre-test, the improvement rate of the experimental group was highly significant. Specifically, the control group overall mean has only approximated the average whereas the experimental group overall mean was highly beyond the average. The factors that stand behind the experimental group outperformance in the post-test are summarized as follows. First, *the increased state of motivation* of the experimental group assisted the students to be socially and cognitively present during the online sessions as opposed to the control group lack of interest and will to participate, answer and discuss. Second, *flexibility of time and space* set the experimental group at comfort to join the online sessions and be cognitively prepared for answering the activities whereas it was a

burden for the majority of the control group participants to join the physical sessions at 8.am especially for those living far from the province of Oum El Bouaghi and some exhibited frequent absences during the semester. *The increased quantity of e-documents and accessibility to websites* created another advantage to the experimental group participants as they enriched their knowledge of the different academic writing features. All of these stated factors in addition to *increasing time* on answering and providing feedback have played a significant role in establishing high levels of feedback and constructive discussion which maximized the experimental group's internalization of the rules, improved their self-monitoring skills and internal feedback.

Although, in general, the students and the instructor faced no serious problems of Internet loss to access the online sessions or follow the progress of instructional activities, the study had some limitations particularly at the first two online sessions. Based on these limitations, we tend to propose some recommendations.

Maintaining the students' discipline online was one problematic issue to consider. During the first online session, some students were not punctual in joining the sessions and did not contribute any feedback to the discussions raised. These students were neither socially nor cognitively present and they obviously joined the online sessions to avoid the burden of attending the physical lectures. After witnessing these negative behaviours, the instructor insisted that showing 'online' during the sessions without answering and participating is equal to an absence. As far as punctuality is concerned, every student must send the teacher a private message saying 'I am present' at the exact time of the lecture to be marked as present. Many strategies including these can be used to keep the students disciplined. We consider that building online discipline is similar to that of physical discipline as it all depends on the instructor's ability to manage the group of students regardless of the learning setting. If the teacher addresses 'Etiquette Rules' from the first meeting session including time limitations for

answering, discussing, and asking questions, punctuality, roles attached to the students and the teacher, and assessment procedures, s/he can guarantee students' self-discipline.

The second limitation of the study is the lack of spontaneity in the students' contributions during the first session. The students were accustomed with traditional methods where the teacher is the source of all information and the one who owns the authority to provide feedback. Nonetheless, during the following session- and after the teacher's encouragement- the students started to provide their own contributions without the request of the instructor. They even appreciated having given the freedom to express their opinions and suggest alternative answers to their peers in an 'open' and 'public' space. As the findings of this research suggest, the students appreciated more public than private evaluations/feedback from the instructor as they enjoyed showing the strength of their replies in front of their classmates. Therefore, it is recommended to address evaluations privately only for introvert students.

When the students started to generate responses spontaneously, their contributions were more socially than cognitively-oriented. This is because the students' general use of Facebook used to serve more social discussions. Although the students enjoyed expressing their ideas and showing their responses in public (the quantity of interactions were high), their contributions were as thoughtful and constructive as need be. As a response to this situation, the instructor stressed more quality than quantity of interactions through asking the students to explain their contributions and using self-reflective and peer-reflective questions.

Given that it was their first experience using Facebook pedagogically, the students were not familiar with conducting cognitively oriented discussions. For that, their responses were somehow chaotic such as when answering (adding one answer in different comments) commenting on others' responses, replying on other's comments or not simultaneously following the progress of the session. The instructor therefore guided the students to use the

Tag Feature whenever they added a reply (opinion or feedback) to one of their peers and the teacher, to add full answer in one comment, and constantly up-date the page and check notifications to follow the progress of the lecture.

All in all, we emphasize the present research contribution in guiding the teachers of 'Research Methodology' towards the appropriate content (the know-what) that fits with the 'true' objectives of the subject as well as the BL methodology (the know-how) they need to use in order to enhance the students' motivation towards the subject and improve their academic writing proficiency. Instructors and students alike must be aware of the significant importance of the subject of 'Research Methodology' in improving the academic writing skills which are needed in all stages of higher education starting from undergraduate to graduate and post-graduate phase. More importantly, the present research findings call for a tendency towards using BL in our educational context given the positive results it yields on students' motivation and writing proficiency. Therefore, it is unreasonable to judge the inadequacy of BL to our learning context before even setting the initiative to confirm the claim is true. It is also erroneous to stick with the traditional learning methods only because the teachers are resitant to any changes in pedagogy.

It is important to emphasize that the scope of the present study was limited in both aims and methodology. The aims were limited to investigate the effect of BL on the students' motivation -following the three motivational theories emphasized earlier- and their writing skill which was operationalized within the 'academic' writing context and in relation to the objectives of the subject of 'Research Methodology'. The study was also limited to the replacement model of BL-among others- which was applied on a sample of students at Larbi Ben M'hidi University. Therefore, the researcher encourages further research on BL which can build on the present research findings or refine its shortcomings. Future research can extend to investigate the effectiveness of BL on other skills using other models of BL.

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## **Appendix -I.1**

### **Students' Pre-Experiment Questionnaire**

Dear student,

This pre-questionnaire is part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Doctorate degree. It aims at investigating your current level of Motivation and Academic Writing Abilities, your attitude towards how “Methodology” is being taught during your first year, and your readiness to the Blended Learning experience. Your precise answers to the questionnaire will be of a great value for the researcher. The questionnaire is anonymous and the answers will be treated confidentially.

Please tick (√) the appropriate box (es) and make full statements when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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**Section I: Background Information**

1-Gender:

a-Male  b-Female

2-Status : do you have a full time or part-time job while you study?

a-Yes  b-No

**Section II: Students' Level of Motivation and Academic Writing Proficiency**

3-To what extent you think motivation is important to learn English?

a-To a great extent  b-To some extent  c- Not important at all

4-How do you rate your current level of motivation?

a-very high  b-high  c-medium  d-low  e-very low

5-What factors affect your motivation?

a-The content of the subject you learn

b-The type of interactions allowed in class.

c-The type of activities you do.

d-The physical environment in which you study.

e-The level of your classmates.

f-The teacher's behaviour.

Others.....  
.....  
.....

6-How important is academic writing proficiency in comparison to other language skills?

a-very important  b-Important  c-Somehow important  d-not important

7- How do you rate your academic writing proficiency?

a-Low  b-very low  c-intermediate  d-high  e-very high

8-What factors affect your academic writing proficiency?

a-Time provided for accomplishing the writing task

b-Level of difficulty of the writing assignment.

c-The type pf feedback you receive (peer vs teacher feedback).

e-The learning resources the teacher provides you (lecture notes, reading materials, CDs,...)

f-type of assignment you do (collaborative vs individual)

Others.....  
.....  
.....

**Section III: Students' Attitudes Towards Current Teaching Practices**

Based on your first year "Methodology" course, answer the following questions:

9-How much time did you spend on writing activities?

a-less than 30 m  b-30m to 1h  c-1 h to 1h:30  d-more than 1h:30

10-Do you think that the time available in class was sufficient to solve writing activities?

a-Yes  b-No

11-If your answer is NO, How much time do you need to solve your writing activities?

.....

12-Have you been given sufficient feedback on your writings?

a-Yes  b-No

13-What type of feedback?

a-Teacher feedback  b-peer feedback

14-Have you been given opportunities to assess your own writings?

a-Yes  b-No

15-What type of classroom communication was allowed?

a-Teacher-student communication  b-Student-student communication

16-Were the learning resources provided by the teacher sufficient for you?

a-Yes  b-No

17-Did your teacher encourage you to consult further resources?

a-Yes  b-No

18-If YES, give us an example

.....

.....

.....

19-Were you satisfied with the way Methodology was taught?

a-Yes  b-No

20-Whatever the answer, please give the reason

.....

.....

.....

**Section IV: Students' Readiness to Blended Learning Experience**

21-How do you rate you computer skills?

a-Poor  b-moderate  c-good  d-Excellent



22-How do you rate your skills in surfing on the Internet?

a-Poor  b-moderate  c -good  d-excellent

23-How many hours per day you stay connected to Internet?

a-Less than one hr  b-from 1-3 hrs  c-from 3 to 5 hrs  d-More than 5 hrs

24-What activities you use when you spend your time connected to the Internet?

a-Read for fun

b-play computer games

c-listen/download music

d-watch/download videos/movies

e-read information to complete a homework

f-preparing for exams

g-online text chatting

h-writing e-mail

Others.....  
.....  
.....

25-Have you been taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment?

a-Yes  b-No

26- If yes, describe .....  
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.....

27-If you are to study a course online, can you easily access internet when it is needed?

a-Yes  b-No

28-If No, explain why  
.....  
.....  
.....

29-How do you access Internet?

a-Home  b-Internet café  c-university library

Others.....  
.....  
.....

**Section V: Students' Readiness to Use Facebook as a Pedagogical Tool**

30-Do you have an account on Facebook?

a-Yes  b-No

31-How often do you connect to Facebook?

a-Never  b-Rarely  c-Sometimes  d-Often  e-Very often

32- Do you consider Facebook an easy application to use?

a-Yes  b-No

33-What do you use Facebook for?

a-Post/ or read posts for fun

b-Post/ or read posts that educate you

c-play online games

d-listen/download music

e-watch/dowload videos/episodes

f-online text chatting

g-online video chatting

Others.....  
.....  
.....

34-Will you be willing to study the course of Methodology on a Facebook Group?

a-Yes  b -No

35-Why?

.....  
.....

36-would your motivation be lower due to the fact that your writings are seen by your teacher and classmates?

a-Yes  b-No

37-Would your motivation be lower if one of your students or teacher comment or presses "like " on your post?

a-Yes  b-No

38- why?

.....  
.....

39- Do you enjoy taking the initiative of commenting on others' posts?

a-Yes  b -No

40- Do you agree that commenting on each other writings on Facebook group develops your academic writing?

a-Agree

b-Disagree

41-Whatever your answers give your reasons

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42-If you have any concerns about the course that you will take on Facebook, please write them down.

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**Section VI: Further Suggestions**

43-Do you have any further suggestions?

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Thank you for your cooperation

## **Appendix -I.2**

### **Students' Mid-Experiment Questionnaire**

Dear student,

This mid-questionnaire is part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Doctorate degree. It aims at investigating your current level of motivation, your attitude towards how “Methodology” is being taught during the previous weeks, and your overall perception regarding the Blended Learning experience. Your precise answers to the questionnaire will be of a great value for the researcher. The questionnaire is anonymous and the answers will be treated confidentially.

Please tick (√) the appropriate box (es) and make full statements when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Miss KADRI Sabah  
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**Instruction:**

According to your experience with the blended course during the previous weeks, show the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the statements in Section I, Section II, and Section III by putting tick (✓) in the columns: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly disagree (SD).

**Section I: Assessing Students' Motivation**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
1-In the online session, I felt <u>comfortable</u> with using <u>Facebook</u> as a teaching tool.					
2-In the online course, <u>private chat</u> made me more <u>comfortable</u> since the teacher <u>evaluated my progress privately</u> without fear of criticism.					
3-In the online session, <u>private chat</u> made me more <u>comfortable</u> as I could <u>address my concerns</u> to the teacher privately at any time.					
4-The online session raised my wiliness to <u>communicate</u> and negotiate with others.					
5- <u>Facebook Group</u> is a <u>useful</u> virtual space for learning.					
6-I found the online session <u>useful</u> since it reduced <u>the cost of education</u> to me.					
7-I found the online course <u>useful</u> since I did not need to <u>travel</u> to attend it.					
8-During online session, I felt I am <u>supported</u> academically, affectively, and technically.					
9-In the online session, I felt <u>confident</u> to participate (to answer teacher's questions and comment on my peer's answers)					
10-In the online session, the teacher <u>modeled best answer strategies</u> and this raised my <u>self-confidence</u> .					
11-The online session encouraged me to learn <u>independently</u> and be responsible on my own learning (reading posted E-documents, searching online websites,...)					
12-The online session taught me <u>punctuality and self-discipline</u> (checking Group updates, e-mail updates, to be on-time for the course...)					
13-I participated in online sessions <u>following my own decision</u> .					
14-I believe that allowing me to generate spontaneous comments raises my freedom					
15-In the online session, I was encouraged to generate spontaneous but well <u>thoughtful contributions</u> .					
16-I believe that <u>efforts lead to self-improvement</u> through <u>trial-error process</u> .					
17-During <u>in-class lecture</u> , teacher <u>interacted</u> with students through question and answer patterns.					
18-During the <u>in-class lecture</u> , teacher <u>drew my attention</u> through real-life examples.					

## Section II: Attitudes toward the way “Methodology” is taught

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
19-During the online session, I received sufficient <u>feedback from my teacher.</u>					
20-During the online session, I received sufficient <u>feedback from my classmates.</u>					
21-Receiving other’s <b>suggestions</b> on my writings (answers) increased my <b>awareness of my mistakes.</b>					
22-Reading other’s <u>posts broadened my understanding to new perspectives</u>					
23-My online experience encouraged me <u>to value perspectives other than my own</u>					
24-The fact that my suggestions were seen by everyone encouraged me to be <u>critical about what I propose before posting.</u>					
25-The online session has sharpened my <u>skills of analyzing and evaluating</u>					
26-I found the online activities <b>intellectually challenging.</b>					
27-Asking me <u>self-reflective questions</u> encouraged me <u>to revise my answers</u> before posting them.					
28-I was generally given <b>enough time</b> to think and <b>answer</b> questions posted.					
29-I was generally given <b>enough time to ask</b> questions.					
30-I could always be up-to-date with online sessions since they are <u>accessible online any time anywhere.</u>					
31-I could <u>memorize</u> information better since online discussions are accessible any time anywhere.					
32-Availability of <u>e-documents</u> increased my understanding of the course concepts.					
33-Accessibility of <u>websites</u> during the online session helped me clarifying ambiguous concepts (vocabulary) related to activities.					
34-During the online session, using <u>grammar checker</u> encouraged me to <b>revise</b> my writings before posting them.					

## Section III: Assessing Blended Learning

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
35-Teacher explained from the beginning <u>what is expected of me</u> during online lectures.					
36-During online session, <u>discipline</u> was highly observed.					
37-During online session, I felt that online discussions <u>were developed by students than teacher.</u>					
38-The online session encouraged me <u>exploit much effort.</u>					
39-I felt that I am a <u>member of a community.</u>					
40- <u>The instructor</u> was <u>well-prepared</u> for each online session.					
41- <u>The instructor</u> provided meaningful and timely <u>feedback.</u>					
42-The instructor and classmates <u>were easy to get in touch with during the online session.</u>					
43-I was given the chance <u>to communicate with my instructor through e-mails</u> at times beyond that of the sessions.					
44-I was able <u>to suggest and evaluate</u> some of my classmates answers at times beyond that of the sessions					
45-I had no difficulty <u>accessing</u> the online session.					
46-I <u>could follow</u> the structure and development of the online session.					
47-Online activities and in-class lectures were <u>relevant to each other.</u>					

48-The blended learning experience had an appropriate <u>workload</u> .					
49-The blended learning experience provided <u>extra feedback</u> .					
50-The blended learning experience provided <u>extra source materials</u> .					
51-I was asked to <b>do additional readings or homeworks</b> at times <u>beyond that of the lectures</u> .					

**Generally speaking, answer the following questions:**

52-How often were u absent from online sessions so far?

a-Very often     b-often     c-sometimes     d-occasionally     e-never

53-What was the reason?

.....

.....

54-Did you experience any obstacles while learning in a blended learning environment?

a-Yes     b-No

55-Explain your choice

.....

.....

56-Are you willing to continue learning this subject using blended learning? (loyalty)

a-Yes     b-No

57-Explain your choice

.....

.....

**Section IV: Further Suggestions**

58-Are there any suggestions for improving the course?

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**Thank you for your cooperation**

## **Appendix -I.3**

### **Students' Post-Experiment Questionnaire**

Dear student,

This post questionnaire is part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Doctorate degree. It aims at investigating your current level of motivation, your current academic writing proficiency and your attitudes towards the Blended Learning after the experience. Your precise answers to the questionnaire will be of a great value for the researcher. The questionnaire is anonymous and the answers will be treated confidentially.

Please tick (√) the appropriate box (es) and make full statements when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Miss KADRI Sabah  
Department of English  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Larbi Ben M'hidi University



**Section I : Assessing Students’ Motivation**

1-How do you rate your current level of motivation towards learning this subject ?

a-very high  b-high  c-medium  d-low  e-verylow

2-To what extent did blended learning increase your motivation toward learning the subject?

a- To a great extent

b- To some extent

c- Not at all

3- Explain your choice

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.....

.....

4-Specify with a (√) and explain the aspects of blended learning that motivated you to learn the subject :

Aspects of blended learning	(√)
a-The level of <i>privacy</i> that Facebook provides.	
b-The level of <i>interaction</i> that online sessions provide.	
c-The <i>cost of education</i> required by online sessions	
d-The level of <i>flexibility</i> that online sessions provide	
e-The level of academic, personal and technical <i>support</i> during online sessions	
f-The level of <i>responsibility and self-discipline</i> gained in online sessions	
g-The level of <i>autonomy</i> supported by online sessions	
h-The level of <i>effort</i> required by online sessions	
i-The level of interaction gained in <i>physical sessions</i>	

**Section Two : Assessing Students’ Academic Writing Proficiency**

5-How do you rate your academic writing proficiency ?

a-Low  b-very low  c-intermediate  d-high  e-very high

6-Specify with a (√) and explain aspects of blended learning that served to increase your academic writing proficiency :

Aspects of Blended Learning	(√)
a-The level of <i>teacher feedback</i> during online sessions.	
b-The level of <i>peer feedback</i> during online sessions.	
c-The level of <i>constructive/thoughtful discussion</i> during online sessions	
d-The extent to which online sessions encourage <i>self-assessment</i>	
e-The extent to which online sessions lead to <i>self-awareness</i> of mistakes.	
f-The extent to which online sessions developthe analytical skills of analyzing and evaluating	
g-The extent to which <i>time was sufficient</i> to answer and ask questions.	
h-The <i>accessibility</i> of the online lectures and discussions anytime anywhere.	
i- <i>The level of memorization</i> of information taught online	
g-The availability of <i>extra documents</i> such as uploading e-documents	
k-The use of <i>websites</i> during online sessions.	
l-The use of “ <i>grammar checker</i> ” feature for self-revision.	

### Section Three : Attitudes TowardsBlended Learning

7-If you are given the choice to change or improve the blended learning method you experienced this semester, select the elements in question and provide explanations :

Elements	(√)
a-The teachingTool (Facebook)	
b-Online discipline	
c-Online discussions	
d-Autonomy provided to students	
e-Organization of content online	
f-Types of questionsasked online	
g-The role of instructoronline	
h-The role of students online	
i-The use of private chat	
j-The use of e-mails	
k-The timing and the quantity of time provided online	
l-The use of web-sites	
m-The use of grammarchecker	
n-The use of self-pacedobjects (e-documents, evaluating peers’ works)	
o-Types of communication online (synchronous vs asynchronous)	
p-The integrationbetweenphysical lectures and online sessions	
q-Interaction in physical lectures	

8-Explain your choice

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**Section four : Further Suggestion**

9-Do you have any further suggestions ?

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**Thank you for your cooperation**

## **Appendix -II**

### **Teachers' Questionnaire**

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Doctorate degree. It aims at investigating your perceptions, experience, and attitudes towards incorporating blended learning in the Algerian context. Your precise answers to the questionnaire will be of a great value for the researcher. The questionnaire is anonymous and the answers will be treated confidentially.

Please tick (√) the appropriate box (es) and make full statements when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Section one : Background Information**

**1-Gender :** a-Male  b-Female

**2-Age :** a-From 23-30  b-from 31-40  c- more than 40

**3-Highest Level of Education :**

a- Master  b-Magister  c-Doctorat  d-Postdoc

**4-Teaching Experience :**

a-from 1-5 years  b-from 6-10 years  c-more than 10 years

**5-How do you rate your skills in surfing on the Internet**

a-Poor  b-moderate  c -good  d-excellent

**6-Do you have a Facebook account?**

a-Yes  b-No

**7-How many hours per day you stay connected to Internet?**

a-Less than one hr  b-from 1-3 hrs  c-from 3 to 5 hrs

d-More than 5

### **Section two: Teachers' Perceptions of Blended Learning Approach**

**8-Is this the first time you read about the blended learning approach?**

a-Yes  b-No

**9-If no, according to you, which of the following situations refer to blended learning?**

a-Incorporating technology in the physical classrooms such as showing students a video to explain a specific aspect/subject.

b- Dividing a course into an online lecture when all students are being online at the same time and another lecture in the physical classroom.

c-Using different methods of learning inside the classroom such as audio-lingual and the communicative method.

b-In addition to the physical lecture, teacher uses a specific online application (eg. Website) in which he posts useful documents, course schedule, due dates while students join at any time to check them.

**10-Based on your knowledge, can you state the difference between blended learning, e-learning, and distance learning?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
**Section three: Teachers' Experience with Blended learning Approach**

**11- Have you ever taught a course or a partial of it in an online environment?**

a-Yes  b-no

**12- If no, why not:**

a-I doubt the success of online teaching in Algerian context (Internet connection, passive students,...).

b-I consider myself not prepared technically.

c-I am accustomed to the methods being used.

d-I don't know much about teaching online (managing time, managing a virtual classroom, encouraging interactive setting...)

**13- If yes, was the objective of the course to teach academic writing?**

a-Yes  b- No

**14- Was the online component interactive?**

a-Yes  b-No

**15- Explain your choice**

.....  
.....

**16- Was the online component learner-centered?**

a-Yes  b- No

**17- Explain your choice**

.....  
.....

**18- If you ever taught a *writing course* in a partial online setting , what were your reasons for choosing to add an online component?**

a-To increase students motivation.

b-To improve students' academic writing proficiency.

c-To add extra writing activities.

d-To be up-to-date with current teaching practices.

e-Because the time allowed in classroom is not enough.

f-Because it is difficult to create a learner-centered, interactive environment in the classroom.

Others.....  
 .....  
 .....

**19-Please state the challenges or frustrations you faced while teaching online.**  
 .....  
 .....

**Section four: Adopting Blended Learning in the Algerian context using Facebook**

**20-Show your agreement with the following statements by putting a tick in “yes” or “no” columns:**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Necessity of Blended Learning</b>		
21-Traditional methods alone are not very useful these days.		
22-There is a need to combine online and offline teaching methods to cope with the evolving needs of Net Generation students.		
<b>Facebook Utility</b>		
23-Facebook is an easy application to use.		
24-Facebook can be effectively used for pedagogical purposes.		
<b>Blended learning and Motivation</b>		
<b>25-Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' <u>comfort</u>.</b>		
26-Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' willingness to <u>communicate</u> with peers and the instructor.		
27- Conducting part of sessions online is <u>useful</u> since it <i>reduces <u>the cost of education</u></i> for learners and teachers.		
28-Conducting part of sessions online is <u>useful</u> due to the <u>flexibility of time and space</u> they offer.		
29-Using Facebook may help teachers to <u>support students academically, affectively, and technically</u> more than in traditional classes.		
30- Using Facebook as part of the teaching curriculum may raise students' <u>self-confidence</u> (to answer teacher's and peers' questions through commenting)		
31- Online sessions may encourage learners <u>to learn independently and be responsible</u> on their own learning		
32- Online sessions may teach better students <u>punctuality and self-discipline</u> (checking Group updates, e-mail updates, to be on-time for the course...)		
33-Online sessions may encourage students to <u>make much effort</u> than in traditional classes.		
<b>Blended Learning and Academic Writing</b>		
34- Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may help teachers <u>provide feedback</u> for each student better than in physical classroom (private chat and commenting)		
35- Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may encourage students to provide <u>peer-feedback</u> through commenting.		
36- Reading others' posts and receiving others' suggestions on one's writing on		

Facebook Group may result to a true <b><i>community of inquiry</i></b> .		
37- The fact that students' writings are seen by everyone in a Facebook Group may encourage them to <b><i>be critical</i></b> about what they write before posting.		
38-Conducting writing activities in a Facebook Group may improve <b><i>students' analytical skills of analyzing and evaluating</i></b> .		
39-Online sessions may provide <b><i>enough time</i></b> for students to discuss and think about questions.		
40-Using Facebook Group, students <b><i>can memorize information</i></b> better since online discussions are accessible online any time anywhere.		
41-The possibility of posting <b><i>e-documents online</i></b> may increase students' understanding of the course concepts.		
42-The simultaneous accessibility of <b><i>websites</i></b> during the online session may help students clarifying ambiguous concepts (eg: vocabulary).		
43-Using grammar checker feature of Facebook may encourage students <b><i>to revise their writings</i></b> before posting them.		

**All in all:**

**44-Will you be willing at any stage in your teaching span to integrate Facebook as a teaching tool?**

a-Yes       b-No

**45-Explain your choice**

.....  
.....  
.....

**46-Will you be willing at any stage in your teaching span to integrate any online tool into your teaching?**

a-Yes       b-No

**47-Explain your choice**

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.....  
.....

**Section Five: Further Suggestion**

**48-Do you have any further suggestions?**

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.....  
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**Thank you for your cooperation**



## Appendix –III

### The Writing Composition Test (120 minutes)

**Instruction:** Suppose you are doing a research about “web-based learning” and you have the following sources, compose *a formal, concise objective, meaningful, and well-structured essay* in which you combine information from the three sources by *summarizing the passages and shortening the quote*

#### Passage one : “Advantages of web-based learning on students’ learning”

The study was conducted in the Department of Foreign Languages at Batna University. The main aim of the course is to help students improve their overall proficiency in the English language which will enable them to follow their departmental courses with ease. Out of 630 students enrolled in the system, six students were chosen. These students were selected through intensity sampling because they are expected to have more experience with the web-based instruction system.

Web-based learning support contributed to students’ learning. The students recognized the contribution especially in terms of vocabulary learning. With the help of vocabulary activities, they practiced the new vocabulary and that drill and practice activities were helpful in recalling the vocabulary. In that way, the activities contributed to their exams studies. Moreover, web-based learning support contributed to students’ motivation. As they were using technology and multimedia, they liked the course more, they did not get bored of doing the same kind of activities and this provided higher level of motivation. Also, as they could easily recognize their success in doing the activities , they saw the activities as reinforcement to their learning. Finally, flexibility of learning was seen as a contribution. The students thought that the topics that they should study were presented on the web-page as a summary and they felt the convenience of time and place in addition to the variety of resources.  
**Source: Bahloul, A. (2004).Students' Insights and Experiences of Web-Based Learning Support ; The Case of Second Year Students of the University of Batna.**

**About the author: Dr. Amel Bahloul has been an English instructor at the University of Batna since 1998. She is specialised in theoretical and applied linguistics.**

#### Passage two: topic: “Using smart phones in teaching” (example one)

The world is moving forward and a lot of new technologies have been offered to people all around the world in order to compete and gain data and new knowledge faster than before. Nowadays, human beings are more familiar with technology which leads the new generation to choose and prefer to use their smart phones in every single matter and issue which the researcher expects that soon the process of reading will be led by online reading.

Therefore, in order to build and develop suitable reading programs or courses, it is such an important part for university EFL programs to expect and estimate their students’ reading capability. In addition, most universities around the world prefer online method of teaching between students and their teachers due to time and duties where all the progress reports will be saved in new software application. The progress report can be accessed through mobile unit especially smart phone because it comes with special software and application where this characteristic offers better and easier way to download most of the applications exactly like what we have in laptop and personal computer. So, clearly this tool is

better, practical and smart since mobile device is smaller, easy to carry, easy to keep and easy to sleek compared to laptop.

**Source: Al-Momani, A., Hussin, S., & Hamat, A. (2015). An Investigation of Smartphone Reading Strategies Behaviours from the Views of Jordanian Students.**

**Quote: “Using Gloster as a teaching tool” (example two)**

The internet no longer simply allows learners to explore and discover their own learning pathways, but it allows learners to construct their own content and add to the online database of resources in the form of multimedia-based UGC (user generated content) built on the premise of sharing and socializing . One such application built on this premise is the free-for-use web-based interactive digital poster publishing tool Glogster (2008).As a free-for use web-based poster publishing platform audio, images, and video can all be imported into a Glogster’s glog page, or linked to or grabbed from a webcam feed, while text titles, stickers, and speech bubbles can be created on the glogster’s glog page directly. Various effects such as frames, shadows, font size changes and color schemes can be implemented as well. Space on the Glogster webpage (glog) can be used freely, meaning items can be placed or replaced, rotated, overlaid, and resized. In addition, all content can be linked to other glogs or other web pages or content around the internet.

**Source: Kent,D.B. (2010). Exploring the Perspectives and Potential of Incorporating Glogster in the University EFL Curriculum. Arab World English Journal, 1 (1), 130-170.**

## Appendix –IV

### The Scoring Rubric

<b>Sub-structures</b>	<b>0 point</b>	<b>1 point</b>	<b>2 points</b>
<b>Present simple</b>	No use of present tense for the all the reporting verbs	Only some reporting verbs are in present	Using present simple adequately for all reporting verbs
<b>Active voice</b>	No active voice (0) for all signal phrases	Active voice is wrongly formulated OR some signal phrases are in active, others are in passive	All signal phrases are in active
<b>Objective analysis of the quote</b>	No objectivity (personal pronouns and subjective evaluation)	/	Completely objective (no personal pronouns and careful evaluation)
<b>Neutral description of the passage</b>	No objectivity if students uses personal pronouns and personal opinions)		Objective for no use of personal pronouns and personal opinions.
<b>Formal reporting verbs</b>	Informal (using weak/phrasal verbs)	Semi-formal (formal verbs are calculated : below 40 % = “0” score, 40 % - 60 % gets “1” score; exceeds 60 % = “2” score.	Formal (no use of weak/phrasal verbs)
<b>Signal phrase model</b>	Same signal phrase model	Changed the model only once	A good change of the use of signal phrase models
<b>synonyms</b>	No synonym is formal	Semi-formal (using the same procedure for ‘formal reporting verbs’)	All synonyms used are formal
<b>Formal analysis of the quote</b>	Informal	Semi-formal	Formal
<b>Complex noun phrases</b>	No use	complex noun phrase not properly used	The signal phrase includes complex noun phrase
<b>Avoiding unnecessary sentences</b>	Extensive use of unnecessary sentences	rare use of unnecessary sentences	No use of unnecessary sentences
<b>Simplifying structures</b>	Not used at all	Not used efficiently (structures are not meaningful when changed OR rarely used )	Used efficiently
<b>Avoid wordiness</b>	Not used at all	in some cases used, in others not	Used efficiently (in a suitable manner)
<b>Coherent quote with ellipsis</b>	Not used coherently	in some cases used coherently in others not	Ellipsis used coherently
<b>Re-ordering ideas and retaining meaning</b>	Re-ordering with no coherence	Some sentences are understood when linked together , others do not make sense/ weak attempt to change original order	Re-ordering ideas with a coherent paraphrasing
<b>Linking ideas with cohesive devices</b>	no use of cohesive devices	where necessary some ideas are linked, others	Where necessary, all ideas are linked together

		are not	
<b>Quote followed by analysis</b>	No analysis	there's an analysis but the analysis is not linked to the idea of the quote	Analysis perfectly covers for the idea of the quote
<b>Extracting main ideas from the text</b>	All details are mentioned.	some main ideas are mentioned, others are not or some details are avoided while others are not.	All main ideas are mentioned with no details.
<b>In-text citation</b>	No in-text citation at all	Not always used OR there is an absence of an element (author without year or page)	Respect of in-text citation for each reference
<b>No copy and paste</b>	All passages are copied (no/hardly no use of one's own writing)	Some sentences/phrases are rephrased, others kept as they are or cut and paste plagiarism	No copy-paste instances

# Appendix V

## Constructivism-Based General Lesson Plan

Constructivism/BL Tenets	Motivation Theories Learning Presences	Phases	Delivery mode	ICT tools	Time	Instructional activities	Online discussion questions	Bloom's taxonomy
F2f mode is a vital component		<b>Phase:1:</b> <b>Lecturing</b>	<b>F2F setting</b>		<b>(1h :30 m)</b>	15m -Teacher asks questions to recall prior related learning.	Recall facts Q	remember
						1h -Teacher presents new materials. -Teacher provides reading materials.		
						15m -Teacher asks questions to assess students' understanding.	Comprehension checking Q	understand
Students' readiness	-SDT (relatedness) -Attribution theory	<b>Phase:2</b>  <b>Activities</b>	<b>Synchronous virtual setting</b>	<b>Facebook Closed Group (FBG)</b>	<b>2 hrs</b>	15m Teacher poses a question to stimulate discussion and break the ice. Students start an informal socially-oriented discussion.	Attention getting Q	
Critical thinking/	-Cognitive presence -Teacher presence					20m -Teacher asks questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. -Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other. -Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.	Recall questions	remember
						Active learning	-SDT (competence) -GOT (effort)	70m <b>-Depending on the number of activities,</b> teacher posts a sentence/paragraph/text on the group page and asks students to re-write it in a way to avoid plagiarism, mistakes in in-text citation, and apply formality, objectivity, concision and coherence while paraphrasing/ summarizing. -Students post their answers (sentences/paragraphs).
learner centeredness Social and Cognitive construction Active learning	-SDT (competence) -GOT (effort)							
Self-paced learning	-SDT (self-regulation)							-Emails -Uploaded E-documents

## Appendix VI

### Constructivism-based Blended Learning Lesson Plans for First Semester, The Subject of "Research Methodology"

Topics	Lecturing Type	Progress	Instructional Activities	Constructivist-BLE Tenets	The added academic writing elements	Final Learning Objective	Motivation tenets
<b>General introduction to Plagiarism: -Definition -Examples -Types -Why to avoid it</b>	<b>Physical Lecturing Session (1) Week (one)</b>	introduction	-Teacher asks students questions to recall their knowledge gained in their first year “methodology” about plagiarism. -Teacher asks students about their own experiences in doing research (what sources did they use, how did they use them).	-Learning is developmental -Learning is experiential		<b>Students will be able to identify a plagiarized corpse and its type, differentiate it from common</b>	-Raising Enthusiasm and T-S/S-T Interaction
		development	-Teacher <b>defines</b> plagiarism in relation to ‘cheating’ in general and provides sub-sequent definitions. - He explains <b>types of plagiarism</b> (intentional /unintentional), (copy and paste, word-switch, style plagiarism).  -Teacher provides examples of each type and asks students to decide on the type of plagiarism detected with selecting peers to correct each other. -Teacher interacts with students about why avoiding plagiarism. He cites different reasons.  -He provides <b>strategies to avoid plagiarism</b> (skimming and scanning, taking notes, quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing).  -Teacher provides <b>real-life examples</b> of his own experiences when doing research (cases of students who have been found committing plagiarism and subsequent punishments, types of unintentional plagiarism, strategies the teacher has went through while doing research, and future occupational and educational benefits of developing borrowing techniques). -Teacher mentions what to cite and what not to cite with reference to	Social and cognitive constructions/ synchronous communication   Experiential learning			-S-T/ S-S Interaction   -Raising Enthusiasm by getting attention/ T-S interaction

<p><b>-How to avoid it</b>  <b>-Defining common knowledge (Week 1 + Week 2)</b></p>		<p><b>common knowledge.</b>          -He asks students to provide him with examples of common knowledge.</p>			<p><b>knowledge, and state the strategies used to clean it from plagiarism. (Week 1 + Week 2)</b></p>	S-T Interaction
	closure	<p>-Teacher asks students questions to assess their understanding and allows them to ask questions. He asks other students to answer their peers' questions.           -He provides students <b>PDF files about topics</b> covered to be read at home as further exploration.</p>	<p>Socialization/ social and cognitive constructions           -Encourage self-paced learning.</p>			-T-S/S-T/S-S/ Interaction  -Support/self-regulation
	introduction	<p>-Teacher posts a <b>welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group</b> or in chat to individual learners.          -He poses an attention-getting question such as <b>“if you own by now one million dollars, what is the first thing that you would do ?”</b></p>	<p>-Students' preparedness</p>			-Comfort/ self-efficacy/ social presence
	development	<p>-Teacher posts questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. An example is to ask <b>“based on the previous lecture, who can define plagiarism and common knowledge, and provide one example of each?”</b>          -He reminds students that they can comment on each other answers in case they considered their answers are incorrect. (<u>spontaneously</u>)          -Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other.           - Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.   <b>-Exercise1: Indicate with Yes or No if you need to cite each example below and explain your choice. You can comment on each other posts.</b>          -Teacher posts each time an instance and students answer in the comment bar.          -Teacher encourages students to <b>self-correct and peer-correct their answers</b>. An example is to select a wrong answer and asks the student who typed it a question like “what do you think about your answer? Is it correct? Why?” and select another one to comment and give his opinion “Do you think his answer is correct? Why? Re-correct it</p>	<p>-Learning is developmental           -Develop social and critical thinking skills/ learner centeredness           -develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing.          -developing social and cognitive constructions.</p>			<p>Social and cognitive presence/ autonomy           Teacher presence           Social and cognitive presence/ support           Teacher presence</p>

		<p>-Teacher summarizes the discussion, shows areas of agreement and disagreement, and provides his feedback.</p> <p>-Students are invited to ask questions in private chat. (5 minutes)</p> <p><b>-Exercise2: Determine whether the sentences use and cite the material in the passage properly or whether they constitute plagiarism. If yes suggest an alternative.</b></p> <p>-Teacher posts a text with its source and asks students to read it.</p> <p>-In the meanwhile, teacher <b>uploads useful links to Vocabulary websites in case students had difficulty understanding some vocabulary in the text and encourages students to share any websites are using.</b> Ex: <a href="http://www.thefreedictionary.com">http://www.thefreedictionary.com</a> <a href="http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/">http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/</a></p> <p>-Teacher reminds students to <b>use private chat</b> to ask him any question.</p> <p>-Teacher posts each time a sentence alone and asks students to answer on the comment bar.</p> <p>-Each student is asked to choose one of his peers' answers to comment on it or suggest an alternative.</p> <p>-Teacher monitors discussion, corrects mistakes, answers students' individual question addressed in private chat and provides his feedback.</p> <p>-Students are invited to ask questions in private chat. (5 minutes)</p> <p><b>Exercise3: Which draft essay would you submit and why?</b></p> <p>-Teacher posts an original text with its source along with three draft essays and asks students to read them.</p> <p>-Students have to compare between the drafts and decide which one does not include any plagiarism instances.</p> <p>-Teacher points to some of the students' answers and <b>asks them self-reflective and peer-assessment questions, then provides his feedback.</b></p>	<p>Computer-generated feedback/extra feedback</p> <p>- develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing. -developing social and cognitive constructions.</p> <p>Social and critical thinking skills</p>			<p>Comfort/support</p> <p>Support/self-regulation</p> <p>Comfort</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence/effort</p> <p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Comfort/support</p> <p>Social, cognitive, and teacher presence</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--	--



		closure	<p>-Teacher posts the names of students who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a modal to the rest of the group members.</p> <p><b>-Encourages students to upload any related E-articles or PDFs in the group page at their own pace, and consult the group and the e-mail for any announcements.</b></p>	Self-paced learning/ responsibility			Self-efficacy  Self-regulation/ autonomy
<p><b>Teach the first borrowing technique: “Quoting”.</b></p> <p><b>-what is quotation</b></p> <p><b>-why using quotations for borrowed material.</b></p> <p><b>-when to quote (limit the use of quotes)</b></p>	<p><b>Physical Lecturing Session (3)</b></p>	introduction	<p>-Teacher reminds students of the previous lecture that there are three borrowed techniques that can be used to avoid plagiarism; one of them is “quoting”.</p> <p>-He asks students of the cases they have ever used quotes in writing and how and when did they use that.</p>	Learning is developmental  Experiential learning			S-T Interaction
		development	<p>-Student attempt to define quotation and state its importance in relation to academic writing.</p> <p>-He provides two examples: one which copies the original source and another which puts the copied material between quotation marks and asks students to compare between them.</p> <p>-He stresses that the use of quotations must be limited since overuse brings the idea that writers have low writing skill.</p> <p>-He cites the cases in which quotes can be used.</p> <p>-He asks students to differentiate between long and short quotes in terms of punctuation.</p> <p>-Refers briefly to MLA In-text citation. (How to deliver author and page from an Entry).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Punctuation in Quoting:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>-How to use the ellipsis mark and brackets:</u></b></p> <p><b>(Using ellipsis should not only be a matter of punctuation but teach students how to use it in a way that keeps the text semantically complete. The misuse of ellipsis not only distorts the meaning of the quote but the coherence of the quote to the overall text.</b></p> <p>-Teacher provides two examples; one which uses ellipsis correctly and another with a misuse of the ellipsis and asks students to explain the use of the ellipsis with peers assessing each other.</p> <p><b>-Teacher emphasizes <u>The Quote Sandwich Rule (Context +Quote + Explanation)</u> that long quotes must be followed by an analysis (in addition to being related to the previous information in a signal phrase).</b></p>		Coherence	<p><b>Students will be able to quote without committing plagiarism, condense quotes coherently using ellipsis, and analyze long quotes using a formal and objective language (Week 3</b></p>	S-T Interaction  S-T interaction  S-T/ S-S interaction

<p><b>-A brief reference to MLA In-text Citation for short and long quotes (author and page).</b></p> <p><b>-How to use punctuation (ellipsis and brackets) in quotes.</b></p> <p><b>- avoid dropping long quotes (analytical skills)</b></p> <p><b>-Objective analysis of a quote</b></p> <p><b>(Week 3 + Week 4)</b></p>		<p>-Teacher provides an example of a quote sandwich and students explain the topic of the quote, how the author interwove the quote and his explanation (viewpoint) with maintaining students' discussion.</p> <p><b>Formal analysis:</b></p> <p><b>To analyse a long quote, teacher gives students some guidelines to write a formal language.</b> The teacher stresses <b>eight characteristics</b> which differentiate between formal and informal language (see chapter four,p. ) and illustrate with some examples. She provides students lists in electronic versions for further understanding (check appendix..).</p> <p><b>Objective analysis:</b></p> <p><b>-Teacher stresses avoiding the use of personal pronouns and using third person or inanimate agent while analyzing.</b> Ex: "Chomsky's point of view is considered very important....." not "I consider Chomsky's perspective important".</p> <p><b>-Avoiding subjective evaluations</b> such as "the author point of view is wrong"...</p> <p>-Teacher provides examples of these techniques.</p>		<p><b>Formality</b></p> <p><b>Objectivity</b></p>	<p><b>+ Week 4)</b></p>	S-T/ S-S interaction
	closure	<p><b>-Teacher asks students questions to assess their understanding and allows other students to correct their peer's answers.</b></p> <p>-He provides students <b>PDF files about topics covered to be read at home as further exploration.</b></p>	<p>-Interaction can be pursued in physical setting as well.</p> <p>-Encourage self-paced learning/ responsibility</p>	S-T/ S-S interaction		Self-regulation/ support
	<b>Online activities session (4)</b>	introduction	<p>-Teacher posts a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group or in chat to individual learners.</p> <p>-He poses an attention-getting question such as <b>"if you wake up by the year 3000, what is the first thing that you would notice?"</b></p>	<p>-Students' readiness</p>		-Comfort/ self-efficacy/ social presence
	development	<p>-Teacher posts questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. An example is to ask <b>"Based on the previous lecture, who can define short and long quotes and state the different punctuation marks that we can insert in them?"</b></p> <p>-He reminds students that they can comment on each other answers in case they considered their answers are incorrect.</p> <p><b>-Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other</b> (if students do not make a simultaneous initiatives, teacher keep on making self and peer-assessment questions to engage learners until they get used to it).</p>	<p>-Learning is developmental</p> <p>Socialization/learner-centeredness</p>	Social and cognitive presence		

		<p>- Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise 1: Re-write the sentences (1),(2) , (3), (4), and (5) from the text, taking into consideration punctuation (quotation marks, ellipsis, brackets, colon) and citation (author and page)</b></p> <p>- Teacher posts a text with its source and asks students to read it. The text sentences are numbered as separate quotes.</p> <p>- In the meanwhile, students <b>are encouraged to read the files uploaded by the teacher on the group page</b> about citing quotations as a reminder.</p> <p>-Teacher reminds students to <b>use private chat</b> with the teacher in case they have any problems (connection, digital, or pedagogical).</p> <p>-Teacher posts each time a quote sentence along with the text and ask students to re-write it by correcting its mistakes (punctuation and citation).</p> <p><b>-Each student is asked to choose one of his peers’ answers to comment on it or suggest an alternative.</b></p> <p><b>-Teacher motivates students who are not participating by privately chatting with them.</b></p> <p>-Teacher monitors discussion, corrects mistakes, answers students’ individual question addressed in private chat and provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise 2: re-write the following long quotations in a way that the ellipsis does not distort the meaning and grammar of the text.</b></p> <p>-Teacher introduces the exercise with <b>posting some links to Grammar websites that reminds students of basic grammar rules and to share any useful websites with their friends whether in chat on in the group.</b></p> <p>-Teacher each time posts an original long quote with another long quote that includes a wrong use of the ellipsis and asks students to re-write it.</p> <p>-For each quote, teacher comments on a wrong answer <b>using self and peer-assessment strategies</b>. He asks the student who answered “what do you think about your quote? is it grammatical? Is it meaningful?”. He also chooses of his peers to comment on that quote answer “Do you think the answer is meaningful and grammatical?” if no, suggest any</p>	<p>responsibility</p> <p>- Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing. -developing social and cognitive constructions.</p> <p>Computer-generated feedback/extra feedback/ responsibility - Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing. -developing social and cognitive constructions</p>	<p><b>Coherence</b></p>		<p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Support/self-regulation</p> <p>Comfort</p> <p>Cognitive and social presence/effort / support</p> <p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence/ effort</p>
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		<p>useful recommendations”.</p> <p>-For each quote, teacher provides his answer.</p> <p><b>Exercise 03:</b></p> <p><b>-Write an analysis for the following two long quotes. Make sure the analysis is formal such as (avoid contractions, personal pronouns) and objective (no subjectivity such as “the viewpoint is wrong”). The last two paragraphs are informal and subjective analyses of quotes. Re-write them to become more objective and formal.</b></p> <p>-For the first two quotes, students post their analysis.</p> <p>-For the last two analyses, students re-write them using a formal/objective style.</p> <p>-He provides students with <b>useful links to Vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words in the quote.</b></p> <p><b>-He reminds students to activate and use the Spelling Checker of Facebook to check their writings first before they post them in the comment bar.</b></p> <p>-Teacher select some answers and ask the students who wrote them self-assessment questions and encourage other students to attempt to ameliorate them in terms of understanding the quote, formality and objectivity (<b>encourage spontaneity</b>).</p> <p>-Teacher posts the best answer as the model answer and provides his feedback.</p>	<p>Computer-generated feedback</p> <p>Develop social and critical thinking skills /social and cognitive constructions</p>	<p><b>Analytical skills/ formality/ objectivity</b></p>	<p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence/ Autonomy</p> <p>Teacher presence</p>
	Closure	<p>-Teacher posts the names of students who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a modal to the rest of the group members.</p> <p>-Teacher reminds students <b>to check the group page within the week in order to download the files of quotation exercises as homework and post their answers as files to the group. Each student is asked to choose one of his peer’s answer file and comment on it in the comment bar in a separate file. In a separate file, teacher corrects each file which contains both the original student’s answer and the peer’s comment.</b></p> <p>-He reminds students to consult the teacher e-mail for any announcements or to address any question.</p>	<p>Self-paced learning/ social and cognitive constructions</p> <p>Asynchronous communication</p>		<p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Self-regulation /social and cognitive presence</p>

**How to use SIGNAL PHRASES :**  
**-what is a signal phrase.**  
**-Formal signal phrase modal.**  
**-Formal reporting verbs.**  
**-Active versus passive voice.**  
**-Using**

<b>Physical Lecturing Session (5)</b>	introduction	<p>-Teacher reminds students that whenever we borrow an idea we need to cite the author and page and that citing the author can be introduced at the beginning or at the end.</p> <p>-A significant method of introducing borrowed information is by using “signal phrases”.</p>	-Learning is developmental			
	development	<p>-Teacher asks first students what is a signal phrase depending on their background knowledge (last year) with peer discussion.</p> <p>-He starts with defining what a signal phrase is and what it “at least” contains (author’ name + verb) and provides examples.</p> <p>-He explains its importance in relation to quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing in avoid dropping information. Teacher in this regard recommends using the signal phrase rather than the parenthetical citation to maintain flow of ideas (especially in paraphrasing and summarizing) (see chapter two).</p> <p><b>-To write academically, signal phrases should be formal, objective, and concise.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1-Formality:</u></b></p> <p><b>-It must contain a structure that is beyond the subject+ verb structure to avoid monotony.</b></p> <p><b>- To vary the structure of signal phrases , students are provided with a list of different models of signal phrases. This includes changing structure and language style to create a more formal academic language.</b> Examples of formal expressions: “In the words of”, “in the author’s view”, “with reference to”, “author states that”, “as stated by..”, “according to”.</p> <p><b>-Using Formal reporting verbs that are suitable for the context of the information borrowed and the author’s stance toward the information cited or information previously mentioned.</b> The reporting verb must be ‘<i>precise</i>’ and not vague/general such as “to say” as compared with “to argue” or “to deny”, ‘<i>strong</i>’, i.e. a single-word verb rather than a phrasal verb (ex: ‘to talk about’ vs ‘to discuss’); and ‘<i>latin</i>’ rather than old English-origin.</p> <p>-Students are provided with lists and E-documents for illustrations.</p> <p>-Students discuss together with the teacher the function/ meaning of each reporting verb and difference between formal and informal equivalents.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>2-Objectivity:</u></b></p> <p><b>-Using the present simple tense for the reporting verb unless the date</b></p>	<p>Learning is developmental</p> <p>Socialization/ synchronous communication</p>	<p>Formality</p> <p>Formality</p> <p>Objectivity</p>	<p><b>Students will be able to introduce borrowed information using a language that is formal, objective, and concise, and to embed its context. (Week 5 + Week 6)</b></p>	<p>S-T/S-S Interaction</p> <p>S-T/S-S interaction</p>

<p><b>present tense.</b>  <b>-Complex noun phrases for author's credentials (concision)</b>  <b>-Adding context in signal phases.</b>    <b>(Week 5 + Week 6)</b></p>		<p><b>in which the quote is stated is provided (using MLA style). It stresses reliability of sources.</b>  <b>- Stressing the active voice because what is stressed while borrowing information is the author when credibility and reliability of sources is ensured.</b> Not to say "it is stated that...", but "author states that".          -Teacher provides examples.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>3-Concision:</u></b></p> <p><b>-In order to reinforce the reliability of sources used, the author's credential can be mentioned. In order to be concise, teacher teaches students how to use complex noun phrases to condense information about the author. Author's credentials are added not in a separate phrase or sentence that goes between commas, but before the subject. Introducing a sentence between two commas means that information is additional and can be omitted.</b> Ex:to say " The president of the human cloning foundation George Smith argues that..", not "George Smith, who is a supporter of cloning and the President of the Human Cloning Foundation, argues that..". The second makes the credentials optional rather than being important for source credibility (a non-defining relative clause).          -Teacher writes on the board examples of using author's credentials and students change it by using complex noun phrase before the author.  <b>-In order to maintain a better coherence and flow of ideas, teacher stresses the importance to relate the borrowed information to the previously mentioned CONTEXT. There are two suggested ways where context can be added to the signal phrase:</b>  <b>1-adding a complete or a partial sentence followed by colon or comma</b>  <b>2-adding a statement that ends with "that"</b>  <b>Or adding context in an extra link sentence before the signal phrase.</b>          -Teacher writes on the board some examples of signal phrases and students apply the strategies suggested using different style with peer feedback.</p>	<p>Social and cognitive constructions</p>	<p><b>Objectivity</b></p> <p><b>Concision</b></p> <p><b>Coherence</b></p>		<p>T-S/S-T/S-S interaction</p> <p>S-T/S-S interaction</p>
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		closure	<p>-Teacher allow students to asks questions and allow other students to answer their peer’s questions or ask them comprehension-checking Qs.</p> <p>-He provides students <b>PDF files about topics covered to be read at home as further exploration.</b></p>	<p>-Interaction can be pursued in physical setting as well.</p> <p>-Self-paced learning/ responsibility</p>			<p>T-S/S-T/S-S interaction</p> <p>Self-regulation/ support</p>
<b>Online activities session (6)</b>		introduction	<p>-Teacher posts a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group or in chat to individual learners.</p> <p>-He poses an attention-getting question such as <b>“how many of you know and play the Facebook vocabulary game “Wordox”?” to get students involved.</b></p>	<p>-Students’ preparedness</p>			<p>Raising comfort/self-efficacy</p>
		development	<p>-Teacher posts questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. An example is <b>“based on the previous lecture, who can define the signal phrase, state when to use it, and what does it consist of? ( you can comment on each other answers in case they considered their answers are incorrect)</b></p> <p>-By reminding students that they can comment on each other answers, teacher encourages <b>spontaneous discussion.</b></p> <p><b>-Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other.</b></p> <p>- Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise 1:</b>  <b>Re-write the following borrowed ideas by correcting any mistakes in SIGNAL PHRASES. Try to vary the model of signal phrases. (pay attention to To remind you, in signal phrases (1) author’s credentials, (2) the reporting verb tense , and (3) the voice used.</b></p> <p>-Teacher posts each time a borrowed idea including a signal phrase and asks students to correct its mistakes.</p> <p>-For each statement, <b>teacher selects one answer (wrong answer) and asks the students who answered it self-assessment questions. Then he asks other students to comment on his answer using peer-assessment questions.</b></p>	<p>-Learning is developmental</p> <p>-Develop social and critical thinking skills/learner centeredness</p> <p>-Developing social and cognitive constructions/ Experiential learning/ learner centeredness/ active learning</p>	<p><b>Formality/ objectivity/ concision</b></p>	<p>Autonomy/ social presence</p> <p>Teacher presence</p> <p><b>Academic Support/ social and cognitive presence</b></p>	

		<p>-Teacher does not state what the mistake is (verb tense, voice, credentials); he lets students discover what the mistake and correct it accordingly.</p> <p>- Teacher motivates students who are not participating by privately chatting with them.</p> <p>-For each statement, teacher monitors discussion, and corrects students' misunderstandings when needed, and only at the end of the discussion he provides the final feedback (answer).</p> <p>-Teacher reminds students to <b>use private chat</b> with the teacher in case they have any problems (pedagogical, digital, or personal).</p> <p><b>Exercise02:</b>  <b>Fill in the blanks in each of the following signal phrases with a suitable reporting verb. Make sure it is formal and explain your choice.</b></p> <p>-The teacher posts each time a borrowed information with a signal phrase where a reporting verb is missing.</p> <p>-He reminds students of checking the PDF of reporting verbs uploaded on the Group page. He also posts website links of vocabulary and asks students to share any useful vocabulary-defining websites to search for any ambiguous verbs.</p> <p>-Students are asked to suggest reporting verbs. While answering through comments, the teacher encourages learners to engage in a constructive discussion when they provide corrections or suggestions on their peers' answers.  After the discussion is well set, the teacher provides his final feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise03:</b>  <b>Reminder : In addition to using signal phrases, information should be put in CONTEXT to be related to previous ideas.</b>  <b>-The following quotes and paraphrases are dropped. Rewrite them in a way that you add context in a signal phrase. You can infer the</b></p>	<p>Computer-generated feedback/extra feedback</p> <p>Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing.  -developing social and cognitive constructions/ experiential learning/active learning</p>	<p><b>Formality</b></p> <p><b>Coherence using context/ Formality/ objectivity</b></p>		<p><b>Mastery goals: effort</b></p> <p><b>Comfort/ self-efficacy</b></p> <p><b>Teacher presence</b></p> <p>Support</p> <p>Support/self-regulation</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence</p> <p>Teacher presence</p>
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			<p><b>context from information mentioned between parentheses or from the quote itself (provide suggestions to peers whenever you think their answer is incorrect)</b></p> <p>-Teacher reminds students of consulting websites for checking the meaning of ambiguous terms.</p> <p>-Teacher each time provides <i>a dropped quote</i> with the context that was mentioned previously either cited between parentheses or before the quote. He asks students to link the quote to the context.</p> <p><b>- Peer and teacher assessment can include the tense and choice of the reporting verb, the voice used, and formal and objective style.</b></p> <p>-At the end of the discussion, teacher provides the answer.</p> <p>-Students are invited to ask for explanation if needed.</p>	<p>Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing.</p> <p>-developing social and cognitive constructions/ experiential learning</p>			<p>Academic support</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence</p>
		closure	<p>- Teacher posts the names of students who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a modal to the rest of the group members.</p> <p><b>-Teacher reminds students to check the correction files of the quotation homework posted in the Facebook Group.</b></p> <p>-He reminds students to consult the teacher <b>E-mail</b> for any announcements or to address any question.</p>	<p>-Self-paced learning/ asynchronous communication</p>			<p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Self-regulation</p>
<p><b>Teach the second borrowing technique; Paraphrasing</b></p> <p><b>: -Define</b></p>	<p><b>Physical Lecturing Session (7)</b></p>	introduction	<p>-Teacher reminds students that there are three borrowed techniques that can be used to avoid plagiarism; the second one is “paraphrasing”.</p> <p>-He asks students of the cases they have ever changed the original wordings of a given text and how and when did they use that.</p>	<p>-Learning is developmental</p> <p>-Learning is experiential</p>			<p>T-S/S-T interaction</p>
		development	<p>-Students try to define “paraphrasing” based on their background knowledge. Teacher provides his feedback shows its importance in relation to academic writing.</p> <p>-He reminds students that similar to “quoting”, paraphrasing also requires citation of the author and page number and therefore requires introducing a signal phrase at the beginning. <b>The signal phrase has to be formal, objective and concise.</b></p> <p>-Since quotations has to be kept to the minimum, teacher cites the cases in which paraphrasing must be used.</p>	<p>Learning is developmental</p>	<p><b>Formality/ Objectivity/ Concision</b></p>	<p><b>Students will be able to paraphrase using a language that</b></p>	<p>S-T/T-S interaction</p>

<p><b>paraphrasing.</b>  <b>-When to paraphrase.</b>  <b>-Techniques of paraphrasing :</b>  <b>-Use synonyms.</b>  <b>-Change word class,</b>  <b>-Change word order/ grammar .</b>  <b>-Change the order of ideas and retain meaning.</b>  <b>(Week 7 + Week 8)</b></p>		<p>-Teacher reminds students that paraphrasing entails <b>neutrality</b> when no personal opinion or alterations are included.  <b>-In order to paraphrase a passage/sentence/phrase in an academic way, teacher has to teach the following:</b>  <b>1-Change Vocabulary using Synonyms:</b>  -Since most students do not have a rich vocabulary repertoire, teacher has to provide students with a list of synonymous words and expressions.  <b>The list contains formal alternative words and expressions which are frequently used in academic writings. (see...)</b>  <b>2-Simplify and combine structures/avoid wordiness:</b>  <b>Students are taught that changing vocabulary is not enough. The original structure must also be changed otherwise ‘patchwork paraphrasing’ will occur. Students need to simplify structures by eliminating any elaborative language or wordiness and emphasizing the core meaning. After simplification, students are taught the strategy of ‘ combining two sentences in one sentence’.</b>  <b>3-Change word class/order:</b>  -From N to Adj, from Adj to Adv, from V to Adv...etc. (<b>class</b>)  -Teacher teaches students how to change grammatical structure of sentences. Examples are to alter between passive/active voices, or change the order of words ex: S +V+Adv+ Adj sentence becomes Adj+S+V+O.  <b>4-Change order of sentences/phrases/clauses and retain meaning:</b>  <b>-Teacher stresses the fact that ideas should not be followed in the same order of the original passage because this is a type of plagiarism (style plagiarism). He informs students to change the order ; <i>but in a way that the meaning is not distorted.</i> Therefore, students have to understand the original passage and make sure their ideas are coherent first, and reflect the original meaning.</b>  -Each of the previously mentioned techniques <b>must be illustrated with examples and discussed with students.</b>  -Teacher write extra example on the board and students apply the five strategies discussed when peers correct and suggest better alternatives (synonyms, word order/class, simplifying structure, and order of ideas).  -Teacher insists on using the techniques altogether since using one strategy on its own consists plagiarism. (Using synonyms but keeping the author’s structure is plagiarism).  <b>-Using a signal phrase:</b>  Teacher insists on an important point that in paraphrasing (and</p>	<p>Socialization</p>	<p><b>Objectivity</b></p> <p><b>Formality</b></p> <p><b>concision</b></p> <p><b>Coherence</b></p> <p><b>Coherence</b></p>	<p><b>is free from plagiarism, formal, objective, concise, and coherent.</b>  <b>(Week 7 + Week 8)</b></p>	<p>Support</p> <p>T-S/S-T/S-S interaction</p>
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			summarizing), it is better to avoid parenthetical citation and introduce a signal phrase at the beginning in order to sustain the flow of ideas.				
		closure	<p>-Teacher asks students questions to assess their understanding and allows other students to correct their peer's answers.</p> <p>-He provides students <b>PDF files</b> about techniques of paraphrasing, and formal language lists to be read at home as further exploration.</p>	<p>-Interaction can be pursued in physical setting as well.</p> <p>- Self-paced learning/ Responsibility</p>			<p>T-S/S-T/S-S interaction</p> <p>Self-regulation/ support</p>
	<b>Online Activities session (8)</b>	introduction	<p>-Teacher posts a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group or in chat to individual learners.</p> <p>-He poses an attention-getting question such as <b>“how many of you know the expression “To hear something straight from the horse's mouth”?</b></p>	<p>-Students' preparedness</p>			<p>Comfort/ self-efficacy</p>

		<p>development</p> <p>-Teacher posts questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. An example is to ask “<b>based on the previous lecture, who can define paraphrasing, state when to use it and mention its techniques?</b>”</p> <p>-He reminds students that they can comment on each other answers in case they considered their answers are incorrect.</p> <p><b>-Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other.</b></p> <p>- Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise1: Suggest synonyms for the words in italics. Make sure that the sentences are formal.</b></p> <p>-Teacher each time provides students a sentence with words in italics and asks students to suggest synonyms. The sentences contain formal as well as some informal words generally included in the list provided to students (ex: phrasal verbs, informal nouns/adverbs adjectives).</p> <p>-Teacher provides students with useful links to Vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words and asks students to share whatever vocabulary sites they know.</p> <p><b>-For each sentence, teacher selects one student’s answer and asks other students to decide whether the words suggested are formal or not. Peers, then, will suggest alternative formal words.</b></p> <p><b>-Teacher suggests on students to open a separate Word File in which they post and save the vocabulary they have learnt from their peers and teacher.</b></p> <p><b>-For each sentence, teacher monitors discussion, encourages students who are not participating via private chat, provides his feedback, and posts the best formal answer as a model for the group.</b></p> <p><b>-Exercise 2:Re-write the following sentences by simplify its structures and change their word order/and class.</b></p> <p>-Teacher each time provides students with a complex sentence.</p> <p><b>-He provides students with useful links to Vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words.</b></p>	<p>Learning is developmental</p> <p>-Develop social and critical thinking skills.</p> <p>Computer-generated feedback/ responsibility</p> <p>-Developing social and cognitive constructions/active learning/learner centeredness</p> <p>responsibility</p> <p>Computer-generated feedback</p>	<p>Formality</p> <p>Concision</p>		<p>Social and cognitive presence</p> <p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Support/ autonomy</p> <p>social and cognitive presence</p> <p>self-regulation</p> <p>teacher presence/ self-efficacy</p> <p>support</p>
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		<p>-For each sentence/text, teacher selects one answer (wrong answer), <b>asks the student who answered it self-assessment</b> questions such as “what changes you think have brought? Do you think your sentences are grammatical this way? Is it concise enough? <b>And selects another peer student peer-assessment questions</b> such as “Do you think his sentences are grammatical and concise? Why? Would you suggest an alternative?”</p> <p><b><u>-Teacher follows whenever a spontaneous discussion arises about certain students answer.</u></b></p> <p>-For each sentence/text, teacher monitors discussion and provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>-Exercise 3: Paraphrase the following <i>two</i> passages and make sure you: (1) change order of ideas (2) signal phrase is concise, formal, and objective (3) your style is formal and objective (neutral).</b></p> <p>-Teacher posts two texts (a text each time) with its source and some information about the author.</p> <p><b>-He provides students with useful links to Vocabulary sites and Online Thesaurus to check for any ambiguous words.</b></p> <p><b>-Teacher reminds students of using Spelling Checker to revise their spelling and grammar mistakes before posting their texts.</b></p> <p><b>-Students are asked to post their own texts in the comment bar.</b></p> <p><b>-Teacher selects some of the students’ texts and asks the student who wrote it self-assessment questions (concerning plagiarism, formality, objectivity, concision) and asks the rest of the group to give their viewpoints, explain them, and ameliorate accordingly. The assessment is to focus on all features required in the activity.</b></p> <p>-Teacher monitors discussion and clarifies misunderstandings. -He posts his answer as the final feedback.</p>	<p>Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing. -developing social and cognitive constructions/ learner centeredness/active learning</p> <p>Computer-generated feedback.</p> <p>Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating. -developing social and cognitive constructions/learner centeredness</p>	<p><b>Formality/ concision/ Objectivity/ coherence</b></p>	<p>social and cognitive presence/ effort</p> <p>autonomy</p> <p>teacher presence</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence/ effort</p> <p>Teacher presence</p>
	Closure	<p>- Teacher posts the names of students who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a modal to the rest of the group members.</p> <p>-He encourages students <b>to upload any useful links</b> in relation to paraphrasing, formal and concise tips, and reminds students to consult the teacher e-mail for any announcements or to address any question.</p>	<p>Self-paced learning/ Responsibility</p>		<p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Autonomy/ self-regulation / support</p>



<p><b>summarizing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Define summarizing technique.</li> <li>-Draw similarities/differences between summarizing and paraphrasing.</li> <li>-When to summarize.</li> <li>-How to summarize:</li> <li>-Skimming and scanning techniques of reading.</li> <li>-how to be selective/teach analytical skills.</li> <li>-Using one's own</li> </ul>		<p><b>2-Teach students analytical skills:</b> After understanding what the passage is about, students have to be taught to be selective. <b>By analyzing the passage, students have to highlight key Vocabulary and key points. Students have to be taught how to differentiate between major ideas and minor /supportive ideas and be critical in deciding about what ideas could give a full but concise overview of the text.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Teacher provide an example of summarizing a text and students selects the main ideas and details.</li> <li>-Researcher added in teaching Analytical skills the importance of choosing the information that supports ones' ideas or research. Therefore, students are given some texts and shown how the authors included only the ideas relevant to their research.</li> </ul> <p><b>3-Using one's own voice/paraphrasing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-After understanding and analyzing the passage by setting key points and vocabulary aside, students have to paraphrase these points using their own words.</li> <li>-Here, teacher reminds students that their <b>language must be formal, objective, and concise both in the paraphrase and in the signal phrase as</b> seen in previous lectures.</li> <li>-Teacher reminds students to check the Pdf files concerning tips about formal and concise language.</li> <li><b>-Teacher reminds students not to involve their own points of view while summarizing. Their writings must involve only a neutral description of authors' ideas.</b></li> <li>-Teacher provides an example with neutrality and another with subjectivity.</li> <li><b>-Teacher reminds students of re-ordering ideas and ensuring a meaningful corpse while summarizing to avoid style plagiarism (as taught in paraphrasing)</b></li> <li><b>-Teacher emphasizes the use of cohesive devices while summarizing to make sure that there is a smooth transition between ideas.</b></li> <li><b>-Students are given a list of commonly used cohesive devices with instances on coherent/non-coherent writings.</b></li> <li>-Each of the previously mentioned <b>techniques must be illustrated with examples and discussed with students.</b></li> </ul>	socialization	<p>Analytical skills</p> <p>Formality/ Objectivity/ Concision</p> <p>Objectivity</p> <p>Coherence</p> <p>cohesion</p>	<p><b>a summary using formal, objective, and concise signal phrase, to summarize in a language that is free from plagiarism, formal, objective, concise, coherent, and well-structured. (Week 9 + Week 10)</b></p>	T-S/S-T interaction
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<b>voice/paraphrasing.</b> <b>-Re-ordering ideas with keeping meaning (coherence and cohesion).</b> <b>(Week 9 + Week 10)</b>		closure	<p>-Teacher asks students questions to assess their understanding and allows other students to correct their peer's answers.</p> <p>-He provides students <b>PDF files about techniques of summarizing</b> to be read at home as further exploration.</p>	<p>Interaction can be pursued in physical setting as well.</p> <p>-Encourage self-paced learning.</p>			<p>T-S/S-T/S-S interaction</p> <p>Self regulation /support</p>
	<b>Online Activities Session (10)</b>	introduction	<p>-Teacher posts a welcoming message in the group page that tags all members of the group or in chat to individual learners.</p> <p>-He poses an attention-getting question such as <b>“How many of you know the idiom “cry over spilt milk”?”</b></p>	<p>Students' preparedness</p>			<p>Comfort/ self-efficacy</p>
		development	<p>-Teacher posts questions to recall information about previous lecturing session. An example is to ask <b>“based on the previous lecture, who can define summarizing, state when to use it and mention its techniques?”</b></p> <p>-He reminds students that they can comment on each other answers in case they considered their answers are incorrect.</p> <p><b>-Students post their answers on FBG, they peer-assess each other.</b></p> <p>- Teacher monitors discussion, and then provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise 1: Re-write the following two texts in a way that you remove any redundancy (repetition), wordiness, or intensifiers.</b></p> <p>-Teacher posts two texts subsequently.</p> <p>-Students write their texts in the comment bar. Teacher selects some of the students' answers and asks self-assessment and peer assessment questions. Peers provide recommendations of when repetition is occurred and how to avoid it.</p> <p>- Teacher monitors discussion, encourages students who are not participating via private chat, and provides his feedback.</p> <p><b>Exercise 2: Summarize the following two texts and make sure you : (1) change the order of ideas (2) use cohesive devices (3) write formally and neutrally (4) use in-text citation.</b></p> <p>-Teacher reminds students to use the feature of <b>spelling checker of Facebook</b> to check for their spelling mistakes before posting their summaries. (post the reminder)</p> <p>-Teacher reminds students that they can <b>consult the Pdf files uploaded</b></p>	<p>Learning is developmental</p> <p>-socialization</p> <p>social and cognitive constructions/ learner centeredness/ active learning</p> <p>Computer-generated feedback/</p>	<p><b>Concision</b></p> <p><b>Formality/ Objectivity/ Concision/ Cohesion/ Coherence/</b></p>	<p>Social and cognitive presence</p> <p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Social and cognitive presence/ effort</p> <p>Teacher presence</p> <p>Support</p>	



		<p><b>on the group page</b> about summarizing, formal and concise language. (posts the reminder)</p> <p>-Teacher reminds students to use the <b>Vocabulary websites</b> to check ambiguous words. (posts the reminder)</p> <p>- Teacher posts two texts with their sources.</p> <p>-Students post their answers in the comment bar.</p> <p>-Teacher selects some texts of students and post them to the group. He posts questions like such as “<b>what do you think is successful about this draft? Is the citation mentioned? Is your signal phrase objective, concise, and formal? Is the summary formal? Did he change the order of ideas without affecting the meaning? Are the ideas linked with cohesive devises? Is the text coherent and meaningful? what about the signal phrase?</b>”</p> <p>-Those questions are asked to both the student who wrote the text <b>as self-assessment questions</b> and also to the rest of the group. The peers answer in the comment bar and are asked to give their opinions and suggest any ameliorations concerning any of the previous factors.</p> <p>- Teacher monitors discussion, encourages students who are not participating via private chat, and provides his feedback.</p>	<p>responsibility</p> <p>Social and cognitive constructions/ Develop higher ordered skills of evaluating and analyzing/learner centeredness/ active learning</p>			<p>Social and cognitive presence/ effort</p>
	closure	<p>- Teacher posts the names of students who posted the best presentation of comments and answers as a modal to the rest of the group members.</p> <p>-He encourages students to upload any useful links in relation to summarizing, formal and concise tips, and reminds students to consult the teacher e-mail for any announcements or to address any question.</p> <p><b>-Teacher reminds students to check the correction files of the paraphrasing exercises.</b></p> <p><b>-Teacher reminds students to check the group page within the week in order to download the files of summarizing exercises as a homework and post their answers as files to the group. Each student is asked to revise the answer of a specific peer in a separate file. Teacher corrects each file which contains both the original student’s answer and the peer’s comment.</b></p>	<p>Self-paced learning/ responsibility</p> <p>Self-paced learning/ social and cognitive constructions/ asynchronous communication</p>			<p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Self-regulation/ Support</p> <p>Cognitive and social presence</p>

## Appendix VII

### Answers of the Exercises Conducted during

#### 'Online Sessions'

##### ➤ Session Two :

###### Exercise One :

1. Yes, because quotations alone are not enough, we need to cite the author.
2. No. One's own work is not cited (ideas, experiments, results, ...) for no stealing of property is involved.
3. Yes, because leaving the exact words as they are constitutes plagiarism. It must be either put in quotations or paraphrased.
4. No
5. No because a well known fact is not attributed to any specified source.

###### Exercise Two:

1. Plagiarism. There is no source and no quotation marks around 'the chief cause of revolt' and 'the demand of personal freedom'.
2. No plagiarism. The student mentioned the source and summarized the whole text on one idea using his own style. Even if the idea doesn't count for the whole text, it means it doesn't cover for the whole ideas of the text (poor summary) but he didn't plagiarize as he used his own style.
3. No plagiarism. First, he used quotation marks around the copied phrase 'continued steadily during succeeding generations' and second, he mentioned the source although it is a poor citation. The poor citation is not considered a plagiarism instance since it can be the result of the students' lack of knowledge and it doesn't alter any of the citation information.
4. Plagiarism. The student mentioned unattributed language. He should have used quotation marks around the following 'the king's repeal of the liberating charters'.
5. No plagiarism. He cited the author and adequately summarized the text using his own style.
6. Plagiarism. Although it is a well-written summary, no citation is included.

###### Exercise three :

**Answer :** Student's paper one does not constitute plagiarism because the student successfully quoted the exact words of the original author with citation and mixed it with using his own paraphrase and again with citation. The second, however, contains a direct copy paste of the original text with no quoting or paraphrasing.

##### ➤ Session Four:

### Exercise One:

1. McConnell reports that ‘clotbusting drugs and surgical techniques can save lives or prevent loss of neurological function’ (35).
2. McConell comments that ‘the need for thse [sic] thérapies [for treating strokes as they occur] is critical’ (35).
3. McConnell states that ‘someone suffers a brain attack every 53 seconds...’ (35).
4. McConnell reports that ‘some 560.000 Americans annually suffer ischemic strokes, while about 140.000 are afflicted with hemorrhagic strokes, which are caused by a reptured blood vessel in the brain’ (35).
5. Among those who argue for the favor of using chemicals and drugs in medical thérapies is the medical lawyer McConnell who suggests that :

While not all brain attacks can be treated, clotbusting drugs and surgical techniques can save lives or prevent loss of neurological function. Meanwhile, scientists are testing chemicals to counteract the otherwise irreversible self-destruction of brain cells following a stroke. The need for thse [these] thérapies is critical. Some 560.000 Americans annually suffer ischemic strokes, while about 140.000 are afflicted with hemorrhagic strokes, which are caused by a reptured blood vessel in the brain. Someone suffers a brain attack every 53 seconds, and every 3.3 minutes someone dies from. (35)

### Exercise Two:

#### **A- Using the information you learnt about ‘ellipsis’, decide whether the following students’ quotes are coherent or not. Explain**

1. The quote is not coherent. The reader would experience a contradiction to the context refered to in the signal phrase. It removes the condition through which Jones and Brown results can be revolutionary stated in the sentence ‘if-and only if-Jones and Brown can supply a new, reliable data set with the same outcome’.
2. The quote is not totally coherent in regards to its context. The student provides extra information that is not related to the overall context of ‘emphasizing the importance of technology’. It is better to remove the sentence ‘Essays drawing on Internet sources are likely to include links to URLs which lecturers can follow if the essays are submitted electronically’.
3. Incoherent quote (careless) because it lacks important words for the meaning to be complete (how the characteristics ‘interact with participants’...)

#### **B-Condence the following quotes using ellipsis :**

1. In his article “Comparison of Eleven Major Learning Styles Models” , DeBello (1990 :205) writes that ‘individual styles must be assessed and that... instructional techniques must be used that are congruent with each student’s style’.

2. Stressing the immoral act of killing mammals, Benson argues that : ‘people surveyed around the world now correctly understand that whales ... must receive instant painless death’.

### Exercise Three:

**A-Write an analysis for the following long quote. Make sure the analysis is formal such as (avoid contractions, personal pronouns) and objective (no subjectivity such as “the viewpoint is wrong”).**

Rodriguez and Bellanca (2006:135) describe the school sharing behaviours of students in urban area writing : “In some urban classrooms, children arrive without any notion of sharing behavior. If they have grown up as street survivors, without strong early mediation for sharing, they may come to school ready to do battle to the death”. From infancy, the way these children are raised was not nurtured with the notion of sharing others one’ own thoughts and feelings. On the contrary, these children have instilled the idea of street survival and self-centeredness where any notion of trust or friendship building is rejected. These behaviours are then assimilated to the school environment making it difficult for these learners to socialize.

**B- The following is a subjective analysis of a quote. Re-write it to make it sound objective.**

**According to me,** americans **seem not to** agree whether the death penalty is a **bad** idea or not. Some people **don’t think** that death penalty is human, while **a couple of** conservators think that **it’s fair** killing a murderer ever if he is under 18 years old. **I** believe the death penalty is **good to stop kids** from killing one another. (original)

→Americans do not agree whether the death penalty is An illegal/unethical idea or not. Some people believe that death penalty is unhuman, while many conservators think that it is justice killing a murderer ever if he is under 18 years old. All in all, the death penalty is efficient to **eradicate** children from killing one another.

### ➤ Session Six:

#### Exercise One:

1. Sigmund Freud argues that ‘dreams are the royal road to the unconscious’ (12).
- 2.The MC Courier writer Alex Kane states that « bottled water is wasteful is harmful for both the environments and...’.
3. The chinese-American Historian Iris chang illustrates the full scope of the... massacre by important statistics.
4. Gene suggests that“It was a night made for hard thoughts” (93).

#### Exercise Two:

1. Donnie Chen (2012) **describes** drug traffickers as ‘the greatest threat to public safety’ due to their massive arsenal of weapons and increasing willingness to use them.

2. A 2011 British Commission Report **criticized** City officials for waiting too long to report the increased bacteria levels in the water.
3. A 2004 Harvard study **suggests** that drinking coffee may indeed have health benefits (Thomes and Van Dyck).
4. Both Bernard (2003) and Kin (2005) **stress** the need for more research before drawing any conclusions.
5. The article **discusses** the qualities of a good American housewife in the 1950's.
6. Chomsky **questions** whether privileged elites should dominate mass communication and 'decieve the stupip majority'.

### Exercise Three:

1. Smith explains the use of essay-writing terminology:

‘An assignment which asks you to do some library research to write on a topic may be called an essay, a paper, a research essay a research paper, a term assignment, or a term paper. The terminology is not necessarily consistent : a term paper may tend to be a longer paper written in advanced courses, but not necessarily. You may be assigned a specific topic or asked to choose your own from subjects relevant to the course’. (225)

2. John Doe (2006 :75) rejects the argument stating that higher speed limits increases the chances to be safe **and considers those who argue in favor of increasing the speed limits claiming that it helps us eliminate any risk chances on the road and reach our destinations faster to ignore the fact that higher speed causes higher-speed accidents.**

3. Twenge addresses the present generation of people who have been taught to put themselves first and expect instant results without working hard to achieve them. He states : ‘they are less likely to work hard today to get a reward tomorrow –an especially important skill these days, when many good jobs require graduate degrees’ (157).

4. A view that contradicts Smith's is articulated by Brows who contends that ‘God never intended for man to participate in his acts of creation. He will never condone our interference in his plans for us’ (235).

### ➤ Session Eight :

#### Exercise One :

1. The press reflected the living culture of the people, it was able to influence opinion and reinforce existing attitudes, however it did not come up with new forms of entertainment.

2. In the modern world our thinking is **largely/ in most cases transmitted/sent** by speech. **But**, At the university, you are **required/asked to** to **do** much of your thinking (think mostly) **by/through** writing.

3. In recent years, the number of international students in American Universities has **gone up/increased**, **dramatically/largely**. **Many**/several studies **points out /demonstrate** that these students do not **get/receive** the language support they **need/require**. This has **set off /angered both/alike** faculty and staff members who have been **trying out/testing** several models and **figuring out/discovering best/ useful** method of refinement.

### Exercise Two :

1. **Teaching Sociology reminds us in each issue that** sociology instructors need not follow the traditional teaching model of lecturing **to a captive audience**. Fiction, film, and music are popular cultural media **that have been suggested as means** for establishing links between sociology and the “real world” **outside our classrooms** (Laz 1996; Loewen 1991; Martinez 1995; Pescosolido 1990).

**Step1 :** Sociology instructors must *use* cultural media such as fiction , film and music instead of following *traditional* teaching models of lecturing for *establishing* links between sociology and ‘real world ‘.

**Step2 :**In order to *establish* links between sociology and the ‘real world’, *the use* of cultural media such as fiction, film and music must be followed by sociology instructors instead of teaching *traditionally* through lectures.

2. Moreover, when learning any foreign language, culture plays a **very significant role in the process of learning that language**. Culture is **now considered to be** one of the elements that are **said to be** inseparable from language. 155 2015 ahmed khadidja

**Step1 :** culture plays a *significant* role when *learning* a foreign language and it is one of the elements that are *inseparable* from language.

**Step2 :** There is no way *to separate* language from culture for culture bears a great *significance to learn* a foreign language.

3. Most teachers, **if not all**, agree that students, **at least in theory**, should **be able to take charge** of their own learning **at some point**. Others **just** feel it is not worth it because students will remain dependent on teachers and textbooks.

**Step1:** Most teachers agree that students should be *responsible* of their own learning whereas others feel it is not *worth* it because students will remain *dependent* on teachers and textbooks.

**Step2:** Most teachers agree that students must take *the responsibility* of their own learning whereas others feel it *worthless* because students’ *dependency* over teachers and textbooks will remain.

### Exercise Three :

“**There has been** a dramatic increase in the number of Australian children taking an interest in cooking in the last two years. **Researchers speculate that this** may be due to the rising popularity of reality based cooking shows aimed at a young audience. These shows often feature children who are very skilled at preparing, cooking and presenting food. **The shows** present the idea that **the levels of skill such children possess in the** kitchen can be reached by any child, as long as they are determined and have family support. Cooking products and games **have also started to line the shelves of** toy stores. **These products are frequently packaged so as to** reinforce their links to the popular television shows and the **promise of success and celebrity status** such shows confer upon the child who cooks.” (McGuinness, 15, 2011)

#### **Step1 :**

“ a dramatic increase in the number of Australian children taking an interest in cooking in the last two years is probably due to the rising popularity of reality based cooking shows aimed at a young audience. These shows often feature children who are very skilled at preparing, cooking and presenting food and present the idea that **these skills** can be reached by any child, as long as they are determined and have family support. Cooking products and games **have become available in** toy stores and **are frequently packaged to** reinforce their links to the popular television shows and the success and celebrity status **they** confer upon the child who cooks.” (McGuinness, 15, 2011).

#### **Step1 : changing syntax into a concise version**

It is speculated thatThe rising popularity of children’s cooking reality shows has dramatically increased the number of Australian children who are interested in cooking. The packaged cooking products and games **have also become available in** toy stores in order to reinforce the links between to these shows and their success and celebrity status they **confer** upon the child. The shows feature skilled children who know how to prepare, cook, and present food and present the idea that any child can reach these skills as they have the determination and are supported by family. (McGuinness, 15, 2011)

#### **Step2 : Changing vocabulary using formal style**

*It is believed that The growing prevalence* of children’s cooking reality shows has *largely extended* the number of Australian children with cooking interests/desires. Different packaged cooking products and games have also been sold in toy shops in order to foster their *prominant position* and success in attracting the child. These televisions *programs present proficient* children who know how to prepare, cook, and present food as well as *emphasize the belief* that any child can *achieve* these cooking *competencies* as far as he *owns* the required *committment* and family *assistance*.

### ➤ Session Ten:

#### Exercise One:

1-**The main objective of note taking** is to capture the essential points of the lecture and **keep a record of the main ideas, which the student later uses for revision, particularly for examination purposes or to write a summary or a report based on the notes.** Taking notes during a lecture is a highly demanding skill and creates problems for students who are learning English as a second or foreign language for academic purposes. For students, participation in lectures requires active listening and effective note-taking skills. Training students to take notes during lectures is an important component of the English for Academic purposes curriculum in preparing them for their future academic classes.

Yasemin Kirkgoz 2010

**Step1 :** Kirkgoz (2010) suggests that the main objective of note taking is to keep a record of a lecture's main ideas for later revision. However, taking notes during a lecture is a highly demanding skill for EFL learners. Therefore, the author considers training students to take notes to be an important component of the English for Academic purposes curriculum.

**Step2 :** Kirkgoz (2010) argues that note-taking serves to extract *key points* from lectures and saves them for *subsequent* use. However, this activity is found to be *extremely difficult* for EFL learners. Therefore, the authors suggests it is *significant* to teach them how to effectively take notes during lectures.

### Exercise Two :

The fundamental theory behind **Lecture Note Taking Driving Licence provides intensive tailor-made training in NT skills at the initial stages of the students' transition form school to university** rather than following the more common prolonged training using commercial NT and study skills books developed for a more general audience, which in most cases are useful for teachers more than students.

This programme was developed at Sultan Qaboos University. The **students were all Omani Arab learners** at the Language Center, who were involved in different English foundation courses before joining their colleges at the university, where the language of instruction is **English**. The programme was tested on three groups of students who **had very little or no instruction in NT at school**.

The focal aspect of the programme is the teacher's involvement in developing the learners' NT skills in a quick fashion **with emphasis on learners' autonomy**. The teacher's role is not traditional. Instead of simply lecturing on NT, **the teacher is involved in the actual writing and shaping of notes through providing demonstrations on how to take notes. Such demonstrations involve: (a) sharing and discussing sets of ready-made notes on the topic of the lecture with the students, (b) taking notes with the students from a recorded lecture on the board, and (c) taking notes from a recorded lecture on the board while the students are busy taking notes and discussing the different notes.** The common advantages of these three activities are: to give students examples of how notes on the same material can look and stress certain points in the material that they might have not picked. The advantage of the latter two activities is to show students that NT requires a lot of effort and imagination. Al-Musalli, 2013,

**Answer:** According to Al-Musalli (2013), Lecture Note Taking Driving Licence provides a profound training in NT skills to graduates who are considered new to the university setting. In his study, the program was applied on Omani learners studying English who had no



sufficient or prior instruction on NT. The teacher's involvement in NT is an important element of the program where he assists students to improve their NT skills through following three types of demonstrations. These include discussion of pre-designed notes about the lecture, interactive process of NT with students, and teacher's and learners' separate note-taking. These demonstrations serve as illustrations of the effective selection of notes and reveal the complexity and creativity that NT necessitates.

**Exercise Three:**

**The significance of taking notes during lectures to students' learning is well acknowledged in the literature / is emphasized by many authors.** Kirkgoz (2010), for instance, argues that note-taking serves to extract *key points* from lectures and *saves* them for *subsequent* use. However, this activity is found to be *extremely difficult* for EFL learners. Therefore, the author consider it *significant* to teach them how to effectively take notes during lectures. **Different methods of teaching note taking during lectures are suggested in the literature.** Al-Musalli (2013), **for example**, suggests the use of Lecture Note Taking Driving Licence which provides a profound training in NT skills to graduates who are considered new to the university setting. In his study, the program was applied on Omani learners studying English who had no sufficient or prior instruction on NT. The teacher's involvement in NT is an important element of the program where he assists students to improve their NT skills through following three types of demonstrations. These include discussion of pre-designed notes about the lecture, interactive process of NT with students, and teacher's and learners' separate note-taking. These demonstrations serve as illustrations of the effective selection of notes and reveal the complexity and creativity that NT necessitates.

## Appendix VIII

### Reading Excerpts (hard and soft copy) Used during The Physical Sessions

#### Physical Session One :

##### Forms of plagiarism:

- Copying another person's work, including the work of another student (with or without their consent) as it is and claiming or pretending it is your own. **(copy and paste plagiarism, no paraphrase, no summary, no quotation marks, no source).**
- summarizing without acknowledging the source. **(no source).**
- quoting without acknowledging the source. **(no source)**
- paraphrasing acknowledging the source. **(no source).**
  
- changing some words to make the information seem a paraphrase or a summary. **(it is called word-switch plagiarism)**
  
- Following the original text sentence-by-sentence or paragraph-by-paragraph is plagiarism, even though none of your sentences are exactly like those of the author. What you are copying in this case is the author's reasoning style. **(this is called style plagiarim).**
  
- change the information, the ideas of the original author.

##### WHAT TO CITE

- Any words or ideas you read in a magazine, journal, newspaper, book, web page, letter, advertisement, government document, or other printed material.
- Any diagrams, illustrations, charts, pictures, or other visual material you use that was created by anyone other than yourself.

##### WHAT NOT TO CITE

- Your own life experiences, observations, and insights.
- Your own results from labs, personal studies, or field experiments.
- Common knowledge

##### WHAT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE?

Broadly speaking, common knowledge refers to **information that the average, educated reader would accept as reliable without having to look it up.** It is a **well-known fact/information/truth.** This includes:

**Information that most people know**, such as that water boils at 100 degrees Fahrenheit, Barack Obama was the first American of mixed race to be elected president, the moon orbits the earth, Paris is the capital of France.

**Information shared by a cultural or national group**, such as the names of famous heroes or events in the nation's history that are remembered and celebrated. John F. Kennedy was elected President of the United States in 1960, Algeria had the independence in 1962.

**Knowledge shared by members of a certain field**, such as the fact that the necessary condition for diffraction of radiation of wavelength from a crystalline solid is given by Bragg's law.

### Plagiarism: What is it?

Plagiarism means taking the words and thoughts of others (their ideas, concepts, images, sentences, graphs, statistics and so forth) and using them as if they were your own, without crediting the author or citing the source. Most plagiarism is **willful**, a sort of theft. It is possible to plagiarize **unintentionally**, though, by being careless or hurried, omitting quotation marks or slipping into the words or ideas of others through inattention or simply for convenience. Whether you meant it or not, you can be found guilty of plagiarism whenever other people's language gets used without proper citation in your text. At this and most other universities, plagiarism is regarded as **intellectual theft**; faculty will rarely bother to determine whether you stole words on purpose or just forgot to acknowledge them.

### Some definitions of plagiarism:

*All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research or self-expression... When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.*

*Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work, whether it be published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or whatever.*

*Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.*

*When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology is plagiaristic.*

### Examples of plagiarism:

Plagiarism is found in all of the following examples:

- Purchasing or copying a paper from the Internet
- Borrowing your classmate's lab report and using his or her description of the experiment to describe your findings
- Turning in a paper as your own that you didn't write
- Copying (cutting and pasting) material without acknowledging the source
- Using material when an author has been identified but not using quotation marks to reflect his or her original words
- Inadequate paraphrasing
- The summarising of another person's work without acknowledgement,



## 1. Physical Session Two :

### **1/-Enclose borrowed language in quotation marks :**

To indicate that you are using a source's exact phrases or sentences, you must enclose them in quotation marks. To omit the quotation marks is to claim-falsely-that the language is your own. Such an omission is plagiarism even if you have cited the source.

**Original source :** Without adequate discipline, the World Wide Web can be a tremendous time sink ; no other medium comes close to matching the Internet's depth of materials, interactivity, and sheer distractive potential. -Frederick Lane, *The Naked Employees*, p.142

**Plagiarism :** Frederick Lane points out that if people do not have adequate discipline, the World Wide Web can be a tremendous time sink ; no other medium comes close to matching the Internet's depth of materials, interactivity, and sheer distractive potential (142).

**Borrowed Language in Quotation Marks :** Frederick Lane points out that for those not exercising self-control, « the World Wide Web can be a tremendous time sink ; no other medium comes close to matching the Internet's depth of materials, interactivity, and sheer distractive potential » (142).

### **2/-Limit your use of quotations : (using quotations appropriately)**

Try your best not to quote excessively. This is because it is almost impossible to integrate numerous long quotations smoothly into your own text.

Except for the following legitimate uses of quotations, use your own words to summarize and paraphrase your sources and to explain your own ideas.

### **3/-When to use quotations :**

- 1-When language is especially vivid or expressive.
- 2-When it is important to let the debaters explain their positions in their own words.
- 3-When the words of an important authority lend weight to an argument.
- 4-When the language of a source is the topic of your discussion (as in an analysis or interpretation)

### **4/-Punctuation in quoting :**

**A-The Ellipsis Mark :** This is used to condense a quoted passage, you can use the ellipsis mark (three periods, with spaces between) to indicate that you have omitted words. **What remains must be grammatically, and semantically complete.**

**Ex :** Lane acknowledges the legitimate reasons that many companies have for monitoring their employees' online activities, particularly management's concern about preventing « the theft of information that can be downloaded to a . . . disk, e-mailed to oneself . . . , or even posted to a Web page for the entire world to see » (12).

The writer has omitted from the source the words *floppy or zip* before *disk* and *or a confederate* after *onself*.

Ordinary, do not use an ellipsis mark at the beginning or at the end of a quotation. Your readers will understand that the quoted material is taken from a longer passage, so much

marks are not necessary. The only exception occurs when words have been dropped at the end of the final quoted sentence.

- Do not use an ellipsis mark to distort the meaning of your source or its coherence to the overall context :

**Ex1 :** The quality of teaching and the feedback provided on student writing are also crucial and, if compromised, affect student writing negatively. (Chokwe , 2011, p.60).

**Student's quote :** Chokwe writes (2011 :60), 'the quality of teaching and the feedback provided on student writing are also crucial and ... affect student writing negatively'.

**Comment :** The student's quote is internally incoherent. By removing the conditional phrase 'if compromised' the quote becomes contradictory (the feedback is crucial and has negative effects).

**Ex2 :** **Student's quote :** The support of technology to students' learning is well-addressed in the words of Coffin et al. (2005 :155) : ' it is worth considering using the available technology not only to enhance how students work and learn ; but to provide them with wider options in their assignments. Essays drawing on Internet sources are likely to include links to URLs which lecturers can follow if the essays are submitted electronically'.

**Comment :** The quote is not totally coherent in regards to its context. The student provides extra information that is not related to the overall context of 'emphasizing the importance of technology'. It is better to remove the sentence 'Essays drawing on Internet sources are likely to include links to URLs which lecturers can follow if the essays are submitted electronically'.

**Brackets :** They allow you to insert your own words into quoted material. You can insert words in brackets to explain a confusing reference or to keep a sentence grammatical.

**Ex1:** Legal scholar Jay Kesan notes that « a decade ago, losses [ from employees' computer crimes] were already mounting to five billion dollars annually » (311).

To indicate an error such as a misspelling in a quotation, insert [sic] after the error.

**Ex2 :** Jonson argues that « while online monitoring is often imagined as harmless [sic], the practice may well threaten employees' rights to privacy » (14).

### 5/-Setting off long quotations :

When you quote more than three/ four typed lines of prose, set off the quotation by indenting it one inch (or ten spaces) from the left margin. Long quotations should be introduced by informative sentence usually followed by a colon. with **no quotation marks** are inserted.

Botan and Vorvoreanu examine the role of gender in company practices of electronic surveillance :

There has never been accurate documentation of the extent of gender differences in surveillance, but by the middle 1990s, estimates of the proportion of surveilled employees that were women ranged from 75 to 85 . . . Ironically, this gender imbalance in workplace surveillance may be evening out today because advances in surveillance technology are making surveillance of traditionally male dominated fields, such as long-distance truck driving, sheep, easy, and frequently unobtrusive. (127)

### Quote Sandwich Method :

Long quotes should not be put haphazardly. Dr Writer A. stresses the importance of using quotations with care stating that :

Quotations are support they are the lettuce, cheese, tomatoes, and other toppings of a sandwich. In other words, an argument, the meat of the sandwich, cannot stand alone , nor just its condiments. The writer's words frame everything like the bread holds the sandwich together. (17)

In other words, quotations cannot stand by themselves. They need to be properly set up, introduced, incorporated, and provide useful support to one's argument.



So create first a transition between your ideas and the borrowed quote to keep the flow of ideas. Present your quote, then explain its meaning to the reader and how it fits with your overall text.

### ➤ The analysis of the quote must be formal :

**Ex :** Sigmund Freud explains the causes of certain psychological problems : 'It may happen that a man who has experienced some frightful accident—a railway collision, for instance—leaves the scene of the event apparently uninjured. In the course of the next few weeks, however, he develops a number of severe psychical and motor symptoms which can only be traced to his shock, the concussion or whatever else it was (Freud, 1990, XIII: 309). So, when people go through bad or shocking moments, the feelings that come out can make them psychologically hurt for a good while even if they had not been physically hurt.

**Better formal analysis :** In other words, when people confront fatal or dangerous events, the emotions arising from these events provoke serious and deep psychological effects even with the absence of any physical damage.

**Comment :** When comparing the words that are in bold reveal , we can notice that the first analysis is informal and casual whereas the second is more academic.

### Eight characteristics of formal language :

The word/expressions is either:

- Of Old English vs Latin word-origin.
- It is a contraction or an abbreviation (ex: 'won't' vs 'will not' / 'etc' vs 'and so on')
- Belongs to conversational language. (ex: 'actually', 'sooner or later', 'well', 'just').
- It is a weak or a strong verb. This refers to (1) avoiding phrasal verbs and (2) 'to have' and 'to be' verbs.
- It is a personal pronoun (informal).
- It is an intensifier such as 'really' and 'very' (informal).
- It is vague such as 'big' (how big it is?), 'say' (does he agree, disagree, illustrate?).
- It is subjective such as 'good', 'bad', and 'great'.

➤ **The analysis must be objective :**

**Ex :** I think the author's results are **wrong**. He **couldn't** assess his students' behaviours **well**.  
The results were **puzzling**.

**Better :** The author's results **seems to be inaccurate/ imprecise**. It was **not possible** to assess his students' behaviours **objectively**. The results were **unexpected**.

**1. Avoiding personal pronouns/using third person or inanimate agent:**

To reach objectivity, one has to write in an objective tone, i.e in a neutral voice letting no personal ideas to interfere. However, in a research writing, one is asked to be critical about what he is searching about, to value opinions, and to analyse findings instead of only describing the research literature. We can in fact reveal our points of view and still reserve the objective tone. This is by avoiding the use of personal pronouns and using whether the third person (it is), « our », or the inanimate agent.

Eg1 : ~~I~~ believe the modal is valid based on these findings

Revised : **The findings** indicate that the modal is valid. (~~inanimate agent~~)

Eg2 : ~~We~~ found that....

Revised : **Results** led to the conclusion that.... (~~inanimate agent~~) Or : **Our** results indicate...

Other examples : Our hypothesis predict that ..... ~~instead of~~ ..... We predict that

Figure illustrates that..... ~~instead of~~ ..... I illustrate my idea with the figure

Opinion vary regarding this issue..... ~~instead of~~ ..... I don't agree with...

**2. Careful evaluations :**

It is advised to use evaluative words that are based on non-technical judgments or feelings but academic-specified criteria and values.

Eg : valid..... ~~instead of~~ ..... amazing

Inacurate/unreliable/outdated..... ~~instead of~~ ..... bad or disappointing

Provides strong evidence..... ~~instead of~~ ..... is right

Les convincing ..... ~~instead of~~ ..... is wrong

Helpful..... ~~not~~ ..... wonderful

Problematic..... ~~not~~ ..... terrible

It's also advisable to use **modality** such as « may », « possibly » to show caution about your views and allow room for others to disagree.

## 2. Physical Session Three :

### Using Signal Phrases

Whenever you include a paraphrase, summary, or direct quotation of another writer in your paper, prepare your readers for it with an introductory phrase called a **signal phrase**.

The signal phrase is at least composed of the author's name and a reporting verb, but it sometimes **provides some context for the source material**.

**Ex1 : Bartell (2008) explains,** "Butterflies cannot fly if their body temperature is less than 86 degrees" (p. 3114). (signal phrase with author and reporting verb)

**Ex2 : O'Brien believes that the method of story-telling is effective because** 'by telling stories, you objectify your own experience. You separate it from yourself. You pin down certain truths'. (signal phrase contains context)

- Using in-text citation in a signal phrase provides better flow than using only parenthetical citation. If we compare Ex2 to the Ex3 provided below we can notice a lack of flow and coherence of ideas.

**Ex3 :** Strong evidence call for using story-telling techniques. 'by telling stories, you objectify your own experience. You separate it from yourself. You pin down certain truths' (O'Brien, 1985).

a gap

- **Signal Phrases must be formal :**

To avoid monotony, signal phrases must be varied in structure (not only S+V).

#### **a. Model Signal Phrases:**

- X states, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- In his book, \_\_\_\_\_, X maintains that "\_\_\_\_\_."
- writing in the journal *XxYyZz*, X complains that "\_\_\_\_\_."
- As the prominent philosopher X puts it, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- According to X, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X himself writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- In X's view, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- With reference to X argument, he states that "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X disagrees when he writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X complicates matters further when he writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- "\_\_\_\_\_ ", X writes.
- In the words of X, "\_\_\_\_\_."



## **b. Formal Verbs in signal phrases :**

### **Verbs in Signal Phrases**

Acknowledges	Comments	Endorses	Reasons
Adds	Compares	Grants	Refutes
Admits	Confirms	Implies	Rejects
Agrees	Contends	Insists	Reports
Argues	Declares	Illustrates	Responds
Asserts	Denies	Notes	Suggests
Believes	Disputes	Observes	Thinks
Claims	Emphasizes	Points out	Writes

The previous formal reporting verbs must be suitable to the author's stance toward the information cited (Is he explaining concept, providing background, supporting a claim, refuting a belief ?

These verbs are more academic because:

- 1-They are more '*precise*' (not vague/general) than the verb "to say/to tell/to think/to mention" and so on.
- 2- They are more '*strong*' (single-word verbs) than phrasal verbs (ex: 'to talk about' vs 'to discuss')
- 3- They are of '*Latin*' rather than an old English-origin.

#### ➤ **Phrasal verbs must be objective:**

- The tense of the reporting verb must be in the present simple tense unless the date in which the quote is stated is provided. It stresses reliability of sources.
- The active voice is better used than the passive voice especially in paraphrasing and summarizing because what is stressed while borrowing information is the author and that the credibility and reliability of sources are ensured. It is also important for the flow of ideas and is more straightforward and clear.

**Better than:** It is argued that students should take just a few notes in direct quotations from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper and instead use paraphrasing or summarizing techniques (Lester, 2010).

**We write :** Lester (2010) argues that students should take just a few notes in direct quotations from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper and instead use paraphrasing or summarizing techniques.

➤ **Using authors' credentials:**

Good research writing uses evidence from reliable sources. The first time you mention a source, briefly include the author's title, credentials, or experience- anything that would help your readers recognize the source's authority and consider it trustworthy.

**Source with credentials:**

**Jay Kesan** points out that the law holds employers liable for employees' actions such as violations of copyright laws, the distribution of offensive or graphic sexual material, and illegal disclosure of confidential information (312).

**Source with credentials:**

**Legal scholar Jay Kesan** points out that the law holds employers liable for employees' actions such as violations of copyright laws, the distribution of offensive or graphic sexual material, and illegal disclosure of confidential information (312).

**Using it concisely:**

It is preferable to use complex noun phrases to condense the author's credentials. Author's credentials are added not in a separate phrase or sentence that goes between commas, but before the subject. Introducing a sentence between two commas gives the intention that the information is additional and can be omitted. Using this strategy entails also condensing the most important information.

**Better to write:** "The president of the human cloning foundation George Smith argues that..."

**Instead of:** "George Smith, who is a supporter of cloning and the President of the Human Cloning Foundation, argues that..."

The second makes the credentials optional rather than being important for source credibility (a non-defining relative clause) and adds repetitive information (if he is the president of Cloning Foundation, then he is supporting it).

➤ **Coherence of ideas:**

**It is important to relate the borrowed information to the previously mentioned CONTEXT. There are two suggested ways:**

**1-adding a complete or a partial sentence followed by colon or comma to the signal phrase.**

**2-adding a statement that ends with "that" to the signal phrase.**

**3. adding context in an extra link sentence before the signal phrase.**

**Ex1:** Doe (2005:456) criticized Jones and Brown's results severely: 'it is unfortunate that the small sample and the questionable quality of the data leave this theory completely unsupported'.

**Ex2:** In his criticism of Jones and Brown's data and results, Doe (2008 :456) states that 'it is unfortunate that the small sample and the questionable quality of the data leave this theory completely unsupported.

**Ex3 :** Several criticism of Jones and Browns' results have been raised. Doe (2008 :456), for example, argue that it is unfortunate that the small sample and the questionable quality of the data leave this theory completely unsupported'.

## Physical Session Four

### **Paraphrasing**

#### **1-Definition :**

Paraphrasing involves changing a text so it is quite different from the source while retaining the meaning. It does not aim to shorten the length of a text but merely to restate it. It is significantly different from the wording/style of the original.

**Read the text below and then decide which is the better paraphrase (a) or (b) :**

-Ancient Egypt collapsed in about 2180 BC. Studies conducted of the mud from the River Nile showed that at this time the mountainous regions which feed the Nile suffered from a prolonged draught. This would have had a devastating effect on the ability of Egyptian society to feed itself.

a)- the sudden ending of Egyptian civilizations over 4000 years ago was probably caused by changes in the weather in the region to the south. Without the regular river flooding there would not have been enough food.

b)- Research into deposits of the Egyptian Nile indicate that a long dry period in the mountains at the river's source may have led to a lack of water for irrigation around 2180 BC, which was when the collapse of Egyptian society began.

#### **2-You must keep a neutral tone while paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing entails changing the style but not the meaning, i.e. the ideas or the attitudes expressed by the author, otherwise that is to be considered plagiarism. In other words, subjectivity must be avoided.

#### **3-When to paraphrase ?**

Generally, paraphrasing is preferably used than quoting. It is used as an alternative to it because, in contrast to quoting, it reveals the writer's understanding and synthesis of the ideas he borrows and gives the impression that s/he owns a good writing style. Here are the most cases when paraphrasing is used :

-To demonstrate your understanding of the ideas of the author

-To assist your readers by explaining difficult concepts or terminology

-When the original ideas are impressive but the original wording is less so

-When you want to change the emphasis of the ideas to better match your own context

-To avoid overuse of direct quotes and the consequent risk of losing your own 'voice' and maintain the flow of ideas.

#### **4-Techniques of Paraphrasing :**

There are four main strategies of paraphrasing :

##### **A-Change Vocabulary using Synonyms:**

If we consider the previous example, we would find the following substitutes of vocabulary:

Studies= research                      society= civilization                      mud=deposits

**Remark1:** Not all the words can be changed. Some words or phrases must be kept as they are (key words) such as **economics, socialism, and global warming** which have no effective synonyms.

**Remark2:** The vocabulary must be formal. Never substitute the original words with informal ones.

##### **Characteristics of formal vocabulary:**

To judge a word or an expression as formal or informal, we take into account the qualities below.

The word/expressions is either:

- Of Old English Vs Latin word-origin.
- It is a contraction or an abbreviation (ex: 'won't' Vs 'will not' / 'etc' Vs 'and so on')
- Belongs to conversational language. (ex: 'actually', 'sooner or later', 'well', 'just').
- It is a weak or a strong verb. This refers to (1) avoiding phrasal verbs and (2) 'to have' and 'to be' verbs.
- It is a personal pronoun (informal).
- It is an informal intensifier such as 'really' and 'very' (informal).
- It is vague such as 'big' (how big it is?), 'say' (does he agree, disagree, illustrate?).
- It is subjective such as 'good', 'bad', and 'great'.

**(Examine the reading excerpts that your teacher provided)**



**Further examples:**

**Ex1:** Even though the coach's plan was risky, the team was successful

Although the coach's strategy was dangerous, the team was successful

**Ex2:** Two of the students were kicked out of school for breaking the school's 'no fighting' rule.

Two of the students were expelled for violating the school's 'no fighting' policy.

**B-Simplify and combine structures/avoid wordiness:**

In addition to vocabulary substitution, the original structure must also be changed otherwise 'patchwork paraphrasing' will occur. There are two strategies to change the original structure:

- **Simplify structures:** by eliminating any elaborative language or wordiness and emphasizing the core meaning.
- **Combine two sentences in one sentence.**

**Ex1:** All in all, **television is increasingly controlling** people and their lives **today**. **Parents need to give their children more attention and mirror a healthy and productive life away from the television so that children lead a happy life in which they have a loving bond with their parents instead of one with the TV.**

**Step1 : Simplifying the structure**

Because **television is highly *controlling*** people's *lives* **today**, **parents must *give* their children more attention by ensuring a healthy life away from the television** where children have a loving bond with their parents .

**Step2 : Combining the sentences**

Because the way people *live* today is **highly *controlled*** by television, children must enjoy a healthy life by *giving* them more attention from their parents where both have a loving bond together away from television.

**Ex2 :** **Teaching sociology reminds us in each issue that** sociology instructors need not follow the traditional teaching model of lecturing to a **captive audience**. Fiction, film, and music are popular cultural media **that have been suggested as means** for establishing links between sociology and the "real world" **outside our classrooms**.

**Step1** : Sociology instructors must *use* cultural media such as fiction , film and music instead of following *traditional* teaching models of lecturing for *establishing* links between sociology and 'real world '.

**Step2** :In order to *establish* links between sociology and the 'real world', *the use* of cultural media such as fiction, film and music must be followed by sociology instructors instead of teaching *traditionally* through lectures.

### **C-Change word class/order:**

Changing word class means changing from Noun to Adjective, from Adjective to Adverb, from Verb to Adverb and so on.

Taking the first example, we find the following word class changes:

Egypt (n)=Egyptian (adj)      mountainous regions (adj+n)= in the mountains (n)

As far changing word order is concerned, we find this example:

Ancient Egypt collapsed= the collapse of Egyptian society

Further Examples can include altering between the passive and the active voice.

**Example:** Angier (2001) reported that *malaria kills* more than one million people *annually*; the overwhelming majority of them are children in sub Saharan Africa.

**Or:** *every year*, more than a million people are *killed by malaria*, and most of the victims are children who live in Sub-Saharan Africa (Angier, 2001).

### **D-change order of sentences/phrases/clauses and retain meaning:**

The author's original ideas must not be followed in the same order, otherwise style plagiarism will take place. However, an important point in changing the order is to *not to distort the meaning, i.e. keeping the text coherent/meaningful*.

All the previous techniques must occur together for a complete paraphrasing. Using one strategy on its own would lead to committing plagiarism.

## Physical Session Five :

### Summarizing

**1-Definition :** A summary is an overview of a text. While paraphrasing *restates* the information in about the same number of words, a summary *condenses* information from a source. The amount of details you include in a summary will vary according to the length of the original text, how much information you need and how selective you are.

### 2/Differences and Similarities between paraphrasing and summarizing :

Examine the following original text, a sample paraphrase and a sample summary and discuss about the differences :

QUOTING:	PARAPHRASING:	SUMMARIZING:
Charles Duhigg, in his book <i>The Power of Habit</i> , identifies the three elements that characterize every habit: one, "a cue, a trigger that tells your brain to go into automatic mode," two, "the routine, which can be physical or mental or emotional" and three, "a reward, which helps your brain figure out if this particular loop is worth remembering for the future" (19).	<i>The Power of Habit</i> presents three elements that make up a habit—the cue, the routine, and the reward. The cue is the sensation that leads to the habit, the routine is the habit itself, and the reward is the result of the habit (Duhigg 19).	Charles Duhigg's book <i>The Power of Habit</i> describes how habits are formed as a result of a repeated three-step process in the brain and shows how positive habits can be nurtured and how bad habits can be broken.

Paraphrasing	Summarizing
-does not match the source word for word -involves putting a passage from a source into your own words. -changes the words or phrases of a passage but retains and fully communicates the original meaning. -must be attributed to the original source	- does not match the source word for word -involves putting the main ideas into your own words, but including only the main points -presents a broad overview so is usually much shorter than the original text. -must be attributed to the original source

### 3-When to summarize ?

The uses of the summarizing technique are very broad. Compared to paraphrasing or quoting, summarizing is used :

- You want to establish background or offer an overview of a topic
- You want to describe knowledge (from several sources) about a topic
- You want to determine the main ideas of a single source
- You want to simplify the material and omit complex arguments in the source material.

**4-Strategies of Summarizing :**

**1-Skimming and scanning reading strategies:**

The first key to a good summary is to read the original material carefully. Understanding the material occurs through 'skimming and scanning'. **Skimming** involves looking *only* for the general or main ideas. Here, you are only interested in what is important to your purpose. In **scanning**, however, you look *only* for a specific fact or piece of information. So, you do not need to read everything.

**2-Apply Analytical Skills:** After understanding what the passage is about, you need to be selective by highlighting key vocabulary and key points.

Examine the following original text and select the minor and the major ideas:

"For most people, writing is an extremely difficult task if they are trying to grapple in their language with new ideas and new ways of looking at them. Sitting down to write can be an agonising experience, which doesn't necessarily get easier with the passage of time and the accumulation of experience. For this reason you need to reflect upon and analyse your own reactions to the task of writing. That is to say, the task will become more manageable if you learn how to cope with your own particular ways avoiding putting off the moment when you must put pen to paper" (Taylor 1989, p. 3).

➤ **Minor Ideas:**

.....

.....

.....

➤ **Major Ideas:**

.....

.....

.....



**Now examine these examples:**

Original:

"The fact is, a large number of chocolate companies do not even make their own chocolate, but commission specialist manufacturers to create particular recipes. Only the large and extremely well established companies – such as Lindt, Cadbury, Nestlé or Hershey – make their own chocolate. Other companies, known as 'coaters' in the industry, buy their chocolate mix or 'couverture' from companies such as Barry Callebaut of Belgium or Nestlé, and use it to coat the fruit, fondant, toffee or nut centres of their chocolates. The product is by no means inferior: even a premium chocolate manufacturer like Godiva can be a 'coater'" (Richardson 232-233).

Poor Summary:

Many chocolate companies do not make their own chocolate, but instead use "coaters" or companies that use their own recipes to coat their chocolate products (Richardson 232-233).

*(Notice that this summary uses phrases and syntax directly from the original without quotation marks, making it a poor attempt at a summary.)*

Appropriate Summary:

In most cases, smaller chocolate manufacturers do not produce their own chocolate but receive materials from "specialist manufacturers" that they use to coat their own products (Richardson 232-33).

➤ **Using one's own voice/'paraphrase the main ideas':**

-After understanding and analyzing the passage by setting key points and vocabulary aside, you need to paraphrase these points using your own words.

- **Use a language that is formal, objective, and concise.**
- **Keep a neutral voice and do not change the original meaning.**

- **Re-order ideas and keep them meaningful.**
- **Use cohesive devices to keep your text coherent**

## Formality

### Avoid Vague Language : Say what you mean

1/-Avoid vague words. Examine the examples below :

Ex 1: Drinking while driving is **bad** (bad in any way ?)

**Better** : drinking while driving is **dangerous**.

Ex2 :They arrested some **people** (who are they ?)

**Better** : they arrested some **protesters**.

Ex3 : school is a **big thing** in my life. (big thing ?how ?)

**Better** : school is an **important part/aspect** of my life.

Ex4 : He needs **something** to do. (what thing ?)

**Better** : he needs a **new job**.

2/-Follow or substitute pronouns with a specific noun :

Eg1 : Amy had an internship at Dell last summer. **This** will become her career. (What does "this" refer to?)

**Better** : Amy had an internship at Dell last summer. **This work** will become her career.

Eg2 : Children should not be allowed to watch horror movies for many reasons. **They** say that these movies can disturb children.

**Better** : Children should not be allowed to watch horror movies for many reasons. **Most psychologists** say that these movies can disturb children

### List of the mostly used intensifiers :

Informal	More formal
-very	-slightly
-so	-quite
-too	-rather
-terribly	-fairly
-frightfully	-deeply
-highly	-largely
-bitterly	-somehow
-owfully	-altogether
-absolutely	-remarkably
-totally	-particularly
-entirely	-to some extent
-shockingly	
-completely	
-enough	
-pretty	
-perfectly	
-a bit	
-a kind of	
-a sort of	
-truly	
-extremely	
-really	
-greatly	
-extraordinary	
-well	
-for sure	

## Avoid Conversational Language :

### 1-Colloquial words/expressions :

Words such as : 'basically', 'cool', 'well', 'awesome', 'sounds like', 'just', 'really', 'things', 'stuff', 'somebody', 'nice', 'for sure'

### Expressions such as :

-easier said than done . **Better** : more difficult in practice.

-beyond the shadow of doubt. **Better** : definitely

Ex : Retirement is **something** most of us must face **sooner or later**.

**Better** : Retirement is **inevitable**.

**2-Slang** such as : 'gotta', 'gonna', 'dat', 'dude', 'lame', sucks, cus.

Ex : the criminal justice system is **messed up**.

**Better** : the criminal justice system **has serious problems**.

**3-Clichés** : on thin ice, raining like cats and dogs, bite your tongue, over the hill, and so on.

Ex : The research of Yuan et al. (2007) on sustainable architecture in Singapore is considered to be **the cream of the top**.

**Better** : The research of Yuan et al. (2007) on sustainable architecture in Singapore is considered to be **the best**.

**4-Abbreviations** : OMG, LOL, me 2, dat, ASAP

### 5-Avoid rhetorical questions :

Ex : **what is a team** ? a team can be one person but will usually end up including many more.

**Better** : a team can be one person but will usually end up including many more.

### 6-Do not state what you will do :

Ex : 'here is what I think', 'you know', 'I am going to explain/discuss/say that...'

## The Academic Word List (AWL) (a sample)



### The Academic Word List

The Academic Word List (AWL) was released in the year 2000 by Averil Coxhead from the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. The list contains 570 word families which were selected by analysing a corpus of millions of words from over 400 academic texts. Words were taken from 28 different academic subject areas within the disciplines of Arts, Commerce, Law and Science, so they are relevant for all areas of academic study. The list of 570 words was then divided into ten sublists, with the most frequent 60 words in Sublist 1, to the least frequent words in Sublist 10. The list excludes the most frequent 2000 words of English.

The AWL was developed to provide learners of academic English to target their vocabulary development for all academic disciplines. It was primarily made so that it could be used by teachers as part of a program preparing learners for tertiary level study or used by students working alone to learn the words most needed to study at tertiary institutions. The complete list (below) has the headwords (the most common form of the word family) for all 570 words, and includes the sublist (1-10) that it comes from.

We have provided you with handouts which contain exercises based on each of the ten sublists. They have been designed to help you develop your vocabulary of these words.

For detail on the development and evaluation of the AWL, see Coxhead, Averil (2000) A New Academic Word List. TESOL Quarterly, 34(2): 213-238.

abandon	8	abstract	6	academy	5
access	4	accommodate	9	accompany	8
accumulate	8	accurate	6	achieve	2

simulate	7	site	2	so-called	10
sole	7	somewhat	7	source	1
specific	1	specify	3	sphere	9
stable	5	statistic	4	status	4
straightforward	10	strategy	2	stress	4
structure	1	style	5	submit	7
subordinate	9	subsequent	4	subsidy	6
substitute	5	successor	7	sufficient	3
sum	4	summary	4	supplement	9
survey	2	survive	7	suspend	9
sustain	5	symbol	5	tape	6
target	5	task	3	team	9
technical	3	technique	3	technology	3
temporary	9	tense	8	terminate	8
text	2	theme	8	theory	1
thereby	8	thesis	7	topic	7
trace	6	tradition	2	transfer	2
transform	6	transit	5	transmit	7
transport	6	trend	5	trigger	9
ultimate	7	undergo	10	underlie	6
undertake	4	uniform	8	unify	9
unique	7	utilise	6	valid	3
vary	1	vehicle	8	version	5



## Verbs for Academic Scientific Writing + Formality Levels (samples)

(source :Norris, C.B. (2016). Academic Writing in English)

### Verbs for Academic Scientific Writing

Your own research **field supplies** enough **substantives**. Most need a **greater stock of verbs**. For first drafts, use boring common verbs ("to be / have / get / find out"); then be more specific.

Verbs are muscular; they move ideas along. Always, however, check connotations in an English-to-English dictionary. Avoid pompous or rare words. **Be specific, not fancy**. Below, **UPPER** case indicates the stressed syllable; "+" means that this verb, spelled thus, can **also** serve as a substantive.

**to look at**  
obSERVE  
view + / reVIEW +  
perCEIVE  
reGARD +  
appROACH +  
be aWARE of  
STUDy +

**o compare**  
conTRAST +  
match +  
CHARacterize  
probe +  
reLATE  
CORrelate +  
asSOCiate +  
differENTIate  
disTINGuish

**to be finding out**  
learn  
see  
search +  
surVEY, (SURvey +)  
inSPECT  
inQUIRE  
QUERy +  
ascerTAIN (= check)  
exPLORE  
inVESTigate  
iDENTify  
aGREE  
check +  
deTECT  
unCOVER  
deTERmine  
asSESS  
ANalyze (vs. anALysis!)  
CALculate

**to balance**  
eVALuate  
conSIDer  
SPECulate  
deCIDE  
conCLUDE  
acKNOWledge  
ADvocate +  
deFEND  
conCEDE

**to test**  
disCERN  
inFORM  
conFIRM  
FALSify  
enSURE  
esTABlish  
subSTANTIate  
VERify

**to show**  
INDicate  
sugGEST  
DEMonstrate  
point out  
exHIBit +  
reVEAL  
disCLOSE  
disPLAY +  
ILLustrate  
exEMplify  
make EVIDent  
conTRAST+  
apPROXimate  
COMment on  
aFIRM  
asSERT  
TESTify (to)  
inTERpret  
deFINE

**to cause—from outside,  
something to decrease**

reDUCE  
curTAIL  
cut +  
deGRADE  
dePRESS  
diMInish

**to cause—from outside,  
something to increase**

raise +  
adVANCE +  
AGgravate  
AMplify  
aROUSE  
ELevate

inTENSify  
lift +  
MAGnify  
proMOTE  
proVOKE  
STRENGTHen

### Formality Levels

Colloquial spoken, first-draft words with some synonyms, in order of increasing formality

#### Avoid these

a bit  
a couple  
a lot, a lot of, lots of  
anyhow  
anyway  
besides; too  
enough  
fix (verb)  
give (verb)  
gone; none  
hard  
let (v)  
little (= few)  
look for (v)  
make  
plenty of  
pretty; quite  
quite X  
so  
start (v)  
take (v)  
think X is  
though

#### Choose among these

a little, slightly, somewhat  
two, a pair, a duo (for people, "couple" implies man and woman)  
several, many, multiple (see "plenty of")  
in any case, in any event, nevertheless, nonetheless  
although, thus, however  
also, in addition, likewise; furthermore, moreover  
sufficient (insufficient is also useful)  
arrange, manage, handle OR repair, renovate, recondition  
supply, furnish, offer, provide, yield  
lacking, absent; missing (think cops)  
difficult, demanding, laborious, time-consuming, taxing  
allow, permit, give permission for  
few, insufficient, lacking, rare, scarce, sparse  
try to find, seek (sought), search for  
produce, construct, form, compose, build, create, originate, constitute  
abundant, ample (vs. sparse), numerous, frequent (occurring over time)  
somewhat, almost, moderately, not uncommon, not infrequent  
very (a weak word), rather, considerably, noticeably, notably, markedly,  
greatly (I would avoid "remarkably" as too emotional.)  
therefore, thus, hence  
begin, initiate, undertake  
adopt (100%), adapt (with changes), transfer, possess  
consider X to be, judge X to be, deem X to be  
even though, although, notwithstanding

The Most Common Verbs used in Academic Writing (Coxhead,2008).

*The most common verbs used in academic writing*

analyze	assess	approach	assume	contract
create	define	derive	distribute	establish
estimate	function	identify	indicate	interpret
involve	legislate	occur	process	require
respond	achieve	administer	affect	assist
categorize	conclude	conduct	construct	consume
evaluate	focus	invest	maintain	obtain
participate	perceive	purchase	regulate	restrict
seek	select	survey	transfer	alternate
compensate	consent	constrain	contribute	coordinate
deduct	demonstrate	document	emphasize	exclude
fund	illustrate	imply	interact	justify
link	locate	publish	react	rely
remove	validate	specify	access	attribute
commit	communicate	contrast	emerge	grant
implement	impose	integrate	investigate	occupy
predict	promote	resolve	retain	adjust
alter	amend	challenge	compound	consult
contact	decline	enable	enforce	entitle
evolve	expand	expose	facilitate	generate
modify	monitor	orientate	pursue	stabilize
substitute	target	acknowledge	allocate	assign
cooperate	exceed	inhibit	precede	reveal
adapt	advocate	aid	channel	classify
comprehend	comprise	confirm	convert	differentiate
eliminate	insert	intervene	isolate	prioritize

prohibit	publish	reverse	submit	survive
chart	clarify	contradict	detect	deviate
explore	guide	reinforce	restore	accommodate
anticipate	attain	confine	diminish	refine
found	claim	argue	state	indicate

As adapted from Coxhead, 2000.

## Tips to avoid colloquial writing (sample)

(from [http://www.wikihow.com/Avoid-Colloquial-\(Informal\)-Writing](http://www.wikihow.com/Avoid-Colloquial-(Informal)-Writing))

### Avoiding Colloquial (Informal) Writing

While it may be acceptable in friendly e-mails and chat rooms, a major pitfall that has been bringing down the quality of formal, written text is the use of excessive colloquialism. Here are some steps/tips that you can follow to help to improve your overall writing.

#### Basic Steps

1. Know the meaning of colloquialism. This can best be described as "writing in the way that one would speak." It is an informal, slang style of English that should be reserved primarily for speech, as it can seem unprofessional and sloppy in written text. A casual tone can be interpreted positively in person with face-to-face contact, but can be perceived negatively in writing.
2. Understand basic English punctuation. This might seem of negligible value at first, but when people speak, we usually disregard certain rules that are mandatory in writing. For example, we usually omit pauses that are required in formal writing, which are usually denoted by commas.
3. Avoid using common colloquial words/expressions, as listed below. Again, these are words that, while acceptable in speech, should not be used in formal writing.
4. Avoid using "filler" words. These words are not necessary, and should be removed.
  - o *Basically* – At best, it can be used to begin a sentence, but there are better choices available to replace the word, if it is not omitted entirely. E.g. "A microphone is ~~basically~~ a device that is used to record sound."
  - o *Even* – Often, this word is found as an "additive" to a series, as in the following example, but is generally not needed. E.g. "The basket contained eggs, sandwiches, and ~~even~~ utensils."
  - o *Just* – When used in the same context as BASICALLY, this is another overused filler word that one should omit. E.g. "When pouring the solution, ~~just~~ be certain not to spill its contents."
  - o *Well* – Generally used to begin a sentence following a question. E.g. "Why is global warming a problem? ~~Well~~, one major issue is the..."
5. Avoid contractions. Some people suggest that when writing formal papers, write out your contractions. This depends on how formal you need to be. If you need to exterminate contractions, here are some suggestions: Replace *can't* with *cannot*, *doesn't* with *does not*, and so on. For example, instead of writing "Therefore, this can't be used as evidence in the case", write "Therefore, this cannot be used as evidence in the case."

- o "He has several reasons for justifying his actions."
- *Ain't* – The word "ain't" has been incorrectly used as a contraction for "am not", "is not", "are not", "has not", and "have not". "Ain't" should never appear within formal writing.
  - o "This ain't working."
  - o "This is not working."
- *Alright* – This word is *always* nonstandard, and should not be used in formal writing. It is a compound of "all right".
  - o "Alright, I am ready to go."
  - o "All right, I am ready to go."
- *Anyways* – The word "anyways" is also always nonstandard and should usually not be used in formal writing. You should always use "anyway."
  - o "Anyways, thank you for your time."
  - o "Anyway, thank you for your time."
- *Could of, would of, should of* – These are incorrect phrases, usually the result of trying to write what one hears (or thinks one hears). The phrases "could have", "would have", and "should have" are correct.
- *Get* – From time to time, this word replaces "understand".
  - o "Do you get the homework?"
  - o "Do you understand the homework?"
- *Got* – In this context, "got" should be replaced with "have".
  - o "Do you got an extra pen?"
  - o "Do you have an extra pen?"
- *Gonna, Wanna* – These are the condensed versions of "going to" and "want to", respectively, which should be revised in formal writing accordingly.
  - o "I am gonna go to the supermarket."
  - o "I am going to go to the supermarket."
- *Kinda, kind of* – The use of these words to mean "somewhat" or "rather" is informal, and should be avoided. KIND OF, when meant as "type of", is acceptable, but is somewhat overused in language. Consider replacing with "type of".
  - o "It is kind of cold outside."
  - o "It is rather cold outside."
  - o "A parakeet is a kind of bird."



## Dictionary of Formal and Informal English (sample)

(from Business Language Services)

### Dictionary of Formal & Informal English

Type	Informal	Formal
Prep.	About ...	Regarding / Concerning ...
Idiom	Agree with ...	Be bound by ...
Conj.	And	As well as ...
Idiom	Bearing in mind	Reference being made to ...
Conj.	Because ...	As a result of / due to (the fact) ...
Verb	Begin	Commence
Conj.	But	While / Whereas
Adj.	Careful / Cautious	Prudential
Verb	Carry out	Effect
Verb	Check	Verify
Adj.	Enough	Sufficient
Verb	Fill me in	Inform / Tell
Verb	Find out	Ascertain
Verb	Follow	Duly observe
Verb	Get	Receive
Verb	Get in touch	Contact
Verb	Go over	Exceed
Verb	Has to be	Shall be
Verb	Have to give	Submit
Conj.	If ...	Should ...
Conj.	If ... or not.	Whether ... or not.
Idiom	If you don't ...	Failing / Failure to...
Idiom	If you've got any questions ...	Should you have any queries ...
Idiom	In accordance with ...	Pursuant to
Idiom	In the red	Overdrawn
Verb	Involve	Entail
Idiom	Lost	Inadvertently mislaid
Verb	Make sure	Ensure
Adj.	Many	Several / Numerous
Verb	Order	Authorise
Verb	Pay	Settle
Idiom	Put in writing	Provide written confirmation
Idiom	Sorry!	We regret ...

### Summary of Differences between Formal & Informal English

	Informal	Formal
1.	Active Voice	Passive Voice
2.	Phrasal Verbs	Latinate Verbs
3.	Direct Language	Formulaic Language
4.	Possible use of Slang	No use of Slang
5.	Personal Form	Nominator
6.	Little use of Conjunctions	Linking Words
7.	Few Revitalised Sentences	Revitalised Sentences
8.	Direct Style	Modal Usage
9.	1 <sup>st</sup> Person Singular	1 <sup>st</sup> Person Plural

**Further Lists of Formal /Informal (Old/IAnglo-Saxon) Equivalents (a sample from Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement, Jamescook University, Australia)**

Part of speech	Informal vocabulary	Formal (more academic) vocabulary
1. Nouns	thing	factor, issue, aspect, item
	place	location, site
	buyer	purchaser
	parts	elements, components
	answer	response, solution
2. Phrases	good thing	benefit, advantage
	good enough	adequate
	lots of / a lot of	many, numerous
	to do with	regarding
3. Adjectives	good	positive, useful, valuable, advantageous
	bad	negative, disadvantageous
	big	large, major
	little	small, minor
4. Adverbs	around	approximately
5. Verbs	get	obtain
	has got, have got	have
	give	provide, donate
	watch	observe
	stay	remain
	keep	preserve
	show	demonstrate, indicate
	need	require
	guess	estimate
	happen	occur
	answer	respond

Part of speech	Informal vocabulary	Formal (more academic) vocabulary
6. Phrasal verbs (verbs + prepositions or adverbs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phrasal verbs are common in spoken and informal English, but are rarely used in academic writing. There is usually a more formal, academic verb which is used instead. Below is a list of the more frequently used phrasal verbs and their more formal equivalents.</li> </ul>	
	bring along	bring
	start again	resume, recommence
	go up	rise, increase
	go down	fall, decrease
	find out	determine, discern, discover
	pick up	collect
	put in	insert
	fill out (a form)	complete
	take away	remove
	come back, go back	return (somewhere)
	give back, take back	return (something)
	throw away	discard
	take apart	dismantle
	think about	consider
	keep up	maintain
	come over	visit
	put up with	tolerate
	help out	assist
	set up	establish
	get rid of	eliminate
	look into	investigate
	bring up	raise
	meet with	encounter
	cut down	reduce
move up and down	fluctuate	
put off	delay	
put out (a fire, cigarette)	extinguish	
talk over	discuss	
bump into (an old friend)	meet (by chance)	

## Concision

### 3.1. Avoid unnecessary phrases :

as a matter of fact	As a matter of fact, there are many authors who agree with the issue. <del>as a matter of fact,</del> There are .....
as far as I'm concerned	As far as I'm concerned, there is no need for further protection of woodlands. <del>As far as I'm concerned, there</del> Further protection of woodlands is not needed.
at the present time	This is because there are fewer farmers at the present time. <del>This is because there are fewer farmers now.</del>
because of the fact that	Woodlands have grown in area because of the fact that farmers have abandoned their fields. <del>Woodlands have grown in area because farmers have abandoned their fields.</del>
by means of	Major forest areas are coming back by means of natural processes. <del>Major forest areas are coming back through natural processes. (or naturally)</del>
by virtue of the fact that	Our woodlands are coming back by virtue of the fact that our economy has shifted its emphasis. <del>Our woodlands are coming back by virtue of the fact that</del> because our economy has shifted its emphasis.
for the most part	For the most part, people's suspicions are based on a misunderstanding of the facts. <del>For the most part,</del> People's suspicions are based on a misunderstanding of the facts.
for the purpose of	Many woodlands, in fact, have been purchased for the purpose of creating public parks. <del>Many woodlands, in fact, have been purchased for the purpose of creating</del> as public parks.
have a tendency to	This policy has a tendency to isolate some communities. <del>This policy has a tendency</del> tends to isolate some communities.
in a very real sense	In a very real sense, this policy works to the detriment of those it is supposed to help. <del>In a very real sense, this</del> This policy works to the detriment of those it is supposed to help.
in my opinion	In my opinion, this wasteful policy ought to be revoked. <del>In my opinion, this</del> This wasteful policy ought to be revoked.
in the final analysis	In the final analysis, the state would have been better off without such a policy. <del>In the final analysis, the</del> The state would have been better off without such a policy.

in the event that	In the event that enough people protest, it will probably be revoked. <del>In the event that</del> If enough people protest, it will probably be revoked.
in the nature of	Something in the nature of a repeal may soon take place. <del>Something in the nature of</del> like a repeal may soon take place.
in the process of	Legislators are already in the process of reviewing the statutes. <del>Legislators are already in the process of</del> reviewing the statutes.
it seems that	It seems that they can't wait to get rid of this one. <del>It seems that they</del> They can't wait to get rid of this one.
manner	They have monitored the activities of conservationists in a cautious manner. <del>They have</del> cautiously monitored the activities of conservationists.
the point I am trying to make	The point I am trying to make is that sometimes public policy doesn't accomplish what it set out to achieve. <del>The point I am trying to make is that some</del> Sometimes public policy doesn't accomplish what it set out to achieve.
type of	Legislators need to be more careful of the type of policy they propose. <del>Legislators need to be more careful of the type of</del> policy they propose.
what I mean to say is	What I mean to say is that well intentioned lawmakers sometimes make fools of themselves. <del>What I mean to say is that well</del> Well intentioned lawmakers sometimes make fools of themselves.

### 3.2. Eliminate unnecessary words :

Writers sometimes feel the urge to add emphasis to their prose by using extra words or phrases that don't contribute much to the meaning (and indeed, sometimes obscure it). Consider the following:

- It is **absolutely** vital that...* [What does *vital* mean? Can something be only *sort of vital*?]
- Their strategy is **quite** unique.* [What does *unique* mean? Are there degrees of uniqueness?]
- The cat is **kind of** pregnant.* [The cat is either pregnant or not].
- He prefers wheat **due to the fact that**...* [Substitute *because*...]
- I need **some sort of** response by Thursday.* [Replace *some sort of* with *a*.]

Eliminate common words that add little meaning or relevance to sentences. Examples include *kind of, sort of, type of, actually, really, various, virtually, basically, generally, practically, specific, particular, truly, clearly, obviously, and undoubtedly*.

- a. *Actually*, Mary *kind of* glanced at Bob when she realized they had *basically* lost the battle.
- b. Mary glanced at Bob when she realized they had lost the battle.

### 3.3. Avoid Word-Wasting Idioms :

They takes up space, add little value, and detract readers from important language.

#### Verbose:

the fact that she died  
he was aware of the fact that  
despite the fact that

#### Concise:

her death  
he knew  
although, even though

because of the fact that	because
in many cases you will find	often you will find
in the majority of times	usually
during the time that	during, while
for the period of	for
there is no doubt but that	doubtless, no doubt

The following list of common phrases are redundant in nature, but can be reduced to a more appropriate form:

adding together.....	adding
cancel out.....	cancel
combine into one.....	combine
cubic meters in volume.....	cubic meters
different varieties.....	varieties
final outcome.....	outcome, conclusion
first and foremost.....	first
initial introduction.....	introduction
joined together.....	joined
mixed together.....	mixed
past history.....	past
personal opinion.....	opinion
physical size.....	size
refer back to.....	refer to

**3.4. Make negative constructions positive:** not all = most, many, some;  
 not many = few; not late = punctual; not negative = positive; not possible = impossible; less depressed =  
 happier; not healthy = unhealthy; not forget = remember; less tired = energized

**3.5. Change a sentence to a phrase and phrase to a word :**

The thing you do before you do anything else : first  
 Try to see where : find  
 Motivate them to into : encouraged them  
 Costs a lot : expensive  
 There is : x exists  
 There are : y emerge  
 Could be seen : visible  
 Each participant was given x : received it  
 Were used as : served as  
 Owing to the fact that : because  
 In reference to : about

## **Appendix IX**

The Current Programs of Teaching the Subject of 'Research Methodology'

### **➤ The Program of First Year : (Compiled Lessons )**

#### ***Unit one : Becoming an active Learner***

***The objective :*** to encourage the student to be active and engage them in the learning process.

#### ***Contents :***

- Identifying some learning principles
- Active learning and passive learning
- Characteristics of creative people
- Combining physical energy with quiet and rest
- Being inquisitive even when having a good knowledge
- Being realistic and imaginative
- Balancing extraversion and introversion
- Getting immersed, learning to focus, getting into 'flow'.
- Developing your own active learning strategies
- Self-evaluation of skills and future objectives.

#### ***Unit two : Intelligence and Learning styles***

***The objective :*** to distinguish the different types of intelligences and learning styles

#### ***Contents center around :***

- Eight intelligences questionnaires (Study Buddy, music and learning, study groups, teacher and learner, visual noters, voice notes, the 5W and IH techniques and meeting personal connections)
- Effective learning techniques.
- Connecting with your senses (audio tapes, free-fall thinking, case studies, concepts mapping, learning on the move, and ecology checks).

#### ***Unit Three : Thinking and Critical Thinking***

***Objective :*** to develop the students' critical thinking skills

#### ***Contents :***

- How well do you think things through ?
- Activities that raise critical thinking such as :

a-reflecting on the meaning of words in a given context (what does the verb 'reach' mean ? lots of money, happy family or getting a meal ?)

b-reflecting on a design/a picture/a story by asking questions and deciding what type of questions are more important.

c-reflecting on different perspectives on a story/debate.

-Asking critical questions and understanding causal relations between events and their long-term and short term consequences.

#### ***Unit Four : Reading with a purpose (at university)***

***Objective :*** To encourage learners to read for a purpose.

#### ***Contents :***

-Reading for lectures, seminars, assignments.

-How to read (academic reading)

-being selective

-why am I reading ?

-Getting ideas from your reading

-Scanning and skimming strategies

#### ***Unit five : Note-Taking***

***The Objective :*** to develop the students' note taking skills when reading from a text and during lectures.

-Semantic markers

-Using abbreviations

-Groups on note-taking

-Listing and numbering

-Aims of note-taking

-Stems and Affixes

#### **➤ The Program of Second year : (Compiled lessons)**

**The objective :** To teach students how to use borrowing techniques without committing plagiarism and following the correct norms of referencing

#### **Contents :**

-Introduction to Plagiarism :

a-Types of Assignments (individual Vs Group)

- b-Exploring students' experience and strategies of conducting research
- c-Skimming and scanning reading techniques
- What is plagiarism ? (definition, importance, types)
- Borrowing techniques : (with activities)
- a-Quoting (how and when to quote with reference to APA and MLA in-text citation)
- b-Paraphrasing (how and when to quote with reference to APA and MLA in-text citation)
- c-Summarizing (how and when to quote with reference to APA and MLA in-text citation)
- MLA and APA References list (books, articles, magazines, websites, ...etc).
- the process of writing a research work (6steps) :
- Collecting sources (using source)
- Evaluating sources for reliability
- Creating note cards
- creating an outline (types of outlines)
- writing a research paper (as a form of a project)
- produce a work cited list

➤ **The Program of Third Year :**

**Objective :** *to identify the basic steps and concepts of conducting a research*

**Contents :**

- Introduction to research :
- a-Definition and aims
- b-Types of research (Experimental/exploratory/qualitative/quantitative)
- c-Why research is of value ? (aims)
- Motivation in research
- The basics of educational research :
- a-The research problem and assumptions
- b-Formulating research questions and hypotheses
- c-The research variables (dependent/independent)
- d-Validity and reliability
- Research and ethics



**Appendix X :**

**A Sample of The Student's Productions in the Writing  
Test**

**(CG13, CG1, EG6, EG4)**

**(Check the enclosed CD for the 60 writing productions)**

Answer:

Name:

The author Bablu speaks about the study conducted at the university of Batna (Department of foreign languages). The aim was to improve students' skills in English. Web-based learning supported learning especially concerning the vocab along the vocabulary activities that students did assisted in remembering the vocabulary. It improved students' motivation as students shown good feelings for the course and the activities. The success in doing the activities made them notice that they are reinforcement to their learning and flexibility of learning was another advantage. The topics of the web page are taken to be a summary and the convenience of time and place and resources was felt. Authors Al-Momani, Hussin Hamat say that a bunch of technologies are spread out world wide where this reality made the new generation to use smart phones in every trouble so it is expected that sooner or later reading programs it is a must to predict and estimate students reading ability. Almost all universities like the online teaching method. Progress reports can be stored and reached by mobile unit that is better and easier in downloading as laptops. Because this tool is smaller than laptop, it is for sure easier to use.

Kent speaks about the following: "one such application built on this premise is the free-for-use web-based interactive digital poster publishing tool Gloster (2008). As a free-for-use web-based poster publishing platform audio, images, and video can all be imported into a Gloster's blog page, or linked to or grabbed from a web cam feed, while

text titles, stickers, and speech bubbles can be created on the gloster's glog page directly. Space on the Gloster web page (glog) can be used freely, meaning items can be placed or replaced, rotated, overlaid, and resized. In addition all content can be linked to other glogs or other web pages or content around the internet.<sup>2</sup>



Answer:

Name:

Among the different researchers who support web-based learning is author Bahloul. Bahloul conducts a study which aims at ameliorating learner's skills in English. As the author argues, web-based learning assisted learning.

First, it improves students' motivation as they manifested positive attitudes towards the course. Second, vocabulary activities assisted in practicing and remembering new vocabulary. Furthermore, due to their success, the activities reinforced students' learning. At last, learning ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> taken to be flexible, they appreciated the timing and place and the multiple resources suitable. Among the example of <sup>considered</sup> web-based learning is the use of Glogster. Kent, agrees with the idea when he writes =

The internet [---] allows learners to construct their own content [---] One such application built on this premise is [---] Glogster (2008). As a free for use web-based poster publishing platform, audio, images, and video can all be imported into a Glogster's glog page, or linked to or grabbed from a webcam feed, while text, titles, stickers, and speech bubbles can be created on the Glogster's glog page directly. Various effects [---] can be implemented as well. Space (also) can be used freely [---]. In addition, all content can be linked to other glogs or other web pages or content around the internet.

The quotation demonstrates the author's positive attitude towards using Glogster. He supports his opinion with citing the different functions of Glogster as a free web application which can permit the learners to construct self-content.



Al-Momani also support the use of smart phones. According to them, it is significant to predict learners' reading capacity to set efficient reading programs. As they argue, the new generation is expert in using technology and favor using smart phones in all circumstances making the researchers to predict that online reading will dominate. Therefore, the majority of universities are found to support online learning. Improvement reports can be stored and reached by smart phones which has a higher quality to download similar to computers. Given that smart phone is easily managed, it is without doubt better than laptop.



Answer:

Name:

The study is conducted in Batna university. 50 students are chosen and are selected by intensity sampling. Web-based learning support was good for learners. This happened mainly for vocabulary learning. By doing the activities, students practiced new words and drill and practice activities helped in recalling them. Also, web-based learning support helped motivation because the use of technology made them love the course and not getting sick of doing the activities again and again. In addition, the activities are seen as reinforcing learning. And the last thing is learning flexibility that was regarded as a contribution because students think that topics of the web page are a summary and they felt the convenience of time and space. Also because our world is moving on and getting data and new knowledge is quick, now we know all about technology and that's why we choose and prefer smart phones in all matter and issues. So, to build and develop good reading lessons, we should predict and estimate students ability of reading. They say that most universities of the world choose online teaching between students and learners where progress is enregistered and accessed by smart phone which contains special application which gives better and easier downloading like laptops and computers. ~~We should also think about the advantages of ~~laptops~~. The internet no longer simply allows learners to explore ~~over the web pages or content around the internet~~. I also agree that the Internet and application like ~~cr hoster~~ have many advantages for learners = constructing content, it is free and has good characteristics like importing video, images, and audio ... etc. and ~~discover their own (content) learning pathways~~~~



FF

The internet no longer simply allows learners to explore and discover their own learning pathways, but it allows learners to construct their own content and add to the online database of resources ~~in the form~~ --- built on the premise of sharing and socializing. One such application built on this premise is --- Cryster (2008)<sup>27</sup>



Answer:-

Name:-

English instructor Bahloul, A (2004) argued the study of Batna university where six students were pointed out since they were thought to be experienced in the web instruction. The latter helped students learning.

First, vocabulary was the area the most affected and it happened by doing the tasks which had new words and which helped in naming these words. Furthermore, this kind of support helped motivation. technology made them happy about the course and they kept excited when practicing same tasks. In addition, the success of activities led students to regard them as a pressure to their learning. And lastly flexibility of learning helped students.

The subsection on the website are felt to be a summary and the same thing for the time and place and resources. Also, Al-Homani, Hussain, & Hamat (2015) argued that having data and knowledge is getting quicker because many technologies are between the hands of people. So, technology is not something new to people anymore and so they like better to use mobiles in every thing they do. So, the structure and creation of adjustable reading schedules make it necessary to predict and estimate students' capacity of reading. Also, the majority of higher institutions in the world choose the online strategy of teaching where everything that will be said on progress is enregistered in an application and they can get access to by mobile unit like smart phone giving better and simpler method to download like in laptop and computer.

"The internet no longer simply allows learners to explore and discover their own learning pathways, but it allows learners to construct their own content and add to the online database of

CG # 13 (post-test)



resource in the form of multimedia-based VCE (user generated content) built on the premise of sharing and socializing - one such application built on this premise is [---] Glosster (2008)<sup>71</sup>

According to the author, the internet can help the learners to find out their own style of learning and build their content. For this reason, an application like Glosster can be helpful too if used in teaching and the author mentions the many advantages that it has.



Answer:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The important goal of the study was to develop the English language of students to follow their departmental courses. Six students out of 630 were chosen because they know more about web-based instruction systems. Web-based learning helped students especially in learning the vocabulary, the drill and practice activities helped a lot in exams. Web-based learning was good for unmotivating students, students didn't get bored of doing the same thing. Lastly, flexibility of learning was helpful. In fact, students saw the topics on the web-page as a summary and the good time, place and resources. Said by Annel Baharal in her book 2004.

The new generation knows more about technology and chooses to use their smart phones in all situations. That's because several technologies are handed to people and make getting knowledge faster. To be build and create sufficient reading programs, it is significant for university EFL programs to predict the reading ability. It seems that the majority of universities like the online method because of time and duties because progress reports will be found in new application especially smart phone where it gives better way to download like computers. This device is really better and effective in comparison to laptop. Said by the authors (Al-Memari A, Hussin, S, & Hamat A in 2015)

"The internet no longer simply allows learners to explore and discover their own learning pathways, but it allows learners... all content can be linked to other blogs or other web pages or content around the internet from Kent, D. B. (2010)



Answer:-

Name:-

The English instructor at the University of Batna since 1998 Bahoul (2004) declares that a study happened at the University of Batna. Six students out of 630 are chosen because they are thought to be experienced with web-based system. The important goal was to aid learners to develop their English to keep up with their studies. Web-based learning added to students' learning. Students knew the contribution is particularly with learning vocabulary through exercising new vocabulary. By this, they succeeded in exams. Web-based learning, assisted students' motivation. They felt good about the course and did not hate doing the exact tasks which gives great motivation. They looked at the activities as encouragement to their learning. Lastly, learning flexibility was viewed to as help. Learners considered the topics shown on the web site as brief presentation and the convenience of time and place besides the big number of resources. Al-Memam (2015) believes that the world is moving ahead with technologies and that these days, this generation selects and favors using mobiles in all conditions and so nearly online reading will take the lead. Consequently, to form sufficient reading lessons it is significant to guess the students' reading ability. Development reports are registered in new applications and all universities like online teaching among learners and teachers. They can go to this report by smart phones for they have unique applications to download easily like computers. As a consequence, this means is the top and the greatest because it has a small shape which can easily be dealt with contrasted to laptop.



The Internet [...] allows learners to construct their own content and add to the online database of resources in the form of multimedia-based UGC (user generated content) built on the premise of sharing and socializing. One such application built on this premise is the free-for use web based interactive digital poster publishing tool *Plaster* (2008). As a free for use web-based poster publishing platform audio, images and video can all be imported into a *gloster's* glog page, or linked to or grabbed from a web cam feed, while text titles stickers, and speech bubbles can be created on the *gloster's* glog page directly. Various effects [...] can be implemented as well. Space on the *Plaster* web page (glog) can be used freely [...]. In addition, all content can be linked to other glog or other web pages or content around the internet (Kent p. 2010).



Answer -

Name -

In the study taking place in Batna university, a course had the aim to develop the learner's skills in English and let them continue their studies just 6 out of 630 students were selected by intensity sampling. The web-based support helped students' learning.

Vocabulary activities like drill and practice activities had actually helped in recalling the vocabulary, trying new vocabulary were beneficial for final exams. In addition, web-based learning support benefited students' motivation. Students felt well about the course and even liked repeating similar activities. Activities also reinforced learning. Lastly, flexibility of learning was helpful because of the website's topics, the convenience of time and place and the many resources. The world is developing very fast with the big number of technologies that made achieving knowledge faster. This is becoming so obvious as people now know exactly how to use technology leading them to use their smart phones in every matter and issue which we can say that soon online reading will be popular. So, to create suitable programs, it is necessary for university EFL programs to expect and measure students' ability to read. Actually, most universities choose online method where progress reports will be registered and get by "Smart phone" giving a better way to download. Consequently this means is as opposed to laptop has a small size that we can handle it easily and that's the reason of its expansion use.

CG # 1 (pre-test)



(Bahloul, A) (2004), Almomani, A. Hussin & Hamat: 2015). After speaking about the importance of smart phones, we refer to Gloster. "the internet no longer simply allows Learners to explore and discover their own learning pathways, but it allows Learners to construct their own content and add to the online database of resources. One such application built on this premise is the free for use web-based interactive digital poster publishing tool. Audio, images, and video can all be imported into a gloster's glog page, or linked to a grabbed from a web can feed, while text titles, stickers and speech bubbles can be created on the gloster's glog page, directly. Various effects can be ~~created on~~ ~~the gloster's~~ implemented as well. Space on the gloster web page (glog) can be used freely. In addition, all content can be linked to other glogs or other web pages or content around the internet." (Kent, D. B. 2010).



Many studies support web-based learning. The university English teacher Bahloul (2004) reports a study that was done in Batna university to develop students' proficiency in English. He reports that web-based learning helped students to learn mainly in vocabulary by doing the drill and practice exercises. Like that, it actually helped in their examinations. In addition, students became more motivated and enjoyed the course and didn't get fed up.

The last advantage is flexibility of learning because of the presentation of summarized subjects on the web, good time, place and resources. More over, they were able to see how much they succeeded in the tasks.

The first example of web-based learning is the use of smart phones.

Here, EL-Momani (2015) believes that people today know very well how to use technology. This opinion is absolutely right as people now are using mobiles in all situations making online reading popular.

As a consequence, to create good courses, it is necessary for EFL universities programs to predict students' capacity of reading.

Also, the majority of universities go for online teaching because remarks about any development are kept in new application. The development is reached by mobile phones similar

Now, everyone owns a smart phone. Obviously, this application is beneficial because of the easiness of using mobile phones. The

Second example is the use of Gloster. Kent argues that:  
as a free-for-use-based poster,

publishing platform audio, images, and video can all be imported into a Gloster's glog page [---]

Various effects such as frames, shadows, size changes and color schemes can be implemented as well.

Space on the gloster web page (glog) can be used freely, meaning items can be placed or replaced, rotated, overlaid, and resized. In addition, all content can be linked to other glogs or other web pages or content around the

internet.

the author in this quotation talks about the advantages of gloster for students. He believes that just like any other internet application, Gloster helps them to figure out their methods of learning. It seems that the arguments suggested

by the author are convincing when looking at the advantages he mentions.

CG #1 (post-test)

(CG #1 → post-test)



## **Résumé**

La présente recherche étudie les effets de la méthode d'apprentissage mixte sur la motivation des apprenants d'EFL et leur maîtrise de la rédaction en effectuant une étude de cas sur des étudiants du département d'anglais de l'Université Larbi Ben Mhidi. L'étude émet l'hypothèse que lorsque l'apprentissage mixte est utilisé dans l'enseignement de la rédaction académique, les apprenants seraient plus motivés; et que l'apprentissage mixte augmente leur maîtrise de l'écriture académique. Pour tester ces hypothèses de recherche, des méthodes d'investigation exploratoires et expérimentales sont utilisées. L'étude utilise le site du réseau social "Facebook "et l'intègre dans le cadre d'apprentissage mixte. À cet effet, une liste de contrôle de la rédaction académique est conçue et comparée aux programmes de rédaction académique utilisés tout au long des trois années d'études de premier cycle (licence). En outre, des questionnaires sont adressés à un échantillon d'apprenants et d'enseignants du département d'anglais et une mise en œuvre quasi expérimentale est réalisée avec un groupe témoin et un groupe expérimental d'étudiants de deuxième année. Le groupe témoin est enseigné dans un environnement entièrement physique, tandis que le groupe expérimental est enseigné à l'aide d'une méthodologie d'apprentissage mixte. Les résultats de l'étude indiquent que les programmes ne sont pas complets pour enseigner le genre d'écriture "académique". Les résultats de la recherche montrent que la motivation des apprenants a considérablement augmenté après l'expérience d'apprentissage mixte et que le groupe expérimental a surperformé considérablement le groupe témoin en termes de maîtrise de l'écriture académique. Il est donc recommandé aux enseignants et aux apprenants de tirer parti des technologies modernes pour renforcer leur motivation, suivre l'évolution des méthodes d'enseignement modernes faisant appel aux technologies de l'information et de la communication et, par conséquent, améliorer le développement des compétences des apprenants dans les domaines académiques et l'acquisition des langues étrangères.



## المخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تأثير طريقة التعليم المدمج على تحفيز متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية و اتقان الكتابة الاكاديمية من خلال اجراء دراسة حالة في قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة العربي بن مهيدي. تفترض الدراسة انه عندما يتم استخدام التعليم المدمج في التدريس الاكاديمي . سيكون المتعلمون اكثر تحفيزا. و ان التعليم المدمج يرفع من كفاءتهم في الكتابة الاكاديمية. لاختبار هذه الفرضيات البحثية . تم اجراء كل من الطرق الاستكشافية و التجريبية للتحقيق عن طريق استخدام موقع التواصل الاجتماعي "فايسبوك" و ادماجه ضمن اطار التعليم المدمج. و لهذا الغرض. تم تصميم قائمة تدقيق للكتابة الاكاديمية و مقارنتها ببرامج الكتابة الاكاديمية التي يتم استخدامها على مدار ثلاث سنوات من الدراسة الجامعية. بالإضافة الى ذلك . تم ارسال الاستبيانات الى عينة من طلبة و اساتذة قسم اللغة الانجليزية و تم تنفيذها بشكل غير تجريبي مع مجموعة تحكم و مجموعة تجريبية من طلاب السنة الثانية. تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة في بيئة وظيفية بالكامل و تم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية باستخدام منهجية التعليم المدمج. اشارت نتائج الدراسة الى ان المنهج الدراسي المتبع ليس شاملا في تدريس الكتابة الأكاديمية اظهرت النتائج ايضا. ان دافع الطلبة قد زاد بشكل كبير بعد تجربة التعليم المدمج و ان المجموعة التجريبية تفوقت بشكل كبير على المجموعة الضابطة في اجادتها للكتابة الاكاديمية. ومن ثم يوصى بان يستفيد الطلبة و الاساتذة من التكنولوجيا الحديثة لتعزيز الدافع و مواكبة التطورات في طرق التدريس الحديثة و استخدام تكنولوجيا المعرفة و الاتصال. و بالتالي تحسين كفاءة الطلبة في المجال الاكاديمي و تعلم اللغات الاجنبية.