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From Learning to Write to Writing to Write: Instilling Habit Formation in EFL Learners
Cognitive and Meta-cognitive Perspectives,
The Case of Second Year Students, University of Jijel, Algeria

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Dedication

This dissertation is utterly dedicated to my late brother *Ali*, may he rest in peace, amen!

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The writing skill is a cognitively complex skill, and it is a problem for many EFL Written Expression students. Writing teachers at the Department of English at the University of Jijel agree that the second year EFL students' written productions are mundane and prolix. The complexity of the writing skill can be partly attributable to some variables that EFL students have to cognitively master both at the sentence level and beyond the sentence level so as to achieve correct English pieces of writing. Besides, the way the writing skill is taught at the department of English remains debatable as to which method teachers should apply in their classes. It can be hypothesized that students would enjoy writing profusely if teachers used the appropriate approaches in teaching writing and know how to develop their students' cognitive and metacognitive skills when writing. In other words, if students are to become proficient writers, it is incumbent upon their teachers to lead them from *learning to write* (learning the fundamentals of writing) to *writing to write* (enjoying writing and being aware of and motivated to write). As such, this study aims at testing the effects of implementing a well balanced approach to teaching writing and allowing more practice for a better students' written performance. As a matter of fact, this approach is an eclectic approach to teaching writing, drawing on the product approach, process approach, and genre approach. With that end in view, two questionnaires were designed for both teachers and students and an experiment -conducted over a period of four months in which each second year student was required to write 4 essays. The analysis of the questionnaires has revealed that the writing skill is being taught and approached piecemeal, with less room for practice and insufficient feedback on the part of teachers of writing. The results of the experiment have shown that the students gained in writing proficiency; hence, the results support the hypothesis (H1).

List of Abbreviations and Coding Conventions

A.a.L   Assessment as Learning

A.f.L   Assessment for Learning

E.F.L   English as a Foreign Language

F.L   Foreign Language

L.M.D   Licence Master Doctorate

L.T.M   Long-term Memory

L1   First Language

L2   Second Language

S.L   Second Language

S.R   Stimulus Response

T.L   Target Language

W.E.   Written Expression

List of Tables

List of Figures

Table of Contents

Chapter One
Writing and Learning to Write

Chapter Two
Composition Instruction and Assessment
towards Writing to Write

Chapter Three

Learning Theories and Strategies towards Instilling
a Cognitive and Metacognitive Habit Formation

Chapter Four

Analysis of the Questionnaires

Chapter Five

The Situation Research Analysis

General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Writing is a very important language skill, and for any learner who wishes to have a good mastery of a given language, they ought to master the four language skills of Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking. Learning to write is no easy task for it is, as aptly described by most composition experts, a complex cognitive activity. In effect, many Algerian EFL learners find it difficult to write fluently due to the complexity of the task which involves the manipulation of certain variables at the sentence level and beyond the sentence level. The students of interest in this study do not seem to enjoy writing because the way they perceive and deal with writing as a skill to be mastered leads them to actually see no value or usefulness in writing other than getting passing marks at the end of the term. As a matter of fact, some teachers seem to concentrate on the final product and the draconian rules of composition, yet they overlook the different stages through which the writing process goes to produce that final product. This state of affairs is increasingly making the writing skill a real bête noire for writing teachers and learners alike.

The objective of the present study is to see how both teachers and students deal with writing at university. It also attempts to yield insightful information into how teachers teach written expression at university along with the serious difficulties encountered by the students when they write. More particularly, it is to come up with a host of remedial procedures for our learners to become better writers.

2. Aims of the Study

The aim of the study is twofold: First, it is to claim the teachers' attention to the importance of leading students from only learning to write to writing to write. Thus, the teachers are called upon to change the way they teach writing by judiciously incorporating the best approaches to the teaching of writing in their classes to improve their students' compositions and make them

1

enjoy writing. Second, it is to help the students overcome the difficulties they experience while writing in order to become better and more fluent writers: difficulties pertaining to the sentence level which include content, format, sentence structure, and the mechanics; and beyond the sentence level such as structuring and integrating information into cohesive and coherent texts. To achieve this end, they need to enjoy the writing skill and be made fully conversant with the ins and outs of this skill.

3. Research Questions and Hypothesis

The research raises the following questions:

1. Is the writing skill a complex cognitive activity?

2. How often do students write?

3. Why do not students seem to enjoy writing?

4. Do students know the different genre rules?

5. Do students know the purpose behind the writing skill?

6. How do teachers teach writing at university?

7. What approach do teachers adopt to teach writing? Do they concentrate on the final product or the process?

8. Is the feedback given by the teachers up to the mark quantitatively and qualitatively?

In the light of the above questions, it can be hypothesized that students would enjoy writing profusely if teachers used the most appropriate approaches in teaching writing and know how to develop their students' cognitive and metacognitive skills when writing.

4. Means of Research

Two questionnaires, one for teachers and one for students were designed plus an experiment. The teachers' questionnaire intends to probe how Written Expression teachers teach writing, and the extent to which this accounts for the students' poor composition skills.

2

A pilot questionnaire was also conducted to allow for a critical overview on how students perceive and deal with the complexities of the writing task. The pilot questionnaire helps in bringing in the necessary adjustments.

For the experiment, the students are required to complete some writing assignments, in the form of essays, throughout the academic year. Then, these assignments are to be collected and analyzed so as to check how far the students' writing skills have progressed.

5. Population and Sampling

The population are 40 second year students randomly chosen from the parent population of 200 second year students at the Department of English in the University of Jijel. Choosing second year students was based upon the fact that they were novice writers in English and that it is at this juncture that they start dealing with essay writing with its different rhetorical modes. Also because second year students, unlike the other levels, study written Expression for around four hours and half per week, permitting them to have ample opportunities for practice.

6. Structure of the Thesis

The research is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters make up the literature review giving a theoretical background to the study. The last two chapters constitute the practical part about the analysis and discussion of the data obtained from both the teachers' and students' questionnaires along with the experiment (the students written assignments).

The first chapter is a discussion of the writing skill and its mechanics. It emphasizes the fact that writing is a fairly difficult process and that EFL students need to know how to manipulate its components in order to become good writers. This chapter also highlights that writing is integrally related to the other language skills, namely reading and speaking.

The second chapter expounds on the various innovative approaches to teaching writing as suggested by scholars in the second half of the last century. It is an attempt to weigh up the pros and cons and the practicability of each of the approaches given the special circumstances and

contexts wherein they emerged and evolved. Lastly, it sheds some light on the notion of assessment, its different types, and the various scoring techniques.

The third chapter is about the most prominent learning theories yet advanced, namely behaviorism and cognitivism. Besides, this chapter introduces the various learning strategies, especially cognitive and metacognitive strategies, relating them to the writing skill. Discussing such theories is so important for the concept of 'learning to write' which draws heavily on these learning theories. The chapter also tries to bridge the gap between habit formation and cognition in writing by discussing role of teacher feedback and peer feedback in promoting EFL students' awareness while writing, allowing them to work out their weaknesses in order to produce acceptable pieces of writing.

The fourth chapter deals with the collection, tabulation and discussion of the data. The questionnaires were designed for the purpose of yielding valuable information into how both students and teachers approach writing in their classrooms.

The fifth chapter focuses on the analysis and discussion of the students' written assignment. An experiment has been carried out to test whether the implementation of an eclectic approach to teaching writing along with intensive practice had positive effect on the students' written performance.

Chapter One

Writing and Learning to Write

Chapter One

Writing and Learning to write

Introduction

Nowadays, writing is of such a paramount importance that it is quite impossible to visualize our world without it. In our quotidian life, writing serves as an effective mode of communication via letters, emails, text messaging, and chatting. It also helps impart knowledge to all manner of people across the world through constantly published books, articles, and newspapers, to mention but these. As regards language learning, the mastery of a given language inevitably entails the mastery of the four language skills, one of which is writing - a major skill to learn in the EFL syllabus.

Composition specialists (Flower and Hayes 1977; Zamel, 1982; Raimes, 1983) have become fully conversant with the fact that learning to write is academically and intellectually more challenging vis-à-vis learning the other language skills of Listening, Speaking and Reading. The complexity of the writing task proceeds from a good many operations writers have to control in order to produce acceptable pieces of prose. In effect, such a complexity has prompted research that is still fueling the age-old debate of how writing should be taught and learned.

In this chapter, some light is shed on the broad concepts of 'writing' and 'learning to write'. The various definitions of writing in conjunction with an overview of the chief reasons why this skill should be learned and taught are dealt with. In addition to that, the main differences between L1 and L2 writing rhetoric are discussed with a touch on the Writing skill in relation to the other language skills of speaking, reading, and aspects such as grammar. Finally, the chapter attempts to cover in some depth the components and mechanics of the Writing skill.

1.1. Writing Defined

Research in the developing field of rhetoric and composition has brought about differing views on how the Writing Skill should be approached, which has accounted for the myriad definitions about the term 'writing'. Granted, it is no easy task to provide a clear definition of writing partly because of the multiple meanings of English words and partly because of the long history of writing and its great importance (Coulmas, 2003, p.1).

Traditionally, writing was defined by linguists as a device to record speech by virtue of visible signs or simply as an equivalent of its spoken counterpart (Gelb, 1963). However, Raimes (1983) states that writing is not "only speech written on paper" (p. 4). That is, writing is much more than being simply a mirror of speaking or just a graphic representation of our ideas. Writing can be defined as "marks on a page or a screen, a coherent arrangement of words, clauses, and sentences, structured according to a system of rules" (Hyland, 2003, p. 3). Given the communicative function of writing, Gelb (1963) points out that writing is a system of human intercommunication by means of conventional visible marks.

Josef (2001) contends that writing is one of the most complex human activities. This is largely because "it requires skill, understanding and a good deal of creativity." (Baker, 2001, p.135). Along the same lines, Harmer (2004) stresses the need for conscious efforts to learn writing when he exhibits the difference between speaking and writing. He adds that, "Spoken language, for a child, is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned." (p. 3).

Writing is then a complex cognitive activity, and such complexity stems from the so many variables writers have to manipulate both at the sentence level and beyond the sentence level. Nunan (1989) explicates that Bell and Bernaby (1984) see that writing is:

> an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required
> to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. At the
> sentence level these include control of content, format, sentence

7

structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherence paragraphs.(p. 36)

As pointed out earlier, the Writing Skill is defined as a means of communication, and as a painful process that is time and energy-consuming because of the composition rules and conventions writers need to manipulate concurrently. However, the proliferations of in-depth rhetoric studies have allowed to craft new lens with which one views the Writing Skill. Essentially, they have suggested more expansive definitions of the writing skill that, again, came to challenge the long-held assumptions that regarded writing as merely putting knowledge into words. These studies have also concluded that there is a great deal more to writing than just being an effective mode of communication. Zamel (1982) maintains that writing is a process whereby meaning is created. Additionally, Langer & Applebee (1987) stress the fact that writing not only disseminates ideas but shapes them; they argue that "Written language not only makes ideas more widely and easily available, [but] it changes the development and shape of the ideas themselves." (p.3). Flower & Hayes (1977) view writing as an act of thinking in that when we commit our thoughts to paper, we often draw on "a staggering array of mental gymnastics, from simply generating language to highly sophisticated concept formation." (pp.449-450)

Similarly, Williams (2003, pp.13-14) points out that writing effectively necessitates that the writers *think* about

-**The objective:** Writers must be clear about what they want their writing to achieve. The content, format and presentation will all depend on the purpose of the message.

- The audience: The needs, interests and knowledge of the reader must be anticipated and the writing planned accordingly.

- The message: This is about the content or meaning that the writer wants to convey to the reader.

- How the message is phrased: The layout and format of the text plays an important part in attracting the reader. It also helps to organize the information and thereby increases the readability of the piece.

- Access to the message: The writer must consider how and when the reader will have access to the written message.

Emig (1977) stresses the outstanding value of writing as powerful tool of learning. According to her, writing "represents a unique mode of learning- not merely valuable, not merely special, but unique."(p.122). Balgopal & Wallace (2013) add that, "Writing-to-learn (WTL) is an effective instructional and learning strategy that centers on the process of organizing and articulating ideas." (p.170). In general terms, writing is a unique mode of learning about the language and content areas (as will follow further down).

In considering all aspects of the Writing Skill, White & Ardnt (1991) view writing from a ' process ' perspective; they describe it as:

> A form of problem-solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering a 'voice' with which to write, planning, goal-setting, monitoring, and evaluating what is going to be written as well as what has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning. (p. 3)

Writing is a fundamental language skill that helps promote communication, learning and thinking and thus it requires strenuous efforts on the part of EFL learners. Therefore, EFL learners should not perceive 'learning to writing' as a chore they carry out with the aim of getting passing marks, but rather as a tremendous asset throughout their academic and professional careers.

1.2. The Importance of Writing

Undeniably, writing plays a substantial part in people's lives. People write letters, e-mails, text messages in order to communicate. Innumerable books, journals, magazines, and

newspapers are written and published with the aim of disseminating knowledge and influencing people's thoughts and actions. Gelb (1963) points out that the importance of writing can:

> can easily be realized if one tries to imagine our world without writing. Where would we be without books, newspapers, letters? What would happen to our means of communication if we suddenly lost the ability to write, and to our knowledge if we had no way of reading about the achievements of the past? Writing is so important in our daily life that I should be willing to say that our civilization could exist without money, metals, radios, steam engines, or electricity than without writing.
> (p. 221)

Besides, Barras (2005), on his part, stresses the vital importance of writing in people's lives, stating that in our day-to-day work, writing helps us to remember, to observe, to think, and to communicate.

1.2.1. Writing Helps People to Remember

As far as students are concerned, this is best done through making good notes during seminars, lectures, tutorials, and other organized classes. Note-taking is an aid to concentration, active study, and learning. Good notes also help students to remember the essentials of their subjects, especially when revising for examinations (Barras, 2005).

1.2.2. Writing Helps People to Observe

Observation is important particularly in arts, humanities, sciences, and engineering. For instance, observation is the basis of journalism in that when providing written reports of events, journalists must concentrate their attention to prepare accurate descriptions of these events. Likewise, the students can use their power of observation to carry out their descriptive and narrative writing assignments (Barras, 2005).

1.2.3. Writing Helps People to Think

Writing helps capture thoughts and feelings for later considerations. When preparing for an essay or project report, writing assists in setting down what one knows and recognizes knowledge gaps (Barras, 2005).

1.2.4. Writing Helps People to Communicate

Despite being at the cutting-edge of mobile communications technology, where one can talk and see one another on a screen, writing remains an important means of communication. Any sort of message can be most effectively conveyed through writing because writing allows for more time to think, decide what to say, and how best to say it (Barras, 2005).

On his part, Harmer (1998) provides some reasons why writing should be taught to students, and these include: Reinforcement, language development, learning style, and writing as a skill in its own right.

1.2.4.1. Reinforcement

Writing can help the students commit to memory the previously learned language points. This is largely because most of them seem to benefit more from the visual demonstration of the language.

1.2.4.2. Language Development

Actually, the mental processes that students go through when composing form a part of their learning experiences. Writing is not there merely for the sake of communication; it rather helps in learning and creating new knowledge as well as thinking critically.

1.2.4.3. Learning Style

Some F.L. learners seem to learn the language rather quickly through visual and auditory materials. Many others, however, prefer to pick up the language through writing because it gives them enough time to reflect on the language before producing it.

1.3. Writing as a Skill

Being one of the four major language skills is one reason to include writing as an integral part of the syllabus. More importantly, the students need to get fully conversant with the conventional rules of composition in order to be able to write in different genres. In general terms, Reinking & Osten (2017) claim that writing offers the following advantages for both the writers and the readers:

> - It gives writers time to reflect on and research what they want to communicate and then let them shape and reshape the material to their satisfaction.
> - It makes communication more precise and effective.
> -It provides a permanent record of thoughts, actions, and decisions.
> - It saves the reader's time; we absorb information more swiftly when we read it than when we hear it. (p.2)

1.4. L1 and L2 Writing Rhetoric

Much of what is known about the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 writing has been generated by a dazzling array of ground-taking research within the lively field of contrastive rhetoric studies. Contrastive rhetoric is, according to Connor (1996), an "area of research in second language acquisition that identifies problems encountered by second language writers, and by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language, attempts to explain them." (p. 5). Basically, contrastive rhetoric rests upon the premise that language and writing are cultural phenomena, which signifies that every language has its own distinctive rhetoric conventions (Connor,1996).

In his attempt to discover cross-cultural differences in the rhetoric patterns, Kaplan (1966) analyzed the organization of the paragraph in ESL students essays and identified five types of paragraphs. The results of his pioneering study are depicted in the following diagram:
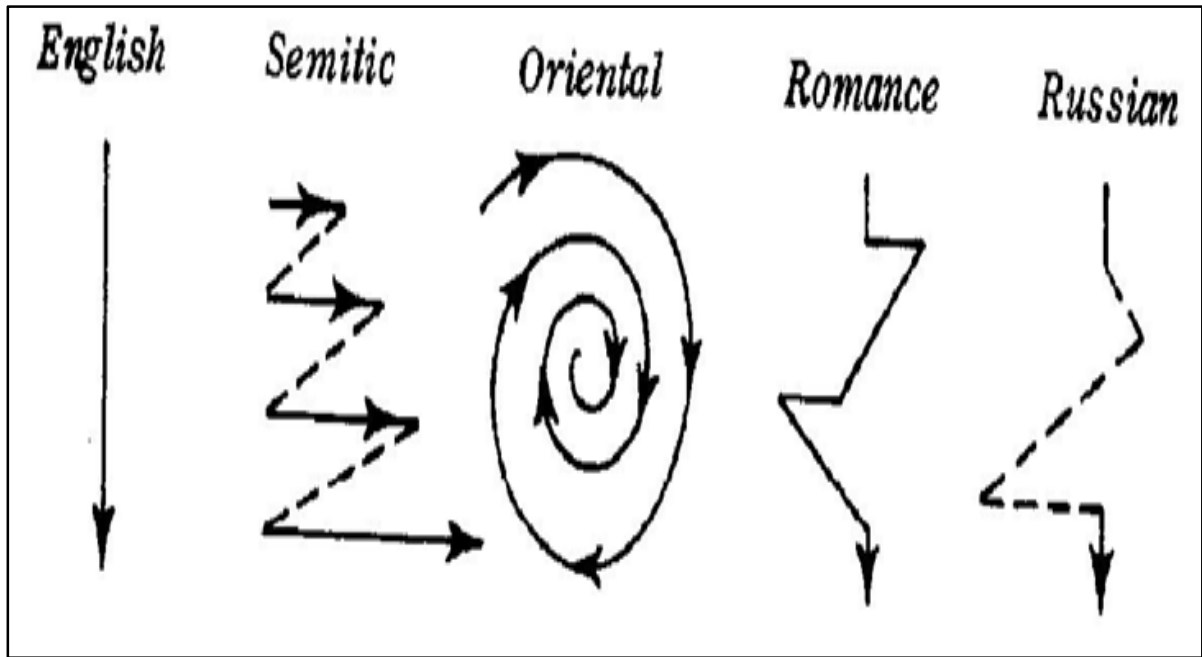
Figure 01. Patterns of Written Discourse in Different Languages (Kaplan, 1966, p.21)

The diagram manifestly suggests that there are indeed different modes of idea presentations and thought patterns across the languages, and this led Kaplan (1966) to conclude that every language and every culture has a paragraph order unique to itself, and therefore, the learning of that particular language certainly warrants the mastering of its logical system.

Boardman & Frydenberg (2008) agree with the findings of Kaplan and maintain that different languages use different writing styles of organization. Boardman & Frydenberg (2008) describe the salient differences in written discourse structures of four languages, namely English, Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic. Concerning Arabic and English, our main interest, they state that the English style of writing is fairly simple and uses a straight line from beginning to end. Arabic has also a distinct organization and oftentimes uses a parallel style. To put it in a nutshell, Hinkel (2004) sees the differences between L1 and L2 writing rhetoric as follows:

-Discourse and rhetorical organization

- Ideas and content of writing

- Rhetorical mode (exposition, narration, classification, argumentation, etc.)

-Reliance on external knowledge and information

- References to sources of knowledge and information

- Assumptions about the reader's knowledge and expectations

- The role of audience in discourse and text production, as well as the appraisal of the expected discourse and text complexity

- Discourse and text cohesion

- Employment of linguistic and rhetorical features of formal written texts (pp. 9-10)

The above discussion shines some light on the differences between L1 and L2 rhetoric structures. Nonetheless, there is actually evidence that attests to the resemblance existent between L1 and L2 writing mainly in the recursive nature of the writing process. Silva (1993) puts it as follows:

> There is evidence to suggest that L1 and L2 are similar in their broad outlines; that is, it has been shown that both L1 and L2 writers employ a recursive composing process, involving planning, writing and revising to develop their ideas and find appropriate rhetorical and linguistic means to express them.(p. 657)

EFL students should bear it in the minds that if they want to be fluent writers of any language, they should master the writing style and rules of grammar of that language. Additionally, the EFL teachers of writing should be aware of the rhetorical and linguistic backgrounds of their students as well as the difficulties encountered by these students during the composing process in order to be able overcome them. As far as EFL writing teachers are concerned, the purpose behind contrastive rhetoric studies is purely pedagogical. Connor (1998) argues that

The driving force behind contrastive rhetoric studies is pedagogical, namely to inform the ESL/EFL teacher about cultural preferences in writing styles and activities. With this knowledge, teachers are better able to prepare ESL/EFL students to write for L2 audiences, which often have different expectations about organization, style, and appropriateness of content. (pp.108-109)

1.5. Writing and the Other Skills

Writing is said to have some sort of affinity with certain language skills and aspects, namely speaking, reading, and grammar. Below is a brief discussion of the writing skill in relation to these skills and aspects.

1.5.1. Writing and Speaking

Writing and speaking are both productive language skills that "share in the manifestation and communication of language."(Newman & Horowitz, 1965, p.164). As a matter of fact, throughout its history, writing has been considered inferior to the other language skills, mainly speaking. This is largely because it was identified as a derived and subsidiary system of expression, or as a way of recording speech by means of visible signs.

However, Newman & Horowitz (1965) argue that "although writing and speaking can represent each other, that fact should not be taken to mean that they are aspects of each other."(p.164). Therefore, there is no denying that written and oral discourses influence each other and are closely interrelated. Gelb (1963) delineates that

> The interrelation between speech and writing and their mutual influences are very strong. It is frequently difficult to study a speech without knowledge of its writing, and it is almost impossible to understand a writing without knowledge of the speech for which it is used.   (p. 223)

Understanding the similarities and differences between speaking and writing is absolutely vital for EFL writing teachers to decide on how these two skills are best taught: either to teach them as similar skills or apart as dissimilar skills (Wallace, 1961). Harmer (2004) agrees with this and claims that when "considering how people write, we need to consider the similarities and differences between writing and speaking." (p. 6) . On these similarities and differences, Wallace (1961) suggests that

> They are much alike linguistically, for whether one is writing or speaking he is subject to the same conventions of grammar, syntax, semantics. When viewed physically and psychologically, they are different, for the processes of encoding use different motor schemes and involves habits developed under different sets of circumstances. (p.391)

On his part, Harmer (2004) explores the disjunctions between writing and speaking in terms of time and space, participants, process, organization and language, signs and symbols, and product. Nevertheless, he highlights the fact that in certain contexts, the difference between writing and speaking is not absolute: Lectures, text-messaging and Internet chats seem to share some of the same qualities of the spoken discourse. In a similar vein, Vygotsky (1986) sees that writing and speaking are two types of activity in that one of which is "spontaneous, involuntary and non-conscious, while the other is abstract, voluntary, and conscious." (p.183).

Raimes (1983) points out to the general difference between writing and speaking; she argues that , "We learned to speak our first language at home without systematic instruction, whereas most of us had to be taught in school how to write that same language."(p. 4). That is, speaking is acquired naturally, but because of the difficulty of writing, this latter has to be taught. Raimes (1983) goes further and provides detailed classification of the differences between writing and speaking. These differences are summed up in the following table

Speaking	Writing
1. Speech is universal: everyone acquires a native language in the first few years of life.	. Not everyone learns to write and read.
2. The spoken language has dialect variations.	.The written language generally demands standard forms of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.
4. Speakers use their voices and bodies to convey meaning.	. Writers have to rely on words on the page to express their meaning.
5. Speakers use pauses and intonation.	.Writers use punctuation.
6. Speakers pronounce	.Writers spell
7. Speaking is usually spontaneous and unplanned.	.Most writing takes time. It is planned. We can go back and change what we have written.
8. Speech is usually informal and repetitive.	. Writing is more formal and compact.
9. Speakers use simple sentences connected by lot of **ands** and **buts**.	.Writers use more complex sentences, with connecting words like **however**, **who** and **in addition**.

Table 1. Differences between Writing and Speaking (Raimes, 1983, pp. 4-5)

It is worthwhile to note that the differences between writing and speaking are more substantial than what they seem. Knowing the distinct nature of writing will tremendously help our learners work out ingenious ways of learning it. Raimes (1983), therefore, concludes that "when we look at just these differences-and there are many more-we can see that our students will not just "pick up" writing as they learn other skills in ESL classes. We have to teach writing." (p.5)

1.5.2. Writing and Reading

Writing and reading are both fundamental language skills, with the exception that writing is a productive skill (active), whereas reading is considered as receptive one (passive). Contrary to speaking and listening which relate to the language expressed through the oral mediums, both writing and reading are said to relate to language that is expressed through the visual medium (Widdowson, 1978). Further, Olson (as cited in Lonka, 2003) confirms that both reading and writing are social practices when he says that , "in reading and writing texts one participates in a 'textual community', a group of readers (writers and auditors) who share a way of reading and interpreting a body of texts." (p. 114)

In essence, reading and writing are interrelated activities that share common features. Berrnstein & Johnson (2004) also confirm that "reading and writing are clearly interconnected processes that share similar meta-cognitive strategies." (p. 70). Tienery & Pearson (1983) claim that one way of comprehending the connection between writing and reading is by viewing them as acts of composing and processes of meaning construction.

> (…) meaning is created as the reader uses his background of experience together with the others cues to come to grips both with what the writer is getting him to do or think and what the reader decides or creates for himself. As a writer writes, she uses her own background of experience to generate ideas and, in order to produce a text which is considerate to her idealized reader, filters these drafts through her judgments about what her reader's background will be, what she wants to say, or what she wants to get to think or do. (p.568)

Similarly, in her investigation of the role of 'written responses to assigned readings' in promoting language acquisition and literacy across the curriculum, Zamel (2000) asserts that it is "by engaging in the written responses of this sort that students begin to understand that reading is not a passive process of encoding words, but rather that it is quite literally, a process of composing." (p.13). This process of composing, which is often employed by both readers and writers, includes the following characteristics: Planning, drafting, aligning, revising, and monitoring (Tienery & Pearson, 1983).

The overwhelming importance of reading in EFL writing classes is unquestionable. Eisterhold (1990) sees that reading, in writing classes, is an appropriate input for acquisition of writing skills since reading passages serve as primary models through which writing skills can be learned. Harmer (1998) agrees with that and maintains, "Reading texts also provide models for English writing, when we teach the skill of writing, we will need to show students models of what we are encouraging them to do." (p.68). In addition to that, Nation (2009) contends that the other language skills including reading should be involved in the preparation

of writing activities, arguing that this will enable the words which have used receptively to come into productive use.

It should go without saying that reading enables F.L. students to promote language by learning granting them easy access to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. Furthermore, through reading, the students will become fully cognizant of how sentences, paragraphs, and texts are constructed. This will eventually assist them in working out their problems in writing, sharpening their composition skills and, by implication, producing elegant pieces of prose. According to Cumming (2001):

> As people learn to write in a second language their written texts display more sophisticated, complex syntax and morphology, and a great range and specificity of vocabulary, and improved command over conventional rhetorical forms and over ways of signaling the relations of their texts to other texts when performing tasks that involve reading and writing. (p.4)

More importantly, Clark (2005) stresses the significance of reading in EFL classes and argues that the conventions of written discourse are primarily and effectively acquired through guided reading that provides opportunities to identify, discuss, and then practice the various conventions of written discourse. Stotsky (1983) as cited in Eisterhold (1990) surveys first language co-relational studies and found the following:

-There are correlations between reading achievement and writing ability. Better writers tend to be better readers.

-There are correlations between writing quality and reading experience as reported through questionnaires. Better writers read more than poorer writers.

-There seem to be correlations between reading ability and measures of syntactic complexity in writing. Better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers.

It can, then, safely be said that writing and reading are both acts of composing which draw upon common knowledge and cognitive processes. Reading and writing are complementary skills which contribute to promoting language and literacy. Indeed, good reading leads to good writing: While composing, good readers tend to make use of the vocabulary, grammar rules, and even style that they pick up from their varied readings, which –in the long run– often results in effective writing. Therefore, writing and reading should, for the most part, be taught in tandem. Krashen (1993) goes further stating that "writing classes also need to be reading classes, places in which students get interested in books and in pleasure reading." (p. 33). It is understandable then that reading should never be conceived of as a passive skill but instead as a requisite skill for the success of EFL writing classes.

1.5.3. Writing and Grammar

Grammar is a fundamental aspect of the language, and mastering a given language inevitably entails, *inter alia*, the mastery of its grammar. Grammar means "the rules which structure our language" (Kane, 1988, p. 13). More particularly, Byrnes (2011) expresses eloquently the centrality of grammar as a language aspect as follows:

> Grammar is the engine driving the capacity of language to do what it does: to take over the material conditions of human existence and transform them into meaning. Grammar accomplishes this by being located between the semantic plane of words and the expressive plane of speaking or, in this case, of writing: it takes words and turns them into wordings. (p. 148)

The idea that there is still a contentious debate among researchers and practitioners over the relationship of grammar instruction to composition is worthy of mention here. The perennial question of 'what effect, if any, does the teaching of grammar have on the students' written performance?' remains hitherto unanswered. However, it may seem to common sense,

some devoutly believe, based on meticulous research, that there is absolutely no connection whatsoever between grammar instruction and students' ability to write.

According to Williams (2003), the biggest myth about writing is that "it is linked somehow to grammar." (p.313). He adds that "despite all the concern and attention devoted to it, grammar has not had any positive effect on writing performance." (p.314). In their report on the results of two international systematic research reviews, Andrews, et al. (2006) conclude that the teaching of syntax (as part of traditional and transformational/generative approach to teaching grammar) does not seem to have any influence on the accuracy and quality of the written discourse for 5-16-year-olds. Williams (1990) concurs with this very idea and sees no relationship between learning grammar principles and writing:

> You may write well, yet can't distinguish a subject from verb, or you may understand everything from retained objects to subjunctive pluperfect progressive, and still write badly. From this apparent contradiction many have concluded that we don't have to understand the principles of grammar to write well.   (p.01)

Williams (1990) also states that, "the best evidence suggests that students who spend a lot of time studying grammar improve their writing not one bit. In fact, they seem to get worse." (pp.1-2). Along the same line, Hillocks and Smith (as cited in Weaver, 1996) affirm that those who impose the systematic study of traditional grammar over long periods of time in the name of teaching composition are actually doing students a terrible disservice. Similarly, Braddock, LIoyd-Jones & Schoer (as cited in Hartwell, 1985) maintain that, "the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually places some instruction and practice in composition, even a harmful effect on improvement in writing." (p.105)

Conversely, other scholars, also based on landmark studies, hold the opposed view that there certainly exists a correlation between grammar instruction and the students' written production. According to Whalen (1969), "there is a strong, positive relationship between the

components of total English instruction-grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling and how well students perform in written composition." (p.61). Sams (2003), on his part, believes that, "grammar and writing are so inextricably linked as to be virtually synonymous. To study one is to study the other." (p. 56)

Sams (2003) argues that the conclusions which state that grammar is not linked to writing are erroneous largely because traditional and in-context approaches to grammar instruction treat grammar as something that exists apart from and outside of the writing process itself. All this suggests that grammar instruction is indispensable for teaching writing, and teaching grammar will prove useless in the extreme so long as it is done in isolation. Certainly, "we should teach grammar, in writing, so that learners understand better how the language works, and functionally, so learners can use what they understand about language when they write." (Farn & Farnan, 2007, p.79). Despite all those widely divergent attitudes concerning this matter, Weaver (1996) takes a middle ground.

> No matter how students are taught grammatical concepts, syntactic constructions, and stylistic devices, or language conventions and editing concepts, they will not automatically make use of these in their writing. However, the relevant research confirms that everyday experience reveals that teaching 'grammar' in the context of writing works better than teaching grammar as a formal system, if our aim is for students to use grammar effectively and conventionally in their writing. (p.23)

In brief, it is worth noting that the debate over the integration of grammar instruction with writing instruction is far from resolved. The EFL context, though, given that the students display a conspicuous lack of syntactic maturity and knowledge of grammar when composing, the teaching of grammar during writing classes would be of high utilitarian value. Another compelling reason for teaching grammar is the fact that most of the mistakes writing teachers spot in their students' written performance are grammatical ones. None of

this is to suggest that writing sessions should be made grammar sessions; instead, grammar should never be taught at length or for its own sake.

1.6. The Components of Writing

As pointed out earlier, writing is mentally and physically challenging. Unlike the other language skills, writing has to be consciously learned. In order to produce acceptable pieces of writing, writers must improve a good command of the cardinal rules of composition. More precisely, these include: basic writing conventions, mechanics (spelling and punctuation), coherence, cohesion, and style. Nunan (1989) argues that successful writing involves:

-Mastering the mechanics of letter formation.
- Mastering and obeying conventions of spelling and punctuation.
-Using the grammatical system to convey one's intended meaning.
-Organizing content at the level of paragraph and the complete text to reflect given/new information and topic/comment structures.
-Polishing and revising one's initial efforts.
-Selecting an appropriate style for one's audience. (p.37)

These components and so many others are depicted in the following diagram:
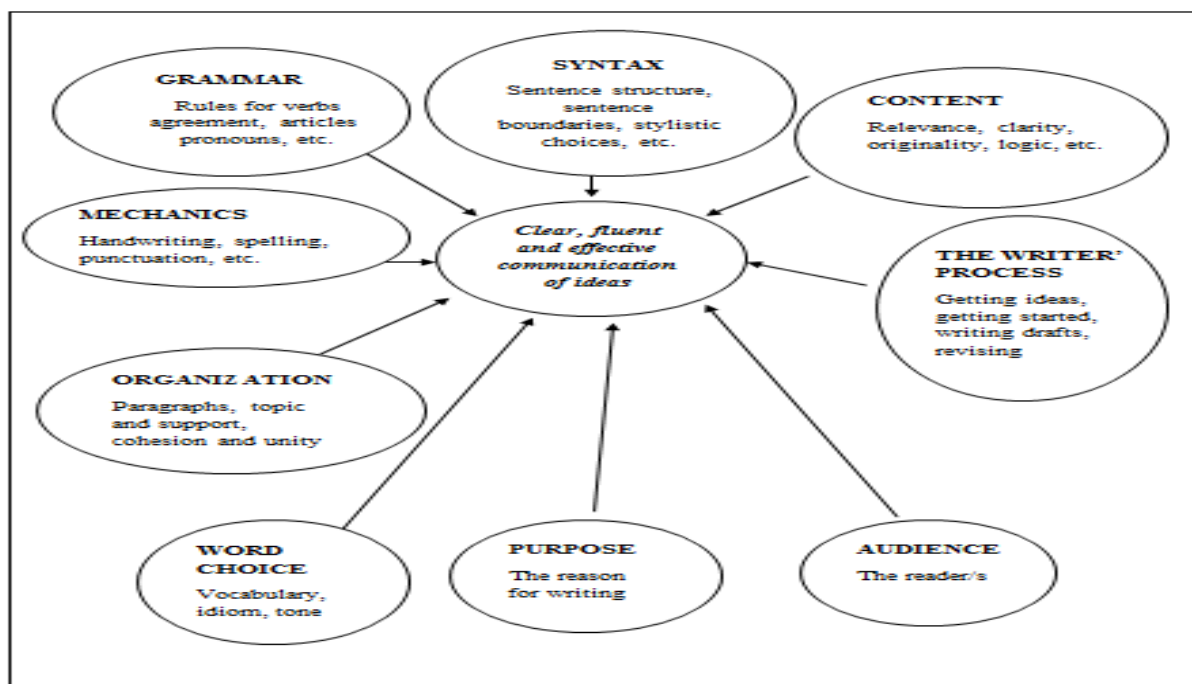
Figure 02: Producing a Piece of Writing (Adapted from Raimes, 1985, p. 06).

1.6.1. English Writing Conventions

Each language has its own long-standing writing conventions. According to Nation (2009), the following are the English writing conventions

> -Writing goes from left to right.
> -The lines of writing come one under the other starting from the top of the page.
> -The pages go from front to back.
> -The words are separated by spaces.
> -Sentences begin by a capital letter and end with a full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark.
> -Quotation marks are used to signal speech or citation.
> -English has upper case (capital) letters and lower case (small) letters. The use of capital letters may carry an extra meaning.
> -Sentences are organized into paragraphs.
> -In formal and academic writing, there are conventions that need to be learned, such as the use of bold and italics. The use of headings and sub-headings, the use of indentation, the use of footnotes, the use of reference and page numbering. (p.12)

1.6.2. Mechanics

Mechanics refers to " the appearance of words, to how they are spelled and arranged on paper." (Kane, 1988, p.23). The mechanics include spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and abbreviation. Capitalization and abbreviation aside, the other mechanics of spelling and punctuation pose real problems for the EFL students when composing.

1.6.2.1. Spelling

Undeniably, good spelling is an earmark of good writing. According to Eggenschwiler & Biggs (2001), "Proper spelling and careful word choice are essential ingredients for good writing."(p.127). In the same token, the written performance that is fully laden with spelling mistakes is a telling sign of a writer's sheer incompetence. Starkey (2004) sees that essay

readers describe spelling mistakes as "making the writer seem 'sloppy', 'unprofessional', 'not as smart', 'lazy', and even 'foolish'." (p.33). Besides, Barras (2005) argues that educated readers lose their confidence in a writer who makes mistakes spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes. Such mistakes could take the readers' attention away from the message that the writer wants to convey. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that spelling correctly is part of efficient communication.

The problem of spelling is a universal phenomenon touching all EFL writing classes, and EFL students in the Department of English of Jijel University are no exception. Actually, most of their writings abound with spelling mistakes of one sort or another. This could be attributable to, according to Westwood (2008), the insufficient of instruction or lack of interest on the part of the student; or to the fact that some students have perceptual or cognitive processes which are related to memory, phonological skills, or information processes. Caroll & Wilson (1993) point out that, the "English spelling system is complex and inconsistent. Because of the influence of so many other languages, many English words reflect the spelling of other languages." (p.198). This does pose problems to the FL learners as they misspell cognates, for examples. Another reason is that the English spelling system is mostly irregular showing little correspondence between pronunciation and spelling. Harmer (2001) maintains that English spelling is complex because the sound of the word and the way this word is spelt is not always obvious. Sometimes, a single phoneme has different spellings *(paw, poor, pore, pour)*; other times, the same spelling can have different sounds *(or, word, information, worry).* One more reason is that not all the varieties of English, for instance, British and American English, spell the same words in different ways as in *'color* or *colour'*, *'theatre* or *theatre'*, *'center* and *centre'*, etc.

Furthermore, EFL students often incorrectly spell words which have the same pronunciation (homophones) as *their* and *there*, *whose* and *who's*, *see* and *sea, cite, site and*

25

sight, etc.. They also tend to misspell certain words which contain prefixes and suffixes; for example, *unbelieveable* instead of *unbelievable*, *iregualar* instead of *irregular*, *admition* instead of *admission.* In addition to that, they make mistakes as regards doubling the consonants when a group of letters (mainly suffixes) are added to some words: they write *biger* instead of *bigger*, *forgeting* instead of *forgetting*, *stoped* instead of *stopped*, etc.

In such cases, the role of teachers of writing becomes largely instrumental in minimizing spelling mistakes in their students' writings. All along the writing process, especially during in-class writing practice, the teachers should encourage their students to consult their dictionaries in order to get their words spelt correctly. Furthermore, they need to focus more on the proofreading stage of writing for the latter's aim is precisely to check, among other things, their spelling mistakes. On this, Westwood (2008) purports that:

> Teachers need to encourage their students to check their own work carefully [through the proofreading stage] and to help one another with such checking and correction. Students should be praised for every attempt they make to self-correct any error. (p.55)

Last but not least, writing teachers are called upon to effectively integrate reading as a skill in their EFL writing classes. Through extensive reading, EFL students can cognitively and meta-cognitively know how words are correctly spelt so as to have a mistake-free writing. For weak spellers, however, there exists certain strategies that would help them improve their spelling skills especially through the use of mnemonics, sounding words, using flash cards, and visiting helpful spelling and vocabulary websites (Devine, 2002). Brown & Hood (1989) suggest other strategies which involve:

> -Reading as much as possible.
> -Taking notice of spelling.
> -Playing word games often found in newspapers and magazines.
> -Becoming more aware of one's own spelling weaknesses and checking them when revising.   (p.32)

1.6.2.2. Punctuation

To Stilman (1997), the word punctuation "derives from the Latin for point. That is, marks within a sentence point to the various meanings of its words, making sense of what otherwise might be a string of sounds."(p.53). For Lauchman (2010), punctuation is "a code, used in writing, that is often necessary for meaning and for emphasis. The code originated in an attempt to capture, in text, the various stops, pauses, and inflections of speech."(p.17). Similarly, Barras (2005) points out that punctuation marks (the comma, semi-colon, colon, full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, bracket and dash) help to indicate the pauses that in speech help to make the meaning of a sentence clear. These punctuation marks are often divided into two broad categories: The stops and the other marks. The stops (the period, the question mark, the exclamation mark, the colon, the semi colon, the comma, and the dash) correspond, though only loosely, to pauses and intonations in speech, vocal signals which help listeners follow what we say; the other marks (the apostrophe, the quotation mark, the hyphen, the parenthesis and bracket, the ellipsis, and diactritics) are purely visual signals that do not signal pauses (Kane, 1988, p.382).

Punctuation is an aspect of written English whose importance is almost invariably underestimated by both writing teachers and students. Good pieces of writing certainly warrants proper punctuation, because the latter helps clarify the meaning and helps the readers understand what the writer exactly wants to say. According to Trask (1997), "the problem with bad punctuation is that it makes life difficult for the reader who needs to read what you have written." (p.2). More importantly, Caroll & Wilson (1993) explain that the correct use of punctuation marks will considerably ease reading and indicate to the reader what groups of words belong together and often how these groups are related. This is largely because punctuation marks convey emphasis, pauses, stops, tones, changes in pattern and speakers, omissions and possessions. Starkey (2004) holds that with "proper punctuation your writing

will be more polished and technically correct, and will convey your voice more directly."(p.48). Similarly, Harmer (2004) contends that, "if capital letters, commas, full stops, sentence and paragraph boundaries, etc. are not used correctly, this cannot only make a negative impression but can, of course, make a text difficult to understand." (p.49)

Not very surprisingly, perhaps, some of EFL students' written performance can be described as turgid and out of focus because punctuation marks are not properly or adequately supplied. Students tend to overuse certain punctuation marks as the comma and the full stop, while they overlook the other marks, such as the exclamation mark, which make their writings devoid of emotions and sentiments. Other times, writing teachers may come across a whole paragraph that is utterly devoid of any punctuation marks. Students encounter difficulties with punctuation maybe because, as Hinkel (2004) puts it, "punctuation rules are largely based on convention; [which] seem somewhat random and haphazard for [FL novice] writers who were not exposed to them from the time they began reading." (p.300). Caroll & Wilson (1993) add more reasons: (1) punctuation rules are not absolute, (2) punctuation is complex, and (3) punctuation depends upon the writer's style and intended meaning.

In short, one can conclude that proper punctuation is one of the defining characteristics of good writing. Students should no longer disregard punctuation or perceive it as a matter of peripheral concern. As regards those who face difficulties with punctuation, they should bear in mind that the problem of punctuation is not by any means insurmountable. They can learn proper punctuation through extensive reading and writing. During the editing stage, they can also pay more attention to their punctuation mistakes so as to put them right for further clarification of the meaning.

1.6.2.3. Cohesion

Cohesion is a *sine qua non* condition of good writing. Halliday and Hasan (1976) who were the first to introduce the notion of 'cohesion', maintain that "The concept of cohesion is

a semantic one; it refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text." (p.4). They add that what distinguishes a text from a non-text is the concept of texture. Texture is derived from the fact that a text functions as a unity with respect to its environment. Accordingly, if a passage is to be perceived as a text, there must exist in that passage some linguistic features which contribute to its total unity and giving it texture. In essence, this latter is provided by certain cohesive relations as illustrated in the following example:

> *Would you like to meet possibly, between the seventh to the tenth?/ Any time during those days will be fine.*

To Widdowson (1978), cohesion refers to "the way sentences and parts of sentences combine so as to ensure that there is propositional development." (p.26). Essentially, Tanskanen (2006) reveals more about the source of these connections when she says that "cohesion refers to the grammatical and lexical elements on a surface of a text which can form connections between parts of the text." (p.7). Another equally inclusive definition is the one proposed by Baker (1992) when she states that cohesion is "the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which provide links between various parts of a text. These relations or ties organize and, to some extend create a text." (p.180)

Taboada (2004) argues that the phrase *'those days'* refers to *'between the seventh to the tenth'*. This relation between these two phrases makes the two sentences become a text, because they hang together as one unit. This relation is then a *cohesive relation* and the pair of related items is a *cohesive tie*. Therefore, cohesion occurs, as conclusively demonstrated in the example above, when the interpretation of some elements in the discourse depends on the interpretation of another one, whether preceding or following. Halliday & Hasan (1976) explain that further as follows

Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text. (p. 4. Original capitals)

Halliday & Hasan (1976) point out that these elements are cohesive only when they are interpreted through their relation to some other element in the text, and no single element can be cohesive by itself. They also add that since the notion of cohesion is part of the system of a language, and like the other semantic relations, cohesion is said to be realized through grammar and vocabulary. In plain English, cohesion can be divided into grammatical and lexical cohesion.

1.6.2.3.1. Grammatical Cohesion

It is the cohesion that is expressed through the grammatical relationships. Taboada (2004) states that the "types of ties established under the grammatical cohesion are all resources found in grammar. They enter into cohesive relations only when they relate to some other item outside the clause where they occur." (p.160). Grammatical cohesion is divided into:

- Reference (*personal, demonstrative, and comparative*)

- Substitution (*nominal, verbal, clausal*)

- Ellipses (*nominal, verbal, clausal*)

-Conjunction (*additive, adversative, causal, temporal*)

1.6.2.3.2. Lexical Cohesion

However, we cannot always assume that the occurrence of certain grammatical and lexical cohesions can ensure that a given text or a collection of sentences form a unified whole. Let us consider the following example provided by Enkvist (as cited in Brown and Yule, 1983)

I bought a Ford. A car in which president Wilson rode down the champs Elysees was black. Black English has been widely discussed. The discussion between the presidents ended last week. A week has seven days. Every day I feed my cat. Cats have four legs. The cat is on the mat. Mat has three letters. (p.197)

This example clearly shows that the text makes no sense even though there exist some grammatical and lexical cohesions. This proves that cohesion is not sufficient in the identification of a text. Conversely, we have manifold, easy to find, texts and contiguous sentences which display few, if any, cohesive relations, yet they can be plausibly interpreted because they form unified and coherent wholes. Widdowson (1978) provides the following illustrative example:

A: That's the telephone.

B: I'm in the bath.

C: O.K. (p. 29)

Another example is given by Brown & Yule (1983)

Once again I lie awake in the small hours tormented by my social conscience. Sometimes it is the single mothers, sometimes the lower classes or disadvantaged Highland sheep farmers, but today it is the homeless. (p.196)

These two examples are devoid of any overt cohesive relations; nevertheless, they make sense for they perfectly hang together. This led Brown & Yule (1983) to draw the following conclusion, "It seems to be the case then that 'texture', in the sense of explicit realization of semantic relations, is not criterial to the identification and co-interpretation of texts." (p.196)

Cohesion represents the overt grammatical and lexical relations within a text that contribute to the interpretation and identification of that text. However, such surface textual cohesion proves barely sufficient in the creation of unity in texts and therefore should be

perceived of secondary importance. "(W)hat actually gives texture to a stretch of language is not the presence of cohesive markers but our ability to recognize underlying semantic relations which establish continuity of sense." (Baker, 1992, p.219). More precisely, what truly accounts for and seems to be the determinant of the unity of a text is the notion of 'coherence', the point to be discussed next.

1.6.2.4. Coherence

Coherence is quite central to any written discourse because it ensures its 'unity' and 'hanging together'. Any piece of writing that is lacking in coherence will totally fail to communicate the intended message to the reader. For Hinkel (2004), coherence refers to the "the organization of discourse with all elements present and fitting together logically."(p.303). In a similar vein, Caroll & Wilson (1993) see that coherence is "the Velcro of writing. Without coherence, neither sentences nor paragraphs would make sense. They would be disjointed, disconnected a jumble mass of words."(p.264). As far as paragraph writing is concerned, Kane (1988) contends that coherence is the fitting together of ideas; it belongs to the substructure of paragraph, to relationships of thought, feeling, and perception. To him, for a paragraph to be coherent, it must satisfy two criteria: *relevance* and *effective order*. *Relevance* means that every idea should be relevant to the topic. *Effective order* means that the ideas must be arranged in a way that clarifies their logic or their importance.

Taboada (2004) expands upon the notion of coherence and views it as the hanging together of a text with something outside itself, more particularly, in relation to its context of situation or culture. Therefore, one can assume that coherence should not be regarded only as text-centered but also reader-centered. That is, the coherence of a text can likewise be measured depending on the reader's ability to understand and interpret that text. Baker (1992) adds that

coherence of a text is the result of the interaction between knowledge presented in the text and the reader's own knowledge and experience of the world, the latter being influenced by a variety of factors such as age, sex race, nationality, education, occupation, and political and religious affiliations.   (p.219)

Additionally, Harmer (2004) believes that for a text to be coherent, even without the presence of cohesive devices, the reader must understand at least two things: First, *the writer's purpose*- for example, is it to give information, suggest a course of action, or express an opinion about world events? Second, *the writer's line of thought*-for instance, whether a text is a discursive, narrative, or descriptive piece, etc. Along the same lines, Sarzhoska-Georgievska (2016) argues that coherence determines the semantic relations which ensure the intelligibility of a certain text; therefore, for coherence to be realized, some conditions should be fulfilled. These include: The purpose of the author, the expectations of the audience, and conveying the message.

Coherence, according to Caroll & Wilson (1993), is of two types: *Internal coherence* and *external coherence*. Internal coherence is the glue that links one sentence to another in a paragraph. In a coherent paragraph, every sentence should stick to the one before it. This can be achieved through a repeated word or synonym, a sustained thought, a clause that harkens back to the previous sentence, parallel structure, a pronoun, chronology, or a coordinating or subordinating conjunction that indicates the relationship between one sentence and the next. External coherence, on the other hand, is the glue that coheres one paragraph to another. External coherence seems to draw upon the same linguistic features used by internal coherence to guarantee that a piece of writing is well constructed.

Coherence, or the property of 'unity' and 'hanging together' of texts, is of paramount importance for any stretch of language to make sense. Quality writing cannot be measured by the abundance of certain cohesive markers, but by the fact that the sentences and paragraphs

all fit together logically. Hence, writing teachers should not overemphasize the cohesive devices to improve their students' writing at the expense of the three fundamental aspects of coherence which include: Purpose, audience, and context. On that, Sarzhoska-Georgievska (2016) recommends the following

> teaching writing should include explicit teaching of coherence creating elements and raise students' awareness of the need to focus on 'whole' texts that is on the level of discourse beyond the sentence level. Students have to be sensitized to the important role that the reader plays in creating coherence.
> (pp.27-28)

1.6.2.5. Cohesion and Coherence

As pointed out earlier, coherence means the fitting together of a given passage, whereas cohesion concerns the way grammatical and lexical relations guarantee 'textness'. In effect, unlike coherence, there is more unanimity amongst the opponents of Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory of cohesion on the minor contribution of cohesive devices to the creation of texts. For Brown & Yule (1983), "Formal cohesion will not guarantee identification as a text nor, (…), will it guarantee textual coherence." (p.197). Baker (1992) adopts the same view and maintains that, even "a simple cohesive relation of co-reference cannot be recognized, and therefore cannot be said to contribute to the coherence of a text, if it does not fit in with a reader's prior knowledge of the world." (p.219)

Most supporters of this view tend to treat coherence and cohesion as two separate phenomena, without one having an influence on the other. However, there is no denying the fact that both coherence and cohesion contribute to the identification of texts. According to Witte & Faigley (1981), " Cohesion defines those mechanisms that hold a text together, while coherence defines those underlying semantic relations that allow a text to be understood and

used." (p.202). Therefore, though coherence and cohesion can be studied separately, they should be regarded as closely intertwined. Tanskanen (2006) argues that:

> Although cohesion and coherence will thus be kept separate, it is important to realize that the two phenomena are nonetheless related. There is an interplay between them in that the presence of cohesive devices in a text facilitates the task of recognising its coherence. In conclusion, it is firmly believed…that successful communication depends on both cohesion and coherence, which are simultaneously independent and intertwined. (p.21)

This conclusion seems to resolve the debate over cohesion and cohesion. Bearing this in mind, writing teachers and students will be better able to attend to the problem of cohesion and coherence. Hinkel (2004) suggests the following techniques that teachers can use to increase coherence and cohesion in their students' writing.

> - One effective way to teach cohesion is show students how to provide known information, usually with repeated lexical items or substituted lexical items in the first part or a sentence with new information presented at the end of the sentence.
> - Enumerative nouns (e.g., aspect, characteristic, issues) are common in academic writing. Students can learn them and use them for lexical substitution to provide cohesion without undue redundancy.
> - In coherent papers, examples are commonly used in support of points, but students need to focus on using academic types of examples in academic writing.
> -For the most part, students should avoid rhetorical questions and presupposition markers such as obvious, obviously and of course in their academic writing.
> -There are few basic punctuation rules that are fairly straightforward. Students should be instructed on the application of these rules and held accountable for following them.
> (p.303)

1.7.2.6. Style

Style is a very crucial aspect in writing and writing instruction. Basically, the style of a piece of writing is "its character or identity." (Reinking & Osten, 2017, p.133). That is, one can describe any written performance as turgid, mundane, eccentric, flamboyant, arresting, prolix, and witty, depending on the style with which one writes. In general terms, the word 'style' refers to the sum of the actual words, sentences and paragraphs, and also to the result of strategy -that involves selecting particular aspects of a topic, organizing them, and choosing the right word to express them- which is, in turn, determined by the purpose of writing: the end we are aiming at (Kane, 1988, p.9).

Style is all about *how* something is written rather than *what* is written. One cannot use the same language for every situation; it all depends on whom we are writing for. (Grenville, 2001). Likewise, Zobel (1997) highlights the importance of considering the audience when composing, claiming that the writing style is the manner of expression that has to do with how well the text communicates with potential audience, and not with the correct use of grammar. What is more, style is not a matter of what is correct but a matter of what is appropriate; therefore, the students are to be sensitized to the fact that their writing styles should vary in accordance with the audience and purpose (Fulwiler, 1988). Besides, Bowden (2008) delineates that

> If one conceives of the work of writers as participating in a network, then stylistic choices (vocabulary, sentencing, structure, and other aspects of form) stem from the interaction between writer, audience, context, and purpose- in other words, from a consideration of how the piece fits, frames, and adjusts the network. (p.296)

Galco (2001) provides three things to be borne in mind if one tries to find his own style

- Say it naturally

- Vary your sentence structure

- Try our different types of figurative language.   (p. 112)

In his fascinating book *the element of style,* Strunk (2000) suggests other cardinal rules of thumb that would help writers establish their own style; they are summed up as follows.

- Place yourself in the background

- Write in a way that comes naturally

- Work from a suitable design

- Write with nouns and verbs and avoid the use of qualifiers

-Revise and rewrite

-Do not overwrite and overstate

- Do not affect a breezy manner

- Use orthodox spelling

- Do not explain too much

-Do not construct awkward adverbs and avoid fancy words

-Make sure the reader knows who is peaking

-Do not use dialect unless your ear is good and use figures of speech sparingly

-Be clear but do not take shortcuts at the cost of clarity

-Do not inject opinion

-Avoid foreign languages and prefer the standard to the offbeat.

Conclusion

   In this chapter, the focus was on the fact that writing is physically and mentally challenging. It is such a grueling process on account of the operations writers should carry out to produce acceptable pieces of writing. What also makes writing a unique language skill is that, unlike the other language skills, it has to be cognitively learned. It is then important to know that writing is not just there for the sake of communication, but instead it can be deployed as an effective mode for learning and thinking.

There was also the discussion that L1 writing is different from L2 writing, and that teachers of writing should be aware of that if they want their EFL writing classes to achieve a substantial measure of success. Central to the writing instruction is the integration of certain language skills and aspects, notably reading and grammar which both are expected to help students update their writing skills.

Chapter Two

Composition Instruction and Assessment towards Writing to Write

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Composition Instruction and Assessment towards Writing to Write

Introduction

In the long sweep of its history, writing was deemed markedly inferior to the other language skills. It was conceived of as either a graphic representation of the spoken language or, at best, as a powerful tool to reinforce grammar and speech. However, over the last fifty years or so, there has been an upsurge in FL rhetoric studies that spawned a revolutionary change in how writing should be approached . Most importantly, such studies have given rise to a panoply of theories and approaches that have contributed to a better teaching and learning of writing.

This chapter shines some light on the most influential approaches to teaching writing, along with the fundamental principles underpinning them. A focus is also put on their advantages and their drawbacks. In addition to that, the various stages writers go through in order to produce acceptable texts are discussed. The notion of assessment which comprises a substantial part in every teacher's professional life is expanded on. Lastly, the most widespread scoring procedures implemented by teachers to judge and evaluate their students' written performance are evenly discussed.

2.1. Approaches to Teaching Writing

In the second half of the twentieth century, a wide range of theoretical frameworks and approaches to teaching writing began to emerge. Each of which viewed the concept of 'writing' from a different perspective, all contributing to facilitate an understanding of the distinct nature of writing. Hyland (2003) contends that each of these theories should be accurately seen as another piece in the jigsaw, as complementary and overlapping

perspectives. Therefore, it is helpful to understand them as curriculum options organizing the teaching of writing around a different focus:

- Language structure

- Text functions

- Themes or topics

- Creative expression

- Composing process

- Genre and content of writing (p.2)

These approaches are therefore not necessarily conflicting but rather complementary and overlapping. Writing teachers are to take recourse to all of them if they want their WE sessions to thrive. What follows is a historical sketch of the most ingenious approaches yet advanced to ESL/EFL composition instruction.

2.1.1. The Controlled to Free Approach

This approach prevailed in the 1950s and early1960s when second language learning contexts were thoroughly dominated by the audio-lingual approach (focusing mainly on listening and speaking). Back then, language was equated with speech (from structural linguistics), and learning with habit formation (from behaviorist psychology). For that reason, "it is not surprising that from this perspective writing was regarded as a secondary concern, essentially as reinforcement for oral habits." (Silva, 1990, p.12). As a result, writing sessions were entirely devoted to grammar instruction, in that the students were only encouraged to attain a mastery of different grammatical and syntactic forms.

Raimes (1983) maintains that this approach is sequential: First of all, students are given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically. With such controlled exercises, writing students are given the opportunity to write in profusion without committing errors. Only after achieving certain fluency are the students allowed to perform

some free compositions. In brief, this approach, according to Raimes (1983), "stresses three features: grammar, syntax, and mechanics. It emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency or originality." (p.7)

2.1.2. The Free Writing Approach

Unlike the controlled to free method, this approach is built upon the premise that, when composing, writing students should assign higher priority to content and fluency at the expense of form. To put it differently, this approach emphasizes the quantity of writing rather than the quality. Given that form-related aspects like grammatical accuracy and organization are of second priority, the teacher's interference during the process of writing is *ipso facto* fairly limited.

Within the scope of this approach, the teacher can only read the students' written performance or comment on the way they expressed their ideas. So central to this approach are the two parameters of audience and content, especially since students feel strongly motivated to write when they choose by themselves the subjects they are interested in and they desire to write about (Raimes, 1983, p.7). Apart from its merits and demerits, this approach tends to fare well so long as the students are fluent writers.

2.1.3. The Paragraph Pattern Approach

This approach gives importance to the organization of ideas over the other aspects of writing, notably accuracy, fluency and content. Raimes (1983) argues that one of the central tenets of this approach is that people in different cultures tend to construct and organize their communication with each other in different ways. Therefore, if students, for instance, want to be fluent writers in English they need to see, analyze, and practice the particularly 'English' features of a piece of writing.

Silva (1990) adds that the chief concern of this approach is the logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms and of primary interest is the paragraph. The attention is not

only given to its elements (topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentences, and transitions), but also to the different options for developing the paragraph: Illustration, comparison, contrast, exemplification, etc. According to Raimes (1983), in such approach, the students are required to

-Copy paragraphs, analyze models of paragraphs, and imitate model passages.

-Put scrambled sentences into paragraph order.

-Identify general and specific statements.

-Choose or invent an appropriate topic sentence.

-Insert or delete sentences. (p. 8)

2.1.4. The Grammar Syntax Organization Approach

As its name suggests, this approach emphasizes grammar and organization, i.e. the form. It stresses the fact that although writing is a composite of various skills, these skills are not to be learned separately. That is, when writing students must not favor a certain feature for another, but should instead work on all the other features concurrently. By way of illustration, Raimes (2003) states that if we want to write a set of instructions on how a given device operates, students need to go through the following points.

-Using the simple forms of verbs.

-Using an organizational plan based on chronology.

-The use of sequence words like *first, afterwards, then, next, finally*, etc.

-The use of sentence structures like "when…, then…" (p. 8)

2.1.5. The Communicative Approach

This approach takes into account the fact that writing is a communicative act, and therefore student writers should consider two important aspects when composing*: The purpose* and *the audience*. According to Raimes (1983), students should behave like writers in real life and ask the following questions: Why am I writing this? Who will read it?

44

Raimes (1983) adds that, traditionally, the teacher used to be the audience for students' writing. Yet, within this approach the teachers have extended the readership to the other students in the class or even outside the class. Thus, the student writers are provided with a context in which to select appropriate content, language, and levels of formality. (p.9)

However, it is to be pointed out that EFL writing sessions seem to overlook the importance of taking into consideration the purpose of writing and the audience before the students go about writing. Most of our students' written performance sounds unexciting because, on the one hand, they don't know why they are writing, and on the other hand, they know that their teacher will be the only one to read what they have written. Hence, the need to incorporate a sense of purpose and audience when writing seems extremely poignant if our students want to hone their composition skills.

2.1.6. The Process-oriented Approach

The process oriented approach, whose prime concern is to discover what writers actually do as they write, had coincided with a growing dissatisfaction with the product-oriented approaches to teaching writing (White,1988). Silva (1990) believes that the "introduction of the process approach to [EFL] composition seems to have been motivated by dissatisfaction with controlled composition and the current-traditional approach." (p.15). These model-based approaches were strongly denounced because of their overemphasis on the surface features and formal properties of the texts at the expense of the other key aspects of writing, chief amongst them are purpose and audience.

Within the scope of these orientations, writing is viewed as a means to reinforce grammar and speech, and, because there is an obsession with correct form, achieving accuracy in writing is always given precedence over fluency. This is not to belittle the importance of these approaches, nonetheless, fluent and effective writing cannot be attained only through syntactic complexity and grammatical accuracy. Hyland (2011) delineates that

45

Many students can construct syntactically accurate sentences and yet are unable to produce appropriate written texts, and an obsessive focus on accuracy may deter them from taking risks which move them beyond their current competence. Simply, students can't simply learn abstract features to produce successful texts but also need to know how to apply their grammatical knowledge for particular purposes and genres. (p.22)

This product-oriented view of writing continued through the 1950s and 1960s. Yet, in 1963, the Conference of College Composition and Communication marked a renewal of interest in rhetoric and composition theory; a revival that generated the 'process' approach to composition that focused on understanding how people write and learn to write. Thenceforth, writing teachers began to embrace a 'process' approach to writing while tossing out their handbooks and grammar exercises. Thus, 'product' became almost a dirty word; whereas the sentence 'writing is a process, not a product' became the mantra of writing enthusiasts (Clark, 2005). It is worth noting that the 'process approaches' view of writing was profoundly influenced by that of the expressive orientation. One of the visionary leaders of the expressive movement is Elbow (1981) who states that there "is no hiding the fact that writing well is a complex, difficult, and time consuming process." (p.3)

In the process approach, Hyland (2011) claims that "writing is seen as a problem solving activity rather than an act of communication." (p.18). Badger & White (2000) add that, "writing is seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as knowledge about grammar and text structure." (p.155). However, there is not much unanimity amongst 'process adherents' over the stages writers go through to produce a piece of writing, but a typical model usually identifies four stages: prewriting; composing/drafting; revising; and editing (Tribble cited in Badger & White, 2000, p.155)

46

Of a particular interest to the process approaches is the notion of '*recursiveness*', which indicates that writing is not a linear process but instead a recursive one, in that the writer can move back and forth between the stages of writing whenever needed. Nunan (1989) sees that "in many instances, the writer starts out with only the vaguest notion of this. The ideas are then refined, developed and transformed as the writer writes and rewrites." (p.36). To put it simply, after planning, drafting and editing, the writers can re-plan, re-draft, and re-edit. Even when they get to what they think is their final product, they can change their minds and re-plan, draft, or edit. (Harmer, 2004, p.6). Along the same lines, Flower & Hayes (1977) explicate the notion of *recursiveness* as follows:

> Do writers dutifully Plan, Generate, Construct and then turn out the light with the paper done? The answer is an emphatic no…the process of writing rarely if ever exhibits those autonomous stages text books describe as Gather information, Outline, and Write. Instead, thought in writing moves in a series of non-linear jumps from one problem or procedure to another.(p.460)

Overall, The different stages of the writing process are demonstrated in figure below:

Selection of topic: by teacher and/or students

Prewriting: brainstorming, collecting data, note taking, outlining, etc.

Composing: getting ideas down on paper

Response to draft: teacher/peers respond to ideas, organization, and style

Revising: organizing, style, adjusting to readers, refining ideas

Response to revisions: teacher/peers respond to ideas, organization, and style

Proofreading and editing: checking and correcting form, layout, evidence, etc.

Evaluation: teacher evaluates progress over the process

Publishing: by class circulation or presentation, notice-boards, website, etc.

Follow-up tasks: to address weaknesses

Figure 03. The Recursive Nature of the Writing Process (Hyland, 2003, p. 11)

Raimes (1983) argues that the teachers who adopt a process approach provide their students with two crucial supports: Time and feedback. Time helps them in exploring the topic through writing, showing the teacher and each other drafts, and using what they write to read over, think about, and move them on to new ideas. Feedback, on the other hand, helps the students improve the content of what they write in their drafts. Hyland (2003), on his part, stresses the importance of feedback in the process approach when he says that, "response is crucial in assisting learners to move through the stages of the writing process and various ways of providing feedback are used." (p.12)

2.1.6.1. Feedback Defined

Feedback plays a fairly important role in language learning. It aims at informing the learners about their current state of performance, and thus offering them proper guidance on how to promote effective learning. As far as writing is concerned, Zamel & Spack (2006) assert that, "when instructors provide supportive feedback to what students have written, writing can serve as a powerful means for promoting language acquisition." (p.126).

It is to be noted here that all along the prominence of the product oriented approach in the first half of the twentieth century, which is chiefly concerned with the form of the final product, feedback to students on their writings was "in the form of a final grade on a paper accompanied by much red into throughout the essay." (Grab & Kaplan, 1996, p.378)

However, the broad concept of feedback received meticulous attention in the aftermath of the advent of the Process-oriented Approach to teaching writing. This approach emphasizes the creation of meaning and the organization of ideas, i.e., the content. In essence, it views the writing skill as a series of mental processes that necessitates an active intervention on the part of the teacher. This is often done through feedback. Elbow (1981) maintains that getting feedback on an early draft means getting criticized before actually polishing your hoped for a piece of writing. On the contrary, getting feedback on the final draft is frustrating because you

are criticized for your best work. In the same vein, Hyland (2003) concludes that, "feedback therefore emphasizes a process of writing and rewriting where the text is not seen as self-contained but points forward to other texts the student will write." (p. 177)

Feedback is a kind a formative assessment that provides information to both teachers and students regarding classroom learning goals. (Brookhart, Moss, & Beverly, 2008). In general terms, feedback is defined as "information provided by an agent …regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. It occurs typically after instruction that seeks to provide knowledge and skills or to develop particular attitudes." (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 102)

In writing, Keh (1990) claims that, feedback is "a fundamental element of a process approach to writing. It can be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision." (p.294). Put differently, feedback refers to the comments, questions and suggestions a reader gives a writer to produce 'reader-based prose' as opposed to 'writer-based prose'.

As stated above, learning can effectively be promoted through feedback. Mory (2004) contends that feedback supports learning in four major ways: First, feedback can be regarded as an incentive for increasing response rate and/or accuracy. Second, feedback can be considered as a reinforcer that automatically links responses to previous stimuli. Third, feedback can also be considered as information that the learner can deploy to change or validate previous responses. Lastly, feedback can immensely help learners construct internal schemata and analyze their learning processes.

In their article, the Power of Feedback, Hattie & Timperley (2007) proposed a model of feedback to enhance learning. This model tends to answer three major questions: *Where am I going?* (Feed Up), *How am I going?* (Feed Back), and *where to next?* (Feed Forward). Each feedback question works at four levels: (1) feedback about the task (how well tasks are understood/performed), (2) feedback about the processing of the task (the main processes

needed to understand/perform the task), (3) feedback about self-regulation (self-monitoring, directing, and regulating of actions), and (4) feedback about the student as a person (personal evaluations-usually positive-about the learner).

According to Keh (1990), there are three forms of feedback: Peer feedback, conferences, and written comments, as will be presented now.

2.1.6.1.1. Peer Feedback

It is also referred to as peer evaluation, peer critiquing, peer response, and peer editing. This type of feedback is "one of the most useful strategies (…) for helping students gain awareness of audience."(Clark, 2005, p157). More importantly, by gaining a conscious awareness that they are not only writing for their teacher, the students will be more motivated to write and improve their writing. According to Lee (2017), from socio-cultural perspectives, peer feedback is "another significant form of mediation to bring about improvement in student writing." (p.59). This type of feedback is discussed in some depth further down.

2.1.6.1.2. Conferences

Conferences refer to face-to-face interactions between the student-writer and the teacher-reader. According to Ferris (2002), "many writing instructors feel that one-on-one conferences with students-whether to discuss ideas, organization, errors- are more effective than written commentary or corrections." (p. 38). Besides, Bitchener & Ferris (2012) argue that conferences "might be seen as a follow-up activity if learners need more information than what can be provided by written [corrective feedback] alone." (p.182). Similarly, Lee (2017) adds that though written feedback has been more extensively studied and addressed, it has been pointed out that teacher written feedback should be followed up by face-to-face conferences (oral feedback), in which teachers can immediately respond to every student's needs.

Keh (1999) claims that one of the advantages of face-to-face conferences (oral feedback) is the interaction that exists between the teacher and the student. She delineates that

> The teacher-reader is a 'live' audience, and thus is able to ask for clarification, check the comprehensibility of oral comments made, help the writer sort through problems, and assist the student in decision making. Thus, the teachers role can be perceive as a participant in the writing process rather than as a grade-giver. And compared to writing comments, conferences also allow more feedback and more accurate feedback to be given per minute. (p.298)

Along the same line, Hyland (2003) states that one-on-one conferences can be potentially beneficial for both teachers and students. She sees that

> The interactive nature of the conference gives teachers a chance to respond to the diverse cultural, educational, and writing needs of their students, clarifying meaning, and resolving ambiguities, while saving them the time spent in detailed marking of papers. For students, writing conferences not only assist learners with auditory learning styles, but give them a clearer idea of their strengths and weaknesses, develop their autonomy skills, allow them to raise questions on their written feedback, and help them construct a revision plan. (p. 192)

2.1.6.1.3. Written Comments

Writing students need to consider carefully their teachers' written comments in order to improve their writing. According to Sommers (2003), written comments should not be perceived as "an end in themselves-a way for teachers to satisfy themselves that they have done their jobs-but rather as a means for helping students to become more effective writers." (p.239). Lee (2017) maintain that written commentary can take several forms: statements, imperatives, questions, and hedges. And that the teachers should vary these forms in accordance with each student's needs and level of proficiency.

In addition to that, Harmer (2004) holds that the way teachers give feedback on writing hinges on the kind of writing the students engage in, and the effect they wish to create. He adds that teachers can use a number of devices to help their students write more successfully, chief amongst them are: *responding* and *coding*. Responding, which is time consuming, means thinking of the written feedback as a way of 'responding' to students' writings rather than assessing what they have done. These written comments ought to be helpful (positive) and not censorious.

Coding, on the other hand, refers to the codes and symbols used by the teachers when correcting their students' written performance. These codes can be put either in the body of the writing itself, or in a corresponding margin. Writing teachers should make sure that their students know perfectly well what these symbols and codes mean, since "Survey of student reactions to teacher feedback have found that student writers resent cryptic codes or symbols that they do not understand." (Ferris, 2011, p.102).

Below is a list of recommendations, suggested by Keh (1999), on how to write effective written comments.

> 1. connect comments to lesson objectives (vocabulary, etc);
>
> 2. note improvements: 'good', plus reason why;
>
> 3. refer to a specific problem, plus strategy for revision;
>
> 4. write questions with enough information for students to answer;
>
> 5. Write summative comment of strengths and weaknesses;
>
> 6. ask 'honest' questions as a reader to a writer rather than statements
>
> which assume too much about the writer's intention/meaning. (p303)

It is safe to say that feedback, when rationally planned and delivered, is considered a key component in any effective language learning process. In writing, unlike the other language skills, feedback can be given after and at any point during the process of composing. This

may help student writers gradually refine their work before reaching their hoped for pieces of writing.

Speaking of our university students, their written performance tends to be fraught with all sorts of mistakes, largely because they only receive feedback on their final products. Besides, they are never encouraged to attend to their teachers' feedback when they receive it because this latter is not up to the mark qualitatively and quantitatively. In a nutshell, Nicol & Macfarlane (2006) identified seven principles for good feedback practice. For them, good feedback practice:

> 1. Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);
>
> 2. Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;
>
> 3. Delivers high quality information to students about their learning;
>
> 4. Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning;
>
> 5. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self esteem;
>
> 6. Provides opportunities to close the gap between the current and desired performance;
>
> 7. Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape learning.   (p.205)

2.1.6.2. Models of the Writing Process

Over the past years, cognitive research has attempted to uncover the mysteries of the writing process. It has suggested that proficient writers' composing process differs greatly from that of less proficient ones. It has also proposed various cognitive models that could account for the complexity of the writing process.

These models, most notably Flower and Hayes, 1981; Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987, advance the idea that writing is a complex cognitive activity, and that the quality of a given piece of writing hinges upon how effectively writers maneuver a variety of tasks when

composing. More importantly, these models "show some differences in the conceptualization of details and terminology, but the consensus is that writing is a cognitively complex and interactive process made up of multiple processes." (Cho, 2008, p. 166)

2.1.6.2.1. The Flower and Hayes Model

An influential and widely accepted model of writing processes is that of Flower and Hayes (1981). Their cognitive process theory of writing draws heavily upon theories of cognitive psychology. The underlying idea of cognitive psychology is that before understanding a particular behavior such as writing, we must first understand the mental structures that determine that behavior, and since language and thought are the primary mental structures that influence writing, to understand then how students learn to write, we must understand how these structures develop (Clark, 2005).

Flower & Hayes (1981) cognitive theory, which is based on their work with protocol analysis (thinking aloud while solving problems), rests on four key points:

> 1. The process of writing is best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate during the act of composing.
> 2. These processes have a hierarchical, highly embedded organization in which any given process can be embedded within any other.
> 3. The act of composing (writing) itself is a goal-directed thinking process, guided by the writer's own growing network of goals.
> 4. Writers generate their own goals in two key ways: by generating both high level goals and supporting sub-goals which embody the writer's developing sense of purpose, and then, at times, by changing major goals or establishing entirely new ones based on what has been learned in the act of writing. (p.366)

The following figure sums up the major thinking processes and constraints as seen by Flower and Hayes in the protocols.
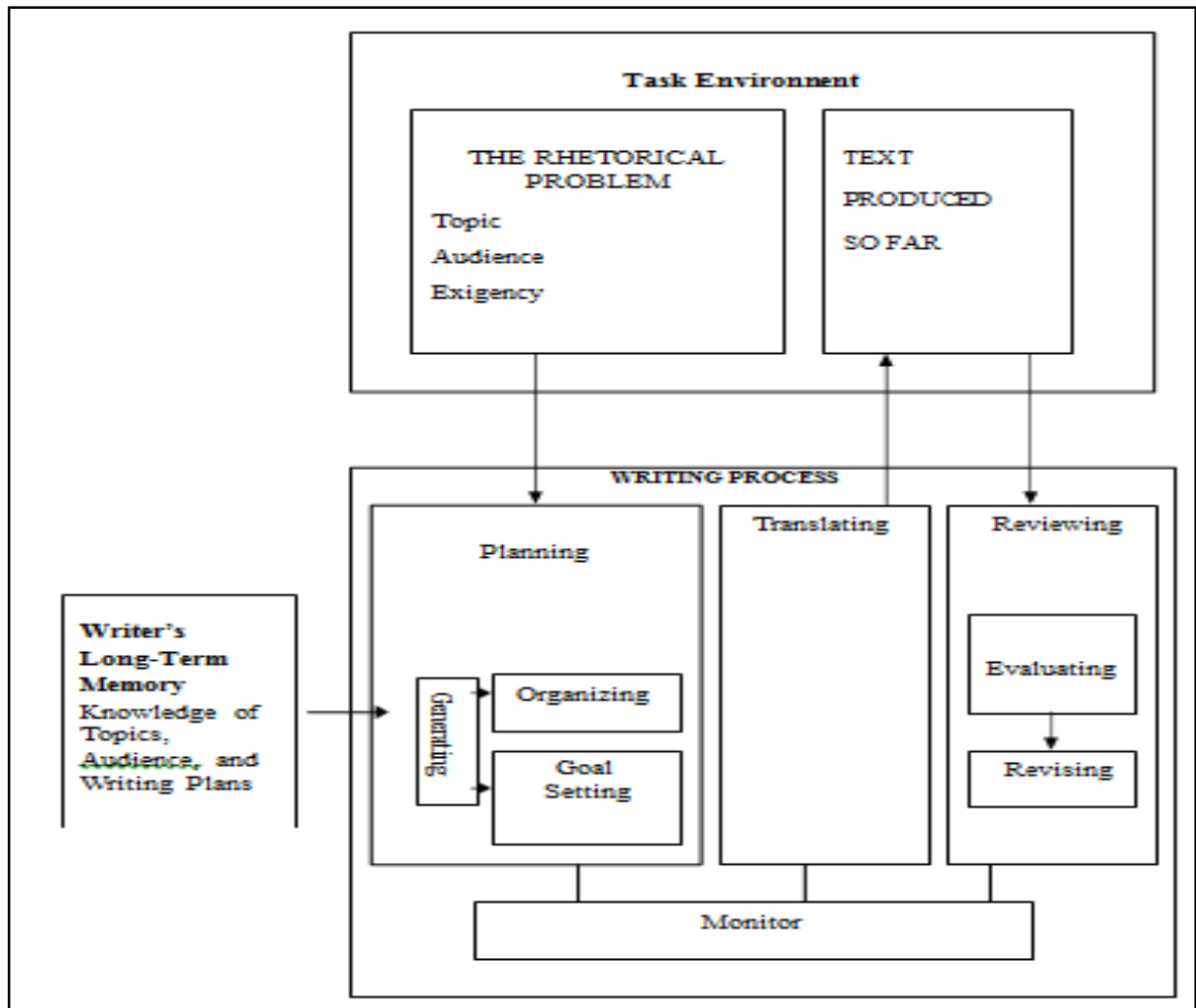
Figure 04: A Cognitive Process Model (Flower and Hayes, 1981, p. 370)

Flower & Hayes (1981) comment on the figure above as follows.

> The arrows indicate that the information flows from one box or process to another; that is knowledge about the writing assignment or knowledge from memory can be transferred or used in the planning processes, and information from planning can flow back the other way. What the arrows do not mean is that such information flows in a predictable left to right circuit, from one box to another as if the diagram were a one-way flow chart… the multiple arrows, which are conventions in diagramming this sort of model, are unfortunately only weak indications of the complex and active organization of thinking processes which our work attempts to model. (pp. 386-387)

It is worthwhile to mention that other writers also stress similarly complex interconnecting of elements and processes. Smith (as cited in White, 1988) highlights that "composition is not a matter of putting one word after another, or of translating successive ideas into words, but rather of building structure (the text) from materials (the conventions) according to an incomplete and constantly changing plan (the specification of intentions)." (p. 9)

As reflected in their model, Flower & Hayes (1981) argue that the act of writing involves three fundamental elements: *The task environment*, *the writer's long term memory*, and *the writing processes*. The task environment includes all those things outside the writer's skin. The second element is the writer's long term memory in which the writer has stored knowledge of the topic, audience, and of various writing plans. Third, the writing processes which include the basic processes of **Planning**, **Translating**, and **Reviewing**. These processes are succinctly explained below:

-Planning

It is the process in which the writers form an internal representation of the knowledge that will be used in writing. The act of building this internal representation involves a number of sub-processes: generating ideas, organizing, and goal setting. *Generating ideas* includes retrieving the relevant information from the long term memory. *Organizing* helps the writers give a meaningful structure of the ideas which are already in their memory. The process of organizing is affected by rhetorical decisions and plans for reaching the audience, because it is often guided by the goals established during the process of *goal setting* (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

-Translating

This process often means putting the ideas generated during the planning process into visible language. Unlike the process of planning, where the information and ideas are represented in symbol systems other than the language, the process of translating involves

translating a meaning into acceptable pieces of writing following the demands of special English writing. In effect, if writers are still grappling with the basic aspects of written English, the process of translating can be somewhat inimical to their process of planning (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

-Reviewing

The process of reviewing often involves two important sub-processes: *revising* and *evaluation*. These two sub-processes can interrupt and occur at any time during the act of writing. In essence, they help the writers read what they have written and allow for new cycles of planning and translating (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

2.1.6.2.2 The Bereiter and Scardamalia Model

Another equally influential model of writing processes is that of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), which was basically built on that of Flower and Hayes. According to Kellogg (1994), "Bereiter and Scardamalia view writing as an act of problem solving. Specifically, the writer must explore options and decide on solutions as to what to say and how to say it."(p.34). In their model, they distinguished two process models that account for the differences of process complexity of skilled and unskilled writers; they label them as *knowledge telling* and *knowledge transforming*. Hyland (2003) elaborates on that as follows.

> The first addresses the fact that novice writers plan less than experts, revise less often and less extensively, have limited goals and are mainly concerned with generating content. The latter shows how skilled writers use the writing task to analyze problems, reflect on the task and set goals to actively rework thoughts to change both their text and ideas. (p. 12)

Hinkel (2004) adds that knowledge transforming is considerably more cognitively complex than knowledge telling. As regards knowledge telling, the writers do not go much beyond telling what they know by simply retrieving the information already available to them in memory. Knowledge transforming, however, requires thinking, getting and processing the information needed for analysis (mostly from reading), and modifying one's thinking.

As for the pedagogical implications of this model, Hyland (2003) states that this model may well help L2 writing teachers explain the difficulties their students experience while composing. It also stresses the fact that students need to participate in more cognitively challenging writing tasks in order to broaden their composition skills.

2.1.6.3. Stages of the Writing Process

As far as paragraphs and essays are concerned, the writing process is "a set of strategies that will help you proceed from idea or purpose to the final statement of a paragraph or an essay."(Brandon & Brandon, 2011, p.31). Basically, the process approaches seem to be framed in four stages of writing: prewriting/planning, drafting, revising, and editing. What characterizes these stages is that they "can occur during any phase of writing right up to the final draft."(Kellogg, 1994, p.122). This means that these stages, whatever labels they are assigned, do not occur in a linear fashion but in recursive one. Below is a brief explanation of these stages.

2.1.6.3.1. Prewriting/Planning

Prewriting, as its name indicates, is the earliest phase in the process of writing. Prewriting is sometimes referred to as "planning, discovering, or trying out" (Fulwiler, 1988, p.23). In this stage, the student writers are supposed to think, generate ideas and reflect on them. During this stage, the writers must also think about three main issues: purpose, audience, and content structure (Harmer, 2004). Kellogg (1994) adds that there are so many prewriting activities which include: thinking, note taking, locating sources, toying with ideas and their

organization, and revising arguments. In addition to that, Brown (1994) maintains that in prewriting student writers are encouraged to generate ideas in the following ways:

- Reading (extensively) a passage

- Skimming and/or scanning a passage

- Conducting some outline research

- Brainstorming

- Clustering (begin with a key word, then add other words, using free association)

- Discussing a topic or question

- Instructor-initiated questions and probes

- Freewriting

At this juncture, we will only touch on the most commonly used prewriting strategies which are *brainstorming* and *freewriting*. According to Zemach & Rumisek (2003), brainstorming is simply a way of collecting ideas using three techniques: making a list, Freewriting, and mapping.

Brandon & Brandon (2011) maintain that brainstorming "features important words and phrases that relate in various ways to the subject area or to the specific topic you are concerned with. Brainstorming includes two basic forms: (1) asking and answering questions, and (2) listing."(p.35)

As for free writing, Elbow (1981) points out that freewriting is "the easiest way to get words on paper and the best all-around practice in writing that I know." For Kane (1988), freewriting simply means "getting ideas on paper as fast as you can. The trick is to let the feelings and ideas pour forth." (p. 25). It is worth noting here that during freewriting, the focus is on fluency rather than accuracy. That is, student writers should write without being concerned with punctuation, spelling, grammar, and other mechanics. Concerns over audience, aim, organization, and structure may prevent the students from generating and

exploring potential ideas; hence the need to set such concerns aside while freewriting (Williams, 2003).

Prewriting is the cornerstone of the writing process. Drafting, revising and editing are largely concerned with writing down and polishing the ideas previously generated and organized during the prewriting stage. Regrettably, most of Algerian EFL students tend to truncate or, worse than that, ignore this stage in the extreme. Therefore, writing teachers are called upon to stress the importance of this stage and encourage students to spend more time deciding and planning what they are going to write about.

2.1.6.3.2. Drafting

Drafting is the phase that directly ensues the prewriting stage. Basically, it is to do with jotting the ideas down onto the page. According to Galco (2001), drafting means "writing a rough, or scratch, form of your paper. It's a time to really focus on the main ideas you want to get across in your paper." (p.49). In addition to that, Fulwiler (1988) holds that during drafting, one tries to establish "direction, the main form of the argument or story, and some sense of beginning middle, and end."(p.17)

Harmer (2004) argues that "we can refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. This first 'go' at a text is often done on the assumption that it will be amended later." (p. 5). Speaking of a first draft means that there will be other versions or drafts, and that only under certain dire circumstances, such as in-class examinations, do students have time for only one draft (Brandon & Brandon, 2011; Grenville, 2001). Williams (2003) contends that writing a first draft comes after generating ideas and developing a work plan, and that successful drafting is largely determined by two factors: *discipline* and *flexibility*. Discipline means that the students should budget their time and plan ahead. Flexibility means that the student writers ought to abandon the belief that their first draft should be perfect, hence the need to produce other drafts.

During drafting, it is extremely important to disregard certain mechanics so as not to interrupt the flow of ideas. According to Brown & Hood (1989), "The drafting stage is where you really begin writing. The most important thing here is to get ideas onto paper. It is not time to worry about spelling, grammar, punctuation, and the best wording." (p.14). Kane (1988) elaborates upon that as follows:

> Accept imperfections. Don't linger over small problems. If you can't remember a spelling, get the word down and correct it later. If you can't think of exactly the term you want, put down what you can think of and leave a check in the margin to remind yourself to look for a more precise word. Your main purpose is to develop ideas and work out a structure. Don't lose sight of major goals by pursuing minor ones.(p.34)

2.1.6.3.3. Revising/Reviewing

Revising, otherwise known as reviewing, is the most critical phase in the writing process. It is considered as the third stage in the writing process but the first in the polishing process. According to Genville (2001), revising "literally means 're-seeing'. It is about fixing the bigger, structural problems and, if necessary, 're-seeing' the whole shape of the piece." (p.146).

Revising, then, does not concern fiddling with surface problems like grammar, punctuation, and spelling; instead, it includes "checking for organization, content and language effectiveness." (Brandon & Brandon, 2011, p.54). More precisely, Fulwiler (1988) highlights that revising is "re-seeing [one's] approach, topic, argument, evidence, organization, and conclusion, and experimenting with change." (p.167). On his part, Williams (2003) insists that during revising good writers tend to focus on "global changes that are intimately linked to their audience, purpose, and stance."(p.118)

When revising an essay or any type of texts, Starkey (2004) suggests considering the following questions:

- Have you addressed the topic?

-Is there a logical flow to your ideas or story?

-Is each paragraph necessary and properly placed?   (p. 55)

Kane (1988) states that when revising, one should put themselves in the readers' place by assuming what they know and do not know, what they believe and consider important, and by asking ourselves whether what is clear to us is equally clear to them.

According to Nation (2009), student writers can be encouraged to revise their writing by providing them with checklists or scales containing points to look for in their writing. Another important thing is peer feedback through which the students read their incomplete work to each other in order to receive suggestions on how to improve and continue it. Elbow (1981) subscribes to the idea of peer feedback and says that "when someone shows you how to say it more simply and in less space-whether by cutting and rearranging your words or by rewriting it afresh in his own words-it makes you more willing to practice cutting and recasting your own words." (p.123)

2.1.6.3.4. Editing

Editing is the last stage in the writing process. It is principally concerned with putting the finishing touches to the piece of writing. Although they are both integral parts of the polishing process, revising concerns the macrostructure of a text, while editing concerns the microstructure. According to Brandon & Brandon (2011), editing involves "a final correcting of simple mistakes and fundamentals such as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization."(p.54) In its broadest sense, "Editing is polishing to make the paragraphs, the sentences, and the individual words communicate carefully, accurately, and correctly with clarity, style, and grace." (Fulwiler, 1988, p.178). Essentially, Grenville (2001) explains below why it is important to edit our written work:

It's all about being practical. If you use spellings that aren't the usual ones, or grammar that isn't what we've come to accept as 'right', it will distract you readers. Instead of thinking 'what wonderful ideas this person has', they'll think 'this person can't spell'. It will break the trance of reading. (p.167)

One of the interesting characteristics of editing is that it does not just occur at the end of the writing process, instead writers "can be periodically reviewing what they write, editing it, and then proceeding with the writing. Thus, editing is not restricted to occurring after all the writing has been completed."(Nation, 2009, p.120). Another interesting thing about editing is that it is one of the hardest parts of writing. One reason is that the students are never taught how to edit, largely because teachers hold the erroneous belief that form-related mistakes do not matter in writing. Another reason is that editing needs conscious efforts, and that most students wrongly assume that writing is, much like speech, effortless and requires little if any attention to surface features (Williams, 2003).

Unfortunately, this state of affairs seems to hold true for most of our EFL writing sessions, where students are never encouraged to edit or peer edit their written performance. As a result, their work often appears to be prolix, out of focus and fully laden with egregious errors. In such a case, editing can be used as an effective way to help the students polish and improve the quality of their work.

In brief, Starkey (2004) argues that when editing one should ask the following questions:

- Do I repeat myself? Rework your point so that you say it well in the first time and remove any repetitious words and phrases.

- Do I have enough details? Look through your essays for generalities and make them more specific.

- Do I reinforce each point with a concrete/or personal example?

- Is my sentence structure varied? Sentences should not be the same length, nor should they be repetitive in any other way, such as all beginning with 'I'.

- Are there any clichés or other types of overused language?

- Do I use the active voice whenever possible?

- Are there too many or too few adjectives and adverbs?

- Are verb tenses consistent?

- Is the antecedent of every pronoun clear? (p.58)

2.1.6.4. Limitations of the Process Approach

There is no denying the fact that the process approach marked the turning point in the history of writing by causing a massive paradigm shift in composition instruction. This approach distracts attention away from only focusing on the 'finished product' to focusing on the complex cognitive tasks that writers take on to produce that finished product. Nevertheless, there are indeed some serious reservations about this orientation. Williams (2003) claims that the implementation of such an approach has had no significant effect on student writing skills. On his part, Hyland (2011) delineates that this approach is influenced by cognitive psychology rather than Applied Linguistics which means that it shines light on what writers think about as they write instead of the language they need to do it. In addition to that, because this approach is writer-centered, it neglects other forces beyond cognition such as knowing how texts are written for particular purposes and audience.

Despite the considerable research into the writing processes, more probing questions remain unanswered. The theories underpinning the process teaching methods are still unable to offer a comprehensive idea of how writers go about writing or how they learn to write. Hyland (2003). They also never spell out why writers make certain choices, and how they make the cognitive transition to the knowledge transforming model. To put it in a nutshell, Badger & White (2000) point out that:

The disadvantages of process approaches are that they often regard all writing as being produced by the same set of processes; that they give insufficient importance to the kind of texts writers produce and why texts are produced; and that they offer learners insufficient input, particularly in terms of linguistic knowledge, to write successfully. (p.157)

2.1.7. The Genre Approach

The genre approaches take full advantage of these deficiencies and advance the idea that writing teachers should lavish their students' attention on how and why texts are written in the way they are. Hyland (2011) asserts that "Genre approaches encourage us to look for organizational patterns, reminding us that when we write we follow conventions for organizing messages because we want the reader to recognize our message."(p.24)

The word 'genre' means 'type' or 'kind', and in writing it refers to "the form writers use as structure." (Caroll & Wilson, 1993, p.102). Weigle (2002) holds that genre can be defined in terms of the intended form and the intended function of writing. Form concerns such written products as letters and essays. Function can be thought of in terms of communicative functions (describing, inviting, apologizing, etc.) or in terms of discourse mode (argumentation, narration, exposition, etc.). Traditionally, the concept of genre was perceived as irrelevant to, and even incompatible with the new ideology and pedagogy of composition. Yet, based on Miller's seminal article 'Genre as Social Action'(1984), "the concept of genre has been broadened and redefined as typified social action that responds to a recurring situation." (Clark, 2005, p.242) . In actual fact, Freedman (1999) points out that genres should never be conceived of as text types identified by their textual regularities, but instead as typified actions in response to recurring social contexts. This is based on the assumption that the reader will easily interpret the writer's purpose so long as the latter (writer) anticipates,

based on the previous texts they have read of the same kind, what the former (reader) might expect (Hyland, 2011, p.23).

Taken in its broadest sense, Badger & White (2000) hold that genre-based approaches view writing as "essentially concerned with knowledge of language, and as being tied closely to a social purpose, while the development of writing is largely viewed as the analysis and imitation of input in the form of texts provided by the teacher."(p.156). Genre-based approaches, then, require that the students engage with tasks that focus on the organization and structure of some sample text (application letters, reports, essays, etc.) which are given to them, in order to be able to create their own texts of the same genre. This clearly suggests that imitating models is so central to genre approaches as is the case for product approaches. The genre approaches are then considered as an extension of product approaches, and the only difference is that genre approaches "emphasize that writing varies with social context in which it is produced." (Badger & White, 2000, p. 155). All in all, Bruce (2008) states that genre based approaches have three major strengths:

> Firstly, they make it possible to focus on larger units of language; secondly, they can provide a focus on the organizational or procedural elements of written discourse; and thirdly, they make it possible to retain linguistic components as functioning features of a larger unit of discourse, thereby avoiding atomistic approaches to teaching writing.(p.06)

Moreover, Hyland (2011) adds that by being fully conversant with how texts are structured and meanings are expressed, the teachers will be able to:

- Intervene successfully in the writing of their students.

- Provide more informed feedback.

- Making decisions about the teaching methods and materials to use.

- Approach current instructional paradigm with a more critical eye. (p.26)

Having said that, it is worthwhile to posit that the genre approach has indeed broadened the lens through which we see the writing skill. This approach views writing as a social act not predominantly linguistic or de-contextualized. In effect, the genre pedagogy is not intended as a panacea for all the problems of composition instruction, but it will certainly help make EFL writing classes more productive. Yet, it is our contention that a subtle blend of genre and process approaches will arguably fare better.

2.1.8. The Process-genre Approach

Although it is claimed that the manifold approaches to teaching writing have instigated a great deal of confusion and insecurity amongst ESL composition teachers Silva (1993), they have actually propelled us towards a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of FL writing. They have also provided writing teachers with a multiplicity of different options to draw upon in order to succeed in their EFL writing classes. doubltless, there is not a one-size-fits-all answer to the question: 'Which approach should teachers employ when teaching writing?' Therefore, "collectively, we might see the research as telling us to reject single formula for teaching writing and look at what the different models tell us."(Hyland, 2011, p.32). Raimes (1983) does not go far from that and points out that since approaches to teaching writing tend to overlap, the teachers should not be wholly devoted to one approach, to the exclusion of all the others. She concludes that, "there is no *one* way to teaching writing, but many ways."(p.11). Therefore, because it seems to encompass almost all aspects of the writing skill, we can take it as a given that implementing an eclectic mixture of genre and process approaches will prove far more useful.

This approach was first proposed by Badger and White (2000) who argue that this approach is a composite of the main features of both genre approaches and process approaches. That is to say, writing in this approach involves: "knowledge about the language (as in product and genre approaches), knowledge of the context in which writing happens and

especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and the skills in using the language (as in process approaches)." (Badger & White, 2000, pp.157-158). Essentially, the main aspects of the process genre approach are illustrated in the following diagram.
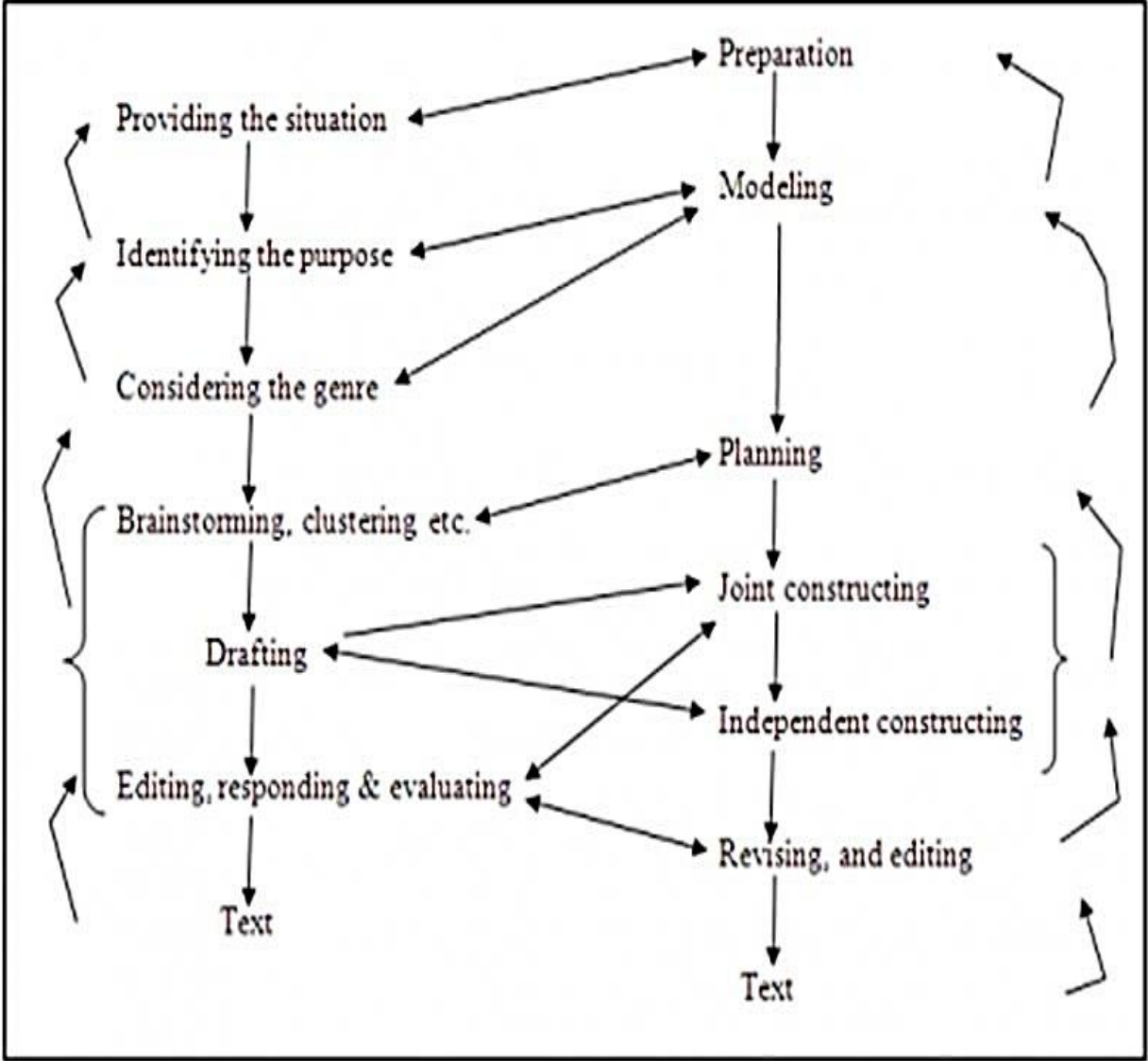
Figure 05. Application of the Process Genre Approach, Belbase (2012), Adapted from Badger and White (2000).

Belbase (2012) contends that the teaching procedures for the process genre approach, as proposed by Badger and White (2000), is divided into six steps: preparation, modeling, planning, joint constructing, independent constructing, and revising. These steps are briefly explained below.

1. Preparation

In this stage, the teacher prepares the students to write by defining a particular situation and placing it within a genre, such as a persuasive essay arguing for and against an issue of current interest. This allows the students to anticipate the structural features and organization of this genre (Belbase, 2012).

2. Modeling

In this stage, the teacher provides the students with a model of the genre and have the students take into account the purpose of the text. Then, the teacher starts elaborating on how the text is structured and how its organization contributes to accomplishing its purpose (Belbase, 2012).

3. Planning

The aim behind this stage is to help the students develop an interest in the topic by relating it to their experience. This stage involves the following meaningful activities: *brainstorming*, *discussing*, and *reading associated materials* (Belbase, 2012).

4. Joint Constructing

The key word in this stage is collaborative work in that the students are prepared to work individually through working together. The students in conjunction with the teacher use the information generated via brainstorming, drafting, and revising to write a text on the board. This final draft presents a model for the students to refer to in their individual compositions (Belbase, 2012).

5. Independent Constructing

At this juncture, the students will have examined model texts and have collaboratively constructed a text in the genre. Later on, the students can carry out their own tasks of

composing. During this process of composing, the teacher can interfere to help, clarify, and consult about the process (Belbase, 2012).

6. Revising and Editing

In this last stage, the students will come to polish their draft through revising and editing. With the help of the teacher, the students go about peer editing, discussing and evaluating their work with their classmates. The teacher may also publish written performance with the aim of boosting the students' self-esteem and motivating them to become better writers (Belbase, 2012).

2.2. Writing Assessment: An Overview

Assessment is a very central aspect of every teacher's academic life. The term assessment refers to "a judgment which can be justified according to specific weighted set goals, yielding either comparative or numerical ratings." (Taras, 2005, p.467). Writing assessment, originated in about1950, has undergone drastic changes reflecting the numerous changes in the field of composition. Writing assessment between 1950s and 1970s (during the dominance of the audio-lingual method) tended to measure the writing ability by having students answer questions about grammar, usage and punctuation. However, such tests were criticized strongly because, albeit objective and reliable, they were not valid: "A student's score on an objective grammar test did not predict whether the students could actually write any more than the written drivers' test can predict whether a person can drive a car." (Lippman, 2003, p.200).

Yancey (1999) adds that from 1970-1986 writing assessment took the form of holistically scored essays. That is, Lippman (2003) purports that writing assessment can be attained through evaluating a particular piece of prose written at a given time. These tests were considered as an improvement over the objective test because they measured what they purported to measure -writing. Again, subsequent rhetoric research, that came to view

composing as a process or as a rhetorical and social act, criticized these writing tests because they defined writing in a narrow, reductive way.

Starting from 1986, 'Portfolio-based Assessment' started to gain ground mainly in the United States. Hamp-Lyons & Condon (2000) highlight that "using portfolios across a writing program was not only practical but beneficial to the students, teachers, and the curriculum, not to mention to the people who run the program." (p.15). More to the point, portfolios "have been seen as valid because they measure what they say they will measure-students' ability to write and revise in a rhetorical setting." (Lippman, 2003, p.201). However, many composition experts have criticized the reliability of portfolio assessment claiming that there are many variables with this assessment instrument and that it is often impossible to determine how competent a writer is or how much help that writer has received during the revision process (Wolcott as cited in Lippman, 2003).

Furthermore, Lippman (2003) argues that over the preceding 50 years the focus of assessment had shifted towards program assessment. The focus should no longer be placed on the individual learner but should instead be on how well a program as a whole is working. Most importantly, this kind of assessment seeks to measure how much learners have developed or learned as a result of a particular program. Still, Yancey (1999) maintains that while this kind of assessment lends itself well to programs, it cannot be used to help individual writers and learners.

Despite the dramatic changes writing assessment has undergone so far, it has stayed the same depending on the geography and institution. Teachers should bear it in their minds that these assessment techniques are not outmoded or mutually incompatible but instead complementary and reliable. Lippman (2003) concludes that some universities are still using objective grammar test as a part of an institutional exit exam; others use the holistically essay

exam, portfolio assessment, programmatic assessment, or some combination of assessment techniques.

2.2.1. Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative and summative assessments, labeled by Scrivener (1967), Law & Murphy (1997), represent two completely distinct modes of evaluation. By and large, formative assessment is an assessment 'for' learning; while summative assessment is an assessment 'of' learning. Put otherwise, the kind of "assessment that exists outside of a context in which the student might improve her work can be labeled summative, whereas those judgments that allow the students to improve are called formative." (Huot, 2002, p.65). Gallagher (2009) asserts that the distinction between these two terms does not necessarily concern the form of the assessments, but is actually about what is done with the data generated from assessments. Hernández (2012) adds that "The key difference between these two types of assessment is not when they are used but their purpose and the effect that these practices have on students' learning." (p.490)

2.2.2. Summative Assessment

According to the IRN-NCTE joint task force on assessment (2009), "Summative assessment, often referred to as assessment *of* learning, is the after-the-fact assessment in which one looks back at what students have learned, such as end-of-course or end of year examination." (p.52). Taras (2005) maintains that "the process of assessment leads to summative assessment, that is, a judgment that encapsulates all the evidence up to a given point. This point is seen as a finality at the point of the judgment."(p.468)

In addition, Sadler (1989) sees that summative assessment is concerned with "summing up or summarizing the achievement status of a student, and is geared towards reporting at the end of a course of study especially for purposes of certification."(p.120). He concludes that "It is essentially passive and does not normally have immediate impact on learning." (p.120).

Another problem with summative assessment is that it affords no opportunity for revision because its prime aim is to measure the success of a given endeavor after it is over. (Lippman, 2003). An overemphasis on the summative assessment at the cost of formative assessment may also lead the students to jump through the assessment hoops and jettison efforts to engage in deeper approaches to learning (Gibbs as cited in Heron, 2011).

2.2.3. Formative Assessment

Formative assessment refers to "another type of evaluation which all who are involved-student, teacher, curriculum maker-would welcome because they find it so useful in helping them improve what they wish to do." Bloom et al. (as cited in Wiliam & Black, 1996, p. 538). On his part, Sadler (1989) delineates that

> Formative assessment is concerned with how judgments about the quality of student responses (performances, pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve the student's competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial-and-error learning.(p.120)

In essence, formative assessment can help promote both learning and teaching. According to Leki, et al. (2008) "formative assessments have the purpose of helping to improve the writing of individual students, to inform instruction, and to evaluate achievements or completion of courses or programs." (p.82). So central to the idea of formative assessment is the notion of feedback. Taras (2005) maintains that, "for an assessment to be formative, it requires feedback which indicates the existence of a 'gap' between the actual level of the work being assessed and the required standard." (p.168).

Sadler (1989) shares the same idea and claims that, "feedback is a key element in formative assessment, and is usually defined in terms of information about how successfully something has been or is being done." (p.120). In a nutshell, Lippman (2003) sums up the differences between summative and formative assessments as follows

In assessing writing, the goal of summative assessment is not to shape students' thinking or learning, but rather to judge how well students have accomplished the writing task. The grade at the end of a course is an example of a summative assessment, and, in this way, all instructors engage in it. External assessment is always summative. In contrast, formative assessment, which is generally internal, puts emphasis on shaping students' writing while they are still in the process of writing. The goal of most formative assessment is to help students improve their writing and writing ability. (pp.203-204)

2.2.4. Composition Scoring Techniques

Scoring or grading students' performance plays a central part in any writing teacher's job. According to Perkins (1983), "ESL composition evaluation consists of two tasks: commenting on students' papers and assigning grades."(p.666). Grading is a real bête noire for all writing teachers owing to its intricacies. Hamp-Lyons (1995) points out that "When we assess writing, we engage in another complex and multifaceted activity: judging another person's text."(p.759). Besides, Belanoff (1991) describes grading as, "the dirty thing we have to do in our own offices." (p.61.). Along the same lines, Huot (2002) asserts that, "Assessing, testing or grading is often framed as the worst aspect of the job of teaching student writers."(p.63)

The growing emphasis on the improvement of students' writing skills has resulted in the widespread use of different methods of assessing writing samples. Brown (2010) contends that, "at responsive and extensive levels of writing, three major approaches to scoring writing performance are commonly used by test designers: holistic, primary trait, and analytical." (p.241). These three types of scales are characterized by two distinctive features: "(1) whether the scale is intended to be specific to a single writing task or generalized to a class of tasks (broadly or narrowly defined), and (2) whether a single score or multiple scores are given to each script." (Weigle, 2002, p.109). Huot (2002) adds that these different types of scales are based upon the assumption that writing quality exists within the text. In other words, writing

quality is a fixed and isolated human trait that can be determined through an analysis of the various textual features.

2.2.4.1. Holistic Scoring

Holistic scoring is one of the major means of direct writing assessment. White (1982) believes that "holistic scoring, the method used in mass testing, can be useful and interesting for both teachers and students. The word holistic reminds us that it is the paper as a whole we should evaluate, not merely its parts." (p.50). More specifically, holistic scoring is chiefly concerned with "an overall impression of how well a writer communicates ideas in response to a particular writing task." (Greenhalgh & Townsend, 1981, p.811). Another more comprehensive definition of 'holistic scoring' is the one suggested by Charney (1984)

> Holistic scoring is a quick, impressionistic qualitative procedure for sorting or ranking samples of writing. It is not designed to correct or edit a piece, or to diagnose its weaknesses. Instead, it is a set of procedures for assigning a value to a writing sample according to previously established criteria. (p.67)

When grading a piece of writing holistically, Perkins (1983) suggests that graders take the following points into consideration:

> 1. Whether a thesis has been clearly stated, developed and supported, and whether an issue has been clearly raised and sufficiently resolved;
> 2. Whether sufficient support and development have been provided to the reader;
> 3. Whether the writer has tried to accommodate the reader in terms of how much the writer thinks the reader knows about the subject;
> 4. Whether there is grammatical and lexical cohesion and overall coherence;
> 5. Whether one paragraph is hinged smoothly to proceeding and succeeding paragraphs through the accomplished use of transitional words, phrases, and structure vocabulary;

6. Whether new information has been converted into given information that forms the base for predicting additional information;

7. Whether the piece makes sense. (pp. 652-653)

Holistic scoring has gained popularity over the past years because of its unique combination of validity, speed, and reliability. Holistic scoring has greater face validity than other so-called objective tests because it is based upon actual samples of writing (Holt, 1993). Huot (1990) adds that the holistic scoring procedures "are much cheaper to use because they are quicker for training, and raters can read a paper in 2 or 3 minutes, whereas in primary trait or analytic scoring it takes 1 to 2 minutes per trait." (p. 239). More importantly, Paulis (1985) notes that using the holistic scoring reaps the following benefits:

1. It forces teachers and students to view their writing as a whole and to revise accordingly.

2. It places the proofreading and editing of mechanical problems in its proper perspectives-as the final phase of the revision stage.

3. It provides a clear, just, and meaningful basis for grading composition.

4. It focuses on what the student writer has done successfully.

5. By including evaluation in the revision stage, students see that, like revision, evaluation is a recursive process.

6. It reduces the time spent reading and responding to papers, and thus reduces the paper load. (p.60)

However, many specialists have indeed cast considerable doubt on the reliability and validity of the holistic scoring procedures. White (1984) argues that what we might wish for is to have a profile not just a single score. In other words, even if the score seems to be reliable, we cannot say much about what we want to know about our student writers. Furthermore, Weigle (2002) highlights that, "holistic scores are not always easy to interpret, as raters do not necessarily use the same criteria to arrive at the same scores." (p.114). Sometimes, two raters, based on two different criteria for scoring, may assign the same score to one piece of writing.

Also, Hamp-Lyons (1995) maintains that, "Because holistic scoring obscures the basis for scores, writers cannot be protected against the influence on raters' scores of features of writer's text such as the use of "ESL," nonstandard, or "feminized" forms." (p.761). Brown (2010) sums up the drawbacks of holistic scoring as follows:

1. One score masks the differences across the sub-skills within each score.

2. No diagnostic evaluation is available.

3. The scale may not apply equally well to all genres of writing.

4. Raters need to be extensively trained to use the scale accurately. (p.242)

2.2.4.2. Analytic Scoring

Analytic scoring, which was first developed by Paul Diederich (1974), "evaluates writing quality through an analysis of the separate components of writing." (Vacc, 1989, p.87). On his part, Huot (1990) asserts that "analytic scoring focuses on several identifiable qualities germane to good writing. These qualities of good writing are identifiable, and a paper's quality is judged by how many components of good writing it contains."(p.238). Overall, these qualities may include, *inter alia*, ideas, organization, style, flavor, wording, handwriting, punctuation, and spelling (Gere, 1980). The following is a list of the advantages of analytic scoring scheme as suggested by Weigle (2002):

> 1. It provides more useful diagnostic information about students' writing abilities.
> 2. It is more useful in rater training, as inexperienced raters can more easily understand and apply the criteria in separate scales than in holistic scales.
> 3. It is particularly useful for second language learners, who are more likely to show a marked or uneven profile across different aspects of writing.
> 4. It can be more reliable than holistic scoring: reliability tends to improve when multiple scores are given to each. (p.120)

The abovementioned advantages, notwithstanding, do in any way not conceal the fact that analytical scoring procedures suffer from significant drawbacks. White (1984) contends that, "analytical essay scoring offers some valuable adjunct measures of some kinds of skills, but not a useful or valid measurement of writing." (p.408). Brown (2010) adds that practicality is lowered because of the time required by the teachers to attend to details within each of the categories in order to assign a final score. In brief, Perkins (1983) argues that

> the procedure itself is time-consuming, is vulnerable to the same threats to reliability as holistic scoring, and is of questionable validity-it isolates features from context and lacks sensitivity to variations in purpose, speaker role, and conception of audience.   (p.658)

2.2.4.3. Holistic and Analytic Scoring

As previously stated, holistic scoring sees things/texts as units and as wholes. Conversely, analytic scoring views writing as a composite of different elements and aspects to be evaluated separately. All in all, the following table sums up the major differences between holistic grading and analytic grading.

Quality	Holistic Scale	Analytic Scale
Reliability	Lower than analytic but still acceptable	Higher than holistic
Construct Validity	Holistic scale assumes that all relevant aspects of writing ability develop at the same rate and can thus be captured in a single score; holistic scores correlates with superficial aspects such as length and handwriting	Analytic scales more appropriate for L2 writers as different aspects of writing ability develop at different rates
Practicality	Relatively fast and easy	Time-consuming; expensive
Impact	Single score may mask an uneven writing profile and may be misleading for placement	More scales provide useful diagnostic information for placement and/or instruction; more useful for rater training
Authenticity	White (1995) argues that reading holistically is a more natural process than reading analytically	Raters may read holistically and adjust analytic scores to match holistic impression
Interactiveness	n/a	n/a

Table2. Comparison of Holistic and Analytic Scales, Adapted from Weigle (2002, p.121)

2.2.4.4. Primary Traits Scoring

The third method of scoring, called the primary trait scoring, was developed by Lloyd-Jones (1977) for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Raymond, 1982). The assumption underlying this method of scoring is that, Weigle (2002) states, "it is important to understand how well students can write within a narrowly defined range of discourse (e.g. persuasion or explanation)." (p.110). According to Perkins (1983), this procedure "requires that graders ascertain whether a piece of writing exhibits certain characteristics-termed *primary traits*-which are crucial to the specific rhetorical task a writer is trying to perform." (p.658). Moreover, Huot (1990) claims that, "These traits are related to the specific rhetorical situation created by the purpose, audience, and writing assignment." (p.238). In plain English, in primary trait scoring, the papers are judged or evaluated based on the degree of success with which student writers have carried out a certain rhetorical task. Brown (2010) gives the following examples:

> If the purpose or function of the essay is to persuade the reader to do something, the score of writing would rise or fall on the accomplishment of that function. If a learner is asked to exploit the imaginative function of language by expressing personal feelings, then the response would be evaluated on that feature alone. (pp.242-243)

McNair & Meyers (1989) claim that this method of scoring offers the following advantages:

> 1. It is a labour-saving device: it saves time that would be consumed in repeating the same general comments on many papers.
> 2. It individualizes instruction: the instructor gains time to respond to each paper's most insignificant strengths and weaknesses.
> 3. It emphasizes what is most important: by focusing sharply on the specific traits required for a given assignment, it facilitates the development of the skills associated with particular kinds of technical writing.

4. It creates a climate of trust and cooperation: the students know from the start of each major assignment what criteria will be used to evaluate their writing.

5. It fosters a coherent curriculum: evaluation and pedagogy are integrally related, because the scoring guide is used both to teach an assignment and to evaluate. (p.79)

However, there are certain serious reservations about the primary trait scoring. Gere (1980) points out that, "primary trait evaluation does not provide for genuine communication intention because it limits the kinds of meanings the reader can consider." (p.48). Another problem with this type of scoring is that it is time consuming. Odell & Cooper (1980) argue that, "the process of devising writing tasks and appropriate Primary Trait scoring guides takes a good bit of time."(p.42). Perkins (1983) shares the same idea and adds that, "Lloyd-Jones has estimated that 60 to 80 hours of grader's times is required for the preparation of each exercise, in addition to the time required to gather samples and conduct trial runs."(p.661)

Conclusion

This chapter is about the discussion of composition instruction and assessment. The researcher tried to shed some light on the major paradigm shifts in composition instruction. This chapter has also tried to trace back the special circumstances wherein each approach to teaching writing originated. Most importantly, it claims attention to the fact that such approaches are to be seen as another piece in the jigsaw, and not necessarily incompatible. It posits then that teachers are to make recourse to the different approaches to teaching writing so as to make their EFL writing sessions more productive. In this chapter, the researcher has also expanded on the notion of assessment along with the diverse scoring techniques adopted by the teachers in order to assess their students' writings.

Chapter Three

Learning Theories and Strategies

<div align="center">**Chapter Three**</div>

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Introduction

Researchers and educationalists have always evinced a passionate interest in what learning is, and how it takes place. Simply, learning is considered as something we understand and have participated in, and is by no means exclusive to the field of our educational systems (Pritchard, 2009). Research has proliferated over the last century, advancing certain seemingly conflicting, yet overlapping, learning theories that sought to demystify and promote learning. In the main, as far as writing is concerned, composition theories addressing the central issue of how writing should be taught and learned draw heavily on learning theories. That is, all the famous writing approaches were built upon the key tenets of the various learning theories. Therefore, an accurate understanding of the broad concept of 'learning to write' certainly warrants a comprehensive understanding of the different learning theories.

This chapter will then be devoted to the central concept of learning. It attempts to provide a definition of both learning and learning theories. It will also expand on the most famous learning theories yet advanced, namely behaviorism (habit formation) and cognitivism, along with their educational implications. Besides, this chapter will deal with the two fundamental processes needed in knowledge acquisition: Cognition and metacognition. Also, We will discuss the various learning strategies, with a considerable emphasis on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, especially in the writing process. Lastly, the chapter will explore the role of teacher feedback and peer feedback in bridging the gap between habit formation and cognition, and fostering writing students' awareness and , by implication, increasing their written proficiency.

3.1. Learning Defined

Learning has been defined in so many ways. As an operational definition, Ormrod (2012) views learning as "a long term change in mental representations and associations as a result of experience." (p. 4). For her, learning is *a long term change* means that it is not a brief or transitory use of information. Having *mental representations and associations* indicates that learning has its basis in the brain. Learning then is a change *as a result of experience*, rather than the result of physiological maturation, fatigue, or onset mental illness.

It is of paramount importance for both educational practitioners and instructional designers to possess an in-depth understanding of learning. According to Shuell (1986), "the concept of learning is central to many different human endeavors." (p. 411). Thus, understanding how people (learners) learn will in large part help educators achieve the goal behind education, which is to assist learners in becoming competent and well-adjusted individuals.

Granted, it is not easy to define the word 'learning' because "Learning is much more complex and drawn process than generally acknowledged." (Shell, 1990, p.531). The term 'learning' has been defined in numerous ways by theorists, researchers and educators; still, many definitions bear striking similarities and employ common elements. Basically, most definitions would agree, *mutatis mutandis*, that learning is a change in a human's behavior. According to Thorndike (1931), human learning "consists of changes in the nature and behavior of human beings." (p.4). This change is oftentimes the result of experience and lifetime events. Pierce & Cheney (2004) confirms that learning refers to "the acquisition, maintenance, and change of an organism behavior as a result of lifetime events. The behavior of an organism is everything it does including covert actions like thinking and feeling." (p.1) Along the same lines, Taylor & MacKenney (2008) believe that learning is a change in performance through conditions of *activity*, *practice*, and *experience*. They add that

In the classroom, the activities and experiences that lead to change in performance involve telling and listening, judging, reading, reciting, observing demonstrations, interacting with pupils and guests, and learning individually. (p. 2)

Indeed, the above definitions are far from exhausting all what is meant by learning. Overall, the table below consists of a sample of the most common definitions of learning:

Learning is	-A change in behavior as a result of experience or practice
	-The acquisition of knowledge
	-Knowledge gained through study
	-To gain knowledge of, or skill in, something through study, teaching, instruction or experience
	-The process of gaining knowledge
	-A process by which the behavior is changed, shaped , or controlled
	-The individual process of constructing understanding based on experience from a wide range of sources

Table 03: Various Definitions of Learning, (Adapted from Pritchard, 2009, p. 2)

3.2. Learning Theories

Learning theories refer to a wide range of theories which are put forward by researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the very complex and multifaceted phenomenon of learning. For the most part, these viewpoints tend to "overlap; yet they are distinctive enough to be treated as separate approaches to understanding and describing learning." (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p. 46). The following are five questions, listed by Schunk (2012) that serve to distinguish one theory from another.

. How does learning occur?

. Which factors influence learning?

. What is the role of memory?

. How does transfer occur?

. What types of learning are best explained by the theory?

Ormrod (2012) states that despite the fact that the changeable nature of these theories can be more often frustrating, as they provide us with no ultimate truth on how learning (linguistic or nonlinguistic) occurs, there are several advantages that are worth considering. In brief, learning theories allow the following:

-Summarize the results of many research studies and integrate numerous principles of learning.

-Serve as starting points for undertaking new research.

-Help understand and explain research findings.

-Help design learning environments and instructional strategies that facilitate human learning.

3.2.1. Historical Foundations of Learning Theories

The existing learning theories have in the extreme been influenced by two opposing positions on the origin of knowledge and its relationship with the environment, which are *empiricism* and *rationalism*. Empiricism, which derives from Aristotle, has espoused the view that 'experience' is the only source of knowledge (Schunk, 2012). It also stresses the fact that all knowledge in gained through the senses (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008). In other words, "organisms are born with basically no knowledge and anything learned is gained through interactions and associations with the environment." (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p. 47).

On the other hand, rationalism endorses the view that knowledge derives from reason without the help of the senses (Schunk, 2012). More specifically, "this fundamental belief in the distinction between mind and matter originated with Plato (427-347 B.C.), and is reflected in the view point that human beings learn by recalling or 'discovering' what already exists in the mind." (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.47).

As seen above, early interests in learning were philosophical in nature. In the late nineteenth century, however, when psychologists first began to study learning in earnest, the two prominent schools of thought were *structuralism* and *functionalism.* These two perspectives were criticized, especially for structuralism, for the introspection method-people were asked to look inside their heads and describe what they were thinking, and also for lacking "a precise, carefully defined research methodology." (Ormrod, 2012, p.6).

In the early 1900, when psychology was still an infant science, the interest in learning or training was centered purely upon behavior, and this area of learning psychology was referred to as 'behaviorism' (Pritchard, 2009). It is worthwhile to mention that "Prior to behaviorism, there was no systematic study of human behavior." (Taylor & MacKenney, 2008, p.23). The behaviorists define learning as permanent change in behavior as a result of experience. This change in behavior is often "observable, with some behaviorists proposing that if no observable change happens, no learning has occurred." (Jordan et al., 2008, p. 21).

Apart from its merits and demerits, behaviorism grew rapidly and dominated most learning and teaching situations mainly in the first half of the twentieth century. Out of this growing interest in behavior and the modification of behavior, came the realization that "the unseen mental processes involved in learning, and the contribution of factors apart from environmental rewards or gratifications, had an important bearing on the understanding of how we learn" (Pritchard, 2009, p.3). In general terms, this different perspective which is known as 'cognitivism', stresses "the conceptualization of student's learning processes and address the issues of how information is received, organized, and retrieved by the mind." (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.51).

The third and last theoretical framework, known as 'constructivism', "comes under the broad heading of cognitive science." (Pritchard, 2009, p.3). This view of learning is based on the idea that, to use Koenig's (2010) words, "the sensory information a learner receives will

be stored, selected, interpreted, altered, matched, connected, used or not used, remembered or forgotten."(p.4)

At this juncture, it is worth noting that speaking only of behaviorism and cognitivism does not deny the existence of other multiple learning theories. Other learning theories may include constructivism. In the main, these learning theories draw heavily upon the aforementioned ones.

3.2.2. Behaviorism: Habit Formation Learning

Behaviorism is the first theory ever advanced, at the turn of the twentieth century or so, to explain how learning takes place. Back then, behaviorism sought an alternative to the long-established doctrine which had posited that the world contains two sorts of stuff- the stuff of mind and the stuff of which the material things are made (Mace, 1948). This theory is considered as the most generalizable and influential learning theory claiming a scientific basis because "like the most useful theories in any field, it is universal and underpinned by only a few principles." (Jordan et al., 2008). This view of learning advocates the idea that "principles of learning apply equally to humans and to animals and, therefore, that research findings from experiments on animals can be applied to humans because humans and animals principally learn in the same way." (Taylor & MacKenney, 2008, p. 23).

As its name suggests, behaviorism is defined as "a theory focusing on observable behaviors and discounting any mental activity. Learning is defined simply as the acquisition of new behavior." (Pritchard, 2009, p. 6). Further, Case & Bereiter (1984) maintain that the behaviorist learning theory claims that behaviors are learned, and become *habitual*, by means of reinforcement. Earlier on, Thorndike (1931), one of the founders and defending champions of behaviorism, states that the term *behavior* "includes thoughts and feelings as truly as movements, and makes no assumptions concerning the deeper nature of any of these. It takes them as they are found." (p. 4)

The relationship of stimulus-response is at the heart of behaviorism. Pritchard (2009) believes that behaviorism is based on the simple notion of a relationship between a stimulus and a response, which is why behaviorist theories are often referred to as 'stimulus-response'(SR) theories. Ertmer & Newby (2013) contend that stimulus, response, and the association between them are key elements, and that of primary concern is how the association between the stimulus and response is made, strengthened, and maintained. In such a case, the old adage 'practice makes perfect' seems to hold true, in that this relationship of stimulus-response is better reinforced and strengthened through repetition and practice. According to Labed (2007), it is through "repetitions, drills, and substantiating exercises, we can make our learners learn." (p.38). All in all, Ormrod (2012) points out that behaviorism is based on the following basic assumptions.

-Principles of learning should apply equally to different behaviors and to a variety of animal species.

-Learning processes can be studied most objectively when the focus of study is on the stimuli.

-Internal processes are largely excluded from scientific study.

-Learning involves a behavior change.

-Organisms are born as blank slates.

-Learning is largely the result of environmental events.

-The most useful theories tend to be parsimonious ones.   (pp. 33-34)

3.2.2.1. Classical Conditioning

The notion of 'classical conditioning' was first introduced out of the work of the Russian physiologist Pavlov (1849-1936). In its broadest sense, it involves "the reinforcement of a natural reflex or some other behavior which occurs as a response to a particular stimulus."

(Pritchard, 2009, p.6). The first and most well-known example of classical conditioning is the work of Pavlov (1927) who conditioned the dogs to salivate at the sound/buzz of a bell.

In his experiment, Pavlov (1928) has shown that that the dogs produced saliva (response) whenever they ate, or even saw, the food (stimulus). The salivation (the response) could also be produced when a neutral stimulus (the bell) is introduced in tandem (contiguously) with food so long as the natural stimulus (food) is closely and *repeatedly* associated with this neutral stimulus (the bell). In this case, the animals tended to salivate whenever they heard the sound of the bell because they had, in their minds, associated the presence of food with the ringing of the bell. This behavior was then reinforced as long as the experimenter kept associating food (the natural stimulus) with the sound of the bell (the neutral stimulus). The dogs would eventually salivate irrespective of the presence of food.

In general terms, Pavlov's experiments were based on a stimulus-response model that involves the pairing of a neutral/conditioned stimulus (the sound of the bell) with a natural/unconditioned stimulus (food) until the former comes to supplant the latter in eliciting a response (Ormrod, 2012).

Through these experiments, Pavlov could identify four stages in the process of classical conditioning: *acquisition*, *extinction*, *generalization*, and *discrimination*. *Acquisition* refers to the learning of the conditioned response-for example the ringing of the bell. *Extinction* means the conditioned response will not remain forever. That is, there will certainly be a gradual disappearance of the conditioned response brought about by associating, for example, the ringing of the bell with the presence of food. *Generalization* means that, even without further training, a conditioned response can be produced whenever exposed to a similar stimulus. *Discrimination,* on the other hand, is the opposite of *generalization*, in that an individual can learn to produce a respond to a particular stimulus and not to another similar stimulus.

As for the practicability and usefulness of classical conditioning, Jordan, Carlile, & Stack (2008) elaborate on that as follows:

> The theory of classical conditioning can be used to explain how people learn a variety of involuntary responses, especially those associated with physiological functioning or the emotions. For example, most people experience darkness as an unconditioned stimulus for going to sleep; therefore, in particular environmental settings, darkness may elicit a 'go-to-sleep' response. Classical conditioning is also useful for explaining the development of fears and phobias. For example, a person who is bitten by a dog may become afraid of that breed of dog, or even all dogs. (p. 22)

3.2.2.2. Operant Conditioning

Operant conditioning, otherwise known as instrumental conditioning, is the second type of conditioning that sought to trace the locus of learning. Operant conditioning, which was formulated by Skinner (1904-1990), is the most important type of behaviorist learning, and is potentially more powerful than classical conditioning. More particularly, "Skinner studied the behavior of rats and pigeons, and made generalizations of his discoveries to human beings." (Pritchard, 2009, p.7). Skinner (1938) created a learning apparatus called the 'Skinner Box'. The animal in the box could get a pellet of food by producing simple responses-by pressing a lever in the box. Through the repetition of the action, the rat would learn that in order to be fed (rewarded), it must press the lever.

Based on the results of his experiments, Skinner (1948) defines operant conditioning as a form of learning in which the consequences of a behavior lead to changes in the probability of its occurrence. Put simply, operant conditioning is based on the principle that "A response that is followed by a reinforcer is strengthened and therefore more likely to occur again." (Ormrod, 2012, p. 50). Furthermore, Schunk (2012) argues that the likelihood or rate of occurrence of the response is changed by reinforcement, and that operant behaviors tend to act

upon their environments and become more or less likely to occur because of reinforcement. Pritchard (2009), on his part, states that operant conditioning involves the reinforcement of a particular behavior by rewarding it. He gives the following example

If a mother gives her child a chocolate bar every day that he tidies his bedroom, before long the child may spend some time each day tidying.

In this example, Pritchard (2009) adds that, "the tidying behaviour increases because it is rewarded. This rewarding is known as 'reinforcement'. It is likely that the tidying behavior would decrease or stop completely if the rewards were suspended." (p.7). Overall, the following are three key conditions for operant conditioning to occur:

1- The reinforcer must follow the response .

2- Ideally, the reinforcer should follow immediately.

3- The reinforcer must be contingent on the response.   (Ormrod, 2012, pp. 51-52)

In brief, Lesgold (2001) delineates that operant conditioning can be equated with 'learning by doing', because much learning takes place when we perform behaviors. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that we can effectively learn to write by actually writing.

3.2.2.3. Reinforcement

In our day to day life, our parents tend to reward us for our good deeds (behaviors) in the hope of strengthening and reinforcing them and, by implication, increasing the likelihood of them occurring again. Other times, they punish us with aim of shaping and altering our misbehaviors, causing them to die out. This state of affairs holds good for all manner of schools where teachers/mentors reward and punish their students for the sake of retaining certain behaviors or decreasing the likelihood of others. This comes as no surprise since, according to Skinner (1958), so many human behaviors are controlled by rewards and punishments.

Reinforcement, oftentimes regarded to be synonymous with 'rewarding', refers to "anything that has the effect of strengthening a particular behaviour and makes it likely that the behaviour will happen again." (Pritchard, 2009, p.8). According to Ormrod (2012), reinforcement is the act of following a response with a reinforcer, and this latter (reinforcer) is a stimulus or event that increases the frequency of a response it follows. Schultz (2006) maintains that reinforcers are defined by their effects and do not depend on mental processes such as consciousness, intentions or goals. Therefore, reinforcers cannot be determined in advance. Skinner (1953) believes that "the only defining characteristic of a reinforcing stimulus is that it reinforces." He then adds that

> The only way to tell whether or not a given event is reinforcing to a given organism under given conditions is to make a direct test. We observe the frequency of a selected response, then make an event contingent upon it and observe any change in frequency. If there is a change, we classify the event as reinforcing to the organism under the existing conditions. (pp. 72-73)

In different learning situations, reinforcement takes multiple forms. Schunk (2012) holds that such events as teacher praise, free time, privileges, stickers, and high grades are typically found reinforcing by students. Along with these rewards, Woolfolk (2016) suggests

. Concrete rewards as: prizes, stickers, certificates

. Activity rewards as: free time, free reading

. Exemption rewards as: no homework, no weekly test

. Social rewards as: praise, recognition   (p. 282)

3.2.2.3.1. Positive Reinforcement

According to Skinner (1953), positive reinforcement is a reward, that when provided in response to a behavior, increases the likelihood of the recurrence of that behavior. This is

actually what most teachers do when they to want encourage and strengthen certain behaviors in their students. Basically, positive reinforcement can take various forms: "Some are extrinsic reinforcers, in that they are provided by the outside environment; whereas others come from within the learner." (Ormrod, 2012, p.54). In addition to that, Pritchard (2009) contends that positive reinforcement is a powerful method that is used to control people's behaviors. He states that

> For people, positive reinforcers include basic items such as food, drink, approval or even something as apparently simple as attention. In the context of classrooms, praise, house points or the freedom to choose an activity are all used in different contexts as rewards for desirable behaviour.   (p. 8)

3.2.2.3.2. Negative Reinforcement

According to Schunk (2012), negative reinforcement involves "removing a stimulus, or taking something away from a situation following a response, which increases the future likelihood that the response will occur in that situation." (p. 92). For instance, if a teacher tells some students they do not have to do their homework whenever they give correct answers, these students will always tend to volunteer to answer the questions correctly so as to escape homework. In actual fact, Ormrod (2012) argues that "negative reinforcement probably explains many of the escape behaviours that humans and nonhumans learn." (p. 56)

It is worth noting here that negative reinforcement is for the most part confused with punishment. Skinner (1971) holds that punishment serves to "remove awkward, dangerous, or otherwise unwanted behavior from a repertoire on the assumption that a person who has been punished is less likely to behave in the same way again." (p. 64). Furthermore, Taylor & MacKenney (2008) point out that negative reinforcement and punishment are quite the contrary. They argue that negative reinforcement involves reinforcing the behavior that helped the learner escape an unpleasant situation; whereas punishment is a negative

consequence that leads to the decrease in the recurrence of the behavior that produced it. Along the same lines, Pritchard (2009) adds that

> There is controversy about whether punishment is an effective way of reducing or eliminating unwanted behaviours. Laboratory experiments have shown that punishment can be an effective method for reducing particular behaviours, but there are clear disadvantages, especially in classroom situations. Anger, frustration or aggression may follow punishment, or there may be other negative emotional responses.(p.8)

3.2.3. Educational Implications of Behaviorism

As we have seen above, behaviorism is the first learning theory ever advanced to demystify how learning takes place. This theory tends to explain learning in the light of environmental events, while downplaying the importance of mental processes. Within the broad concept of 'behaviorism', the theories, notably those of Thorndike, Pavlov, and Guthrie, seem to differ; yet, each of which views learning as a process of forming associations between stimuli and responses (Schunk, 2012). The behaviorist view of learning dominated learning situations in the first half of the twentieth century, and is still influencing many teaching situations nowadays.

Apart from its drawbacks, behaviorism (habit formation) has significant implications for instruction. Pritchard (2009) argues that behaviorist methods "can also be effective in establishing classroom behaviours." (p. 13). Schunk (2012) believes that, within the behaviorist view of learning, the process of learning requires establishing responses to discriminative stimuli, and that *practice* is needed to strengthen responses. More particularly, Ormrod (2012) claims that behaviorism has several educational implications:

> -Active responding and practice are important in effective learning.
>
> -Classical conditioning paradigm emphasizes the importance of helping learners experience academic subject matter in contexts that elicit pleasant instead of unpleasant emotions.

95

-Replacing existing S-R connections with more productive ones must be involved when eliminating undesirable behaviors.

-Teachers can ultimately determine whether or not learning has occurred only when changes in students' behaviors are observed. (p. 47)

Along the same line, Gropper (as cited in Ertmer & Newby, 2013) adds that behavioral theories imply that the job of the teacher is to:

-Determine which cues can elicit the desired responses.
-Arrange practice situation in which prompts are paired with the target stimuli that initially have no eliciting power but which will be expected to elicit the responses in the "natural" (performance) setting.
-Arrange environment conditions so that the students can make the correct responses in the presence of those target stimuli and receive reinforcement for those responses.   (p. 50)

3.2.4. Cognitivism: A Historical Background

Educators and psychologists remained passionately interested in how learning occurs, mainly into the 1960s. Prior to the ascendancy of cognitive psychology–also known as *cognitivism*- behaviorism was the first and only theory to hold sway over cognitive development. However, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, "the Zeitgeist of psychology began to change from a behavioristic to a cognitive orientation. Concern for the mind and the way it functions returned to scientific psychology." (Schuell, 1986, p. 411). This sudden shift from behaviorism to cognitivism came as a result of a mass discontentment with strict S-R psychology. Most early behaviorists, according to Ormrod (2012), "intentionally omitted internal mental events from their learning theories, arguing that such events were impossible to observe and thus could not be studied objectively." (p.141). In other words, behaviorism utterly disregarded the non-observable phenomena; therefore, the study of the neural bases of

behavior was not pursued due to the fact that neural processes are far from observable (Nelson, Thomas, & De Haan, 2006).

At this juncture, it is worthwhile to mention that the roots of cognitivism preceded the widespread dissatisfaction of behaviorism. In the first half of the last century, academics from several disciplines (psychology, artificial intelligence, philosophy, linguistics, neuroscience and anthropology) began to realize that they were trying to solve problems pertaining to the mind and the brain (Pritchard 2009). Even during the heyday of behaviorism, Ormrod (2012) argues, many prominent learning theorists' work used to have a distinctly cognitive flair. She adds that:

> Some cognitive learning theories, notably those of American psychologists Edward Tolman and the Gestalts psychology of Germany, appeared in the early decades of the twentieth century. At about the same time, two developmental psychologists, Jean Piaget in Switzerland and Lev Vygotsky in Russia, described how children's thought processes change with age and speculated about underlying learning mechanisms that might make such change possible.
> (p. 141)

Jordan et al. (2008) hold that there are four factors that influenced the development of cognitivism as a separate discipline:

- the development of experimental psychology;

- the move from an interest in external behaviors to internal brain processes;

-the inadequacy of behaviorism to explain language acquisition;

- the development of computers and an interest in artificial intelligence.   (p.36)

3.2.4.1. Cognitivism Defined

As opposed to behaviorism which focuses on behavioral changes, Cognitivism, otherwise known as cognitive psychology, is strictly concerned with the various mental processes and

knowledge structures that can be inferred from behavioral indices and that are responsible for different types of human behavior. (Shuell, 1986). To put it simply, cognitivism refers to the study of mental processes that behaviorists were reluctant to study, because cognition occurs inside the black box of the brain. These mental processes include sensation, perception, attention, encoding, and memory (Jordan et al., 2008). Along the same line, Pritchard (2009) contends that cognitivism is the study of how people learn, remember and interact, often with a great emphasis on mental processes such as "learning, perceiving, remembering, using language, reasoning and solving problems." (p.17). Posner (1989) adds that cognitivism investigates "intelligence and intelligent systems, with particular reference to intelligent behavior as computation." (p.1)

Cognitivism is by no means a theory of cognition, but it is instead the strong view that "*all* mental activity is cognitive-that perception, understanding, learning and action are all to be understood on the model of fact gathering, hypothesis formation, inference making, and problem solving." (Dreyfus, 1991, p.1). Cognitive approaches to learning views learning as an active process. They stress the fact that learning is "an active, constructive and goal-oriented process that is dependent upon the mental activities of the learner." (Schuell, 1986, p.415). Cognitive theories also stress the fact that learning is not concerned with what the learner *do* but instead with *what* they know and *how* they come to acquire it (Jonassen, 1991). Thus, knowledge acquisition is viewed as "a mental activity that entails internal coding and structuring by the learner. The learner is viewed as a very active participant in the process of learning."(Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.51). In a nutshell, cognitivism can be simply defined as "the study of knowledge representation and use in human beings." (Friedenberg & Silverman, 2006, p.97). Essentially, Ormrod (2012) believes that contemporary cognitivism is premised upon the following assumptions.

-Some learning processes may be unique to human beings.

-Learning involves the formation of mental representations or associations that are not necessarily reflected in overt behavior changes.

-People are actively involved in the learning process.

-Knowledge is organized.

-The focus of scientific inquiry must be on objective, systematic observations of human behaviors, but behaviors often allow reasonable inferences about unobservable mental processes.
(pp. 153-154)

3.2.4.2. Implications for Instruction

Since the 1960s, cognitivism "has been the predominant perspective with which learning research has been conducted and theories of learning have evolved." (Ormrod, 2012). This is largely because cognitive theories provide the only firm ground which presently forms the connection between the principles of learning and the brain (Bruer, 1997). There is no denying the fact that cognitive psychology has indeed influenced learning theory and research in a number of significant ways. For Shuell (1986), these include

> (a) the view of learning as an active, constructive process; (b) the presence of higher level processing in learning; (c) the cumulative nature of learning and the corresponding role played by prior knowledge; (d) concern for the way knowledge is presented and organized in memory; and (e) concern for analyzing learning tasks and performance in terms of the cognitive processes that are involved. (p.415)

Since learning, as claimed by cognitivists, comes as a result of organizing and processing information effectively, educators must in the first place understand how learners process information so as to design learning experiences that would optimize this activity. (Jordan, Carlie & Stack, 2008, p.36). In addition to that, Ormrod (2012) contends that teachers must not be concerned only with what learners need to learn but also with how learners are trying

to learn it. Unquestionably, cognitive theories stress the importance of helping the learners organize and connect new information to their already existing knowledge . Therefore, the teachers must allow time for learners to think and reflect upon what they have previously learned, and encourage them to review what they know about a new topic prior to embarking on new teaching (Pritchard, 2009, p. 33). All in all, Ertmer & Newby (2013) see that the major tasks of the teacher/designer include:

> -understanding that individuals bring various learning experiences to the learning situation which can impact learning outcomes;
>
> -determining the most effective manner in which to organize and structure new information to tap the learner's previously acquired knowledge, abilities and experiences;
>
> -arranging practice with feedback so that the new information is effectively and efficiently assimilated and/or accommodated within the learners' cognitive structure.   (p. 54)

3.3. Cognition and Metacognition

The two broad notions of 'cognition' and 'metacognition' were first introduced in response to behaviorism. They both stress the fact that the process of learning is not merely a matter of stimulus-response. Below is a detailed explanation of both notions.

3.3.1. Cognition

As we have seen earlier on, the second half of the last century witnessed a movement called 'cognitive revolution' that took place in response to behaviorism (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2012). Throughout this period, research within the field of cognitive science has proliferated, demonstrating that a scientific understanding of human behavior necessarily entails the study of cognition (Pecher & Zwaan, 2005). Consequently, a good many different approaches to cognition have emerged (behavioral, developmental, information processing, or linguistic in orientation). This state of affairs makes it [difficult], if not impossible, to give an

exact definition of the word 'cognition' (Taylor & MacKenney, 2008). De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes, & Barnes-Holmes (2018) agree with the same idea and argues that despite its "pivotal role, it is often not entirely clear what "cognition" (and thus "cognitive" as involving cognition) exactly means." (p.119)

According to Chaney (2013), the word 'cognition' and every term related to it dates back to the ancient Greek. However, the most currently influential definition of the term 'cognition' was provided by Neisser (1967) some 60 years ago, who viewed cognition as information processes, and the mind as an information processor. He delineates that

> The term cognition refers to all the processes by which the sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered and used. It is concerned with these processes even when they operate in the absence of relevant stimulation and hallucinations…Giving such sweeping definition, it is apparent that cognition is involved in everything a human being might possibly do; that every psychological phenomenon is a cognitive phenomenon. (p. 4)

For a further clarification, Neisser (1967) gives the following metaphor

> The task of a psychologist trying to understand human cognition is analogous to that of a man trying to discover how a computer has been programmed. In particular, if the program seems to store and reuse the information, he would like to know by what 'routines' or 'procedures' this is done. (p. 6)

It goes without saying that Neisser's (1967) definition is not the only one available, nor has it gone uncontested. Some cognitivists have equated cognition "internal processing contrasting them with external ones such as those going on in the body." (Moors, 2007, p.1240). Likewise, De Houwer et al. (2018) add that other cognitive psychologists use the word 'cognition' to refer to a subset of mental states, in that when "contrasting cognition and

emotion, cognitive researchers sometimes imply that cognitive states are non-emotional in that they involve "cold" beliefs rather than "hot" emotional experiences." (p.6). Therefore, Moors, (2007) confirms that "the consultation of literature teaches us that cognition is a contrastive notion: It derives its meaning from the category with which it is contrasted." (p.1240).

It is virtually impossible to exhaust all the various definitions that have been put forward in cognitive psychology literature about the term 'cognition'. Worse still, because very little is known about the human mind, it is as yet downright impossible to come up with a definition that covers all aspects of the broad concept of cognition. Minsky (1988) states that "It often does more harm than good to force definitions on things we do not understand (…) especially when it comes to understanding minds, we still know so little that we can't be sure our ideas about psychology are even aimed in the right direction." (p.35). More importantly, though, all the definitions stated above stress the point that *cognition* refers to the so many possible information processing activities of the human mind. These mental processes include perception, encoding, storing, and retrieval, to name a few.

3.3.1.1. Principles of Cognition

According to Jordan et al. (2008), there are five basic processes involved in cognition, and all of which have implications for the learning process. These processes include sensation, perception, attention, encoding and memory. Below is an explanation of each.

3.3.1.2. Sensation

The sensory perceptions are the only channels through which the brain can receive data and information before categorizing them in different sections of the brain (Taylor & MacKenney, 2008). They are sometimes called 'external events detecting agents', and "each of which sends signals to the nervous system when it detects certain physical conditions."

(Minsky, 1988, p.113). Based on that, the term 'sensation' refers to "the process through which stimuli from the external environment are held very briefly in sensory registers before being transferred for further processing." (Jordanet al., 2008, p. 38). For instance, visual information is retained for only half a second, while auditory information is available long enough for language processing to take place (Massaro & Cowan, 1993).

environmental inputs are received by our five senses: vision, hearing, touch, smell and taste. Each of which has its register that holds information in the same form for only a fraction of a second (Schunk, 2012). According to Ormrod (2012), there are three characteristics of these sensory registers: (a) the sensory registers have a very large capacity; (b) the input seems to be stored in the sensory registers in basically the same form in which it has been received, before any significant encoding occurs; and (c) the input remains in the sensory register for only a very brief time.

3.3.1.3. Perception

Perception refers to the process whereby we interpret environmental input presented to our senses. Accordingly, visual perception, by way of illustration, is not just about "seeing what is projected onto your retina; the process is much more complex. Your brain processes the stimuli, giving the stimuli meaning and interpreting them." (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2012, p.87). Furthermore, Massaro & Loftus (1996) argues that the perception of briefly presented stimuli evokes two sets of perceptual events. First, *normal* perception takes place while the stimuli are still physically present. Second, perception also takes place during a short period following the stimuli offset.

Ormrod (2012) maintains that one of the major characteristics of perception (our interpretation of the environment) is usually more and less than sensation (the input that we sense from the environment). Perception is less than sensation in the sense that it is virtually impossible for people to interpret all sorts of data and information that bombard their sensory

receptors all at once. In any case, they would attend to and interpret some of the stimuli, and ignore the others. However, perception can also be more than sensation, because sensation alone provides insufficient input for adequate interpretations of ongoing events. According to Jordan et al. (2008), perception involves:

-pattern recognition;

-Object recognition;

-bottom-up or top-down processing;

-unconscious perception.

-Pattern Recognition

The different patterns are perceived according to the four laws of perception: proximity, similarity, continuity and closure. Proximity means that we tend to categorize and group close objects together. Similarity means that similar objects and information are usually categorized and grouped together. Continuity, for instance, refers to our tendency to perceive smooth continuous lines rather than sudden changes in direction. Closure refers to our tendency to perceive closed figures instead of fragmented or disconnected objects.

-Object Recognition

Unlike patterns which are two dimensional, objects are three dimensional. Marr (1982) put forward a theory whereby we can recognize three dimensional objects, from an increasing range of visual cues just like an artist might draw a picture, starting with an outline and adding details.

-Bottom-up or Top-down Processes

According to Sternberg & Sternberg (2012), bottom-up theories are stimulus-driven theories that argue for the point that perception starts with the stimuli whose appearance is taken in through our eyes. The four main bottom-up theories are direct perception, template theories, feature theories, and recognition-by-components theory. Top-down theory; on the

other hand, claim that perception is driven by high-level cognitive processes such as inference, deduction and knowledge of context (Gregory, 1980). However incompatible they may seem, both approaches are actively involved in perception and, by implication, learning. Initially, the bottom-up theory is required to establish a sensory data, then this is followed by a top-down interpretation adding contextual and high-level processes of inference and deduction.

-Unconscious Perception

This cognitive aspect refers to our ability to perceive certain phenomena to which we are not consciously attending. In the classroom, for example, you can be aware that your name is being spoken though your full attention is devoted to your instructor.

3.3.1. 4. Attention

According to Minsky (1988), the more things we see and think about, the more difficult it is for us to pay attention to all of them. To put it simply, one tends to be bombarded by all sorts of stimuli at once, but because of our limited attentional capacities, one can only keep track of some stimuli to the exclusion of others. This cognitive process of selectively concentrating on some potential input while ignoring others is referred to as *attention.* Sternberg & Sternberg (2012) state that attention allows for a judicious use of our limited mental resources, and that it has generally four different kinds: vigilance, search, selective attention, and divided attention. At this point, the key question is: How can we select some input and avoid being overloaded with information? This is accomplished through the *controlled and automatic processes*, and then through *focus*.

First, controlled processes need both conscious awareness and intentional effort, whereas Automatic processes require little intentional effort, and usually no conscious awareness. For example, novice drivers tend to drive with full attention and full presence of the mind. For experienced drivers, however, the whole process (driving) becomes automatic. Second,

focusing attention on some input while ignoring the others occurs either by filtering or weakening unattended messages (sensory data), or instead by giving priority to more important messages.

Admittedly, attention is an integral part in the process of learning. Learners should bear in mind that they do not have an unlimited amount of attention. Therefore, if they want to learn from their teacher, they need to concentrate and attend to the teachers' voice and ignore other sounds (Schunk, 2012). Besides, Taylor & MacKenney (2008) add that "Students must be exposed to strategies to promote attention. Educators should be aware of the factors that may impede or promote attention, such as diet, emotions, and hormones." (p. 177)

3.3.1.5. Encoding

Prior to storing the information in the memory, more specifically the long-term memory, it first needs to be encoded for storage. Simply, encoding means transforming sensory data into a form of mental representation (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2012). According to Ormrod (2012), information is encoded in the long-term memory in various ways. Sometimes the information is stored in terms of physical characteristics; for example, a rose has a particular look and a particular smell. Other times, knowledge is stored in terms of actions, for instance, one can learn how to clip a rose from a thorny rose bush. Third, encoding in terms of symbols, represented in memory by words, symbols, and mathematical expressions. Finally, knowledge often takes the form of abstract meanings that goes beyond particular physical characteristics, actions, and symbols.

In the classrooms, however, though students attend to the teachers, most of what teachers say go unlearned, because the students do not continue to process the information. Perceiving and attending to stimuli do not guarantee the continuation of information processes. Schunk (2012) holds that encoding is influenced by three important factors which are organization, elaboration, and schema structures. *Organization* means classifying and grouping bits of

knowledge and this will help improve memory and enhance learning. *Elaboration* consists of expanding upon and relating new information to information already known. One form of elaborative devices is the use of mnemonics. *Schemas* represent "templates developed from previous experience, into which information can be organized. They mean that people do not have to interpret the world every time they encounter it." (Jordan et al., 2008, p. 43). Further, existing schemas are regularly updated and new ones are created, and this process takes place whenever one observes, listens, reads, tries out, or senses anything new (Pritchard, 2009).

3.3.1.6. Memory

Cognitive psychologists and educators have always been enthralled by the concept of memory and its intricacies. Unquestionably, memory is "a key component of the information processing system." (Schunk, 2012, p. 226). The term memory has been defined in myriad ways reflecting the so many different lenses through which it was viewed and studied. Memory is sometimes simply defined as "the ability of an individual to retrieve previously learned information and skills." (Taylor & MacKenney, 2008, p.201). One inclusive definition is provided by Ormrod (2012) who claims that:

> Memory is related to the ability to recall previously acquired
> information. In some instances, the word memory refers to the process
> of retaining information for a period of time. In other instances, it refers
> to particular "location", (e.g., working memory or long-term memory)
> where acquired information is kept. (p. 158)

Sternberg & Sternberg (2012) argues that memory processing consists of three common operations: encoding, storage, and retrieval. Encoding concerns changing the form of information. Storage means keeping the coded information in memory. Retrieval refers to pulling out or using the information stored in memory. These three phases of memory correspond to the three operationally distinguishable phases of memory experiment: learning, retention, and usage (Taylor & MacKenney, 2008). For the last fifty years or thereabouts,

many psychologists have posited the existence of several different human memory systems (Pashler & Carrier, 1996). According to Jordanet al. (2008), although "we may think of memory as one particular faculty, it involves different kinds of inter-related systems: sensory, short-term memory (STM) and long-term memory. Each of these has a different purpose." (p.43). All in all, Menzel (2008) considers that

> Irrespective of whether we divide up memories according to time, cellular mechanisms, brain structures involved; categories of contents, type of learning, or type of retrieval, we always imply that memory directs behavior towards the process of retrieving information.   (p. 5)

3.3.1.6.1. Sensory Memory

According to Taylor & MacKenney (2008), "Memory begins at the sensory organs, which receive and transform energy such as light, heat, and sound into electrical nerve impulses." (p. 202). Therefore, sensory memory, or sensory store, is "the initial repository of much information that eventually enters the short-term and long-term stores."(Sternberg & Sternberg, 2012, p.194). It may include how things looked, smelled, tasted, felt, and sounded, and this often allows to, for example, recognize a familiar voice over the phone or the taste of a favorite food (Cowan, 2008). Visual sensory memory, generally nicknamed *iconic memory*, often lasts several hundred milliseconds after the offset of the stimulus. However, auditory sensory memory, otherwise known as *echoic memory,* tends to hold information much longer than iconic memory, typically for one or two seconds (Pahshler & Carrier, 1996).

3.3.1.6.2. Short-term Memory

Anything sensed is presumably stored in the sensory memory store before entering the short-term memory. Residual information is ignored, while selected information is transferred to the short term memory. Short-term memory is sometimes known as working memory, and researchers at times use these terms interchangeably (Friedenberg & Silverman, 2006).

Specifically, short-term memory refers to "the awareness and recall of items that will no longer be available as soon as the individual stops rehearsing them."(Taylor & McKenney, 2008, p.203). It is said to have some control process that regulate the flow of information to and from the long-term memory storage, where information is held for longer periods of time (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2012). These functions may include rehearsal, coding, decision making, and retrieval (Jordan et al., 2008).

For Ormrod (2012), short-term memory is different from sensory store in terms of capacity, forms of storage, and duration. As for capacity, people tend to hold from five to nine bits of information at one time. This is best assisted through *chunking*, which represents a process of combining bits of information in some way. With regard to the form of storage, it has been proven that a great deal of information is stored in an auditory form (by the way it sounds). Concerning duration, as its name implies, the duration of the short-term memory is relatively short and limited. For bits of information to be retained, they must be rehearsed. Information is lost after few seconds without rehearsal (Schunk, 2012). The major cause of this information loss is displacement by other stimuli (Pashler & Carrier, 1996).

3.3.1.6.3. Long-term Memory

It is a generally acknowledged fact that our daily activities, to a very large extent, depend upon our memory. We use memory to hold information about people's names, where things and so on are kept. When talking about memory, however, it is usually the long-term memory referred to (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2012). Long-term memory is defined as "that part of the memory system that retains information for a long period of time." (Taylor & McKenney, 2008, p.205). Knowledge representation in the long-term memory depends upon *frequency* and *contiguity* (Schunk, 2012). That is, the more often a fact or an idea is encountered, the stronger is the representation. Further, information in the long-term memory is represented in associative structures. In plain English, two experiences that take place closely in time tend to

be linked in memory, in that when one of the experiences is remembered, the other one is activated.

Storage processes in long-term memory are not so simple compared with those of the first two components of memory (sensory and short-term memory), which are described as fairly straightforward. This is mainly because effective Long-term memory storage processes include selection, rehearsal, meaningful learning, internal organization, elaboration, and visual imagery (Ormrod, 2012). As for the distinctive characteristics of long-term memory, (Jordan et al. 2008) argue that the LTM[1] is "a store of enormous capacity and indefinite duration." (p. 46). In comparison with working memory, its capacity is much larger, its form of storage is more flexible, and its duration is quite a bit longer (Ormrod, 2012).

Tulving (1985) believes that long-term memory is made up of three interrelated systems that differ from one another in a numerous ways. These memory system are episodic, semantic, and procedural. Episodic refers to memories of the things that have happened. Semantic refers to memories of facts, concepts and principles. Procedural refers to the knowledge of how to do things. By way of illustration, Jordan et al. (2008) delineates that

> For example, when asked by a teacher about the events of a field trip, a learner makes conscious use of his episodic memory. Semantic memory is used to recall a complex scientific equation, and procedural memory is used to carry out a familiar experimental technique in the laboratory. (p. 44)

3.3.2. Metacognition

Effective learning clearly entails a kind of knowledge or cognitive process that monitors and regulates the different mental activities. It is called *metacogniton.* Metacognition is, according to Lories, Dardenne, & Yzerbyt (1998), "a fundamental characteristic of human

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[1]LMT is the abbreviation of 'Long-term Memory'

beings. Not only do we have cognitive activities but it would seem that they can apply to themselves: we have cognition about cognition." (p.1). In other words, metacognition is the state of being aware of our own cognitive/mental processes. In essence, the interaction between cognition and metacognition is of critical importance "not only for problem solving, planning, and for memory, but arguably for sensitive assessment of one's own and other people's wants and needs, and evaluation and control of one's own appropriate social behavior." (Metcalfe, 1996, p.407).

A great deal of research has been conducted for more than thirty years to account for the fuzzy and broad conceptualization of the term 'metacognition'. Garofalo & Lester (1985) claim that this confusion of what is precisely meant by metacognition has at least two sources. First, metacognition has two separate but related facets: *1*. knowledge and belief about cognition, and *2*. the regulation and control of cognition. Second, it is not always easy to distinguish between metacognition and cognition. Accordingly, researchers provided many definitions for the term metacognition. According to Shimamura (2000), metacognition "refers to the evaluation and control of one's cognitive processes." (p.313). Kuhn (2000) defines metacognition as "the cognition that reflects on, monitors, or regulates first-order cognition." (p.178). Probably, one of the most exhaustive definitions is the one proposed by Flavell (1985) who posits that metacognition

> has usually been broadly and rather loosely defined as knowledge or cognitive activity that takes as its objects, or regulates, any aspect of any cognitive enterprise (…) It is called metacognition because its core meaning is "cognition about cognition". Metacognitive skills are believed to play an important role in any cognitive activity, including oral communication of information, oral persuasion, comprehension, reading comprehension, writing, language acquisition, perception, attention, memory, problem solving, social cognition, and various forms of self-instruction and self-control. (p. 140)

So, 'metacognition' refers to knowledge, processes and strategies that serve to *monitor* and *control* of one's cognitive processes. Metacognition and cognition are connected through these functions of monitoring and control (Efklides, 2008). Wells (2000) sees that most "cognitive activities are dependent on metacognitive factors that monitor and control them." (p.7). Monitoring is the process of observing, reflecting on, or experiencing one's own cognitive processes; controlling, on the other hand, refers to the conscious or non-conscious decisions one makes based on the output from the monitoring process (Schwartz & Perfect, 2004).

The fact that cognitive processes are dependent upon metacognitive activities does not mean that these metacognitive activities take place before them. Instead, according to Akturk & Sahin (2011), metacognitive activities "occur before cognitive activities (planning), during activities (monitoring), and after activities (evaluating)." (p. 3733). Kitchener (1983) claims that monitoring memory or a comprehension task includes three parts: *1*.knowledge about self and others as cognitive processors when they are engaged in a task or goal, *2*. knowledge about specific cognitive tasks or problems themselves, and *3*.metacognitive experience, i.e., the feelings that lead to the re-evaluation of strategies.

Flavell (1979) subdivides metacognition into three classes: Metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experiences, and metacognitive skills. *Metacognitive knowledge* represents knowledge about one's information processes, the nature of the cognitive task, and the strategies for coping with such tasks (Sodian, Thoermer, Kristen, & Perst, 2012). As an illustrative example, Veenman (2012) states that "a learner may think that s/he (person characteristic) is not proficient in math (task characteristic) and, therefore, that s/he thinks she should invest a lot of effort in making homework assignments (strategy characteristic)." (p.22). *Metacognitive experiences* refer to the metacognitive feelings and judgments that are based on the monitoring of the task processing feature and/or its outcomes. As an example, "a

learner's writing a succinct summary of a text and discovering he has not really differentiated important information from irrelevant detail."(Garner, 1988, p.63). The third facet is called *metacognitive skills*, which refer to the "acquired ability of monitoring, guiding, steering, and controlling one's learning." (Veenman, 2012, p.24). These metacognitive skills tend to develop slowly (Schunk, 2012).

The discussion above leads us to one conclusion: Metacognition (otherwise referred to as *knowing about knowing)* involves complex, abstract ideas and processes, which include

- Knowing that one's own learning and memory capacities are and what learning tasks one can realistically accomplish

- Knowing which learning strategies are effective and which are not

- Planning a viable approach to a new learning task

- Tailoring learning strategies to the circumstances

- Monitoring one's present knowledge state

-Knowing effective strategies for retrieval of previously stored Information   (Ormrod, 2012, pp. 353-354)

3.3.3. Aspects of Metacognition

Metacognition consists of two related sets of skills: first of all, one must understand the skills, strategies and resources needed to perform the task. Second, one must know how and when to use these skills for a successful completion of that task (Schunk, 2012). Put most simply, The first set of skills is sometimes referred to as *what one knows about cognition*. The second indicates *how one uses that knowledge to regulate cognition* (Schraw & Moshman, 1995). Premised on that, most theories have made a distinction between two aspects of metacognition: *metacognitive knowledg*e and *metacognitive regulation* (Wells, 2000).

-Metacognitive Knowledge

Metacognitive knowledge or knowledge about cognition represents the "the information that individuals have about their own cognition and about task factors or learning strategies

that affect it." (Wells, 2000, p.7). It usually comprises three different sub-processes that facilitate the reflective aspect of metacognition: declarative, procedural, and conditional (Schraw & Dennison, 1994). More specifically, "declarative knowledge refers to knowing "about" things. Procedural knowledge refers to knowing "how" to do things. Conditional knowledge refers to knowing the "why" and "when" aspects of cognition." (Schraw & Moshman, 1995, p.352).

-Metacognitive Regulation

Metacognition regulation or regulation of cognition can be defined as "a variety of decisions and strategic activities that one might engage in during the course of working through a cognitive task or problem." (Garofalo & Lester, 1985, p.166). Most importantly, these strategies oftentimes include planning, monitoring, and evaluation (Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

According to Schraw & Moshman (1995), planning means the selection of appropriate strategies needed to perform a task. Monitoring refers to one's on-line awareness of comprehension and task performance, and this ability tends to improve by training and practice. Evaluating means judging or estimating the outcomes and regulatory processes of one's learning.

3.4. Language Learning Strategies

In any English as a foreign language class, teachers notice that some students are more competent in learning the language than others (there are quick learners, indifferent learners, and slow learners). Therefore, many researchers have tried to delve into how learners go about learning something, and why some learners are more effective in learning than others. These questions can only be answered through investigating learning strategies (Williams & Burden, 1997). Learners varying levels of competency can be attributed to the different learning strategies employed by these learners.

3.4.1. Definition

The broad concept of 'language learning strategies' occupies a pre-eminent position in the field of language acquisition research (Kherzlou, 2012). In fact, effective learning, as portrayed by cognitive and social cognitive theorists, involves, *inter alia,* choosing learning strategies that are likely to help achieving pre-set goals (Ormrod, 2012). So central to understanding the concept of 'learning strategies' is the basic term *strategy*. According to Oxford (2003), the term strategy comes from the ancient Greek term *strategia*, which means 'command of a general'. However, in modern usage, the term is used to refer to a plan that is consciously aimed at meeting a goal.

The concept of 'language learning strategies' that refers to the learners' attempt to learn has become widespread after the rigorous research carried out by Oxford,1990; and Chamot and O'Malley, 1987 (Takac, 2008). Learning strategies are simply defined as "specific behaviors that learners select in their language learning and use."(Cohen, 2003, p.279).

Another definition is given by Oxford (1990), who regards learning strategies as "operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information." (p. 8). Further, Tarone (1981) defines learning strategies as "an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language-to incorporate these into one's interlanguage competence." (p.290). All in all, the above definitions stress the fact that learning strategies simply refer to "the methods students use to acquire information." (Denbo, 2004, p.13).

Learning strategies are procedures that learners use to help facilitating a learning task. (Chamot, 2005). Autonomous and self-regulated learners are likely to use a wide range of language learning strategies (Oxford, 1999). Many factors are said to affect the choice of these strategies such as: degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, teacher expectations, age, sex, nationality/ethnicity, general learning style, personality traits,

motivation level, and the purpose for learning the language. Examples of these strategies may include activities such as "selecting and organizing information, rehearsing material to be learned, relating new material to information in memory, and enhancing meaningfulness of material." (Schunk, 2012, p.417). According to O'Malley & Chamot (1990) other may also include the following

> Focusing on selected aspects of new information, analyzing and monitoring information during acquisition, organizing or elaborating on new information during the encoding process, evaluating the learning when it is completed, or assuring oneself that the learning will be successful as a way to allay anxiety (p.43).

According to White (2008), strategies provide "a set of options from which learners consciously select in real time…in order to optimize their chances of success in achieving their goals in learning and using the TL." (p.9). These strategies are important in language learning and teaching for two reasons: (a) they help gaining insights into the metacognitive, cognitive, social, and effective processes involved in language learning; and (b) they can help less successful language learners become better language learners by teaching them new strategies (Grenfell & Harris, 1999). Most importantly, a strategy is useful if the following conditions are met.

-the strategy relates well to the L2[2] task at hand;

-the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies for the doing the task;

-the strategy coordinates with the learner's general learning style preferences to one degree or another.   (Oxford, 2003, p.274)

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[2] In her article, Rebecca (2003) used the abbreviation 'L2' to refer to second and foreign languages, as differentiated from the first or mother tongue (L1).

3.4.2. Classifications of Language Learning Strategies

Language Learning strategies are "attempts to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language." (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 43). They can help language learners to "improve their own perception, reception, storage, retention, and retrieval language information." (Oxford, 2003, p.274). It is to be noted that language learning strategies classifications employ common elements. O'Malley & Chamot (1987) have distinguished three categories of learning strategies that are useful for "differentiating groups of strategies and in showing teachers how to integrate the strategy instruction into their daily lessons." These categories are as follows.

> 1. Meta-cognitive strategies: These involve executive processes in planning for learning, monitoring one's comprehension and production, and evaluating how well one has achieved a learning objective.

> 2. Cognitive strategies: The learner interacts with the material to be learned by manipulating it mentally (as in making mental messages or relating new information to previously acquired concepts or skills) or physically (as in grouping items to be learned in meaningful categories or taking notes or making summaries of important information to be remembered).

> 3. Socio-affective strategies: The learner interacts with another person in order to assist learning, as in cooperation or asking questions for clarification, or uses some kind of affective control to assist learning. (pp. 241-242)

Another classification is the one provided by Oxford (1990), and was mainly based on O'Malley and Chamot's (1987) model. Oxford (1990) added two other strategies (memory and compensation strategies), and included all of them under two major classes: *direct* or *indirect learning strategies*. The following diagram represents these classes:
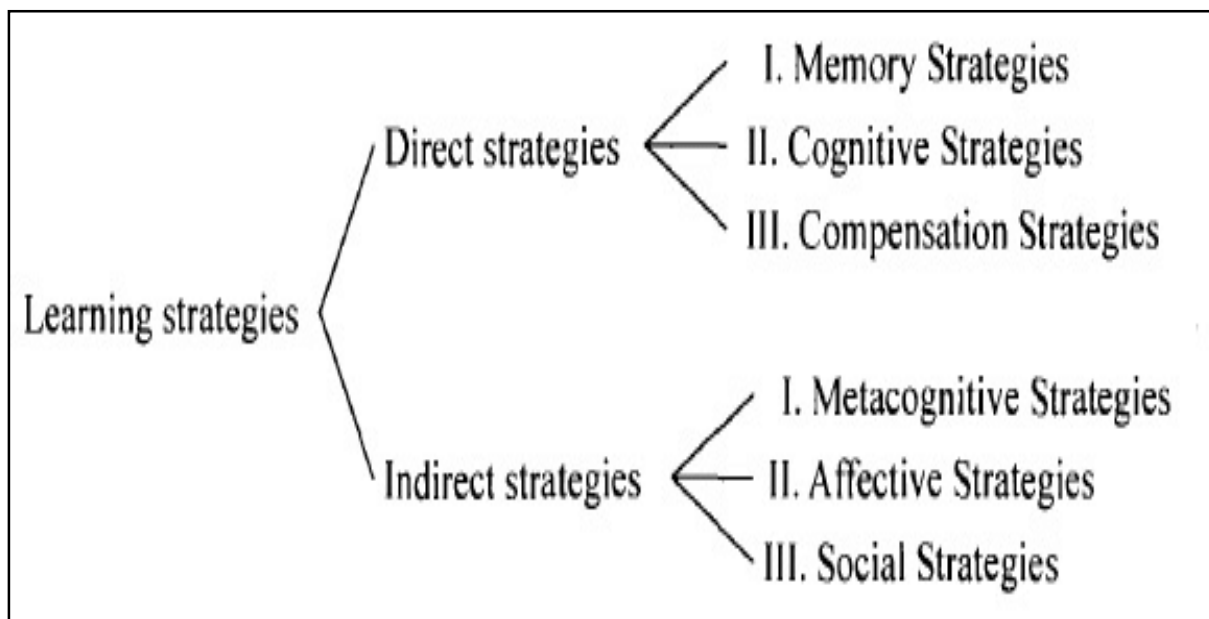
Figure 06. Direct and Indirect Learning Strategies, Adapted from Oxford (1990).

In more detail, these classes and subclasses include the following:

1. Memory strategies, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, and structured reviewing.

2. cognitive strategies, such as reasoning, analyzing, and summarizing (all reflective of deep processing), as well as general practicing.

3. Compensation strategies (to compensate for limited knowledge), such as guessing meanings from the context in reading, and listening and using synonyms and gestures to convey meaning when the precise expression is not known.

4. Metacognitive strategies, such as paying attention, consciously searching for practice opportunities, planning for language tasks, self-evaluating one's progress, and monitoring error.

5. Affective (emotional, motivation-related) strategies, such as anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward.

6. Social strategies, such as asking questions, cooperating with native speakers of the language, and becoming culturally aware. (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995, p.5)

Cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies, of concern in this research, are discusses in considerable detail below.

3.4.2.1. Cognitive Learning Strategies

Cognitive strategies play a fundamental part in learning the target language. Garner (1988) states that in order to complete a variety of academic tasks learners need to use a range of cognitive strategies. Grenfell & Harris (1999) define cognitive strategies as "mental engagement with language in materials and tasks in order to develop understanding and hence learning." (p.44). According to Cohen (2003), the language learning strategy repertoire includes "cognitive strategies for memorizing and manipulating target language structures." (p. 280). These strategies may also include attending to new information, rehearsing, elaborating, using LTM retrieval strategies, and applying problem solving strategies (Schunk, 2012).

O'Malley & Chamot (1990) maintain that learning strategies act directly upon incoming information, manipulating it in ways that promote learning. The cognitive strategies they have suggested are summed up as follows

1. *Rehearsal*, or repeating the names of items or objects that have been heard.

2. *Organizing*, *grouping*, or *classifying* words, terms, or concepts based on their semantic and syntactic attributes.

3. *Inferencing*, or using the information from oral texts to guess meanings of new items.

4. *Summarizing* what one has heard to ensure the retention of the information.

5. *deducing* or *applying* rules to understand language.

6. *Imagery*, or using visual images to understand and remember new verbal information.

7. *Transfer*, or using known information to facilitate new learning tasks.

8. *Elaboration*, or linking ideas contained in new information or integrating new ideas with new information.

As for Oxford (1990), there exist four sets of cognitive strategies which include *Practicing*, *Receiving and Sending Messages*, *Analyzing and Reasoning*, and *Creating Structure for Input and Output.* The following diagram shows these four cognitive strategies as major headings (A,B,C,D), along with other subheadings giving a total of 15 cognitive strategies:
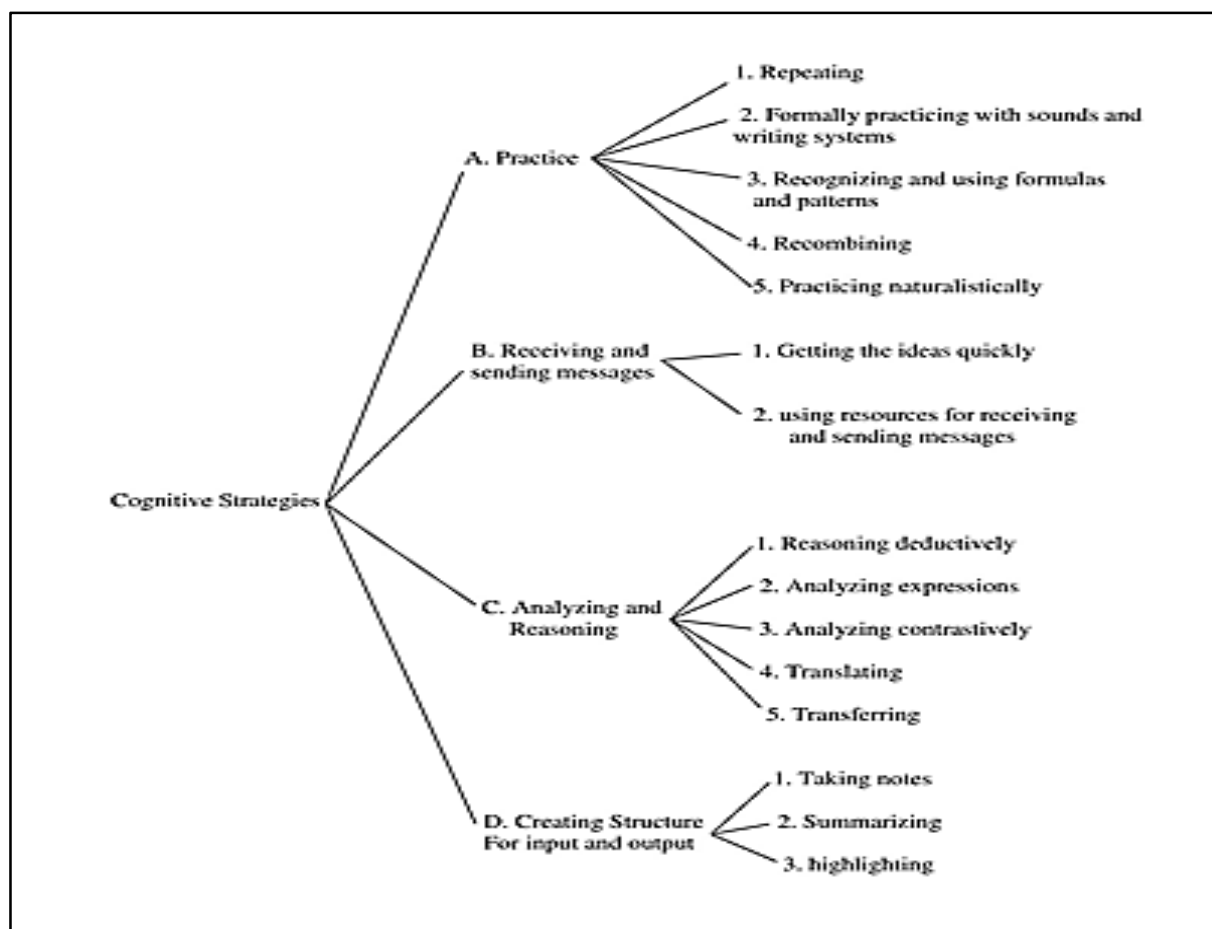
Figure 07. Cognitive Strategies (Oxford, 1990)

As shown in the figure above, practicing is among the most important cognitive strategies. However, language learners do not always seem to realize how significant practice is (Oxford, 1990). Practice inside or outside the classroom is definitely needed to reach acceptable proficiency in the four language skills-more specifically writing. Obviously, the writing task involves the use of almost all the aforementioned cognitive strategies, and one of the most

important being *practice*. The fact is that the Written Expression sessions, because of time and timetabling constraints, do not allow much practice, which often results in students having poor writing skills.

3.4.2.2. Metacognitive Strategies

According to Grenfell & Harris (1999), "'meta' literally means 'beyond'. Metacognition therefore means 'beyond cognition'." (p.45). It also means knowing about knowing, which refers to one's being aware of his/her language learning process. Metacognitive strategies are absolutely essential for effective language learning. O'Malley & Chamot (1987) hold that metacognitive strategies that can be applied to any sort of learning are "selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation." (p.242). More particularly, metacognitive strategies involve "planning of learning, setting of goals, thinking about the learning process, monitoring of performance and comprehension, as well as evaluation of results and the learning process." (Takac, 2008, p.53).

Similarly, O'Malley & Chamot (1990) define metacognitive strategies as "higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the process of a learning activity." (p.44). For them, these strategies for productive and receptive language tasks include:

> 1. Selective attention for special aspects of the learning task, as in planning to listen for key words or phrases;
>
> 2. Planning the organization of either written or spoken discourse;
>
> 3. Monitoring or reviewing attention to a task, monitoring comprehension of information that should be remembered, or monitoring production while it is occurring; and
>
> 4. Evaluating or checking comprehension after completion of receptive language activity, or evaluating language production after it has taken place.   (p.44)

Additionally, Oxford (1990) sees that metacognitive strategies are indirect strategies (they manage language learning without involving the target language) that permit the learners to control their own cognition by using certain functions such as *centering*, *arranging*, *planning*, and *evaluating*. these strategies are grouped into three major headings, with other subheadings extending from each, as shown in the diagram below.
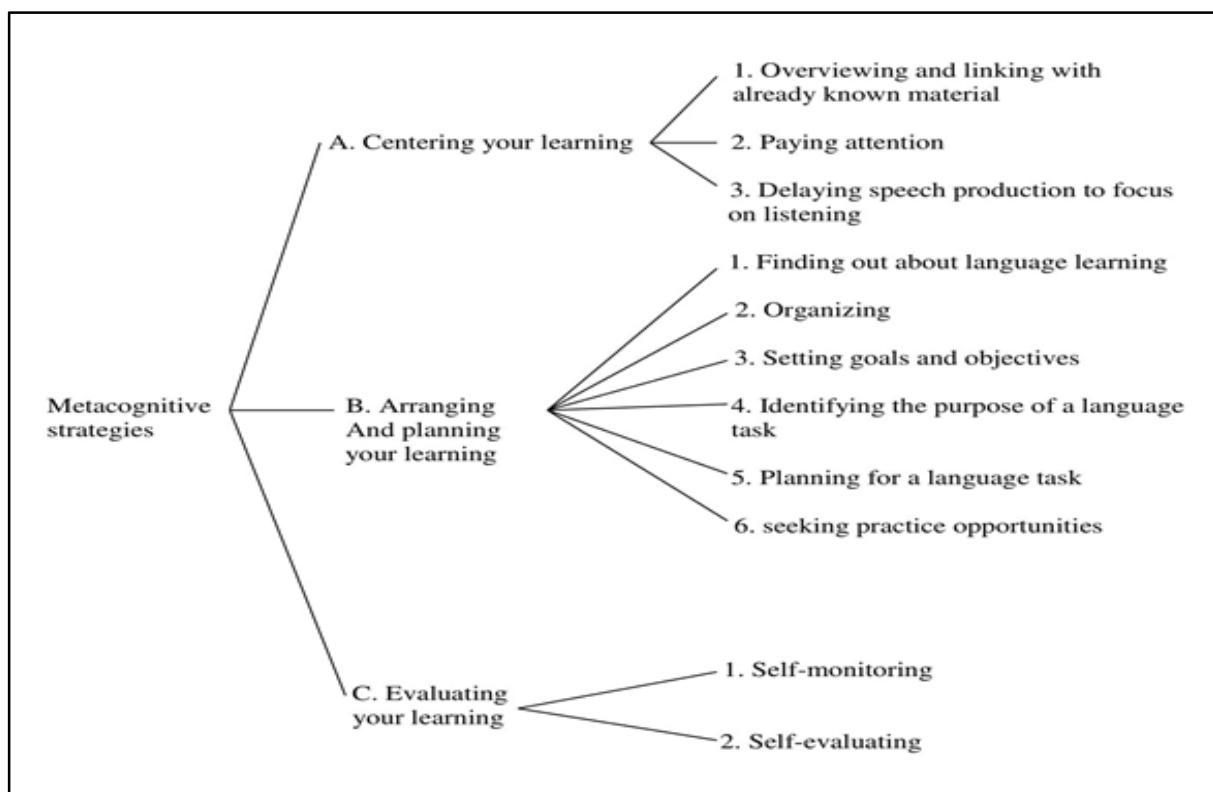
Figure 08. Metacognitive Strategies (Oxford, 1990)

EFL learners have been proven to use these strategies sporadically, without much consideration of their importance. They tend to employ planning strategies most frequently, with scant attention to evaluation and self-monitoring. Therefore, Oxford (1990) stresses how important it is for the learners to use all the above mentioned metacognitive strategies in order to enhance their language learning.

3.5. Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies in Writing

Cognitive and metacognitive strategies are core elements in any successful language learning process. Cognitive strategies concern practicing (rehearsing), analyzing, and

122

summarizing information, while metacognitive strategies serve to plan, monitor, and evaluate these cognitive processes. Indeed, both strategies seem to overlap.

Phakiti (2003) holds that metacognitive strategies may not differ from cognitive strategies. Garofalo & Lester (1985) stress the fact that it is always difficult to distinguish between what is metacognitive from what is cognitive. They claim that "One way of viewing the relationship between them is that cognition is involved in doing, whereas metacognition is involved in choosing and planning what to do and monitoring what is being done."(p.164). In other words, "cognitive skills are necessary to perform a task, while metacognitive are necessary to understand how a task was performed." (Schraw, 1998, p.113).

In writing, the cardinal importance of cognitive and metacognitive strategies was eventually recognized along with the advent of the process-oriented approaches to teaching writing. These orientations brought about a revolutionary change in the way writing was taught and learned. Within the scope of these approaches, writing is viewed as an act of problem-solving, or as a complex *cognitive activity* that involves a series of steps: planning, drafting, and reviewing. This complex cognitive activity is seen as a dynamic, recursive, and non-linear process. That is, writers may go back and forth all along the process to re-plan, re-draft, re-edit whenever the need arises.

According to Flower & Hayes (1981), writing is a complex *cognitive* activity that involves three major components: long-term memory, task environment, and writing processes. The writer's long-term memory is where knowledge of the topic, audience, and various writing plans are stored. The task environment includes the rhetorical problem and the text produced so far. The writing processes, which come under the control of a monitor, include the following mental processes: planning, translating, and reviewing. In addition to that, based on process models, Kellogg (1994) believes that the writing process involves four *cognitive* operations: "Collecting information, planning ideas in the realm of personal symbols,

translating these symbols into the consensual realm of written texts, and reviewing ideas and texts." (p. 18). It is, therefore, safe to say that writing is an activity that reflects and involves a great deal of cognitive processes (Scrunk, 2012).

Cognitive strategies are thus clearly essential in the process of writing. However, learners with both cognitive and metacognitive strategies are highly likely to be far more successful than those who use cognitive strategies alone (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). More importantly, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are hard to disentangle. Veenman, Van Hout-Wolters, & Afflerbach (2006) maintain that metacognition draws on cognition, in that "If metacognition is conceived as (knowledge of) a set of self-instructions for regulating task performance, then cognition is the vehicle of those self-instructions." (pp.5-6). Metacognition, or knowing about knowing, helps improve writing proficiency. Hyland (2003) claims that seeing writing as a cognitive process entails that the teachers "develop their students' metacognitive awareness of their processes, that is, the ability to reflect on the strategies they use to write." (p.12)

According to Kellogg (1994), the act of writing requires that the writer employs conceptual, sociocultural, and metacognitive knowledge. The latter is considered crucial during the phases of planning, monitoring and evaluating. The quality of a piece of writing largely hinges upon the time and effort allocated to planning and evaluating (reviewing), which are generally determined beforehand. Schraw & Moshman (1995) maintain that, unlike poor writers, older and more experienced writers have more knowledge about cognition, and are able to plan effectively and diagnose text problems in order to correct them.

Oxford (1990), in her insightful book, explicated how metacognitive strategies (which include *centering your learning*, *arranging and planning your learning*, and *evaluating your learning*) can be applied to the writing skill: *First*, getting ready to do a writing assignment involves ten minutes of 'nonstop writing' (brainstorming) in order to generate ideas. *Second*,

deciding in advance which aspect of writing to focus on like structure, content, coherence, punctuation, or audience needs. *Third*, setting goals for one's writing which might include writing academic and scientific articles, passing the language course, or maintaining correspondence with foreign friends. *Fourth*, deciding upon the purposes for writing, such as providing factual information, convincing the audience, persuading someone, or entertaining the audience. *Fifth*, deciding upon the specific language functions (asking questions, describing, and explaining), structures (past, present, future, or conditional), and the necessary vocabulary to be use. Next, after writing their draft, the students can monitor their own errors without the intervention of their teachers. Finally, again without the intervention of the teachers, the students can review their own written work (in terms of style and content), or compare their writing with the writing of more proficient language users.

In a nutshell, It is worthwhile to say that a judicious use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies is a hallmark of writing proficiency. Cognitive strategies aside, our students seem to have serious problems as to how the writing task could be successfully completed. This stands to reason, partly because most of them oftentimes devote little, if any, attention to the various metacognitive skills, and partly because they are still struggling with basic skills and mechanics of writing. Therefore, becoming a good writer is at least "a matter of automatizing basic skills. People can devote themselves to the task of clear self-expression only if they are not bogged down with concerns about subject-verb agreement or the correct spelling of *psychology*." (Ormrod, 2012, p.210).

3.6. Bridging the Gap between Habit Formation and Cognition

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, as far as writing is concerned, habit formation refers to building the habit of writing in our learners usually through repetition (practice). That is, in order for our students to learn writing effectively, they need of course to learn the

nuts and bolts of the writing skill, besides being provided with enough and ample opportunities for practicing writing. But does this mean that the writing skill, in such a case, is purely mechanical (from behaviorism)? Is the mechanical side of the word 'practice' enough for learners to be proficient writers? Is writing to write necessitate only the mechanical habit of writing? The answer is an emphatic '*no*'!

Building the habit of writing in our learners does not in any way mean that this activity be purely mechanical. In other words, when our students write they just transcribe what they have learned about writing (the mechanics) into their texts. EFL students, instead, should engage in certain cognitive and metacognitive processes, that reflect that they know what they are doing (writing task), and that they know how to do it (knowing about knowing). Put most simply, by being aware (cognition about cognition) of what they are doing, the students will immensely improve their writing skills. According to Paris & Winograd (1990), metacognition improves "independent learning by providing insights into one's own thinking. This awareness can lead to flexible and confident problem solving as well as feelings of self-efficacy and pride." (p.7)

But the perennial question remains the following: How can we guarantee a smooth transition from the formation of the writing habit into making it a cognitive and metacognitive activity? There is no doubt that instruction plays an important role in this matter. Still, feedback (both on the part of students and on the part of teachers) can act the mediator (the bridge) that serves to bridge the gap between the mechanical aspect of the writing task and the cognitive and metacognitive aspect (awareness). Through feedback, the students are said to develop a sense of audience and self-regulation, that would ultimately permit them to effectively revise and, by implication, improve their written performance.

Feedback plays a central part in process writing pedagogy. In this orientation, which includes a number of complex cognitive activities, reviewing and editing one's written work

is considered of utmost importance. Admittedly, the quality of a piece of writing depends, to a large extent, on the amount of time and effort/energy devoted to the revision stages. Schraw & Moshman (1995) agree that more effective writers spend more time and energy during the revision stage. The latter, along with other cognitive processes can be greatly facilitated through the use of the various types of feedback. According to Ferris (2004), "the cognitive investment of editing one's text after receiving error feedback is likely a necessary, or at least helpful, step on the road to longer term improvement in accuracy." (p.54)

In addition to improving textual accuracy, feedback is highly important in raising student's awareness of the type of errors they commit so as to avoid them in future writing assignments. Ferris (2011), maintains that "while it seems likely that asking students to edit their papers after receiving error feedback not only will improve the quality of the text (…) but will also cause writers more aware of and attentive to patterns of errors." (p.39). In a similar vein, Hyland (2003) claims that, "Not only does this individual attention play an important part in motivating learners, it is also the point at which overt correction and explicit language teaching are most likely to occur." (p.12)

Cognition and metacognition skills are pivotal to effective writing. According to Hacker, Keener, & Kirtcher (2009), writing is "the production of thought for oneself and others under the direction of one's goal-directed metacognitive monitoring and control, and the translation of that thought into an external symbolic representation." (p.154). This definition of writing clearly stresses the importance of metacognitive skills in writing. In general terms, metacognition has two major elements: (a) knowledge or awareness of one's cognition or (which includes declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge), (b) conscious regulation and control of one' writing activity (which includes planning, monitoring, and evaluation). Centrally relevant to our main interest is the second element of metacognition: Regulation of

one's cognition. Self-regulated students are those who are met cognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process (Zimmerman, 1989).

It is perfectly understandable that feedback plays a fundamental role in self-regulated learning. Butler & Winne (1995) proposed an examination of feedback that takes into account how feedback influences cognitive engagement with tasks and how this engagement is related to achievement. Essentially, they hold that the most effective learners are self-regulatory. They add that

> For all self-related activities, feedback is an inherit catalyst(…)For example, by setting plan for engaging in a task, a learner generate criteria against which successive states of engagement can be monitored. In some cases, when a discrepancy exists between current and desired performance, self-regulated learners seek feedback from external sources such as peers' contribution in collaborative groups, teachers' remarks on work done in class, and answer sections of textbooks. (p.246)

Additionally, Hattie & Timperley (2007) contend that self-regulation refers to the way students monitor, direct, and regulate their thoughts, feelings, and actions towards achieving the learning goal. Such regulation can lead to seeking, accepting, and accommodating feedback information. They add that less effective learners have minimal self-regulation strategies, and they rarely seek to incorporate feedback in ways that will eventually promote their learning.

To recapitulate, one can safely say that feedback is very important for making our students aware of their learning objectives, current performance, and progress. Put otherwise, the writing skills can be made a cognitive and metacognitive activity (the students know and they know that they know) by providing the students with constant feedback on the part of their teachers and their peers. This feedback can accompany the students all along the continuum (the writing process). Thus, writing is no longer rigid and mechanical, but instead cognitive and reflective. As simple as that, in a nutshell, feedback can be said to be the vehicle that

leads students from the mechanical aspect of the writing skill 'learning to write' to the cognitive and reflective aspect of writing which is 'writing to write'.

3.6.1. Types of Feedback

As pointed out earlier, feedback plays a substantial role in any effective learning process. However, the impact of feedback on learning and achievement can be positive or negative, depending on the type of feedback and the way it is given (Hattie & Temperley, 2007). According to Lee (2017), "To arouse students' interest, and to engage them actively, teachers can experiment with different types of feedback-namely teacher feedback, peer feedback, and technology-enhanced feedback."(p.58).

At this juncture, we will only be dealing, in some depth, with teacher feedback and peer feedback. In the main, these two types of feedback most of the time complement (without contradicting) each other. Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick (2004) hold that these two types of feedback provide additional information that would challenge students to reevaluate their knowledge and beliefs. Having said that, teacher feedback is proven to influence more changes (gains), and be prioritized by students (Saito, 1994; Paulus, 1999).

3.6.2. Teacher Feedback: The Role of the Teacher

In almost all EFL writing contexts, where the Process-oriented Approach to teaching writing is often used, responding to students' compositions is indeed a plum job for all writing teachers. It is considered very challenging and time consuming. Ferris (2007) argues that the "response to student writing is extremely challenging to do well, and it takes considerable reflection and experience-not to mention a basic commitment to devoting the energy it takes to really accomplish the task successfully." (p.179). Responding to students' written productions is such a complex phenomenon, and this complexity arises from "the

controversies that surround such issues as whether to correct, what to correct, how to correct, and when to correct." (Ellis, 2009; p.16).

It might seem surprising, though, to mention that the results of research over the effectiveness of teacher feedback have been inconclusive. For example, Leki (1990) states that regardless of how teacher feedback is delivered, there is no evidence to suggest that it would improve students' subsequent writings. Conversely, so many other researchers and practitioners believe that teacher feedback practices are of great utilitarian value for the students. Nicol & Macfarlane (2006) contend that teacher feedback plays the role of an authoritative external reference point against which students can assess, and self-correct their progress and their internal goals.

In her survey of 100 ESL students in freshman composition classes, Leki (1991) concluded that these students equate good writing in English with error-free writing. Based on that, the students want and expect their teachers to correct all their errors. Student writers, therefore, need to be provided with regular constructive teacher feedback for the sake of judging their current performance, and knowing how far they progressed towards satisfying their expectations. That is, the type and the quality of feedback plays a key role in the student's perception of that feedback. In her survey of 44 students, Weaver (2006) found that feedback could be valued and made more helpful if teachers strike a balance between positive and critical feedback. The teachers need to provide guidance and motivation to their students instead of diagnosing the problems and justify the mark.

The teacher feedback given to student writers can be direct and indirect. Both methods are tremendously useful in improving students' written performance. Srichanyachon (2012) defines the two terms stating that "Direct feedback is a technique for correcting students' errors by giving an explicit written correction…indirect feedback is when the teacher indicates that an error has been made by means of an underline, circle, code, etc." (p. 10). In

other words, direct feedback is when the teacher gives the correct linguistic form of an error by, for instance, suggesting or deleting a word, sentence, or a certain word structure. In such a case, the students will only passively transcribe such corrections into their texts. Indirect feedback, on the other hand, occurs when the teacher points out to an error using particular codes and symbols, but leaves it to the students to correct these errors themselves.

It is worth noting here that researchers have not reached a common consensus over which type of teacher feedback is more effective. Ferris (2011), argues in favour of the indirect feedback, because, for her, this latter makes the students "more reflective and analytical about their errors than if they simply transcribed teacher corrections (*direct error feedback*) into the next draft of their paper." (p.94). However, according to Bitchener & Ferris (2012), those who prefer the direct feedback think that it is more helpful for writers because it:

1. minimizes the confusion they get if they misunderstand or forget about the meaning of the feedback (codes and symbols) given to them.

2. helps them resolve more complex errors.

3. provides more explicit feedback on previously made hypothesis

4. is more immediate.

Teacher feedback to students should be consistent. The teachers can offer both written (commentary) and oral feedback (conferences) all along the composing process to help students improve their writing. According to Ferris (2007), teacher feedback of any type is "more likely to benefit student writing if it comes primarily at intermediate, rather than final, stage of the writing process." (p. 38). This will give students the chance to revise and rewrite their texts in accordance with the teacher feedback. One-on-one conference automatically ensues the written feedback in case student writers fail to comprehend their teacher's written corrections.

In her study, Ferris (2007) shows that students pay considerable attention to their teacher feedback because it helps them make substantial, effective revisions. Thus, writing teachers are urgently needed to make their feedback (written comments) as clear and legible as possible. Zamel (1985) claims that most ESL composition teachers, when responding to their students' texts, seem to be more concerned with language-specific errors and problems, and that "the marks and comments are often confusing, arbitrary, and confusing." (p.79). Keh (1990) suggests that in order to avoid writing ineffective comments, writing teachers need to consider the following two recommendations: First, the teacher should respond as a concerned reader to a writer, not as a grammarian or grade-giver. Second, the teacher should limit the comments according to fundamental problems, because the students cannot pay attention to everything at once.

There has been much debate amongst researchers over which aspect of writing should teacher feedback address: content or form. Substantial research has shown that it would be futile and may not be worth the teacher's time and effort to provide feedback over surface level errors (mainly grammatical ones), simply because this approach is ineffective and has harmful effects (Truscot, 1996). Nonetheless, Ferris (2004) believes that error feedback of any kind assumes a fundamental role in L2 writing instruction. Other researchers have clearly demonstrated students' preference for feedback which focuses on language (form) compared to that on content, largely because they feel that teacher feedback on content seems too general and confusing (Zacharia, 2007).

However, other studies, for example the one conducted by Fathman & Whalley (1990), claimed a middle ground. This survey demonstrated that student texts improved in overall quality and grammatical accuracy when they get teacher feedback on both form and content. They added that both types of feedback can be provided separately or at the same time without overburdening the students. Similarly, the same opinion was voiced by Hyland

(2003), maintaining that teacher feedback should address "all aspects of student texts: structure, organization, style, content, and presentation, but it is not necessary to cover every aspect on every draft at every stage of the teaching-writing cycle." (p.185)

Assessment as Learning (AaL) which is a subset of Assessment for Learning (AfL), "emphasizes using assessment as a process for developing and supporting metacognition for students." (Earl, 2013, p.3).Within the scope of this notion (AaL), the students "acting as critical thinkers, make sense of information, relate it to prior knowledge, and use it to construct new learning. It is the regulatory process in metacognition." (Earl, 2013, p. 3). Self-regulation, which is a distinct feature of metacognition, is so central to the notion of AaL. (Perrenoud, 1998). Assessment as Learning (AaL) stresses students' active participation in classroom assessment through "the process of monitoring their own learning, achievement and progress." (Mutch, 2012, p.375).

According to Lee (2017), in an AaL based classroom, the teachers should assist the students in "developing an understanding of the learning goals and success criteria against which their writing will be evaluated. This is an essential step toward developing students' metacognitive capacity and enhancing their metacognitive awareness." (p.43). In AaL-focused writing classroom, the various types of feedback figure so centrally. This clearly shows to what extent feedback can enhance students' metacognitive awareness and self-regulation. Overall, Lee (2017) claims that in AaL-focused writing classrooms

> Students take control by proactively seeking feedback, e.g., by soliciting comments on areas that they feel are most relevant to their needs (e.g. related to their persona learning goals), seeking clarification from their peers, disagreeing with peers or even challenging peer comments, and initiating discussion with peers about areas of writing that warrant further attention. (p.45)

In brief, teacher feedback should constitute an intrinsic part of our FL writing instruction. According to Lee (2004), "writing teachers know too well that students are frustrated by the lack of feedback on their written errors." (p.268). Put otherwise, student writers tend to value their teacher feedback because it helps them boost their strengths and overcome their weaknesses. More importantly, in order to improve their students' composition skills, writing teachers should not only provide feedback on the final product-usually in the form of a grade-instead, they ought to offer it all along the composing process, allowing them to make effective revisions. They should also offer corrective feedback and not just information on strengths and weaknesses. Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick (2006). In addition to that, Guénette (2007) confirms that "For students to improve their writing…they should be provided with appropriate feedback, given at the right time and in proper context." (p.52). All in all, Lee (2017) suggests eight guiding principles to enhance teachers' feedback practices

1. Less is more
2. Respond to errors selectively
3. Use feedback to diagnose strengths and weaknesses
4. Adopt a balanced approach
5. Be concrete and constructive
6. Give individualized feedback
7. Use feedback to encourage and motivate learners
8. Use feedback to integrate teaching, learning, and assessment   (pp.75-78)

3.6.3. Peer Feedback: The Responsibility of the Students

Peer feedback is another predominant type of feedback that aims at promoting the process of learning English writing. Traditionally, during the dominance of the product orientation, writing teachers took it upon themselves to respond to their students' written performance, usually on formal accuracy and the final product of writing. Nowadays, however, with the prominence of the process writing pedagogy, that stresses the recursive nature of the writing

process during which teacher and peer intervention is allowed, peer feedback practices are now forming a good part in the writing classroom instruction. According to Ting &Yuan (2010), "peer review is a crucial component in multi-drafted process-oriented writing instructions." (p. 87)

Broadly speaking, peer feedback is considered as "a part of a larger category of educational activities in which students work together in groups." (Jacobs, 1989, p. 68). More specifically, peer feedback can be said to refer to "a variety of input that is given from one learner to another." (Wakabayashi, 2013; p.177). Probably the most inclusive definition is the one proposed by Liu & Hansen (2002) who see that peer feedback is the "use of learners as sources of information, and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume responsibilities (…) in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing." (p.1)

Peer feedback is sometimes referred to as peer response, peer editing, peer critiquing, and peer evaluation, etc. According to Keh (1990), each of the aforementioned names connotes a particular slant to the feedback, mainly with regard to where exactly this feedback is offered, and the focus of this feedback. For instance, peer response, which focuses on the content (organization and development of ideas), may come earlier on in the process of writing. Peer editing, on the other hand, which focuses on the surface features of the text (grammar, punctuation, etc.), usually takes place near the final stages of drafting.

The basic assumptions of peer feedback are underpinned by a number of theoretical frameworks, including process writing theory, collaborative learning theory, interaction theory in SLA, and socio-cultural theory. Process writing theory views writing as a non-linear and recursive process of creating meaning and organizing ideas (Flower and Hayes 1981). This process involves "multiple drafts with intervention response at the various draft stages." (Rollinson, 2005, p.24). This intervention response is invariably made by tutors and peers

alike to improve the quality of the students' writing. Peer feedback is said to "benefit the revision processes of reviewers as well as writers, making them less reliant on teacher feedback by helping them to internalize an audience." (Hyland, 2000, p.35).

The rationale of peer feedback can also be explained through the collaborative learning theory. This theory claims that learning is a socially constructed activity that is enacted through communication with peers. According to Bruffee (1984), "we must acknowledge the fact that people have always learned from their peers and doggedly persist in doing so whether we professional teachers and educators take a hand in it or not." (p.647). In addition to that, peer feedback is supported by works on interaction and second language acquisition. Peer response can be used as a tool for facilitating second language acquisition with the proviso that the learners should be pushed to negotiate meaning and practice language (group work) (Long & Porter, 1985)

Lastly, and most importantly, peer feedback is also underpinned by the socio-cultural theory, namely the Vygotsky (1978) notion of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) defines his theory as "the distance between the actual development 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." (p.86). In other words, this theory claims that the cognitive development of individuals' minds occurs as a result of social interaction, in which these individuals promote their learning through the guidance of a more experienced person, usually referred to as 'scaffolding' (Hansen & Liu, 2005).

Self-assessment, otherwise known as self-evaluation, is a basic feature of self-regulation (metacognition). Self-assessment refers to the evaluation of one's own performance. Klenwosky (1995) defines self-assessment as "the evaluation or judgment of the 'worth' of one's performance and the identification of one's strengths and weaknesses with a view to

improving one's learning outcomes." (p.146). It is to be pointed out that self-assessment goes much beyond grading one's work, it involves determining what is good work in any given situation; for example, the students are needed to consider what are the characteristic of a good essay and then apply this to their work (Boud, 1995).

It is worthwhile to mention that self-assessment, which is a metacognitive aspect, can be strongly promoted by means of peer feedback (peer assessment). Topping (1998) argues that cognitive and metacognitive benefits tend to increase before, during, or after peer assessment. The latter might also increase reflection and generalization to new situations, promote self-assessment and metacognitive self-awareness.

Peer feedback is proven to have positive effects for both the assessor and the student who receive the assessment. The students assessing the work of their peers seem to engage in a cognitively demanding activity that furthers their comprehension of subject matter and writing (Roscoe & Chi, 2008). Thus, one can conclude that it is through peer feedback that students can enhance their learning by being self-regulated and meta-cognitively aware of the writiyng task at hand. Nicol & Macfarlane (2006) state that "when suitably organized, self-assessment can lead to enhancements in learning and achievement." (p.207)

Peer feedback is therefore proven to be extremely beneficial for improving students' writing. Peer feedback should be integrated into the writing classroom with confidence that it can be effective and can be used by learners in their revisions (Paulus, 283). Moreover, peer feedback is said to "provide a means of both improving writer's drafts and developing readers' understandings of good writing." (Hyland, 2003, 198).

Through feedback, the students can develop an awareness of the audience (readers). Clark (2003). However, without comments from readers, the students "assume that their writing has communicated their meaning and perceive no need for revising the substance of their text."

(Sommers, 1982, p. 149). Overall, Keh (1990), summarizes the benefits of peer feedback as follows

> There are several advantages given for using peer feedback in whatever form it may take. It is said to save teachers time on certain tasks, freeing them from more helpful instruction. Feedback is to be more at the learners' own level of development. Learners can gain a greater sense of audience with several readers (i.e. readers other than the teachers). The reader learns more about writing through critically reading about others' papers. (p. 296)

Nilson (2010) proposes two guidelines to enhance the benefits of peer feedback:

1. Teachers should present peer feedback items that ask the students to respond to defined parts of the [text].
2. The students should constitute the real audience, at least in the revision stages, if they want to provide honest and useful feedback.

Having said that, because of the positive experiences reported from students, peer feedback is still widely recommended and incorporated by teachers and course designers in their writing classrooms (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). For example, Liu (1997) found that students tend not to trust their peers' responses, still they felt that they benefit from it at the textual, cognitive, and communicative levels. In short, below is a list of some useful tips that would help teachers plan and organize peer feedback activities most effectively. According to Lee (2017), teachers should

> 1. explain the purpose of peer feedback
>
> 2. let students express their experience and concerns, as well as ask questions
>
> 3. create a supportive and secure learning environment
>
> 4. provide motivation and establish goals for learning for each peer feedback activity
>
> 5. choose the most appropriate mode(s) of peer feedback
>
> 6. use peer feedback sheets where appropriate   (pp.90-92)

Conclusion

In this chapter there was an attempt to delineate the broad concept of learning in the light of the most famous learning theories which were put forward by researchers during the last century. More particularly, these include behaviorism (habit formation) and cognitivism. We have explained in considerable detail how these learning theories came to be, how they evolved, and what their educational implications were. There was also another attempt to provide a brief account of the key terms of 'cognition' and 'metacognition'. The chapter has dealt at length with the different learning strategies, with a greater focus on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, more specifically in the process of writing. The chapter then closed with a discussion of the role of feedback in bridging the gap between the mechanical aspect (habit formation) and the cognitive aspect of the writing skill.

Chapter Four

Analysis of the Questionnaires

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Introduction

The researcher aims at analyzing and discussing the questionnaires which are designed for the purpose of yielding insights into the way teachers and students attend to the writing skill. Questionnaires remain relatively efficient research tools. A questionnaire is "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting them among existing answers." (Brown, 2001,p.6). Questionnaires often include questions or items of the closed or fixed-alternative type (Kerlinger, 1973, p.487). The merits claimed on behalf of this method include the fact that it is free from the bias of the interviewer, and that it allows the respondents to have adequate time to provide well thought out answers (Kothari, 2004).

It is worth noting here that prior to administering the questionnaire to the students, the researcher planned/administered a pilot questionnaire to a group of second year LMD students. This type of questionnaire aims at amassing preliminary data on how our EFL students view and approach the writing skill.

4.1. Description of the Teacher Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into three major sections: The first section is all about gathering *general information* about writing teachers, the second section deals with the *Written Expression teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards writing instruction*, and the last section, which contains only one question, is about getting *further suggestions* from the teachers about the general aim of the questionnaire.

More specifically, the first four questions were asked in order to collate pertinent information about the teachers' experience in teaching Written Expression. Questions 5 and 6

are concerned with the approach that writing teachers pursue when teaching writing. The following three questions (Q07-Q08-Q09) deal with two basic notions: feedback and assessment. Questions 10 and 11 are about practicing writing in and out of the classroom.

The subsequent three questions (Q12-Q13-Q14) try to gather information about students' level of writing, the problems they face when they write, and the possible solutions to these problems. Questions 15, 16, and 17 concern instilling the habit of writing in our learners, and whether the students are able to write in different genres. The following two questions deal with students' reluctance to write, and whether they are encouraged to 'learn to write' or 'write to write'. The last question is about asking writing teachers to put forward some suggestions they think are relevant to the aim of the questionnaire.

4.2. Administration of the Teacher Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to (08) Written Expression teachers at the Department of English at the University of Jijel. The questionnaire consists of 19 questions open-ended, closed-ended, and mixed questions, designed to probe how Written Expression teachers teach and deal with the writing skill to make their students fluent writers. The questionnaire was delivered to the teacher at the end of 2018/2019 academic year.

4.3. Analysis of the Results of the Teacher Questionnaire

Q.01. Degree held

In fact, for the first question in the teachers questionnaire, the column for 'Magister' was added.

B.A	Master	Magister	PhD	Total
00	04	03	01	08
00%	50%	37.50%	12.50%	100%

Table 04. Degrees Held

142

The table shows that 50% of the informants hold a Master's degree, 37.5% of them have a Magister's degree, and the remaining 12.5% of them have a PhD degree. None of the teachers have a B.A. Accordingly, this sample is to a large extent representative of the whole population of Written Expression teachers, given that most writing teachers at the department of English at the University of Jijel are part-time teachers, holding a Master's degree.

Q.02. How long have you been teaching writing?

From 1 to 5 years	From 5 to 10 years	Total
05	03	08
62.50%	37.50%	100%

Table 05. Teaching Experience

When asked about the their teaching experience (the number of years they have been teaching writing), 62.50% of the teachers replied that their teaching experience ranges from 1 to 5 years. The remaining 37.50 % said they had 05 to 10 years.

Q.03. Is Written Expression module your major subject?

Yes	No	Total
05	03	08
62.50%	37.50%	100%

Table 06. Teachers' Major Subject (Written Expression)

The table above shows that 62.50% of the informants replied that writing is their major subject; 37.50% said that writing is not their major subject. Accordingly, the data is somewhat reliable and reflects Written Expression teachers involvement in teaching writing.

Q.04. Have you ever taught second year students?

Yes	No	Total
05	03	08
62.50%	37.50%	100%

Table 07. Teaching Second Year Students

The total respondents 62.50% said they had already taught second year students, while 37.50% of them said they have never taught second years.

Q.05. If yes, which approach do you usually apply in teaching writing?

When asked about the approach they implement when teaching writing, 62.50% of the teachers answered the question; against 37.50% of the informants who offered no answer. The 62.50% of the respondents who answered the question said they apply the Process-oriented Approach to teaching writing in their classrooms.

Q.06. Please, explain the reasons for your choice of this approach.

This question is a follow-up question to the preceding one. Writing teachers were further asked to explain on which grounds they have built their choice of that particular approach. Actually, 37.50% of the teachers provided no answer 62.50% of the teachers' answers varied, and most of them offered no compelling justification for the use of their desired approaches. One of the teachers said that s/he applies the process approach because writing is a life-time task! That is why teaching the process of writing will guarantee their competence to a large extent, even without the help of their teachers.

Furthermore, a teacher replied that writing is a continuous process in which the writer proceeds the changing extract. Another teacher provided an equally confusing and rather straightforward answer, saying that writing is a process which goes through drafting, planning, and revising, these different stages that the learners should follow.

Another teacher justified his/her choice of the process approach by saying that it pays attention to the processes of writing such as planning, drafting, editing, etc. Another one said that writing is a process of recursive steps and stages, and that the final product is not the only thing we should focus on; all stages are equally important and thus, a good product is the result of a good process.

144

Q.07. Do you use/give feedback in the writing process?

Yes	No	Total
08	00	08
100%	00%	100%

Table 08. Using Feedback in the Writing Class

The table shows that all writing teachers are aware of the importance of feedback in their writing classes, in that 100% of them offer feedback in their writing classes.

Q.08. How often do you assess your students' written work?

Each session	Weekly	Monthly	Each term	Total
02	04	00	00	08
25%	75%	00%	00%	100%

Table 09. Frequency of Assessing Students' Written Work

The table above indicates that 75% of teachers *weekly* assess their students' written performance; against 25% who said that they do that *every session*. No teacher opted for the other two choices.

Q.09. List the following according to the importance that you attach to them when assessing students' written performance.

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank7	Rank 8
Content	25%	25%	00%	25%	00%	00%	00%	25%
Form	62.50%	00%	00%	12.50%	00%	00%	25%	00%
Grammar	00%	00%	00%	25%	00%	50%	00%	25%
Punctuation	00%	00%	25%	00%	37.50%	12.50%	25%	00%
Spelling	00%	00%	00%	00%	12.50%	12.50%	25%	50%
Organization of ideas	25%	12.50%	12.50%	37.50%	00%	00%	00%	12.50%
Coherence and cohesion	00%	50%	25%	00%	00%	25%	00%	00%
Unity	12.50%	12.50%	37.50%	00%	37.50%	00%	00%	00%

Table 10.The Points Teachers Focus on When They Assess Their Students' Writing

The informants were asked to list certain aspect of the writing skill according to the importance they attach to them when assessing their students' texts. 62.50% of teachers tend to focus on 'form' when assessing their students' written performance; 50% of the teachers give the second importance to 'coherence and cohesion'. The third importance goes to unity, proposed by 37.50% of the respondents. Spelling 50%, Grammar 25%, and Content 25% are given the least priority when assessing the students' written work, even if second year students are still struggling with the mechanics and the surface features of their written texts.

Q.10. Do you motivate students to practice outside the classroom?

Yes	No	Total
07	01	08
87.50%	12.50%	100%

Table 11. Motivating Students to Practice Outside the Walls of the Classroom

The table above reveals that 87.50% of the teachers said that they motivate their students to write outside the classroom; while 12.50% of the teachers said that they don't!

Q.11. How often do your students practice writing in the classroom?

Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
03	05	00	08
37.50%	62.50%	00%	100%

Table 12. Frequency of Students' Practice of Writing in the Classroom

The table shows that 62.50%, of teachers said that their students *sometimes* practice in the classroom; against 37.50% who said *always.*

Q.12. How would you describe the level of your the students in writing?

When asked about their students' level in writing, the respondents provided multiple answers. One teacher said that there is a small number of good writers, while most of other learners are bad writers. 37.50% of teachers said that their students are poor writers; against

25% who said that the students have an average level in writing. One other teacher, though, said that his/her students have, to some extent, a good level.

Another teacher said that his students are fairly competent: They have fresh ideas and a desire for writing, but need guidance, as long as there is someone to teach them, they will show higher levels. To recapitulate, based on the teachers' answers, one can conclude that most of the students' level in writing is either weak or average; those who have a good level constitute only a very small minority.

Q.13. If they have problems, where do you think the problems lie?

Teachers were also asked to specify the problem(s) that their students face when they write. Again, the respondent teachers offer different plausible answers. One teacher said that the problem lies in practice, for students have little opportunity for practice, and just rely on their teachers for everything. In a similar vein, another teacher put the blame on writing instruction and students, by stating that writing teachers do not seem to teach writing effectively, and that most students exert the least effort to learn writing.

As for instruction, the problem lies in writing curricula, the quality of instruction, materials, motivation, and nature of feedback. Regarding the students, s/he asserted that they have little practice, so many grammatical mistakes, limited vocabulary, and have cognitive problems. However, another teacher said the problem lies in the fact that most students do not take Written Expression module seriously. The remaining teachers, which actually make up the majority, claim that their students are still beset with problems pertaining to grammar, mechanics, ideas, organization, content, style, and the interference of the mother tongue, to name but a few. Another teacher succinctly answered that the students have no passion for writing.

Q.14. Suggest ways for solving them?

This question is in effect a follow-up question to the former one (Q**.**13). The teachers were required to put forward some suggestions as to how the students can surmount these difficulties in writing. 12.50% of the teachers provided no answer to the question. Another teacher suggested giving interesting topics that the students really desire to write about. Most importantly; 62.50% of teachers emphasized two optimal solutions: reading and practice. 12.50% of the teachers insisted upon reconsidering the inclusion of writing (as a matter) in the syllabi of Middle and High schools.

Q.15. Do you ever instill the habit of writing in your students?

Yes	No	Undecided	Total
04	02	02	08
50%	25%	25%	100%

Table 13. Instilling the Habit of Writing in Students

The table shows that 50% of teachers claimed that they instill the habit of writing in their students; 25% of the teachers said 'no'; and other 25% abstained.

When asked to provide an explanation, they said the following.

Those who answered 'no', said that the students are not ready to write but only if it is compulsory! Most of those who gave 'yes' as an answer to the previous question, offered no answer to this question. The remaining ones provided different answers: one teacher said that the four EFL skills are complementary, and that his/her students are by no means interested in writing. s/he keeps repeating to his/her students that they won't speak while passing a test unless they succeed in its written part. Another teacher stated that s/he instills the habit of writing in his/her students by convincing them, raising their awareness, and making them practice. One of the teachers said that he instills the habit of writing in students by

encouraging them to write daily, setting rewards, helping them to find their inspiration, and making the writing activity fun as much as possible.

Q.16. Are students capable of writing in different genres?

Yes	No	Total
00	08	08
00%	100%	100%

Table 14. Students' Ability to Write in Different Genres

The table shows that 100% of the teachers think that their students are not capable of writing in different genres.

Q.17. Do students need to be able to write in different genres if they want o be better writers?

Yes	No	Total
06	02	08
75%	25%	100%

Table 15. Students Needs in Writing Genres

This question is closely related to the previous one. The teachers were asked whether their students need to be able to write in different genres if they want to become better writers. 75% of teachers said 'yes'; while 25% opted for 'no'.

Q.18. Do students seem to be reluctant to write?

Yes	No	Total
08	00	08
100%	00%	100%

Table 16. Students' Reluctance to Write

As indicated in the table above, 100% of the teachers agree that their students seem to be reluctant to write. When asked to explain, one teacher said that the students feel reluctant to write due to the complexity of the task. Along the same line, two other teachers said that the students are reluctant to write because they lack in confidence and motivation. Writing is

considered by the students as the most complex and difficult skill. Another teacher stressed the fact that the students do not take writing seriously, that is why they do not spare any effort in studying it. Another teacher said that the students prefer to speak as they can explain and correct themselves. A teacher said that it is difficult to draw the students' attention to the importance of writing, because most of them are looking for grades only. One of the teachers said that the students seem reluctant to write because they do not have enough practice.

Q.19. Please, add other suggestions you think are relevant.

In this last question, the teachers were called upon to put forward other suggestions they think are relevant to the general aim of the questionnaire. Only 50% of the teachers offered their suggestions: 25% of the teachers said that Written Expression teachers themselves are in need of practical training programs on how writing is best taught, prior to teaching writing to their students. 12.50% of the teachers recommended that it is high time writing teachers integrated technology in their writing classes to support their students' writing processes, skills, and motivation. The other 12.50% said that the students' problem in writing is a psychological one, in that the students should enhance their self-confidence and keep trying [practicing] if they want to become better writers.

4.4. Discussion of the Results of the Teacher Questionnaire

The analysis of the results of the teachers' questionnaire has revealed so much about what our EFL Written Expression teachers do in their writing classrooms. In actual fact, this analysis has come to confirm the findings of the students' questionnaire, previously discussed. Most notably, 62.50% teachers believe that most of their students express no passion for writing, and that their level is writing is either 'average' or 'below average', (Q12).

The analysis of the questionnaire has shown that most writing teachers are novice teachers, with a one to five years teaching experience (Q02). Besides, 62.50% of teachers claimed that Written Expression module is their major subject, as in Table 32; yet, 37.50% of the teachers

provided no answer when asked about what approach they implement when teaching writing! The other 62.50% (Q 05) stated that they apply the process approach while teaching, with no reference to the other innovative approaches, namely the product and genre approaches. In other words, our EFL teachers are not being eclectic when teaching the writing skill.

Additionally, the analysis has revealed that one of the prime factors behind students' reluctance to write is the lack of practice inside the classroom (Q11). The importance of practice was further highlighted on the part of teachers in the subsequent questions (Q13-14), in that the a considerable number of teachers thought that the students' major problem in writing lies in the lack of practice, and that the students should be given ample opportunity for practice. This being said, only 50% of the teachers expressed that they instill the habit of writing in the students, as it is indicated in Table 13.

The analysis of the results has also shown that 100 % of the teachers tended to provide enough feedback to their students. Actually, feedback reaps the most benefits if provided constantly. However, 75 % of teachers stated that they assess and therefore provide feedback to their students' written work on a weekly basis; while only 25% said that they do so every session. Besides, when assessing the students' written assignments, the teachers tend to focus more on the form as well as coherence and cohesion, at the expense of content (Q09). This strongly implies that second year Written Expression teachers keep getting stuck in the 'learning to write' phase.

4.5. Description of the Students Pilot Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of ten (10) open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple choice questions. These questions help the researcher draw an overall picture of the students' attitudes and beliefs towards the writing skill.

4.6. Administration of the Students Pilot Questionnaire

The student pilot questionnaire was administered to 10 second year students at the Department of English, University of –Jijel, at the end of 2018/2019 academic year.

5.7. Analysis of the Students Pilot Questionnaire

Q.01. Do you enjoy/do you feel motivated to write?

Yes	No	Total
07	03	10
70%	30%	100%

Table 17.Students' Motivation to Write

The table shows that 70% of the total number of respondents (N=10) confirmed they enjoy writing, while the remaining 30% of them opted for 'no'.

Q.02. Does your teacher encourage you to write in and outside the classroom?

Yes	No	Total
08	02	10
80%	20%	100%

Table 18. Teachers' Encouraging the Students to Write

Table 18 shows that 80% of the informants opted for 'yes', meaning that their teachers encourage them to write outside the classroom. The rest of the respondents 20% said opted for 'no' as an answer.

Q.03. How would you describe your level in writing?

Good	Average	Bad	Total
00	09	01	10
00%	90%	10%	100%

Table 19. Students' Description of their Level in Writing

As the table above shows, 90% of students said that their level in writing is 'average', and 10% of them answered that their level is 'bad'. No student said that their level in writing is good.

152

Q.04. How often do you write/practice writing in the classroom?

Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
01	09	00	10
10%	90%	00%	100%

Table 20. Students' Frequency of Practicing writing in the Classroom

90% of the informants said that they sometimes practice writing in the classroom, while the other 10% said that they always practice writing. No students 00% said that they never practice in the classroom.

Q.03: Do your Written Expression teachers stress the importance of writing?

Yes	No	Total
05	05	10
50%	50%	100%

Table 21. Teachers' Stressing the Importance of Writing

Table 21 shows that 50% of the respondents replied that teachers stress the importance of the writing skill; while the other 50% said 'no'. Those who answered 'yes' were asked to further explain how teachers stress the importance of writing. One respondent answered that teachers do so by asking students to write essays as homework. One other said that they do that through correcting students' mistakes. Another student replied that teachers stress the importance of writing by giving it priority, and also by testing the students' language skills through writing paragraphs and essays. One respondent said that they do that by offering sufficient explanation and practice.

Q.05. Does your teacher give you [enough] feedback?

Yes	No	Total
05	05	10
50%	50%	100%

Table 22. Teachers Giving their Students Enough Feedback

The table shows that half of the respondents 50% answered 'yes', and the other half 50% said 'no'. This certainly implies that feedback practices are not very common in writing classrooms.

Q.07. Do you consider your teacher's feedback when writing?

Yes	No	Total
05	05	10
50%	50%	100%

Table 23. Students Consideration of Their Teachers' Feedback

50% the students said that they consider their teacher's feedback when they write, while the other 50% said 'no'. This probably suggests that teachers' feedback is not up to the mark qualitatively and quantitatively.

Q.08. How often do you revise/review your written performance before handing it to the teacher?

Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
03	07	00	10
30%	70%	00%	100%

Table 24. Students' Frequency of Revising their Written Work

70% of students answered that they sometimes revise their written work before they hand it in to the teacher; against 30% of them who confirmed that they always do that. This actually means that writing teachers only occasionally stress the importance of revising as a crucial stage of the writing process.

Q. 09. Does your teacher emphasize the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing?

Yes	No	Total
07	03	00
70%	30%	00%

Table 25. Teachers' Emphasis of the Various Cognitive and Metacognitive Processes

The table above shows that 70% of students asserted that their teachers emphasize the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing. The remaining 30% of the students said 'no'.

-If *yes*, how does s/he do that?

Those who gave 'yes' as an answer to the question above, were asked further to explain how their teachers highlight the cognitive and metacognitive process in writing. Only four students provided answers. One said they their teachers emphasize the various cognitive and metacognitive processes in writing by giving them so many rules and instructions on how the writing process should be, and what they should avoid when they write. Another one said that their teachers give them example to help them think correctly when they write. The other student said that their teachers teach them depending on their (the teachers') own experience in writing. One other student said that their teachers stress the importance of cognitive and metacognitive processes by reading and writing!

4.8. Discussion of the Results of the Students Pilot Questionnaire

The different answers provided by the students to the pilot questionnaire have revealed a great deal about the way the students view and approach the writing skill. For instance, Q01 indicates that the majority of students feel motivated to write. Having said that, the overwhelming majority of students 90% stated that their level in writing is 'average' (Q03). This actually stands to reason for the substantial majority of students 90 % seem to practice writing very occasionally, as indicated in Q04. Besides, when asked whether their teachers stress the importance of writing (Q06), half of the informants said that they did not. Most interestingly, the other half said their teachers stress the importance of writing by testing the students and offering enough explanation and practice.

Some of the informants' answers have also revealed the fact that their teachers do not offer them enough feedback. Worse still, half of the students pointed out that they never consider

their teachers' feedback when they write, as in Table 23. Further, Table 24 revealed that 70% of students only sometimes revise/review their written work when they write. Most importantly, overlooking the teachers' feedback, and lacking knowledge of the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing (Q9), have actually made the students seemingly unaware of the outstanding merits of one of the most critical phases of the writing process, namely reviewing.

4.9. Description of the Students Questionnaire

The questionnaire is designed for the purpose of getting useful information on the writing skill: on how the writing skill should be taught in order to make our EFL students proficient writers. This questionnaire consists of three major sections: the first section, which includes only two question (Q01 and Q02), seeks to get *general information* on the type of Baccalaureate the students have, and whether or not Written Expression sessions are that interesting for them. The second section, which contains 06 questions (Q03-Q08), deals mainly with the *students' views and attitudes towards the writing skill*: whether they are motivated to write or not, how they describe their level in writing, and what major difficulties they come across when they write.

The third section (Q09-Q19) is concerned with both *teachers' and students' practices in their writing classrooms*. More specifically, it is about what writing teachers and students actually do in their Written Expression sessions: how often the students are encouraged to write inside and outside the classroom, how often they receive feedback from their teachers, how often they review their written work before handing it to their teachers, and whether their teachers emphasize the cognitive and metacognitive processes in writing.

4.10. Administration of the Students Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to 40 second year students at the Department of Lettres and English Language, the University of Jijel. The questionnaire ranges over 19

questions, consisting of closed-ended, open-ended, and mixed questions. This questionnaire was given to a sample of second year students at the end of the 2018/2019 academic year.

4.11. Analysis of the Students Questionnaire

Q.01. What type of Baccalaureate do you hold?

Type of Baccalaureate	Number
Sciences	11
	27.50%
Foreign Languages	23
	57.50%
Letters	04
	10%
Maths	02
	05%
Total	40
	100%

Table 26. Type of Baccalaureate the Students Hold

As Table 13 shows, students have different backgrounds and learning experiences. 57.50% were Lettres stream students; 27.50% were in the Sciences stream, 10% were 'letters' students; against 5% who were in Maths stream.

Q.02. How do you find the 'Written Expression' module?

Boring	Interesting	Don't know	Total
23	10	7	40
57.50%	25%	17.50%	100%

Table 27. How Students Find the 'Written Expression' Module

57.50% of students said they find that Written Expression sessions boring; 25% said that they are interesting; against 17.50% who abstained. This suggests that most students lack motivation and do not take writing seriously. It also shows that most students derive no tingle of pleasure from the whole process of 'learning to write'.

Q.03. Do you enjoy/do you feel motivated to write?

Yes	No	Total
29	11	40
72.50%	27.50%	100%

Table 28. Students' Motivation to Write

When asked whether they enjoy/feel motivated to write, 72.50% of students said 'yes'; against 27.50% who said that they did not feel motivated. This can be attributed to the way writing is taught to these students, and to their failure to see the point behind learning to write.

Q.04. If 'no', Please, explain why.

As Table 28 above shows, 27.50% of students said that they don't enjoy or feel motivated to write. For that, they gave numerous reasons, chief amongst them are: the students' sheer incompetence and disinterest in the writing skill, and the ineffectiveness of the teachers' methods of teaching writing.

Q.05. How would you describe the writing skill?

Easy	Difficult	Don't know	Total
10	19	11	40
25%	47.50%	27.50%	100%

Table 29. Students' Description of the Writing Skill

47.50% of the informants believe that writing is a very difficult skill; 27.50% of them had a neutral stance. The remaining students 25% said that writing is easy.

-When asked to explain -whatever the answer was, students gave the following:

Out of 47.50% of the respondents, who opted for 'difficult', some said that they have difficulties understanding the lessons, and the somehow complicated rules that should be followed minutely in writing. Others agreed that they do not have extensive vocabulary that would permit them to express themselves freely. Some others, though, put the blame on the teachers' incompetency and lack of practice inside the classroom.

27.50% of the students who gave 'Don't know' said that everything related to the writing skill is quite confusing. They said that they do not seem sure how to go about writing because they do not write/practice a lot. However, 25% of the students, who think that the writing is 'easy', said that they know enough information about the topics they intend to write about (especially the most interesting ones). Some of the students also think that it is easy depending on the teachers' method. One student said that writing is easy because s/he knows grammar rules, and how a piece of writing should be structured.

Q.06. How would you describe your level in writing?

Good	Bad	Average	Total
06	03	31	40
15%	7.5%	77.50%	100%

Table 30. Students' Level in Writing

When asked to describe their level in writing, 77.50% of students said that it is 'average'; 15% of the respondents claimed that their level in writing is 'good'; against 7.5% who said that their level in writing is 'bad'.

Q.07. What is your major difficulty when writing?

Vocabulary	Grammar	Content and Organization	Mechanics and conventions of writing	Other	Total
19	06	12	01	02	40
47.50	15%	30%	2.5%	5%	100%

Table 31. Students' Major Difficulty in Writing

Table 18 shows that 47.50% of the respondents' major difficulty in writing lies in vocabulary. 30% of the students find most difficulties in terms of content and organization; 15% said that grammar is their major difficulty in writing; against 2.5% who considered that they have most problems with the mechanics and conventions of writing. This again shows that assign high priority to vocabulary over the other aspects of writing.

-If *others*, please specify.

When asked about specifying other major difficulties they have in writing, only 5 students gave answers. Two students insisted upon the importance of vocabulary in writing, the very thing that they seem to lack when it comes to writing. Other two students said that their major difficulty in writing is the lack of sufficient information about the topic. The last one, however, said that his/her major difficulty lies in his/her reluctance to write, because no one seems to encourage him/her to write.

Q.08. What does 'good writing' mean to you?

Good style	Good vocabulary	Mastering writing mechanics	Good ideas	Total
18	07	08	23	40
45%	20%	20%	57.50%	100%

Table 32. On What Students Think 'Good Writing' Is

When asked about what 'good writing' mean to them, 57.50% of the students said that good writing means good ideas. The other 45% of them said that good writing is equivalent to having a good style. 20% of the students considered that good writing means mastering the mechanics of writing; against 17.5% of them who equated good writing with good vocabulary.

-If *others*, please specify. Unfortunately, no answer was provided by the respondents.

Q.09. Does your teacher encourage you to write inside and outside the classroom?

Yes	No	Total
21	19	40
52.50%	47.50%	100%

Table 33. Teachers' Encouraging the Students to Write

Table 20 clearly shows that 52.50% of the informants agreed that their teachers do encourage them to write; against 47.50% who opted for 'no', suggesting that their teachers never encourage them to write.

160

-If *yes*, please explain how.

As a follow-up question, when asked about the way their teachers encourage them to write outside the classroom, 47.50% of students provided irrelevant answers. They said that the teacher tends to give them more topics to write as homework. Others said that their teachers encourage them to write a lot outside the classroom, suggesting some novels and articles to be read so as to improve their language proficiency (writing). One student said that their teacher encourages them to assume responsibility for studying and practicing writing by insisting that they are writing for themselves and not for her/him.

Q.10. What does your teacher do in Written Expression sessions?

Provides explanation	Allows practice	Both	Undecided	Total
13	03	23	01	40
32.50%	7.50%	57.50%	2.50%	100%

Table 34. What Teachers Do in Written Expression Sessions

Table 21 shows that 57.50% of the students agree that their teachers provide explanation and allow practice during their writing classes; 32.50% see that their teachers only provides explanation in Written Expression sessions; while 7.50% said that their teachers allow practice in their classrooms.

Q.11. How often do you write/practice writing in the classroom?

Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
05	31	04	40
12.50%	77.50%	10%	100%

Table 35. Students Frequency of Practicing Writing

When asked about the frequency of practicing writing in the classroom, 77.50% opted for 'sometimes'; 12.50% said it is 'always'; against 10% who said 'never'.

Q. 12. While writing, does your teacher move around and help you?

Yes	No	Total
21	19	40
52.50%	47.50%	100%

Table 36. Teachers Moving Around and Helping their Students

Table 36 indicates that 52.50% of the informants agree that their teachers move around and help them during the composing process; against students 47.50% who claimed that their teachers neither move around nor help them when they are writing.

Q.13. When writing, does your teacher emphasize the importance of respecting/following the stages of the writing process?

Yes	No	Total
27	13	40
67.50%	37.50%	100%

Table 37. On Teachers Stressing the Importance of Following the Stages of the Writing Process

67.50% of students said that their teachers stress the importance of following the different phases of the writing process when they write, while 37.50% of them answered that their teachers never emphasize the different stages of the writing process.

-If *yes*, how does s/he do that?

Some of the students' answers were completely irrelevant. These students seem to be mistaking stages of writing for aspects of writing. Others said that their teachers emphasize the stages of writing through an oral explanation of these stages.

162

Q.14. What is the first thing you do when the teacher gives a writing task?

Brainstorming ideas	Immediately start writing your first draft	Immediately start writing your first draft	Total
21	02	17	40
52.50%	05%	42.50%	100%

Table 38. Students' Dealing with a Writing Task

As shown in the table, 52.50% of the informants said that the first thing they do when given a writing task is brainstorming ideas; 42.50% stated that they search about the topic before they go about the writing task; while 5% said that they immediately start writing their first draft when given a writing assignment.

Q.15. Does your teacher give you [enough] feedback?

Yes	No	Total
17	23	40
42.50%	57.50%	100%

Table 39. Teachers Giving their Students Enough Feedback

As indicated in the table above, 57.50% of the students said that their teachers never give them enough feedback, while 42.50% provided a 'yes' answer.

Q.16. How often does your teacher correct/assess your written performance?

Each session	Weekly	Monthly	Each term	Don't know	Total
05	16	08	05	06	40
12.50%	40%	20%	12.50%	15%	100%

Table 40. Teachers' Frequency of Correcting Students' Written Performance

The table shows that 40% of the informants said that their teachers assess their written performance on a weekly basis; 20% said that teachers assess their writing every one month.

25% of the students opted for 'each session' and 'each term'; 15% of the students remained undecided, in that they provided no answer, with 12.50% for each option.

Q.17. Do you consider your teacher's feedback when writing?

Yes	No	Undecided	Total
25	14	01	40
62.50%	35%	2.50%	100%

Table 41. Students' Consideration of Their Teachers Feedback

The table indicates that 62.50% of the students consider their teachers feedback when they write; 35% of them claim that they never take into consideration their teachers' feedback; while 2.50% provided no answer.

Q.18. How often do you review/revise your written performance before handing it to the teacher?

Always	Sometimes	Never	Undecided	Total
15	20	3	2	40
37.5%	50%	7.5%	5%	100%

Table 42. Students' Frequency of Revising Their Errors

50% of the respondents said that they *sometimes* revise their written work before submitting it; 37.5% of the students said that they *always* review their work before handing it to the teacher; 7.5% stated they never revise their work; while the remaining 5% offered no answer.

Q.19. Does your teacher emphasize the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing?

Yes	No	Undecided	Total
5	32	3	40
12.50%	80%	7.5%	100%

Table 43. Teachers' Emphasis of the Various Cognitive and Metacognitive Processes in Writing

Table 43 shows 80% of students said that their teachers never emphasize the importance of the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing; 12.50% opted for *yes*; while 7.5% remained undecided.

-If *yes*, how does s/he do that?

The five students who opted for 'yes', were required to explain how their teachers stress the various cognitive and metacognitive processes in writing. Unfortunately, only one student replied, with a rather irrelevant answer.

4.12. Discussion of the Results of the Students Questionnaire

The analysis of the results of the questionnaire yields insights as to how EFL students of interest perceive and approach the writing skill. The students' answers have to some extent shown that Written Expression sessions are boring (Table 27). For Q.4, 27.50% of the students do not enjoy or feel motivated to write, as shown in Table 15. This can be put down to the sheer incompetence of students on the one hand, and probably on the inadequate teaching methods that most teachers follow.

The analysis has also revealed that 47.50% of the students think that writing is a difficult activity, largely because of the so many variables they have to manipulate (they feel confused), and also because they are provided with little opportunity for practice (Tables 34-35/Q10-11). This is actually the reason why the vast majority of students are far from satisfied with their level in writing: 77.50% of the students believe that their level in writing is average. In addition to that, the analysis has indicated that the major difficulties encountered by students in writing are related to the sentence level: vocabulary 47.50%, grammar 15% (Table 31). This again means that the students are still struggling with the fundamentals of the writing task.

In Table 36, 42.50% of students stated that, while on writing, their teachers never more around and help them. This is demonstrably true given that 57.50% of the students assert their

teachers never give them enough feedback, and that 35% of them never consider teacher feedback. Teacher feedback is very essential in encouraging the students to write and guiding them through every step of the writing process. The lack of teachers' feedback has presumably taken a heavy toll on the students' level (85% of the students are not satisfied with their level in writing- Table 30).

Again, teacher feedback plays a fundamental role in making the students consciously aware of the their mistakes and shortcomings in writing, and how to overcome them. This will tremendously help them throughout the process of writing, especially during the last stage (revising/reviewing). Yet, the analysis has shown that the majority of students either occasionally or never revise their papers before submitting them (Table 42). Revising or evaluating one's work is an effective metacognitive strategy that would ultimately improve the EFL students' writings. These metacognitive processes, along with the cognitive processes, seem not to be highlighted by Written Expression teachers, as revealed by 80% of the students (Table 43).

Conclusion

The data obtained from both teachers' and students' questionnaires have revealed the way the writing skill is attended to in the EFL writing classes. The analysis of the results has shown that EFL students of interest seem not to be satisfied with their level in writing, and also, do not seem to be motivated to write. All this can be largely put down to the fact that writing teachers do not utilize a well-established method of teaching, and do not offer ample opportunities for their students to practice. Another equally causative factor in the students' incompetence in writing is the lack of teacher feedback. The latter is believed to help the students build a metacognitive awareness that would ultimately permit them to refine their written productions.

Chapter Five

The Situation Research Analysis

Chapter Four

Fieldwork and Experiment

Introduction

This chapter is exclusively about the experiment. More particularly, It is about the description and analysis of the students' writing assignments. All through the four-month experiment, the students were called upon to write four consecutive essays (belonging to different types). Prior to writing these essays, the sample students (second year students at the university of Jijel) received sufficient theoretical explanation about these four types of essays. Essentially, the experiment was carried out for the purpose of checking the effectiveness of implementing an eclectic approach to teaching writing and enough practice in developing EFL students' writing proficiency.

5.1. Research Design

The study aims at highlighting the importance of leading EFL students of interest from the 'learning to write' phase to the 'writing to write' phase to make them become better writers. More specifically, on the one hand, 'learning to write' means mastering the basic components of the writing skill at the sentence level (mechanics, grammar, vocabulary, etc.) and beyond the sentence level (coherence, cohesion, organization, etc.).

On the other hand, 'writing to write' means establishing the habit of writing in EFL students, making them motivated to write in different writing genres. With this end in view, the researcher has tried to create opportunities to the EFL students to practice, together by introducing them to the different types of essays.

In addition to that, the study seeks to test the effects of building a metacognitive awareness amongst students on their written proficiency. An aspect of metacognition, which is self-regulation expected to create beneficial impact on the students' written productions in the

long term. Self-regulation, can be promoted further through the use of feedback. Students are likely to be aware of their weaknesses in writing and how to overcome them, and by implication, become better writers, with the proviso that they receive immediate constructive feedback from their teachers. Accordingly, the experiment consists of investigating the effects of adopting the best teaching method and allowing more practice on the EFL students written proficiency.

5.2. Subjects' Population and Random Sampling

A sample of 40 second year LMD students were randomly selected from the target population of the Department of English at the University of Jijel. Choosing second year students was mainly based on the fact that essay writing (with its different types) is first introduced to university students in their second year. Also, the time allotted to written expression sessions per week (four hours and half) is fair enough to strike a balance between theory and practice.

5.3. The Experiment

The experiment, which lasted almost four months, involved asking each individual student to write four essays using the genre of comparison/contrast, cause/effect, process analysis, and narration. These types of essays were introduced by applying an approach that consists of a blend of the product and process orientations, where the students should focus on both the form of the final product and the different cognitive processes involved in writing. The students were given enough time to draft and redraft at will.

The broad aim behind asking the sample students to write four types of essays is to instill the habit of writing in these students. More precisely, it is to evaluate the effectiveness of adopting an eclectic approach in teaching writing on the one hand, and the effectiveness of enough in-class practice on the students' written production on the other. Another equally important factor in the experiment includes teacher feedback and peer feedback, which are

two basic components of the process-oriented approach. Feedback was delivered in tandem with the composing process in order to check whether the students tend to consider this feedback and develop a metacognitive awareness that would ultimately improve their written performance.

5.3.1. Analysis of the Assignments

The first essay students were asked to write was a **comparison and contrast** type, in which the students were asked to write about one of the following topics: (1) *Compare and contrast between living in Algeria and living in Germany*, and (2) *Compare and contrast between Tassousst University and Oxford University*.

The second type of essay introduced to the students was a **cause and effect** type. Students were asked to write an essay about: (1) *The causes and effects of illegal immigration*, (2) *The causes and effects of stress* and (3) *Then causes and effects of arranged marriage*, among other topics. The third type of essay was a **process analysis** type. Students were required to write about *the processes and steps involved in writing an essay*. The last type of essay was **narrative essay** type, in which the students were called upon to develop an essay about *The most tragic/exciting event they have ever experienced in their lives*.

For the matter of analyzing the students' essays, and because of absences, there remained only thirty students in the sample. Therefore, only 30 writing assignments were analyzed for each type of essay.

5.3.1.1. Analysis of the Results of the First Work

The following table shows the students' first work grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes. Students were required to write a *comparison and contrast* essay about a number of topics. Again, because of the unwanted variable of absence, the researcher ended up analyzing only 29 essays in total.

Students	Grammar mistakes	Spelling mistakes	Mechanics mistakes	Number of mistakes	Number of words	%
1	17	03	20	40	179	22.34%
2	16	02	10	28	252	11.11%
3	05	04	04	13	192	6.77%
4	12	08	03	23	225	10.22%
5	09	01	18	28	153	18.30%
6	08	02	12	22	208	10.57%
7	11	01	12	24	152	15.78%
8	23	01	12	36	198	18.18%
9	14	01	12	27	199	13.56%
10	14	06	12	32	135	23.70%
11	03	10	03	16	90	17.77%
12	17	00	09	26	216	12.03%
13	07	02	07	16	104	15.38%
14	23	02	09	34	212	16.03%
15	25	03	04	32	335	9.55%
16	13	14	01	28	250	11.20%
17	10	01	11	22	154	14.28%
18	15	03	08	27	193	13.98%
19	18	04	01	23	246	29.34%
20	10	02	02	14	231	6.06%
21	20	04	04	28	209	13.39%
22	13	03	05	21	210	10%
23	14	08	09	31	179	17.31%
24	12	03	13	28	211	13.27%
25	11	09	04	22	254	8.66%
26	03	01	07	11	152	7.23%
27	17	10	06	33	142	23.23%
28	22	11	17	50	241	20.74%
29	/	/	/	/	/	/
30	22	04	05	31	238	13.02%
Total	381	123	140	644	5760	
Proportion	59.16%	18.52%	21.73%	11.18%		

Table 44. Quantitative Observational Grid of the Students Mistakes in the First Work

The table shows that in the 29 assignments, 59.16% of the mistakes were in grammar; 21.73% in mechanics and 18.52% in spelling. Out of the 5760 words, there were 11.18% of different mistakes made.

Table 45 below represents a qualitative evaluation of the students' first work in terms of organization, content and style.

171

Students	Organization			Content			Style		
1	A			B			B		
2	G			A			A		
3	G			A			G		
4	G			A			A		
5	A			B			B		
6	A			A			A		
7	A			B			A		
8	A			A			B		
9	A			A			B		
10	B			B			B		
11	A			B			B		
12	A			A			B		
13	B			B			B		
14	A			B			B		
15	A			A			A		
16	B			B			A		
17	A			B			B		
18	A			B			B		
19	A			B			B		
20	G			A			G		
21	A			B			B		
22	A			G			A		
23	B			A			B		
24	A			B			B		
25	A			A			A		
26	A			B			B		
27	B			B			B		
28	B			B			B		
29	/			/			/		
30	B			A			B		
Total	G	04	13.79%	G	01	3.44%	G	02	6.89%
	A	18	62.06%	A	12	41.37%	A	08	27.58%
	B	07	24.13%	B	16	55.17%	B	19	65.51%
A: Average B: Bad G: Good									

Table 45. Qualitative Observational Grid of the Students' First Work

The table shows that 62.06% of the students had an 'average' organization, 24.13% of them had a 'bad' organization, and 13.79% of them had a 'good' organization. As regards content, 55.17% of the participants' content was 'bad', 41.37% was 'average', and 3.44% of their content was 'good'. Concerning style, 65.51% of the students' style was 'bad', 27.58% was 'average', and 6.89% was 'good'.

172

5.3.1.2. Analysis of the Results of the Second Work

This table reports the students' second work grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes.

Students	Grammar mistakes	Spelling mistakes	Mechanics mistakes	Number of mistakes	Number of words	%
1	08	02	03	13	133	9.77%
2	11	00	12	21	290	7.24%
3	00	02	02	04	215	1.86%
4	02	02	05	09	228	3.94%
5	13	05	06	24	192	12.50%
6	19	01	00	20	243	8.23%
7	07	06	04	17	138	12.31%
8	16	00	05	21	189	11.11%
9	10	03	07	20	221	9.04%
10	11	00	11	22	183	12.02%
11	08	04	01	13	156	8.33%
12	09	01	04	14	182	7.69%
13	14	01	01	16	180	8.88%
14	12	05	07	24	300	08%
15	16	06	04	26	403	6.45%
16	19	07	07	33	272	12.13%
17	14	04	11	29	301	9.63%
18	13	01	07	21	216	9.72%
19	10	01	02	13	256	5.07%
20	17	05	07	29	137	21.16%
21	10	02	12	24	171	14.03%
22	08	01	05	14	107	13.08%
23	18	02	09	29	175	16.57%
24	15	04	12	31	311	9.96%
25	07	00	06	13	186	6.98%
26	08	03	05	16	165	9.96%
27	21	10	12	43	334	12.87%
28	08	10	16	34	297	11.44%
29	09	04	01	15	307	4.88%
30	12	01	19	32	193	16.58%
Total	**245**	**93**	**101**	**439**	**6681**	
Proportion	**55.80%**	**21.18%**	**23.00%**	**06.57%**		

Table 46. Quantitative Observational Grid of the Students' Mistakes in the Second Work

The table above shows that 55.80% of the students mistakes were grammatical mistakes, 21.18% were spelling mistakes, and 23.00% of the mistakes were related to the mechanics. The following table states the students' improvement and no improvement between first work and second work in terms of grammar, spelling and mechanics mistakes.

Students	Improvement		No improvement	
1	√			
2	√			
3	√			
4	√			
5	√			
6	√			
7	√			
8	√			
9	√			
10	√			
11	√			
12	√			
13	√			
14	√			
15	√			
16			×	
17	√			
18	√			
19	√			
20	√			
21			×	
22			×	
23	√			
24	√			
25	√			
26			×	
27	√			
28	√			
29	/		/	
30			×	
Total	**24**	**82.75**%	**05**	**17.24**%
√: Improvement			**×: No improvement**	

Table 47. Students Improvement From the First Work to the Second Work

Out of the 29 students, 17.24% of the students made more mistakes and therefore achieved no improvement. The remaining 82.75% made a significant improving by making less mistakes in terms of grammar, spelling, and mechanics.

The following table reports the students' second written work in terms of organization, content, and style.

Students	Organization			Content			Style		
1	B			B			B		
2	G			A			A		
3	G			G			G		
4	G			G			G		
5	A			A			B		
6	A			A			B		
7	B			B			B		
8	A			A			A		
9	A			A			A		
10	A			B			B		
11	A			A			A		
12	A			A			A		
13	A			A			B		
14	A			A			A		
15	G			A			A		
16	A			A			A		
17	A			A			B		
18	B			A			B		
19	G			A			G		
20	A			B			B		
21	A			A			B		
22	A			G			A		
23	B			A			B		
24	B			A			B		
25	A			A			A		
26	A			A			A		
27	A			A			B		
28	A			B			B		
29	G			G			A		
30	A			A			B		
Total	G	06	20%	G	04	13.33%	G	03	10%
	A	16	53.33%	A	21	70%	A	12	40%
	B	05	16.66%	B	05	16.66%	B	15	50%
A: Average			B: Bad G: Good						

Table 48. Qualitative Observational Grid of the Students' Second Work

The table shows that 53.33% of the students organization in the second work was 'average', 20% was 'good', and 16.66% of their organization was 'bad'. As for content, 70% of the students' content was 'average', 16.66% was 'bad', and 13.33% was 'good'. Regarding style, 50% of the students' style was 'bad', 40% was 'average', and the remaining10% was 'good'.

The table below shows the students' improvement or no improvement in terms of organization, content, and style between the first and second work.

	Quality	1st essay	2nd essay	Imp/No Imp
Organization	G	13.79%	20%	**Imp**
	A	62.06%	53.33%	**No Imp**
	B	24.13%	16.66%	**Imp**
Content	G	3.44%	13.33%	**Imp**
	A	41.37%	70%	**Imp**
	B	55.17%	16.66%	**Imp**
Style	G	6.89%	10%	**Imp**
	A	27.58%	40%	**No Imp**
	B	65.51%	50%	**Imp**
A: Average; B: Bad G: Good; Imp: Improvement; No Imp: No Improvement				

Table 49. Students Improvement in Organization, Content, Style from the First Work to the Second Work

The table shows that the students made a remarkable improvement as regards organization, content, and style. Second essays' organizations were 20% 'good'; against 13.79% in the first essays, 62.06% was 'average' in the first work compared to 53.33% in the second work, and 24.13% of the students' organization in the first work was 'bad'; against 16.66% in the second work. In relation to content, 3.44% of the students' content in the first work was 'good', against 13.33% in the second work, 41.37% of their content was 'average' in the first work, becoming 70% in the second work, and 55.17% of their content was 'bad' in the first work, against 16.66% in the second work. As for style, 6.89% of the students' style in the first work was 'good', against 10% in the second work, 27.58% of the students' first work style was 'average', against 40% in the second work, 65.51% of their style in the first work was 'bad', whereas it was 50% in the second work.

5.3.1.3. Analysis of the Results of the Third Work

This table reports the students' third work grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes.

Students	Grammar mistakes	Spelling mistakes	Mechanics mistakes	Number of mistakes	Number of words	%
1	07	00	07	14	93	15.05%
2	06	7	04	17	234	7.26%
3	04	02	01	07	207	3.38%
4	03	01	03	07	199	3.51%
5	06	07	06	19	166	11.44%
6	07	00	04	11	213	5.16%
7	06	00	03	09	107	8.41%
8	14	01	01	16	159	10.66%
9	06	01	08	15	135	11.11%
10	11	00	05	16	140	11.42%
11	07	02	02	11	157	7.00%
12	05	00	05	10	144	6.94%
13	04	04	01	09	125	7.20%
14	08	01	04	13	146	8.90%
15	02	02	01	05	244	2.04%
16	13	09	03	25	241	10.37%
17	13	00	03	16	165	9.69%
18	10	01	10	21	234	8.97%
19	08	04	02	14	258	5.42%
20	18	05	05	28	297	9.42%
21	14	02	02	18	221	8.14%
22	13	02	10	25	226	11.06%
23	07	03	01	11	130	8.46%
24	10	03	11	24	314	7.64%
25	09	04	05	18	159	11.32%
26	05	05	08	18	138	13.04%
27	11	03	04	18	172	10.46%
28	08	04	10	22	201	10.94%
29	12	03	03	18	224	8.03%
30	22	02	02	26	208	12.50%
Total	**269**	**78**	**134**	**481**	**5878**	
Proportion	**55.92%**	**16.21%**	**27.85%**	**08.17%**		

Table 50. Observation Grid of the Students' Mistakes in the Third Work

The results show that 55.92% of the mistakes committed by students were grammatical, then 27.85% of the mistakes were about mechanics, and 16.21% of them were spelling mistakes. The rate of mistakes 08.17% was actually more than that of the second work 06.57%.

The subsequent table represents the students' improvement and no improvement between the second work and the third work in terms of grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes.

Students	Improvement		No improvement	
1			×	
2			×	
3			×	
4	√			
5	√			
6	√			
7	√			
8	√			
9			×	
10	√			
11	√			
12	√			
13	√			
14			×	
15	√			
16	√			
17			×	
18	√			
19			×	
20	√			
21	√			
22	√			
23	√			
24	√			
25			×	
26			×	
27	√			
28	√			
29			×	
30	√			
Total	20	66.66%	10	33.33%
√: Improvement			×: No improvement	

Table 51. Students' Improvement from the Second Work to the Third Work

The table clearly shows that 66.66% of the students (20 out of 30) achieved an improvement, in that they made less grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes; whereas the remaining 33.33% (10 out of 30) made no significant improvement.

The following table shows the evaluation of the students' organization, content, and style of the third written work.

178

Students	Organization			Content			Style		
1	A			B			B		
2	A			B			A		
3	G			G			G		
4	G			G			G		
5	A			B			A		
6	G			G			A		
7	B			B			B		
8	A			A			B		
9	B			B			A		
10	B			A			B		
11	G			A			A		
12	A			A			A		
13	A			A			A		
14	A			A			A		
15	A			G			G		
16	A			A			A		
17	G			A			A		
18	A			A			B		
19	G			G			A		
20	A			A			B		
21	G			A			A		
22	G			A			G		
23	A			B			B		
24	G			G			A		
25	A			B			B		
26	A			B			A		
27	A			B			B		
28	A			A			A		
29	A			G			A		
30	A			A			B		
Total	**G**	09	30%	**G**	07	23.33%	**G**	04	13.33%
	A	18	60%	**A**	14	46.66%	**A**	16	53.33%
	B	03	10%	**B**	09	30%	**B**	10	33.33%
A: Average			**B: Bad**			**G: Good**			

Table 52. Qualitative Observational Grid of the Students' Third Work

The table shows that, again, the students have actually improved their written performance in terms of organization, content, and style. Starting with organization, 30% of the students' organization in the third work was 'good', 60% of their organization was 'average', and 10% was 'bad'. With regard to content, 23.33% of the students' content in the third work was 'good', 46.66% was 'average', and 30% was 'bad'. Style seems to achieve the least gradual improvement, 13.33% of the students' writing style was 'good', 53.33% of their style was 'average', and the remaining 33.33% of the students' style was 'bad'.

179

This table shows the students' improvement or no improvement between the second and third work in terms of organization, content, and style.

	Quality	2nd essay	3rd essay	Imp/No Imp
Organization	G	20%	30%	Imp
	A	53.33%	60%	Imp
	B	16.66%	10%	Imp
Content	G	13.33%	23.33%	Imp
	A	70%	46.66%	No imp
	B	16.66%	30%	No imp
Style	G	10%	13.33%	Imp
	A	40%	53.33%	No imp
	B	50%	33.33%	Imp
A: Average; B: Bad G: Good; Imp: Improvement; No Imp: No Improvement				

Table 53.Students' Improvement in Terms of Organization, Content and Style from the Second Work to Third work

The table indicates that there was a good gain in terms of organization between the students' second work and third work. 30% of the students' organization in the third work was 'good'; against 20% in the second work, 60% of their organization in the third work was 'average'; while it was 53.33% in the second work, and 10% of their organization in the third work was 'bad', against 16.66% in the second work. Regarding content, as a whole, there was no significant improvement, in that 46.66% of the students' content was 'average' in the third work; against 70% in the second work, and 30% of the students' content was 'bad' in the third work, while it was only 16.66% in the second work. As for style, the students have in effect achieved a considerable improvement: 13.33% of the students' writing style was 'good', against 10% in the second work, 33.33% of the students' style in the third work was 'bad', whereas it was 50% in the second work.

5.3.1.4. Analysis of the Results of the Fourth Work

The table below reports the students' grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes in the fourth work.

Students	Grammar mistakes	Spelling mistakes	Mechanics mistakes	Number of mistakes	Number of words	%
1	06	00	01	07	182	3.84%
2	12	00	01	13	266	4.88%
3	03	02	00	05	363	1.37%
4	02	01	01	04	238	1.68%
5	10	01	06	17	152	11.18%
6	11	02	02	15	349	4.29%
7	08	00	04	12	166	7.22%
8	11	00	05	16	184	8.69%
9	13	01	06	20	243	8.23%
10	11	03	09	23	174	13.21%
11	05	02	08	15	146	10.27%
12	04	02	02	08	212	3.77%
13	07	04	03	14	272	5.14%
14	09	01	03	13	274	5.26%
15	09	04	01	14	326	4.29%
16	18	04	03	25	264	9.46%
17	09	11	02	22	282	7.80%
18	08	00	01	09	205	4.39%
19	05	00	04	09	368	2.44%
20	12	02	02	14	222	6.30%
21	11	01	00	12	178	6.74%
22	07	01	04	12	255	4.70%
23	13	00	05	18	248	7.25%
24	03	01	05	09	215	4.18%
25	11	03	03	17	200	8.50%
26	05	07	02	14	268	5.22%
27	06	07	02	15	176	8.52%
28	11	06	05	22	238	9.24%
29	11	03	03	17	190	8.94%
30	16	04	04	24	220	10.90%
Total	266	72	97	435	7076	
Proportion	61.14%	16.55%	22.29%	06.14%		

Table 54. Quantitative Observational Grid of the Students' Mistakes in the 4th Work

This table shows that grammatical mistakes are still the most spotted mistakes in the students' work with a proportion of 61.14%, then came mechanics mistakes with a proportion of 22.29%, and spelling with a proportion of 16.55%. The proportion of mistakes to the total number of words was 06.14%, which was less than that of the third work 08.17%.

The next table demonstrates the students' improvement and no improvement between the third work and the fourth work in terms of grammar, spelling, and mechanics mistakes.

Students	Improvement		No improvement	
1	√			
2	√			
3	√			
4	√			
5	√			
6	√			
7	√			
8	√			
9	√			
10			×	
11			×	
12	√			
13	√			
14	√			
15			×	
16	√			
17	√			
18	√			
19	√			
20	√			
21	√			
22	√			
23	√			
24	√			
25	√			
26	√			
27	√			
28	√			
29	√			
30			×	
Total	**26**	**86.66**%	**04**	**13.33**%
√: Improvement	**×: No improvement**			

Table 55. Students' Improvement from the Third Work to the Fourth Work

The table above reveals a substantial improvement in students' written production. 86.66% of students made fewer mistakes in grammar, spelling, and mechanics in their fourth work compared with the third work; while only 13.33% of them made more mistakes in their fourth work when compared to the third work.

The following table reports the evaluation of the students' organization, content, and style of the fourth written work.

Students	Organization			Content			Style		
1	A			A			A		
2	A			A			G		
3	G			G			G		
4	G			G			G		
5	A			A			A		
6	G			G			A		
7	A			A			A		
8	G			G			A		
9	A			A			A		
10	A			A			B		
11	A			G			A		
12	A			G			A		
13	G			G			G		
14	G			A			A		
15	A			A			A		
16	A			A			A		
17	G			G			A		
18	A			G			A		
19	G			G			G		
20	A			A			A		
21	A			B			B		
22	G			G			G		
23	G			G			A		
24	G			G			G		
25	G			G			A		
26	G			G			G		
27	A			A			A		
28	A			A			B		
29	G			G			A		
30	A			A			B		
Total	G	14	46.33%	G	16	53.33%	G	08	26.66%
	A	16	53.33%	A	13	43.33%	A	18	60%
	B	00	00%	B	01	3.33%	B	04	13.33%
A: Average			B: Bad			G: Good			

Table 56. Qualitative Observational Grid of the Students' Fourth Work

The table shows that 46.33% of the students' organization in the fourth work was 'good', 53.33% was 'average', with no instances of 'bad' organization. In terms of content, 53.33% of the students' content in the fourth work was 'good', 43.33% was average, and only 3.33% was 'bad'. As for style, 26.66% of the students' style in the fourth work was 'good', 60% was 'average', and only 13.33% was 'bad'.

183

The following table reveals the students' improvement or no improvement between the third and the fourth work in terms of organization, content, and style.

	Quality	3rd essay	4th essay	Imp/No Imp
Organization	**G**	30%	46.33%	**Imp**
	A	60%	53.33%	**No Imp**
	B	10%	00%	**Imp**
Content	**G**	23.33%	53.33%	**Imp**
	A	46.66%	43.33%	**No Imp**
	B	30%	3.33%	**Imp**
Style	**G**	13.33%	26.66%	**Imp**
	A	53.33%	60%	**Imp**
	B	33.33%	13.33%	**Imp**
A: Average; B: Bad; G: Good; Imp: Improvement; No Imp: No Improvement				

Table 57. Students' Improvement in Terms of Organization, Content and Style from the Third Work to the Fourth Work

The table above shows that the students improved dramatically in terms of organization: 46.33% of the students' organization in the fourth work was 'Good', against 30% in the third work, there were no instances of 'Bad' organization in the fourth work, while the proportion was 10% in the third work. The students' content has immensely improved: 53.33% of the students content in the fourth work was 'Good', against 23.33% in the third work, and 3.33% of the fourth work content of the students was 'Bad', against 30% in the third work.

Between the third and the fourth work, the students seem to have improved the most in terms of style: 26.66% of the students' style in the fourth work was 'Good', against 13.33% in the third work, 60% of the students' style in the fourth work was 'average', while it was 53.33% in the third work, and only 13.33% of the students' style was 'Bad' in the fourth work, against 33.33% in the third work.

5.4. Discussion of the Results

The analysis of the students' written assignments proves that there is a considerable difference of achievement between the students' first work and second work, second work and third work, third work and fourth work, in terms of the mistakes committed in relation to mechanics, spelling, and grammar, on the one hand, and the quality of organization, content, and style, on the other hand.

Overall, the students were to some extent able to gradually surmount some of their difficulties in writing: the students were making less mistakes in terms of grammar, spelling, and mechanics all along the continuum. However, despite such significant improvement, these surface level mistakes, mainly grammatical ones, tend to figure so centrally in the students' written productions. The most substantial improvement, though, was related to other aspects of the writing skill, namely organization, content, and style.

Accordingly, it is worthwhile to conclude that the results yielded from this experiment suggest that there exists a cause/effect relationship between the research variables. That is, the students are likely to enjoy writing and promote their writing skills as long as their teachers adopt the most effective approaches to teaching writing (being eclectic) and allow for more practice. Throughout this experiment, the students have developed their metacognitive awareness, especially through feedback, which allowed them to know how to control their texts and become consciously aware of their shortcomings and imperfections in writing and how to put them right.

Conclusion

This chapter was for the description and analysis of the students' written assignments produced all along the four months of the experiment. Each of the students was required to write an essay (of a particular rhetorical mode) after receiving enough explanation and instruction. The analysis of the students assignments has revealed that, from a written work to

a subsequent one, the students tended to make less mistakes in their writings. Accordingly, the findings support the research hypothesis (H_1). Thus, the conclusion is that in order to make EFL students better writers, they must be taught writing using the right approach, have more practice opportunities, and receive appropriate feedback on the part of their writing teachers.

General Conclusion and Recommendations

To EFL learners, learning to write is challenging if compared with the other language skills of Reading, Listening, and Speaking. Writing students encounter difficulties in writing owing to the numerous variables they have to control concurrently, both at the sentence level, which may include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation; and beyond the sentence level such as structuring and integrating information into cohesive and coherent texts. By the same token, teaching the writing skill is demanding for EFL writing teachers. In effect, writing teachers experience difficulties in catering for their students' overriding needs in writing, such as lack of motivation and self-confidence and sheer incompetence as regards the fundamentals of the writing skill.

The overall aim of the study is to lead EFL students from the primary phase of 'learning to write' to the more elaborate, thorough phase of 'writing to write'. More specifically, it is to check the effectiveness of some variables which include adopting an eclectic approach for the teaching writing, and providing the EFL students with opportunities for practice. Actually, being eclectic is seen to be potentially an effective solution to the problems students run into in their writing classrooms. Writing teachers, therefore, are called upon not to cling to just one approach, namely the Process Approach, although primordial in teaching writing, to the exclusion of the other approaches. Instead, they need to consider the Product and Genre approaches which are important, too, in teaching writing.

Another central yet neglected aspect of EFL writing classes is practice. *Practice makes perfect* should be the mantra in any composition instruction classroom. An important variable in this study is to instill the habit of writing in EFL students, and for this practice is paramount −with the perspectives of cognition and metacognition, that is, making the EFL learners know and know about why they are having [an intensive] practice.

Accordingly, the literature review has shed some light on how writing should be approached and attended to in order for EFL writing classrooms to fare better. The first chapter then dealt with the writing skill by discussing in some depth the importance of writing, its relation with the other language skills and aspects, chief amongst them are speaking, reading, and grammar. Also the chapter attempted to discuss in some depth the various components of the writing skill: its conventions, mechanics, coherence, cohesion, and style, etc.

The second chapter was about composition instruction and assessment. It dealt with the various innovative approaches to teaching writing, viz. the Process Approaches, the Product approaches, and the Genre Approach. It attempts to trace back the circumstances wherein these approaches emerged and evolved. The chapter posited that such approaches, albeit seemingly conflicting, are to be regarded as complementary and overlapping. This chapter has also expanded on the notion of assessment, which constitutes an intrinsic part in every writing teacher's job, in conjunction with the different scoring techniques that must be deployed by writing teachers when assessing their students' written performance.

The third chapter was on the various learning theories and strategies which marked the transitional stages that the concept of "learning to write" has passed through, and the key role they play in writing instruction classrooms. Admittedly, the manifold approaches to teaching writing holding sway over EFL writing classes are premised upon the different learning theories put forward in the last century. Additionally, the chapter cast some light on the language learning strategies, especially cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies in relation to writing. It also attempted to bridge the gap between the mechanical aspect of writing (habit formation) and the cognitive and metacognitive aspect. This is best accomplished through constant feedback on the part of teachers and peers alike.

The fourth chapter has exclusively dealt with the description and analysis of the data collected from the students' pilot questionnaire, the students' questionnaire, and the teachers' questionnaire. The analysis of the data has revealed that the writing skill is being approached and taught rather sporadically, with students having little opportunities for practice, and receiving insufficient feedback from their teachers.

The fifth chapter was about the fieldwork *per se* where 120 students' assignments (04 assignments by each of the 30 members of the sample) were analyzed. Each of the students was asked to write four essays (of different rhetorical modes) at regular intervals after receiving enough explanation and instruction on how these types of essay writing are organized and structured. The prime aim behind that was to instill the habit of writing in EFL learners via creating more opportunities for practice. Prior to and During the composing process, the necessary cognitive and metacognitive processes are emphasized to help the students work out the difficulties they encounter and, by implication, produce acceptable pieces of prose.

The data collated from the students' assignments manifested that there was a considerable improvement in the students' written proficiency from one work to the subsequent one. That is, the students have gradually started to overcome their weaknesses in writing by making less mistakes in terms of: (1) grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and (2) the quality of organization, content, and style. Ultimately, The analysis of the data have to some extent confirmed the hypothesis (H$_1$) that if Written Expression teachers apply the best teaching methods (being eclectic) and allow more practice, the students are highly likely to promote their written productions.

In the light of our findings, the following recommendations can be suggested:

1. Writing teachers should not cling to one approach to the dismissal of others, but had better resort to eclecticism by also introducing the Product Approach and the Genre Approach.

2. Writing teachers are to instill the habit of writing in their students through sound practice and collaborative work. Teachers can judiciously create opportunities for the students to practice inside and why not outside the classroom.

3. Writing teachers are to develop their students' cognitive and metacognitive (basically: planning, translating, and reviewing) skills when writing. They should also lead their students from learning to write and to writing to write i.e. they should make students know how to write and know why they practice writing.

4. Reading and grammar should form an intrinsic part in every composition instruction class. When incorporated effectively, extensive reading would, *inter alia*, ultimately serve to broaden EFL students horizons and familiarize them with how texts are constructed; while a good command of grammar would but help them communicate their ideas and thoughts so successfully.

5. Constructive feedback especially on the part of the teachers is of high utilitarian value. Writing teachers are therefore called upon to desist from providing feedback in the form of a grade in red, but should instead offer feedback (be it direct or indirect) all along the whole composing process.

Overall, one can wish that this study has brought a plus to the writing practices and concerns to TEFL contexts in the Department of English at the University of Jijel, and by ricochet in the other Algerian universities.

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Appendices

Appendix# 01

Teacher Questionnaire

Dear Colleagues,

This questionnaire is for collecting information on how writing is taught to make students fluent writers. Your personal beliefs and experience will sincerely be appreciated.

1. Degree held

B.A ☐   Master ☐   PhD ☐

2. How long have you been teaching writing?

Years ☐

3. Is Written Expression module your major subject?

Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Have you ever taught second year students?

Yes ☐   No ☐

5. If yes, which approach do you usually apply in teaching writing?
……………………………………………………………………………………………

6. Please, explain the reasons for your choice of this approach.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Do you use/give feedback in the writing process?

Yes ☐   No ☐

8. How often do you assess your students' written work?

Each session ☐   weekly ☐   monthly ☐   each term ☐

9. List the following according to the importance that you attach to them when assessing students' written performance.

Content ☐   Form ☐   Grammar ☐   Punctuation ☐   Spelling ☐

Ideas ☐   Coherence and cohesion ☐   Unity ☐

10. Do you motivate students to practice outside the classroom?

Yes ☐   No   ☐

11. How often do your students practice writing in the classroom?

Always   ☐   Sometimes   ☐   Never   ☐

12. How would you describe the level of your the students in writing?

………………………………………………………………………………..……

13. If they have problems, where do you think the problems lie?

…………………………………………………………………………………

14. Suggest ways for solving them?

…………………………………………………………………………………

15. Do you ever instill the habit of writing in your students?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

-Please, explain.

…………………………………………………………………………………

16. Are students capable of writing in different genres?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

17. Do students need to be able to write in different genres if they want o be better writers?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

18. Do students seem to be reluctant to write?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

-Please, explain why.

…………………………………………………………………………………

19. Please, add other suggestions you think are relevant.

………………………………………………………………………………….

Appendix# 02

Student Pilot Questionnaire

Please, tick (√) the appropriate box and give full answer(s) whenever asked.

1. Do you enjoy/ feel motivated to write?

yes ☐   no   ☐

2. Does your teacher encourage you to write in and outside the classroom?

yes ☐   no   ☐

3. How would you describe your level in writing?

good   ☐   average ☐   bad   ☐

4. How often do you write/practice writing in the classroom?

always   ☐   sometimes   ☐   never   ☐

5. Does your teacher give you [enough] feedback?

yes ☐   no   ☐

6. How often does your teacher correct/assess your written performance?

Each session ☐   weekly ☐   monthly ☐   each term   ☐

7. Do you consider your teacher's feedback when writing?

yes ☐   no   ☐

8. How often do you revise/review your written performance before handing it to the teacher?

   Always   ☐   sometimes   ☐   never   ☐

9. Does your teacher emphasize the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing?

yes ☐   no   ☐

-If *yes*, how does s/he do that?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix # 03

Student Questionnaire

Dear student,

The questionnaire is designed to get information on the writing skill, on how writing should be taught in order to make students fluent writers. Please, tick (√) the appropriate box and give full answer(s) whenever asked.

Thank you

1. What type of Baccalaureate do you hold?

Sciences ☐   Lettres ☐   Maths ☐

2. How do you find 'Written Expression' module?

boring ☐   interesting ☐   I don't know ☐

3. Do you enjoy/do you feel motivated to write?

yes ☐   no ☐

4. If 'no', please, explain why.
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. Does your teacher encourage you to write in and outside the classroom?

yes ☐   no ☐

If *yes*, please explain how.
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. How would you describe the writing skill?

easy ☐   difficult ☐   don't know ☐

-Whatever your answer is, please explain**.**
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

7.How would you describe your level in writing?

Good ☐   average ☐   bad ☐

8. What is your major difficulty when writing?

vocabulary ☐   grammar ☐   content and organization ☐

mechanics and conventions of writing ☐

-If *others*, please specify.

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

9. What does 'good writing' mean to you?
good style ☐   good vocabulary ☐   mastering the mechanics of writing ☐
good ideas ☐

-If *others*, please specify.

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

10. What does your teacher do in Written Expression sessions?

provides explanation ☐   allows practice ☐   both ☐

11. How often do you write/practice writing in the classroom?

always ☐   sometimes ☐   never ☐

12. While writing, does your teacher move around and help you?

yes ☐   no ☐

13. When writing, does your teacher emphasize the importance of respecting/following the stages of the writing process?

yes ☐   no ☐

-If *yes*, how does s/he do that?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

14. What is the first thing you do when the teacher gives a writing task?
brainstorming ideas ☐   immediately start writing your first draft ☐

searching about the topic ☐

15. Does your teacher give you [enough] feedback?

yes ☐   no ☐

16. How often does your teacher correct/assess your written performance?

Each session ☐   weekly ☐   monthly ☐   each term ☐

216

17. Do you consider your teacher's feedback when writing?

yes ☐　　　　　　　no ☐

18. How often do you revise/review your written performance before handing it to the teacher?

Always ☐　　　　　sometimes ☐　　　　　never ☐

19. Does your teacher emphasize the various cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing?

yes ☐　　　　　　　no ☐

-If *yes*, how does s/he do that?
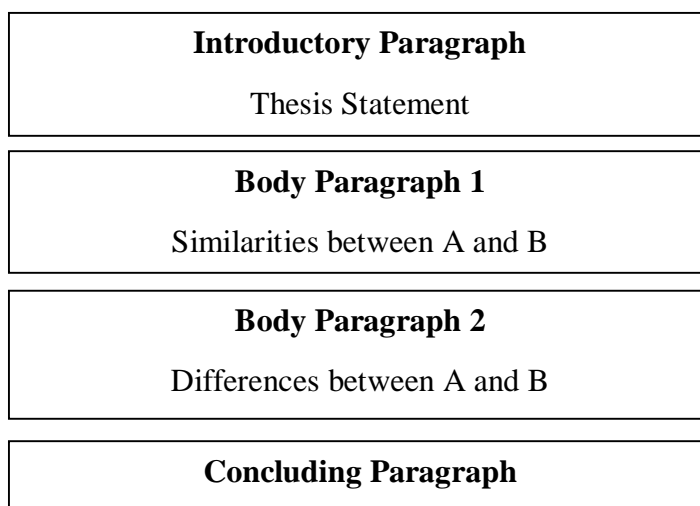
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix # 04

Sample Lesson

As was the case all through the experiment which lasted almost four months, this sample lesson is twofold: to provide comprehensive instruction on how a particular type of essay is organized and structured and then to create ample opportunities for practice. This was best accomplished through the adoption of an eclectic approach to teaching writing which encompasses the Process approach, Product approach, and Genre Approach. In effect, the sample lesson concerns the following rhetorical mode: Comparison and Contrast. Below is a detailed account of this sample lesson.
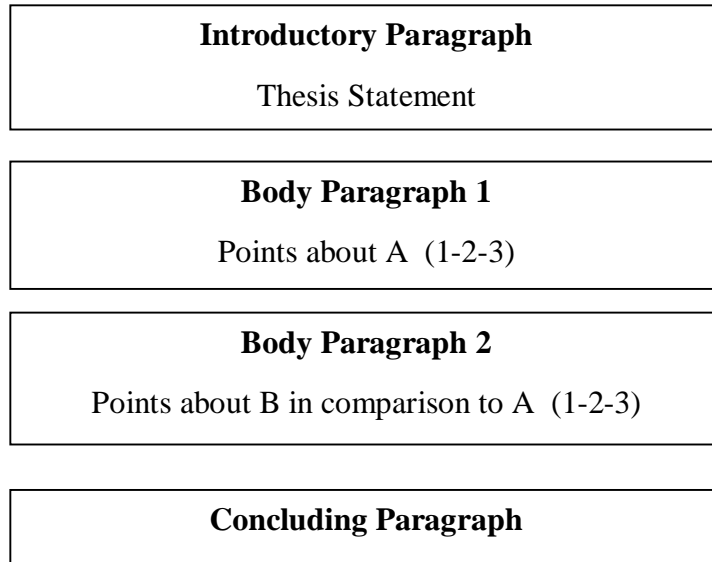
Phase 1: Instruction

First of all, the teacher goes about introducing a rhetorical pattern that is very common in academic writing which is *comparison and contrast*. He explains what is meant by this genre and the purpose behind it. He then presents how comparison and contrast essays are basically organized. Usually, this type of essay is organized in three ways called: *Basic Block*, *Block comparison*, and *Point-by-Point Comparison*. These graphic organizers look like this:

A/ Basic Block
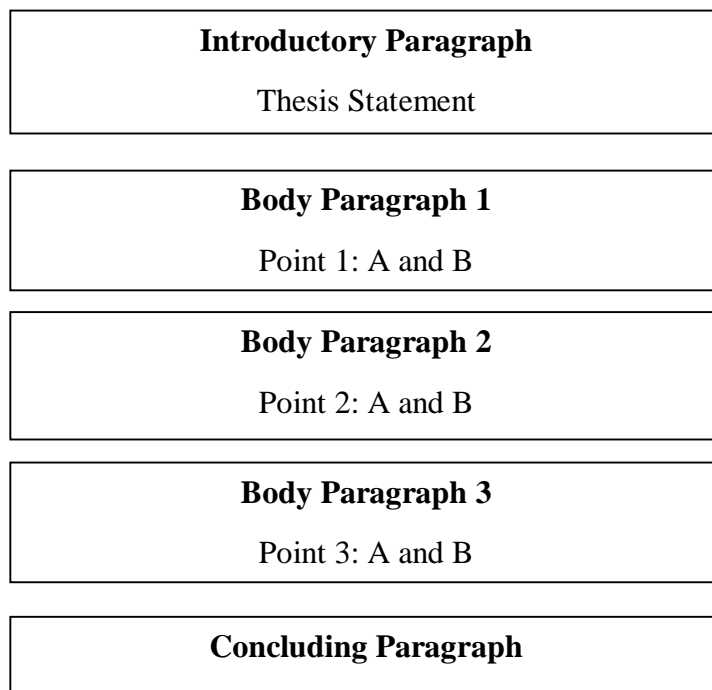
Introductory Paragraph
Thesis Statement

Body Paragraph 1
Similarities between A and B

Body Paragraph 2
Differences between A and B

Concluding Paragraph

B/ Block Comparison

Introductory Paragraph
Thesis Statement

Body Paragraph 1
Points about A (1-2-3)

Body Paragraph 2
Points about B in comparison to A (1-2-3)

Concluding Paragraph

C/ Point-by-Point Comparison

Introductory Paragraph
Thesis Statement

Body Paragraph 1
Point 1: A and B

Body Paragraph 2
Point 2: A and B

Body Paragraph 3
Point 3: A and B

Concluding Paragraph

Secondly, when the teacher finishes presenting the different graphic organizers, he offers the students two or three model essays to examine (following the principles of model-based approaches: the Product Approach and Genre Approach). The analysis of the model essays helps them know full well how this genre (comparison and contrast) is organized and structured with the aim of writing comparable essays during the subsequent phase of practice. Below is a number of questions that facilitate the analysis of the model essays.

- What is being compared in the essay?

- What is the organizational style of the essay?

- Identify the thesis statement and the topic sentences?

- What are the topics of the body paragraphs of the essay?

- What are the transition signals used in the essay?

Phase 2: Practice

Once fully conversant with how comparison and contrast essays are organized and structured, the students set about practicing. They are required to imitate the structures and organizational patterns of the model essays given to them earlier on. Then , the whole process of composing is carried out with strict adherence to the Process Oriented approach. This approach, as has been stated initially, stresses the cognitive and metacognitive skills of *planning*, *translating*, and *reviewing*, to name but these. Overall, the students go through the following [cognitive and metacognitive] processes:

- **Selection of the topic**: Some topics are suggested by the teacher, others by the students. The students agree to write about one of the following topics:

1. Compare and contrast between living in Algeria and living in Germany.

2. Compare and Contrast between Tassousst University and Oxford University.

- **Prewriting/Planning:** students are given enough time to think, set goals, and generate ideas with the help of two major strategies: *brainstorming* and *freewriting*.

- **Drafting:** at this juncture, the students start jotting down the ideas onto the page, with much focus on the main ideas they want to get across in their papers.

- **Responding to the drafts:** this stage involves the teacher moving around and responding to the students' ideas, organization, and style. It is in this stage that the teacher starts offering constructive feedback be it direct or indirect.

- **Revising:** when the teacher is over and done with responding to the drafts, the students start revising them by checking for organization, content and language effectiveness. Revising, sometimes known as reviewing, is very much emphasized by the teacher because it is a very important metacognitive skill.

- **Responding to revisions:** the teacher and peers offer their feedback with regard to ideas, organization, and style. Feedback at this stage would help them promote their self-regulation and self-assessment.

- **Editing:** in this last stage in the writing process, the students go about polishing their texts by correcting simple mistakes and fundamentals like grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

At the end of the writing process, the papers are handed over to the teacher.

Appendix # 05

Samples of Students Assignments

Sample of Students First Assignment

Student # 01

HARID
NABIL
G1

Tuesday, February 10th 2014

Algeria and Germany are two countries which are situated in two different continents. The first comes in the north of Africa, the letter in the north of Europe. However, Algeria and Germany are completly different in three different ways.

Algeria is different from Germany in three fields. Firstly, Algerian economy depends completely on oil exports. Secondly, the Algerian educational system is very weak. It lacks the efficiency and the teachers' competency. Thirdly, the Algerian health system is to some extent bad. The medical services are not sufficient. Most hospitals are dirty, which threatens the patient's health.

Germany is different from Algeria in three various fields. Firstly, the German economy is strong and based on industry and agriculture. The health system of Germany is very efficient and well organized. No patient is left to his destiny. Finally the educational system of Germany is very developed. It focuses on the quality of the learner not the number. ⟶

To sum up, Algeria and Germany are completely different in three fields. We can assume that Germany is far more developed than Algeria. Therefore, Algeria must make effort to improve it's economy, health system and education. S

$$D \rightarrow G$$
$$C \rightarrow A$$
$$S \rightarrow G$$

$$N/W \rightarrow 192$$

Student # 02
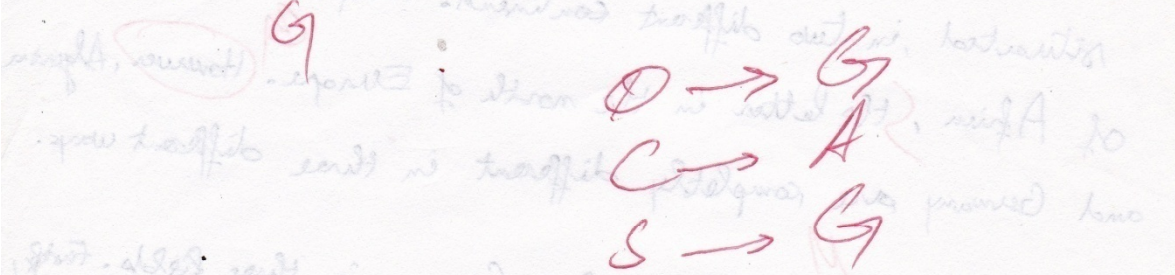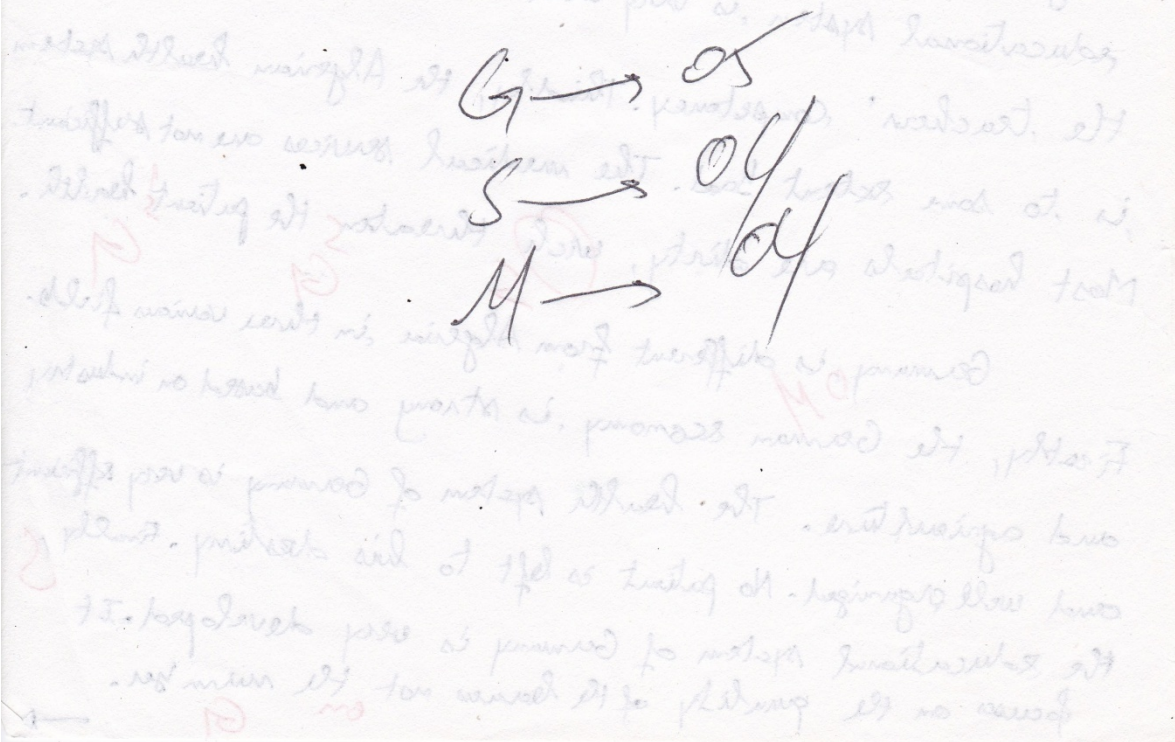
BOUHARICHE Leyla / G 09.

I remember when I studed German at high-school. It was a very nice language and a very large culture. It is completly different from the Algerian one. And this means that living in Germany is very different from living in Algeria, especially when we talk about life style and Climat.

Algerian life style is very different from the Germanic one. German people for example are very intelligent. They eat and study recularly and wear popular cloths. The children there are grewing in good conditions. They practice sport, go to theater, and the people know how to sped their time. In contrast, the Algerian people are different completly in the way of thinking. They are very simple people; they don't eat very well, they do not go to theatre except same of them. So, they do not have the same life slyle.

Clima also plays an important rule when we compare between the two countries. We can say that German has a humid clima according to it location. Very hat in summer and the winters can be very cold. Wherease in Algeria, we find that the climat is very nice. Fair and mild becouse it located on the mediteranean sea. So the clima is the major a very important factor.

224

In conclusion, Algeria and Germany have a different culture. They share nothing in common.

N/W → 225

O → G
C → A
S → A

G → 12
S → 08
M → 03

Student # 03

KHECHA
IbTissam   GO9

Living in Algeria Vs America.

It is hard to have the Khoice of living wherever you want cause the life differs from pace to another and living in Algeria is completely different from living in America.

living in America based on simplicity, people are American people live a simple life. They have an open wide mind. They help each other because they give a big important for charity . Also, Americans have many job opportunities in America people plays different fields different sports such as soccer, golf, food ball etc

because they have a great decency. G

living in Algeria, in contrast, is based on immitation

Algerian people live a complicated life. The majority

of them think of their appearance their clothes

because they have an imaginative brain. Algerian people

don't find job opportunities especially in the last years,

play football and support it more them the other sports.

Although Algeria is not good enough to live, but it

is not the worst.

G → 10
S → 01
M → 11

O → A
C → B
S → B

N/w → 15 4

Sample of Students Second Assignment

Student # 01

HARID   Monday, February 23th 2015
NABIL

School Dropout in Algeria

The school dropout is meant to be the stop of studying due to some particular reasons. In Algeria, it is a serious problem where about 500 000 pupils leave school every year. School dropout is due to many causes; it has also a number of effects.

To my mind, the first reason of school dropout in Algeria is the parental carelessness. Most of the parents, be they rich or poor, don't follow and control their children in their course of study. If the pupil does not feel any support from his parents, he will neglect his studies. Another reason is that social conditions could, for some families, be the reason to oblige their sons to leave school.

The school dropout in Algeria has in fact many effects on Algerian society and family.

As a result of school dropout, many social problems could be generated. The first one is ignorance that leads to some kind of bad behaviour such as: violence and drug taking. Another indirect effect is the underdevelopment.

In conclusion, school dropout in Algeria which has many causes, provokes a number of bad effects. In order to stop it, the Algerian government should improve the school system by following each pupil in his course of study in every step. They should also help poor families.

Student # 02

BOUHARICHE Leyla _ (09).

One of the most dominat problems in our lives is depression. It is a very dangerous problem that we can not deal with any especially nowadays where we are living in a world that seems to be going crazy. Depression can derive from both family and environmental factors, and can lead to many results.

Violence is considered to be a major factor that leads people into depression because it has a bad side on their feelings. In other hands, some people are depressed by nature. So, they can show sadness without any reason. Another factor is the lack of culture : the people who do not know how to spend and organize their time will get more depression. The persons's environment also can play an important role : the people who grew up with a hard relationship with their family will be exposed to more depression in their lives.

However, depression can, at least lead to most damages result on both sides : social and individual.

Being depressed has so many negative consequances on society in general : It can collapse the culture of peoples the people who are sad all the time can not do their job perfectly. as an individual result, depression can bring a person into a great failure besides the psychological problems that a person can not avoid.

to sum up, depression has so many causes and effects on our lives, but we can avoid it by doing same good activities.

229

Student # 03

KHECHA IbTissam   C08

Some times human beings feel depressed in which they be in the most case of sadness. Two of the most common reasons behind depression are: social and family problems, that lead to many bad results.

Depression can touch all ages, and the first reason that leads to it is family problems. We find many couples suffers from betrayal, in which they keep fighting even about small things because of misunderstanding, they don't respect each other and they don't feel secure like before. Also we can find many students suffers from loneliness in schools instead of killing time by playing, having fun, laughing and chatting with others, they seems like the living death.

The second reason is social problems. We find many people suffers from joblessness in which they don't have any hope in life, waiting for a job at least for 7 years or more in such a bad situation, whereas many others suffers from chronicle disease they try everything but without any good result, they think just of their illness and how to do with it, forgetting their lives.

However, depression can lead to many effects.

Suicide is the most effect behind depression. Statistics recently show that suicide was a solution for many people that arrives to a high level of depression. People become very sensitive and they try only to find a way of to hide or to run away from others. people who suffers from depression fail in their lives ,they fail in every thing they want to do and they forget their responsibilities in which they neglect their families.

Many depressed people create a lonely world full of sadness , lonelyness, neglect and misery. They want to find a solution but they can't , So a solution must be found in order to help them.

G → 14
S → 14
M → 11

D → A
C → A
S → B

N/W → 30

Sample of Students Third Assignment

Student # 01

HARID
NABIL
G8

How do we write essays?

The essays are defined as a form of short writing which are composed of a limited number of paragraphs. Each paragraph is related to each other, and the whole should express only one idea. There are generally three steps to follow in order to write a good essay.

The first thing to do is to make an outline of what we are going to speak about. It is very important to make such a "main plan" and to write it in a sheet of paper. It helps us focusing on the matter and not forget anything of our subject. Also, the main idea of the essay should appear clearly in the outline.

Secondly, we have to keep in mind the general structure of an essay. We have to develop our idea in a logical and chronological order; from the most important to the least important point. We begin with an introduction, then with a number of body paragraphs in which we are going to develop each point related to our main idea. Finally, we write a conclusion with restate our main idea and give future predictions.

Consequently, writing an essay involves many steps from outlining to developing the main points, until making a conclusion which gives future solutions.

Student # 02

BOUHARICHE Leyla. Group (03).

　writing an essay is not an easy thing. It is an experience that needs a lot of skills, and costs so many time, too. Writing an essay has roughly three steps:

　In the first step, you should take a plan for your essay. It is a very nesessary step that you have to deal with before start writing. It helps you a lot to organise your thoughts. So, drawing a plan will make it easy for you to write your essay.

　For the second step, that is not far from the first one, you are going to brainstorm your information that you have already planned. All what you have to do is to keep writing without caring about the miskes. feeling free will help you write so many ideas. Brainstorming is a very interesting stage in writing, but you have to be as intelligent as possib in order to get more time.

　Finally, you have got a lot of ideas that you have to organise in a good tidy piece of writing.

　Writing an essay is a very interesting thing actually. I love writing essays. It is a very important subjet that we should learn how to deal with especiall at university.

233

Student # 03

KHECHA

Ibtissam

Giog

How to write essay !

Writing an essay is not easy that much. Its somehow complicated because it differs from one type to another. How to write a good essay should pass through 4 steps.

The first step is brainstorming. When we brainstorm we write everything that comes to our minds & has a relation with our topic, without thinking of the mistakes.

The second step is Organizing ideas. When we organize our ideas that we brainstorm before we select the most important ones in order to make it easy for writing later, and we neglect the others.

The third step, Writing the essay. When we write the essay we order, the idea fully and correct if there are any mistakes in order to have a good and a full one.

The last step is checking the essay. In this step, we read the essay twice or three times in order to check

234

it and make sure that it is correct.

Writing an essay is somehow difficult, but it

is interesting & like having a challenge.

$$O \longrightarrow G$$
$$C \longrightarrow A$$
$$S \longrightarrow A$$

$$N/w \longrightarrow 165$$

$$G \longrightarrow 13$$
$$S \longrightarrow 100$$
$$M \longrightarrow 03$$

235

Sample of Students Fourth Assignment

Student # 01

HARID
NABIL
68

Monday, April 13th 2015

A frightening day in my life

Among all days in my life, there were some happy and some sad ones as for every human being on earth. There were some tragic days I can remember. But, the most fearful day I could never forget, is my long and tiresome crossing by swimming to a small island in my town.

This happened one day in summer when we decided my friend and me to make a challenge: to swim across the sea to reach the island. It was several miles away from the beach. As we were young and fond of adventure, we took the decision immediatly to dive and started our long trip. A third friend was with us in the beach and stood there to take care of our clothes.

It was a full sunny day. We were swiming quietly and amazingly until we got in a mid distance between the beach and the island. A man was swiming in that place seeing us going away from him in the direction of the island, he said to us with gesture: « you're really fool! »

236

Student # 02

BOUHARICHE. Leyla (09).

I remember very well when I was samall, my best hobby was to break eggs. One day, when my mother was outside and there was no one in the house except me and my elder sister. I decided to break eggs. I went outside in the garden and started looking for the hens. It was the most entertaining experience I have ever lived in my childhood.

As I saw the hens going away far from their hens, I went immediatly to the place. I sat down on the grass and started counting the eggs. I have forgotten the number actually, but I still remember the way. I took the eggs and broke them one after another. It took a long time, and my sister knew that something wrong has happened She started calling me, but I did not enter the house. I could not leave the place. Breaking eggs was so funny and I was very happy by doying so. After having broken all the eggs, I got home, and my sister was standing on the door kitchen. She looked at me and she said: have you broken eggs again? She smelt the smell of eggs from my hands. And I was silent.

She was angry really, and she could do nothing but looking in my eyes. she noticed that I was afraid. She held me up and said: "I will never tell my mother."

Student # 03

The char "Tissart" Crog

This life is full of happiness and sadness!

Sometimes it makes us laugh, and other times it makes

us cry. I have passed through many tragic events in

my life. But there was one of them that broke my

heart so harshly.

The worst event was the death of my grandmother.

When I was in the middle school, my grandmother died.

Nobody told me about her death because I was passing

the exams. I felt something wrong at home, besides, they

told me that my mom went to visit her for few days. I

don't know, maybe I was young that's why they didn't

tell me, but my grandmother was so close to me and I

didn't see her for the last time, and that was that broke my

heart into pieces. After few days, my mom came and

I was so happy and amazed at the same time, my mom's

eyes were full of tears I asked her many times what was wrong!

but no answer and then she said "your grandmother died"

238

I was shocked, and I felt my heartbeats were getting
so quickly. Since that I hated everything and I didn't speak
with any one of my family still   my mom told me
that they did that for me in order to pass in the exams, and
I was still young   to be in a place full of sadness and
crying, but even though I couldn't pass those moments
easily and I'am always pray to God for her.

        I think that the worst and tragic event that could
pass in our lives is the death of someone near to your heart
and , we can't do nothing.

O ⟶ G
C ⟶ G
S ⟶ A

G ⟶ OG
S ⟶ M
M ⟶ OU

N/W ⟶ 282
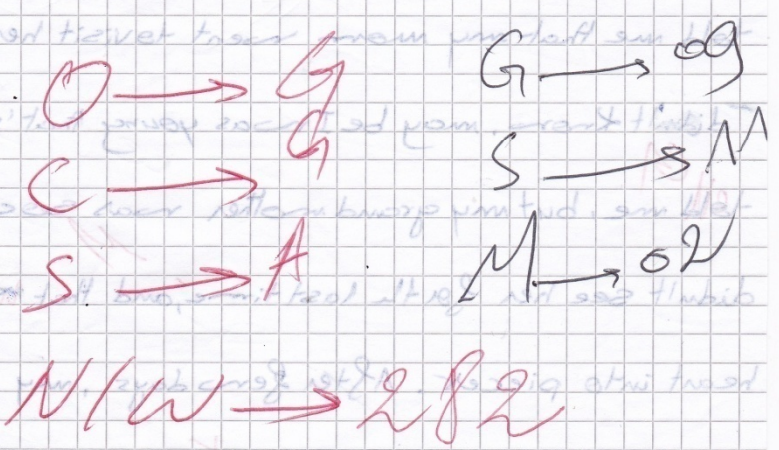
Résumé

 La compétence rédactionnelle est une compétence cognitivement complexe, et c'est un problème pour de nombreux étudiants d'expression écrite en anglais comme langue étrangère (EFL). Les enseignants de la rédaction du Département d'anglais de l'Université de Jijel conviennent que les productions écrites des étudiants de l'EFL sont banales et prolixes. La pure complexité de la compétence rédactionnelle peut être en partie attribuable aux quelques variables que les étudiants (EFL) doivent maîtriser cognitivement, à la fois au niveau de la phrase et au-delà du niveau de la phrase afin d'obtenir des textes anglais corrects. En outre, la façon dont la compétence rédactionnelle est enseignée au département d'anglais reste discutable quant à la méthode que les enseignants devraient appliquer dans leurs classes. On peut émettre l'hypothèse que les étudiants apprécieraient d'écrire abondamment si les enseignants utilisaient les approches les plus appropriées dans l'enseignement de l'écriture et savaient comment développer les compétences cognitives et métacognitives de leurs étudiants lors de la rédaction. En d'autres termes, si les étudiants devaient devenir des écrivains compétents, il incomberait à leurs enseignants de les conduire de l'apprentissage à la rédaction (apprentissage des principes fondamentaux de la rédaction) à la rédaction pour la rédaction (apprécier la rédaction et être conscient et motivé pour en rédiger). En tant que telle, cette étude vise à tester les effets de la mise en œuvre d'une approche bien équilibrée de l'enseignement de la rédaction, permettant plus de pratique pour une meilleure performance écrite des étudiants. En fait, cette approche est un mélange éclectique des approches les plus utiles à l'enseignement de la rédaction, à savoir : approche produit, approche processus et approche genre. Dans cette optique, deux questionnaires ont été conçus à la fois pour les enseignants et les étudiants et une expérience - menée sur une période de quatre mois au cours de laquelle chaque étudiant de deuxième année a dû rédiger 4 essais. L'analyse des questionnaires a révélé que la compétence rédactionnelle est enseignée et abordée de manière

désorganisée , avec moins de place pour la pratique et une rétroaction insuffisante de la part des enseignants de la rédaction. Les résultats de l'expérience ont montré que les étudiants ont acquis plus de compétences en rédaction. Les résultats confirment l'hypothèse (H1).

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الملخص

تعتبر مهارة الكتابة عملية معقدة، وهي مشكلة لكثير من طلبة التعبير الكتابي باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية .يتفق أساتذة التعبير الكتابي في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة جيجل على أن التعابير الكتابية لطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية هي عادية ومطنبة . ويمكن أن يعزى التعقيد الهائل لمهارة التعبير الكتابي جزئيًا إلى بعض المتغيرات التي يتوجب على طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أن يتقنوها إدراكيًا، على مستوى الجملة وما بعدها، وذلك من أجل تحقيق الكتابة بالإنجليزية الصحيحة .إضافة إلى ذلك، تظل الطريقة التي يتم بها تدريس مهارة التعبير الكتابي في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية والطريقة التي يجب أن ينتهجها الأساتذة في فصولهم الدراسية محل نقاش. لذلك يمكننا أن نفترض أن الطلبة قد يستمتعون بالكتابة بغزارة إذا استخدم الأساتذة أنسب الطرق في تدريس التعبير الكتابي، وعرفوا كيف يطورون مهارات الطلبة المعرفية والوراء معرفية عند الكتابة. بمعنى آخر، أنه إذا أراد الطلبة أن يصبحوا كتابًا ماهرين، على معلميهم أن يقودوهم من تعلم التعبير الكتابي (تعلم أساسيات الكتابة) إلى التعبير من أجل التعبير (أي الاستماع بالكتابة والوعي بالكتابة والتحفيز عليها).على هذا النحو، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اختبار آثار تطبيق مقاربة متوازنة لتدريس التعبير الكتابي، والسماح بمزيد من الممارسة لأداء كتابي أفضل للطلبة. في الواقع، هذا النهج هو مزيج انتقائي من الأساليب الأكثر فائدة لتدريس التعبير الكتابي، وهي مقاربة المنتوج، مقاربة العملية، ومقاربة النوع. مع وضع هذه الغاية في الاعتبار، تم تصميم استبيانين لكل من الأساتذة والطلبةوأُجريت تجربة على مدار أربعة أشهر كان يُطلب من كل طالب في السنة الثانية كتابة 4 مقالات . كشف تحليل الاستبيانات أن مهارة التعبير الكتابي يتم تدريسها وتناولها بطريقة غير منظمة، مع مجال أقل للممارسة وعدم كفاية التأثير المرتد من جانب أساتذة التعبير الكتابي .أظهرت نتائج التجربة أن الطلبة قد نجحوا في اكتساب مهارات التعبير الكتابي، وهذه النتائج تدعم الفرضية (H1) .

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