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**The Effectiveness of Correction Symbols as  
Feedback in Enhancing Self-Correction in Writing  
The Case of First-Year Students,  
University of Constantine**

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Master degree in Language Science s**

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## **DEDICATION**

*To my father, may God rest his soul,  
who left us on the 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2009*

*To my mother*

*I dedicate this work.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to check the effects of the use of correction symbols on enhancing students' self-correction in writing. We will try to answer the question whether using correction codes, as a form of teacher feedback, is effective or not by examining students' abilities of self-correction through this technique.

To achieve this objective, we relied on two means of research: a test and two questionnaires. The test was administered in order to check our hypothesis through analyzing students' self-corrected paragraphs. The students' questionnaire aimed at finding out their understanding of the writing skill, their preferences in teachers' feedback, and their viewpoints about correcting their own mistakes. The second questionnaire was destined to teachers to elicit their attitudes towards writing and the different techniques used in providing feedback.

The analysis of the results of the test showed, to a large extent, the effectiveness of correction symbols in enhancing students' self-correction. The results of the questionnaires showed that the students prefer their teachers to indicate their mistakes in providing feedback in an attempt to their enhance self-correction.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

1. EFL.....English as a Foreign Language.
2. ESL.....English as a Second Language.
3. L1.....First Language.
4. L2.....Second Language.
5. N.....Number of Students/ Teachers.
6. WE.....Written Expression.
7. ....Percentage.

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## INTRODUCTION

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

Writing as a skill has always been considered as a part of the syllabus in teaching ESL/EFL. Feedback is considered as a tool of teaching the writing skill, and learners expect their teachers to provide them with appropriate mistake correction. At the University of Constantine, teachers of Written Expression apply different ways of providing feedback on students' compositions because some of them think that a good piece of writing depends on grammar and vocabulary, so they focus more on giving feedback concerning these two aspects. Other teachers focus on text design and organization, so their response to learners' written production may be quite different.

## **2. Aim of the Study**

The present study aims to enhance the effect of correction symbols on promoting learners' abilities to correct their mistakes and examine the use of symbols as a strategy to encourage students to think about their mistakes and to correct them themselves. This procedure is based on the idea that when learners are actively involved in the process of self-correction, they will show more motivation to do this task. It is also based on the idea that teachers should take into account learners' attitudes in order to develop a strategy to evaluate their students' written production.

## **3. Hypothesis**

In an attempt to examine the effectiveness of feedback in the writing process, we hypothesize that the provision of correction symbols strategy would have positive effects on promoting learners' self-correction and improve their written production.

#### **4. Definition of Feedback**

Feedback refers to the information given to the learners about their performance. It is the input from a reader to the writer with the effects of providing information to the writer for revision; or in clearer words, any procedure used to inform a learner whether an instructional response is right or wrong, and via feedback learners are provided with information on aspects of their performance through explanation or proposition of better options.

Feedback is of three types; teacher written feedback, teacher-student conferences and peer feedback. Teacher written feedback takes many forms. The most common ones are; commentary, rubrics, minimal marking (correction symbols), taped comments and electronic feedback. Our research seeks to investigate the minimal marking form in enhancing self-correction.

#### **5. Means of Research**

Investigating the benefits of correction symbols in improving learners' self-correction can be realized through the use of a test. The test will evaluate the effects of correction codes on enhancing students' self-correction as a way of providing feedback on their compositions. Adopting a test would allow us to analyze students' paragraphs after applying the correction symbols technique and enable us to examine our hypothesis.

The study is conducted at Mentouri University, Constantine. The data are collected through an analysis of first-year students' questionnaire in order to consider their opinions and to gain insights from their answers. The second analysis examines the teachers' questionnaire to get more information about their experience in teaching this skill and the techniques that they use in providing feedback. The analysis of the questionnaires aims to determine the teachers' various ways of providing feedback and the students' attitudes towards the use of correction codes and self-correction.



## **Structure of the Study**

Our study is divided into two main parts: a theoretical part which includes two chapters about the review of literature and an empirical part which includes one chapter.

Chapter One provides an overview of the teaching of writing through defining writing and the development of the writing skill and through reporting the current approaches that characterize the teaching of writing.

Chapter Two provides an in-depth discussion of the importance of feedback. It includes a definition of feedback, its different types, teacher written feedback, and the most common forms of teacher written feedback.

Chapter Three deals with data analysis. It contains the analysis of the test as well as the learners' and teachers' questionnaires.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **TEACHING THE WRITING SKILL**

Introduction

1.1 The Writing Skill

1.1.1 The Nature of Writing

1.2 Approaches to Teaching Writing

1.2.1 The Product Approach

1.2.1.1 Focus on Language Structures

1.2.1.2 Focus on Text Functions

1.2.1.3 Focus on Creative Expression

1.2.2 The Process Approach

1.2.3 The Genre Approach

1.2.4 The Creative Approach

1.2.5 The Cooperative Approach

Conclusion

## **Introduction**

Writing in a second language is one of the most challenging aspects of second language learning (SLL) and numerous approaches have adopted to teach this complex skill. This research work explores the issues related to English as second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) writing. It starts with showing the nature of writing and its relation to the productive skills, and highlights the current approaches to the teaching of the writing skill.

### **1.1 The Writing Skill**

In this section, we attempt to define the writing skill through the distinction between speaking and writing and to cast light on the different approaches to the teaching of this complex skill. Another point to be dealt with in this chapter is to investigate the reason behind the difficulty of the writing skill.

#### **1.1.1 The Nature of Writing**

The writing system was used by the Sumerians around 5,000 years ago. Writing, as an act, is the use of graphic symbols that are called letters. These letters represent words we utter in a language, but in writing "...the writer must compensate for the absence of external contextual elements by the deliberate inclusion and elaboration of explanatory details which the speaker could omit" (Rivers and Temperley, 1978: 263). Acquiring a language requires a good mastery of its four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Children learn to speak and express themselves effectively in speech, and later they learn to read, but many people never learn to express themselves freely in writing.

Writing is a great challenge to produce a fluent and coherent piece of writing. It is much more than graphic symbols, and involves producing ideas and "...involves a different kind of mental process. There is more time to think, to reflect, to prepare, to rehearse, to make mistakes and to find alternative and better solutions" (Scrivener, 1994: 192). Olshtain (1991, 235) states that "writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learner's course of study". The relationship between writing and the productive skills, especially speaking, has been subject to an important discussion.

"Speaking and writing involve language production and are therefore referred to as productive skills" (Harmer, 1991: 16). It was believed that writing is a set of graphic symbols which represent speech, and the reason for the existence of the written form is to present the oral form of a language. "Written language was thought by some to be spoken language put into written form" (Brookes and Grundy, 1991: 1). If Brookes, Grundy and others are right in thinking that writing is speech written down, both spoken and written forms of communication should have the same characteristics. Yet, it is obvious that each has specific features distinguishing it from each other because all people acquire speech in their mother tongue and find it difficult to write. Al-Mutawa and Kailani (1989, 125) state that speaking and writing "are concerned with conveying information. Thus a pupil practises in writing what he has practised orally, and expresses through it what he understands and wishes to convey".

There are many differences between writing and speaking. White (1981, cited in Nunan, 1989: 36) explains that writing is not a natural activity. All physically and mentally normal people learn to speak a language. Yet, all people have to be taught how to write. This is a

crucial difference between the spoken and written forms of language. There are other important differences between speaking and writing as shown in the following table 1

Speech	Writing
<p>1. Speech is spoken sounds passing through the air.</p> <p>2. Takes place in a context, which often makes references clear.</p> <p>3. Producing spoken sentence means coordinating complex movements of the muscles of the mouth and lungs.</p> <p>4. Immediate feedback given and expected</p> <p>a- verbal: questions, comments</p> <p>b- non-verbal: facial expressions.</p> <p>5. In speech, we are not much concerned with the precision in the expression. We can make a statement, repeat it, expand it, and refine it according to the reactions and interjections of our listeners.</p> <p>6. Speech develops naturally and early in our L1.</p>	<p>1. Writing is visible signs on a flat surface.</p> <p>2. Reader not present and no interaction possible.</p> <p>3. Producing a written sentence means Coordinating complex movements of fingers using a pen and keyboard.</p> <p>4. No immediate feedback possible. Writers may try to anticipate reader's reactions and incorporate them into text.</p> <p>5. Written statements should be constructed more carefully, concisely and coherently.</p> <p>6. Competence in writing develops much more slowly in L1. Writing is usually learned through formal instruction rather than through natural acquisition processes.</p>

**Table 1: Differences between Speaking and Writing**

There are several cases where speech exhibits the characteristics of writing (sermons and lectures, for example), and there are other cases where writing resembles speech (for example, e-mail communication or informal notes).

Speaking and writing are two productive skills, and they are two forms of using a language.

## **1.2 Approaches to Teaching Writing**

A range of foreign language teaching approaches have emerged to develop practice in writing skills, each stressing a different aspect and applying one approach or another depending on what we want our learners to do: whether we want them to focus on the final piece of writing than its process, and whether we want to focus on the creative writing, either individually or cooperatively.

### **1.2.1 The Product Approach**

The product approach focuses on the production of well-produced composition.

The product approach to writing focuses on the end results of the act of composition, i.e. the letter, essay, story and so on. The writing teacher who subscribes to the product approach will be concerned to see that the end product is readable, grammatically correct and obeys discourse conventions relating to main points, supporting details and so on.

(Nunan, 1989: 36)

The product approach is concerned with how well the writer knows the structure of the language, and writing is an imitation of texts produced by the teacher. Learners study a model and attempt various types of exercises aimed towards relevant features of text: punctuation, spelling, vocabulary and rhetoric conventions. Consequently, writing revolves around the writer's mastery of the grammatical and lexical systems of the language. Writing, in this approach, is reduced to produce a product. This objective is fulfilled through different sub-approaches that each focuses on a different aspect of writing.

### **1.2.1.1 Focus on Language Structures**

Focus on structure was born with structural linguistics and behaviorist learning theories of second language learning. Hyland (2003, 03) states that "...writing is seen as a product constructed from the writer's command of grammatical and lexical knowledge, and writing development is considered to be the result of imitating and manipulating models provided by the teacher". Writing, in other words, is the arrangement of words, clauses and sentences in a coherent and readable way. It involves having a range of vocabulary, linguistic knowledge, syntactic patterns and cohesive devices.

An emphasis on language structure as a basis for writing teaching is, as Hyland (2003 : 3-4) states, typically four-stage processes. It starts with familiarization, in which learners are taught grammar and vocabulary, then, controlled writing where learners have to manipulate fixed patterns from substitution tables. The third stage is guided writing where learners imitate a model text and the last stage in the process is free writing. Here, learners use the learnt patterns to write essays, letters and so on.

### **1.2.1.2 Focus on Text Functions**

This orientation attempts to relate structures to meanings. This introduces the idea that a particular language form performs a certain communicative function. "Functions are the means for achieving the ends (or purposes) of writing" (Hyland, *ibid.*, 6), this approach aims at helping students develop effective written productions through creating topic sentences, supporting sentences, and transition, and to develop different types of paragraphs. The teaching of a product approach model starts with comprehension checks on a model text through a range of exercises that draw attention to structures.

### **1.2.1.3. Focus on creative Expression**

This orientation focuses on the writer and the reader rather than form as a starting point. “Writing is a way of sharing personal meanings and writing courses emphasize the power of the individual to construct his or her own views on a topic”. (*ibid.*, 9). In contrast to the rigid practice of a more form-oriented approach, teachers have to be creative and to take opportunities through free-writing. As Hyland (*ibid.*) states “expressivism is an important approach as it encourages writers to explore their beliefs, engage with the ideas of others and connect with readers”. Readers are not only teachers, who used to be the only respondents, but also peers who will “read, respond, summarize, make comments but not correct” Raimes (1983: 9). Other roles that teachers can play lie in providing students with the space for making their own meanings within a cooperative environment and stimulating writers’ ideas with pre-writing tasks. Expressivism was criticized for its social view which “tends to neglect the cultural background of learners, the social consequences of writing, and the purposes of communication in the real world, where writing matters” (Hyland, 2003: 10).

### **1.2.2. The Process Approach**

The process approach came as a reaction to the weaknesses of the product approach. It started to gain ground in the mid 1970s. It developed from the assumption that

If we can analyze the different elements that are involved in a longer piece of writing, and can help learners to work through them, and use this knowledge positively in their own writing, then such writing will have a lot of stress taken out of it.

(Brookes and Grundy, 1991:7)

In other words, this approach tackles the elements which determine what we write down one by one. The process approach represents a shift in emphasis in teaching writing from the product itself to the different stages the writer goes through in order to create this product.



Writing, then, is an exploratory collaborative approach during which the finished product emerges after a series of drafts rather than a linear route to a pre-determined product. Osbima and Hogue (1999: 3) state that

It is important to note that writing is a process, not a “product”. This means that a piece of writing, whether it is a composition for your English class or a lab report for your chemistry class, is never complete; that is, it is always possible to review and revise and review and revise again.

Osbima and Hogue (*ibid.*)

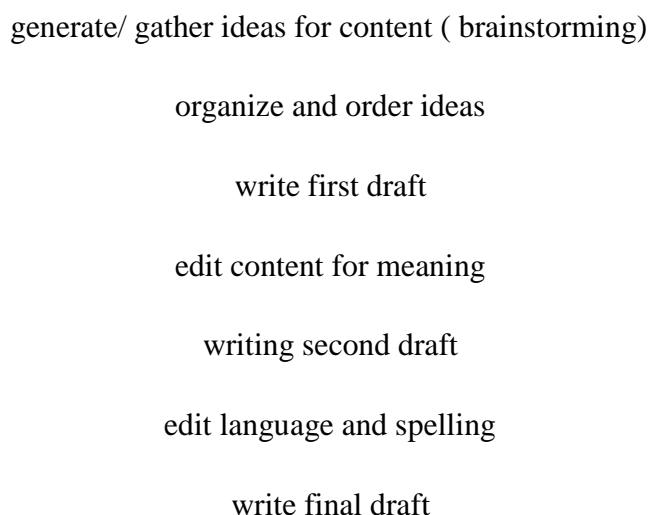
Giving the teaching of writing a process orientation shifts focus from the text to the writer and the stages he goes through; generating ideas, focusing on, structuring, drafting, evaluating, and reviewing. These stages generally involve different forms of brain-storming, selection and ordering ideas, planning, drafting, redrafting and revising. Instruction should aim to make students aware of the cognitive strategies involved in composing.

Common practice in the process approach includes free writing, writing, extended narratives through a cyclical process, and publishing student writing. In dialogue journals, for example, learners are required to write about thoughts entries sharing experiences, ideas, and reactions as well as modeling correct usage. The development and pedagogical applications of these cognitive models, though meaning a decreasing concern with error in ESL/EFL contribute to help students at different stages of the writing act. In the Process Approach, teachers can detect the source of difficulty learners encounter at a particular step, and learners are made aware of the interaction that exists between them and the reader which is important in conveying ideas clearly.

Writing, as Zamel (1983) puts it, is “a non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning”. (Zamel, 1983; in Hyland, 2003: 11). Writing here helps us to come into terms with

our experience and understand better. When we edit what we have written, our writing itself goes through a further filter, because we clarify what we think when we force ourselves to write it down. Flower and Hayes suggested an original framework consisting of planning-writing-revising (Flower and Hayes, 1981; in Hyland, 2003: 11). This framework was, later, extended to identify four stages in the writing process: pre-writing, composing or drafting, revising or rewriting and editing.

The following figure 1 shows how we might produce a longer text such as a composition:



**Figure 2: The Process Approach**

(Adapted from Lindsay and Knight)

Notice that the arrows between the stages in the diagram of the writing process go in both directions. This is because the process of writing and re-writing does not just develop in a straight line. For example, you might decide at the first draft stage to re-order some of the ideas, or to take some ideas out and put different ones in. So, when we write we move backwards and forwards between the different stages. (Lindsay and Knight, 2006: 86)

The following table 3 provides a summary of the differences between the product and process approach:

The Process Approach	The Product Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emphasis on learning process.</li> <li>- focus on student experience.</li> <li>- regard for form and structure.</li> <li>- priority on student interactions.</li> <li>- concern for immediate tasks, activities, brainstorming, genre analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emphasis on finished products.</li> <li>- focus on objective outcomes.</li> <li>- regard for global meaning.</li> <li>- priority on formal course design.</li> <li>- concern for long-term objectives.</li> <li>- classroom writing, error analysis and stylistic focus are features of a product writing approach.</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Major Dichotomies in Writing Approaches**

( Adapted from Newfields, 1999)

### 1.2.3. The Genre Approach

Before discussing this approach, it would be necessary to define the word “genre”. Lynch defines genre as the following:

A genre is a type of text (e.g. recipe, prayer, advertisement), which is recognized as a “type” by its overall content, structure, and function. The notion of genre is closely connected with that of an audience, and in particular, with the idea that readers (and writers) of a specific genre are members of a community of people sharing interests and expectations about its communicative purpose.

(Lynch, 1996: 148)

Johnson and Johnson also state that “genres are types of spoken and written discourse recognized by a discourse community. Examples are lectures, conversations, speeches, notices, advertisements, novels, diaries, and shopping lists, each genre has typical features”. (Johnson and Johnson: 140).

The Genre Approach became popular in the 1980s; drawing largely on the Systematic Functional Linguistics developed by Halliday which stresses the relationship between language and its social function. The approach attempts to get learners aware of the different elements of writing: the topic, conventions, and style, of the genre and the context in which their writing will be read and by whom. The approach proposes deconstructing dominant genres, analyzing them from a linguistic point of view, reproducing them from an analysis of their structural and linguistic features, and generating their own texts that conform to the conventions of each genre.

In the Genre Approach “writing is seen as an essentially social activity in which texts are written to do things, the assumption being that if the reader cannot recognize the purpose of a text, communication will not be successful” (Tribble, 1996: 37). In addition, learners study texts in the genre they are going to write before they proceed their own. Learners, then, might be given the task to write business letters of various kinds, or provided with a typical model of such letters before they start composing their own.

In the Genre Approach, writing is perceived as a form of production rather than as a creative act. The approach conceives writing as the analysis and imitation of texts provided by the teacher, which is also what the product approach seeks to achieve.

#### **1.2.4. The Creative Writing Approach**

Creative writing allows learners to write starting from their own experience. Engaging in assignments such as writing poetry, stories and plays provide a strong motivation to learners. It is a journey of self-discovery which promotes learning. (Gaffield-Vile, 1998: 31). In addition to the teachers’ feedback, the whole class can also be a good practice. We can also include class magazines, or set up, if possible, websites for classes on the Internet. The

purpose is to give a chance to learners to display their current abilities in making them use language in ways that suit their own needs.

Hall Haley and Y. Austin state that “computer technology affords a variety of tools that can be helpful resources for developing writing”. The various reasons for using the computer are:

- Removing the problem of poor hand writing that some suffer from.
- Spell checkers can ease the task of achieving correct spelling.
- A computer screen can sometimes be more visible to the whole group than a piece of paper.

E-mail writing is another important use of the computer. The communication via E -mail is very immediate and a motivating activity for learners since it represents a genre of its own where linguistic accuracy.

### **1.2.5. The Cooperative Approach**

A great benefit can be gained from writing as a cooperative activity. Students may find themselves producing a piece of writing which they might not have come up with on their own. Individual students may also find themselves saying and writing about topics they might not have come up with on their own, and the group’s research is broader than an individual’s.

A major advantage of this approach is to allow the teachers to give a more detailed and constructive feedback to group writing since they are dealing with a small number of groups rather than many individual students (Boughey, 1997). This kind of writing involves not only writing, but research, discussion and peer evaluation.

## **Conclusion**

Writing is gaining a paramount importance in language instruction. Teaching writing as a system of communication has taken hold in both SL and FL settings. Traditionally, writing was viewed primarily as a tool for the practice and reinforcement of grammatical and lexical patterns, a fairly one dimensional activity, in which accuracy was important. But, in recent years, writing has started to be conceptualized as a social, cultural, and cognitive phenomenon. Writing, then, is considered as a worthwhile enterprise in itself.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **FEEDBACK AND CORRECTION SYMBOLS**

Introduction

2.1 The Importance of Feedback

2.1.1 Definition of Feedback

2.2 Types of Feedback

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Conclusion

## **Introduction**

Responding to students' writing is probably the most challenging part of teaching writing in ESL and EFL settings. Writing teachers invest much time and energy examining students' writing. Providing feedback is often seen as one of ESL writing teachers' most important tasks. Writers typically intend to be read, and in the classroom, feedback from readers provides opportunities for them to see how others respond to their work and to learn from these responses. However, this chapter attempts to discuss the importance of feedback in teaching the writing skill. It starts with defining feedback. Then, it discusses the different types and forms of feedback.

### **2.1 The Importance of Feedback**

In this section, we attempt to define feedback and discuss its importance through dealing with its different types. Then, we discuss the different forms of teacher written feedback, focusing on the use of correction symbols.

#### **2.1.1 Definition of Feedback**

“Feedback generally refers to the listener's or Reader's response given to the learner's speech or writing”. (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 34). Feedback refers to the information that is given to the learners about their performance. It is the input from a reader to the writer with the effects of providing information to the writer for revision; or in clearer words, any procedure used to inform a learner whether an instruction response is right or wrong, and via feedback learners are provided with information on aspects of their performance, through explanation, or proposition of better options.



## **2.2 Types of Feedback**

Response towards learners' writing can vary widely, and feedback practices differ according to the teachers' preferences as well as to the kind of writing task they have set and the effect they wish to create. But while a response to written work is probably essential for the development of writing skills, there is less certainty about who should give this response, the form it should take, and whether it should focus more on ideas or forms.

### **2.2.1 Teacher Written Feedback**

Teacher written response continues to play a central role in most L2 writing classes. Many teachers do not feel that they have done justice to students' efforts until they have written substantial comments on their papers and provided a reader reaction. Feedback on early drafts of a paper does seem to lead to improvements in subsequent drafts. However, teachers need to consider what students want from feedback and what they attend to in their revisions.

Research suggests that teacher written feedback is highly valued by second language writers.... . The effect of written feedback on students' revisions in subsequent drafts has not been extensively studied, although it seems that students try to use most of the usable feedback they are given.

(F. Hyland, 1998, cited in K. Hyland, 2003: 179)

It is important to note that what individual students want from feedback varies considerably. Some students want a response to their ideas, some demand to have all their mistakes marked, others use teacher commentary effectively, and other students ignore it all together.

A great deal of research, however, has questioned the effectiveness of teacher written feedback as a way of improving students' writing. Research on first language writing suggests that much written feedback is of poor quality and frequently misunderstood, by students, being too vague and inconsistent...

(K. Hyland, 2003: 178)

Zamel (1985, cited in K. Hyland, *ibid.*, 178) suggests a similar picture in ESL contexts:

ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescriptions, impose abstract rules and standards, respond to texts as fixed and final products, and rarely make content-specific comments or offer specific strategies for revising the texts....The teachers overwhelmingly view themselves as language teachers rather than writing teachers”.

(Zamel, *ibid.*)

## **2.2.2 Teacher-Student Conferences**

Teachers can give feedback on students’ papers through face-to-face conferences. Conferences provide opportunities for the teacher and the student to discuss the meaning of a text through dialogue. K. Hyland (2003: 192) states 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 paper”. Moreover, O’ Malley and Valdez Pierce (1996, 138) state that “student-teacher conferences are also an important form of feedback students receive on their writing”. For students, the main advantage of conferences is giving them a clearer idea of their strengths and weaknesses.

Zamel (1985, cited in K. Hyland, 2003: 192) explained that “both teachers and students tend to be positive about the opportunities for detailed discussion that conferences offer, and research suggests that students typically receive more focused and usable comments than through written feedback”. The most effective conferences are those in which students ask questions and discuss their papers. Conferences can vary in their purpose and focus. Students may be advised on a particular problem or provided clarification from the teacher.

### **2.2.3 Peer Feedback**

“The idea of students receiving feedback on their writing from their peers developed from L1 process classes and has become an important alternative to teacher -based forms of response in ESL contexts. Peer response is said to provide a means of both improving writers’ drafts and developing readers’ understanding of good writing, but teachers have generally been more positive than students, who tend to prefer teacher feedback, and its benefits have been hard to confirm empirically in L2 situations” ( K. Hyland, 2003: 198). The advantage of peer response is improving collaboration between students, as individuals belong to the same community. Moreover, peer response in ESL leads writers to make some use of peer’s comments in their revisions. Hyland (*ibid.*, 200) states that:

Peer response can take a number of different forms and occur at various stages in the writing process. Most typically it consists of assigning students to groups of two, three, or four who exchange completed first drafts and give comments on each others’ work before they revise them  
(*ibid.*, 200)

## **2.3 Forms of Teacher Written Feedback**

“While reading student papers, teachers often ask themselves, “How can I give the best feedback to help my students improve their compositions?” The question is difficult because there is little agreement among teachers or researchers about how teachers should respond to student writing” (Fathman and Whalley, 1990: 178). K. Hyland states that most common techniques in providing feedback are commentary, cover sheets, minimal marking, taped comments and electronic feedback.

### **2.3.1 Commentary**

This is the most common form of teacher written feedback. This technique of providing feedback takes the form of hand written commentary on the student papers. Commentary

feedback is considered as a responding to the students' writing rather than evaluating what they have done. "If time allows, responses may take the form of both marginal and end comments. A comprehensive end note allows more space and opportunities for the teacher to summarize and prioritize key points and to make general observations on the paper" (Hyland, 2003: 180). Such a form of feedback can be extremely useful and should help students to avoid mistakes in their final version.

### **2.3.2 Rubrics**

"A variation on commentary, and often accompanying it on final drafts, is the use of cover sheets which set out the criteria that have been used to assess the assignment and how the student has performed in relation to these criteria" (*ibid.*, 181). Rubrics can be used for different genres, and they are useful in showing what the teacher values in a particular student work.

### **2.3.3 Correction Symbols**

Correction symbols refer to the indication of types and locations of students' mistakes through the use of correction codes such as those suggested by Oshima and Hogue (1997) (See appendix 01). The application of correction codes is "normally done by underlining the mistakes and using some kind of symbol to focus the attention of the students on the kind of mistake they have made" (Byrne, 1988: 125). So, the coding technique consists of using a number of different codes (either in the body or in a corresponding margin) to refer to the different aspects of language such as word order, spelling and verb tense.

Correction symbols are also called minimal marking. Using correction codes is a convenient way of giving learners information on where they have gone wrong and "it is

convenient to have a system of signals to the pupil in order to help him to know what he is looking for before he has acquired much proof-reading skill” Bright and McGregor (1970: 156). In addition, “this technique makes correction neater and less threatening than masses of red ink and helps students to find and identify their mistakes” ( Hyland, 2003: 181) and “makes correction look less damaging” ( Harmer, 2007: 121) . “These also have the advantage of encouraging students to think about what the mistake is, so that they can correct themselves” (*ibid.*, 2001: 111), correction codes encourage students to look at writing as a skill that can be improved, and train them in looking for areas of improvement (Hedge, 2000: 316). Students can therefore correct their mistakes because their mistakes occur in “the ‘hurly-burly of conversation where there many things to get right at the same time. The learner knows the right form, but produces the wrong one ” (Johnson, 2001: 335). When responding to first and second drafts of students, teachers expect a new version to be produced which shows that learners have taken into consideration the use of correction symbols. The reason for using symbols is that learners can identify their mistakes and correct them. The feedback process is finished once students have made changes in their written production (Harmer, 2001: 112).

### **2.3.4 Taped Commentary**

Taped commentary is the use of a tape recorder to record remarks about students’ writing and to use a mark on their papers to indicate what the comment refers to. “This not only saves time and adds novelty, it provides listening practice for learners and assists those with an auditory learning style preference. It also shows the writer how someone responds to their writing as it develops, where ideas get across, where confusion arises, where logic or structure breaks down” (*ibid.*, 182). Students may well enjoy getting reactions in this format since it is both more personal and more immediate than written comments at the end of a paper.

### **2.3.5 Electronic Feedback**

A lot of feedback can now be given electronically, either via e-mail or through text editing programmes. E-mailing comments to students is an ideal way of responding to their work as it goes through various drafts, since as students work at their computers they can incorporate the comments that their tutor is making, or reply questions that are being asked. “These new channels of written feedback offer teachers greater flexibility in their responding practices, but ultimately convenience is likely to be the deciding factor in which are used” (*ibid.*, 183).

### **Conclusion**

The importance of feedback on learners' writing is due to the changing attitudes towards feedback. Teachers and researchers are aware of the challenges and complexities involved in providing feedback concerning what and how to correct.

Teachers should ask students for their feedback preferences at the beginning in order to avoid vague and difficult responses which confuse learners. In sum, there are good reasons to believe that teacher written feedback is effective in improving second language writing.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS WRITING**  
**AND CORRECTION SYMBOLS**

Introduction

3.1 The Test

3.1.1 Administration of the Test

3.1.2 Results of the Test

3.1.3 Interpretation of the Results

3.2 The Students' Questionnaires

3.2.1 Description of the Students' Questionnaire

3.2.2 The Questionnaire Administration

3.2.3 Results of the Questionnaire

3.2.4 Interpretation of the Results

3.3 The Teachers' Questionnaire

3.3.1 Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

3.3.2 The Questionnaire Administration

3.3.3 Results of the Questionnaire

3.3.4 Interpretation of the Results

Conclusion

## **Introduction**

Writing cannot develop in a vacuum. It is a skill that needs a special care from teachers and learners. It is useful to identify students' attitudes and concepts toward their teachers' feedback. Moreover, it is important to elicit teachers' different ways of providing feedback. This is done through the use of a test and the administration of two questionnaires: one administered to the learners and the other to the teachers.

### **3.1. The Test**

Investigating the effectiveness of correction symbols in enhancing self-correction correction can be best realized through the use of a test. Our test seeks to check whether using correction symbols, as a form of feedback, in dealing with students' writings, would lead learners to correct their own mistakes.

#### **3.1.1 Administration of the Test**

The empirical study took place at the Department of English, the University of Mentouri, Constantine. Two groups of First-Year students were involved. The study was conducted in the second semester because the writing programme focuses on writing paragraphs. We taught both groups correction symbols in order to make students familiar with this technique, for the purpose of answering our questionnaire. We divided our test into four sessions:

- First session: we provided the students with a list of correction symbols adapted from Oshima and Hogue (1997). (See appendix 01). Then, we explained the different symbols of the different mistakes.
- Second Session: we carried on explanations of correction symbols.
- Third session: we asked students to write paragraphs on the following topic "I hope if there are more than twenty-four hours in a day".



- The students' papers were collected and corrected, out of class using correction symbols.
- Fourth session: students are handed in their writings and asked to rewrite their paragraphs, taking into account the underlined mistakes and symbols. We collected the corrected paragraphs for the analysis.

The test procedure was followed with both groups. We randomly chose twenty-five corrected paragraphs from each group, because it represents approximately half of the group, to analyze them and check the effects of correction symbols on enhancing self-correction.

### **3.1.2 Results of the Test**

1. Punctuation P.

Incorrect	Correct
1. ...I take my dinner and finally <u>I</u> go to sleep. P.	1. ...I take my dinner and finally, I go to sleep.
2. If we have more than twenty-four hours in a day <u>I</u> 'll divide..... P.	2. If we have more than twenty-four hours in a day, I'll divide.....
3. ....doing my home works. <u>and</u> revising my lessons. P.	3. ....doing my home works, and revising my lessons.
4. ...for example <u>they</u> publish different books. P.	4...for example, they publish different books.
5....simply <u>when</u> we have more time, we will... P.	5...simply, when we have more time, we will...
6. If I have the power to change it <u>I</u> 'll do. P.	6. If I have the power to change it, I'll do.
7. Because I have difficulties <u>I</u> cannot do it. P.	7. Because I have difficulties, I cannot do it.
8. Thirdly <u>for</u> practicing sport. P.	8. Thirdly, for practicing sport.
9. I take a short time to relax. <u>and</u> after this I go to the cinema. P.	9. I take a short time to relax, and after this, I go to the cinema.
10. Everyone feels good <u>At</u> the end, I..... P.	10. Everyone feels good.
11. I'll come back home <u>At</u> the end, I..... P.	11. I'll come back home. At the end, I.....
12. I get up at six o' clock <u>I</u> practice sport, and I..... P.	12. I get up at six o'clock, I practice sport, and I.....
13. On the other hand <u>I</u> think that..... P.	13. On the other hand, I think that.....
14. ... to develop my country <u>to</u> develop my country. P.	14.....to develop my country.
15. In my opinion <u>life</u> is difficult. P.	15. In my opinion, life is difficult.

Table 4: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Punctuation

## 2. Word Missing ○

Incorrect	Correct
1. Let <u>l</u> imagine what we can do.	1. Let's imagine what we can do.
2. Some people wishes that are more than twenty-four hours in a day.	2. Some people wishes that there are more than twenty-four hours in a day.
3. There are more <u>o</u> twenty four-hours in a day.	3. There are more than twenty-four hours in a day.
4. I wish <u>i</u> can do it.	4. I wish that I can do it.
5. I have many interesting <u>o</u> to do.	5. I have many interesting things to do.
6. I know how <u>o</u> pass my day.	6. I know how to pass my day.
7. I go to the university <u>o</u> studying.	7. I go to the university for studying.
8. If there are more than twenty-four <u>o</u> in a day.	8. If there are more than twenty-four hours in a day.

**Table 5: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Word Missing**

## 3. Capitalization Cap.

Incorrect	Correct
1. I want to ask about <u>S</u> omething. <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap.</span>	1. I want to ask about something.
2. I take my lunch, <u>T</u> hen I..... <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap.</span>	2. I take my lunch, then I.....
3. If there were more than <u>T</u> wenty-four hours..... <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap.</span>	3. If there were more than twenty-four hours.....
4. I prepare <u>M</u> y <u>H</u> ome work. <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap. cap.</span>	4. I prepare my home work.
5. I will do <u>T</u> his task. <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap.</span>	5. I will do this task.
6. Time is not enough to do whatever I want, <u>T</u> hat's why I..... <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap.</span>	6. Time is not enough to do whatever I want, that's why I.....
7. I thought that <u>I</u> t was not enough. <span style="margin-left: 20px;">cap.</span>	7. I thought that it was not enough.

8. ....to help myself. <u>at</u> the end..... <i>cap.</i>	8. ...to help myself. At the end.....
9. I think that <u>T</u> ime is life. <i>cap.</i>	9. I think that time is life.
10. I study Written Expression and <u>e</u> .S.P. <i>cap.</i>	10. I study Written Expression and E.S.P.
11. I will change <u>T</u> his program. <i>cap.</i>	11. I will change this program.
12. I go to the <u>Z</u> oo. <i>cap.</i>	12. I go to the zoo.
13. I help my <u>F</u> ather. <i>cap.</i>	13. I help my father.
14. I go <u>T</u> o my garden. <i>cap.</i>	14. I go to my garden.
15. Time is very <u>P</u> recious. <i>cap.</i>	15. Time is very precious.

Table 6: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Capitalization

4. Verb Tense *v.t.*

Incorrect	Correct
1. I <u>hoped</u> if we have more than twenty-four hours. <i>v.t.</i>	1. I hope if we have more than twenty-four hours.
2. I'm <u>doing</u> many tasks everyday. <i>v.t.</i>	2. I do many tasks everyday.
3. When someone <u>waiting</u> for something, he finds that time is very long. <i>v.t.</i>	3. When someone waits for something, he finds that time is very long.
4. Life <u>is</u> always <u>changing</u> . <i>v.t.</i>	4. Life changes always.
5. I'm <u>dividing</u> my time according to my daily tasks. <i>v.t.</i>	5. I divide my time according to my daily Tasks.
6. When I <u>finished</u> , I will go to the university. <i>v.t.</i>	6. When I finish, I will go to the university.
7. Everyday, I prepare dinner, listen to music, and <u>am sleeping</u> for seven hours. <i>v.t.</i>	7. Everyday, I prepare dinner, listen to music, and sleep for seven hours.
8. I <u>don't</u> succeed last year. <i>v.t.</i>	8. I didn't succeed last year.

Table 7: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Verb Tense

5. Subject-Verb Agreement *agr.*

Incorrect	Correct
1. Twenty hours <u>is</u> not enough. <i>agr.</i>	1. Twenty hours are not enough.
2. The exploration of the universe <u>start</u> ..... <i>agr.</i>	2. The exploration of the universe starts....
3. My day <u>become</u> insufficient. <i>agr.</i>	3. My day becomes insufficient.
4. Workers <u>wishes</u> to have..... <i>agr.</i>	4. Workers wish to have.....
5. It is something which <u>come</u> first. <i>agr.</i>	5. It is something which comes first.
6. Why we <u>loses</u> our time. <i>agr.</i>	6. Why we lose our time.
7. Students <u>wants</u> to have extra-hours. <i>agr.</i>	7. Students want to have extra-hours.
8. Everyone <u>need</u> time. <i>agr.</i>	8. Everyone needs time.
9...until the sun <u>rise</u> . <i>agr.</i>	9...until the sun raises.

Table 8: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Subject-Verb Agreement

6. Make One Word or Sentence *C*

Incorrect	Correct
1. I visit my grand <u>father</u> .	1. I visit my grandfather.
2. I drink coffee in the after <u>noon</u> .	2. I drink coffee in the afternoon.
3. When I imagine my <u>self</u> .....	3. When I imagine myself.....
4. ....to help our <u>selves</u> .	4....to help ourselves.
5. Every <u>body</u> hopes.....	5. Everybody hopes.....
6. ...never <u>theless</u> , I wish a short day.	6. ....nevertheless, I wish a short day.
7...in every <u>day</u> .	7...in everyday.
8. Every <u>one</u> likes working hard.	8. Everyone likes working hard.
9. Any <u>one</u> knows.....	9. Anyone knows.....
10. Every <u>thing</u> needs time.	10. Everything needs time.
11. At the end, I will do any <u>thing</u> .	11. At the end, I'll do anything.

12. Now <u>a</u> days, life is very difficult.	12. Nowadays, life is very difficult.
13. I play foot <u>b</u> all.	13. I play football.
14. We can do whatever we want with <u>o</u> t tiredness.	14. We can do whatever we want without tiredness.
15. I cannot do every <u>th</u> ing alone.	15. I cannot do everything alone.

**Table 9: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Making One Word or Sentence**

**7. Spelling** *sp.*

Incorrect	Correct
1. It is very <u>expensive</u> . <i>sp.</i>	1. It is very expensive.
2. The <u>foriegn</u> countries. <i>sp.</i>	2. The foreign countries.
3. It is <u>inough</u> . <i>sp.</i>	3. It is enough.
4. We revise our <u>lesons</u> . <i>sp.</i>	4. We revise our lessons.
5. <u>Personaly</u> , I wish..... <i>s.p.</i>	5. Personally, I wish.....
6. I want to <u>divide</u> the day..... <i>sp.</i>	6. I want to divide the day.....
7. ...the way which leads to <u>happyness</u> . <i>sp.</i>	7. ...the way which leads to happiness.
8. .... <u>us</u> I like. <i>sp.</i>	8...as I like.
9. ....to stay with my <u>familly</u> . <i>sp.</i>	9...to stay with my family.
10. My <u>dialy</u> life. <i>sp.</i>	10. My daily life.
11. .... <u>therefor</u> , I will succeed. <i>sp.</i>	11. ...therefore, I will succeed.
12. ...for practicing different sports.	12. ....for practicing different sports.
13. .... <u>oufs</u> are not enough. <i>sp.</i>	13. ....hours are not enough.
14. .... <u>specially</u> my home work. <i>sp.</i>	14. ....especially my home work.
15. I need <u>freinds</u> . <i>sp.</i>	15. I need friends.

**Table 10: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Spelling**

8. Plural pl.

Incorrect	Correct
1. There are twenty- four <u>hour</u> <sup>pl.</sup> in a day.	1. There are twenty-four hours in a day.
2. We study extra hours, to understand our <u>lesson</u> <sup>pl.</sup> very well.	2. We study extra hours, to understand our lessons very well.
3. If we don't gain time, we will be <u>loser</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	3. If we don't gain time, we will be losers.
4. I watch different kind of <u>animal</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	4. I watch different kind of animals.
5. I study different <u>module</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	5. I study different modules.
6. I do some <u>exercise</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	6. I do some exercises.
7. ....because <u>Algerian</u> <sup>pl.</sup> try always to....	7. ...because Algerians try always to....
8. There are some <u>student</u> <sup>pl.</sup> who.....	8. There are some students who.....
9. ...to get a good <u>jobs</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	9. ...to get a good job.
10. Some <u>dream</u> <sup>pl.</sup> are impossible to realize.	10. Some dreams are impossible to realize.
11. I like playing <u>game</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	11. I like playing games.
12. Some students like reading <u>book</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	12. Some students like reading books.
13. On the other <u>hands</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .....	13. On the other hand...
14. To take <u>breakfasts</u> <sup>pl.</sup> and <u>lunches</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	14. To take breakfasts and lunches.
15. ....to do a necessary <u>things</u> <sup>pl.</sup> .	15. ....to do a necessary thing.

Table 11: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Plural

9. Unnecessary Word

Incorrect	Correct
1. I must divide <del>the</del> time.	1. I must divide time.
2...who have nothing important to do <del>it</del>	2...who have nothing important to do.
3. I came back <del>at</del> home.	3. I came back home.
4....because <del>of</del> time is not enough for us.	4....because time is not enough for us.

5...because <del>the</del> life is difficult.	5... because life is difficult.
6. Everyone divides his time according to his <del>personal</del> job.	6. Everyone divides his time according to his job.
7. I go to the university to study <del>my</del> studies.	7. I go the university to study.
8. <del>In</del> nowadays, life is different.	8. Nowadays, life is different.
9. Each work requires <del>from</del> two hours or more.	9. Each work requires two hours or more.
10. I am <del>who</del> the responsible about it.	10. I am the responsible about it.
11. Because <del>the</del> teachers give us many exercises.	11. Because teachers give us many exercises.
12. I haven't finished the program which I prepared <del>it</del> .	12. I haven't finished the program I prepared.
13. Working at home <del>it</del> takes too much time.	13. Working at home takes too much time.
14. To do everything I like <del>it</del> .	14. To do everything I like.
15. To achieve <del>to</del> my goal.	15. To achieve my goal.

Table 12: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Unnecessary Word

10. Wrong word form W.F.

Incorrect	Correct
1. I try to <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>organized</u> my time.	1. I try to organize my time.
2...Helping poor people and <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>fight</u> poverty.	2...Helping poor people and fight time poverty.
3. Working hard, for <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>develop</u> ...	3. Working hard, for developing...
4. They didn't <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>found</u> ...	4. They didn't find...
5. I prepare myself for <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>revise</u> my lessons.	5. I prepare myself for revising my lessons.
6. We need a long time to <del>finish</del> all our tasks.	6. We need a long time to finish all our tasks.



7. I have to do many things, like praying, <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>revise</u> my lessons...	7. I have to do many things, like praying, revising my lessons...
8. He will not <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>found</u> any problem.	8. He will not find any problem.
9. Everyone can <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>realized</u> his dreams.	9. Everyone can realize his dreams.
10. We go to study extra-hours to <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>understood</u> our lessons very well	10. We go to study extra-hours to understand our lessons very well
11. Twenty-four hours are not enough for <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>make</u> everything.	11. Twenty-four hours are not enough for making everything.
12. I may <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>divided</u> ...	12. I may divide...
13. He doesn't <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>made</u> his job.	13. He doesn't make his job.
14. They don't <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>known</u> the reality.	14. They don't know the reality.
15. I am <sup>W.F.</sup> <u>go</u> to do my home work.	15. I am going to do my home work.

**Table 13: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Word Form**

**11. Wrong word** <sup>W.W.</sup>

Incorrect	Correct
1. I go <sup>W.W.</sup> <u>house</u> to relax.	1. I go home to relax.
2. I make up at 6:30, take my breakfast, and go to school; like this I spend every <sup>W.W.</sup> <u>journey</u> .	2. I make up at 6:30, take my breakfast, and go to school; like this I spend every day.
3. Time is <sup>W.W.</sup> <u>expensive</u> .	3. Time is precious.
4. I want to divide the day into four <sup>W.W.</sup> <u>seasons</u> .	4. I want to divide the day into four parts.
5. It is easy <sup>W.W.</sup> <u>for</u> continue.	5. It is easy to continue.
6. Twenty-four hours <sup>W.W.</sup> <u>are</u> too <u>tired</u> .	6. Twenty-four hours <u>are</u> too heavy.

**Table 14: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Wrong Word**

12. Wrong word order u

Incorrect	Correct
1. Always time is an problem	1. Time is always our problem.
2...with eyes opened.	2...with opened-eyes.
3...in order to not dislike my life.	3...in order hot to dislike my life.
4. Really I miss them.	4. I Really I miss them.
5. I wish if there are nights long.	5. I wish if there are long nights.
6...for the day coming.	6...for the coming day.

Table 15: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Word Order

13. Run-on or comma splice (Incorrectly joined independent clauses) RO-CS

Incorrect	Correct
1. The weather was very hot, I felt that it was a very long day. <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">CS</span>	1. Because The weather was very hot, I felt that it was a very long day.

Table 16: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Incorrectly Joined Independent Clauses

14. Subject S.

Incorrect	Correct
1. Playing football is the sport which admire. <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	1. Playing football is the sport which I admire.
2. When arrive from school, I... <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	2. When I arrive from school, I...
3. I feel that didn't do many things. <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	3. I feel that I didn't do many things.
4. Time is money, that is why is very important in my life. <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	4. Time is money, that's why it is very important in my life.
5. Sometimes, help my sister. <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	5. Sometimes, I help my sister.
6. When finish revising my lessons, I go..... <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	6. When I finish revising my lessons, I go.....
7.... That's why wish if there is more time. <span style="color: blue; margin-left: 100px;">S.</span>	7.... That's why I wish if there is more time.

8. They will find enough time to do whatever <sup>S.</sup> want.	8. They will find enough time to do whatever they want.
9. There are many things <sup>S.</sup> have to do.	9. There are many things I have to do.

Table 17: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Subject

15. Verb: <sup>V.</sup>

Incorrect	Correct
1. If <sup>V.</sup> we more than twenty-four hours, we can finish all our tasks.	1. If we have more than twenty-four, we can finish all our tasks.
2. I wear my clothes and <sup>V.</sup> my breakfast.	2. I wear my clothes and take my breakfast.
3. Thinking about having extra-hours <sup>V.</sup> something positive.	3. Thinking about having extra-hours is something positive.

Table 18: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Verb

16. Preposition: <sup>prep.</sup>

Incorrect	Correct
1. I go to the university <sup>prep.</sup> studying.	1. I go to the university for studying.
2. I go home <sup>prep.</sup> sleeping some hours.	2. I go home for sleeping some hours.
3. I call my family <sup>prep.</sup> phone.	3. I call my family by phone.
4. The rest <sup>prep.</sup> the day.	4. The rest of the day.
5. I didn't waste time <sup>prep.</sup> vain.	5. I didn't waste time in vain.
6. I relax <sup>prep.</sup> some time.	6. I relax for some time.
7. Twenty-four hours <sup>prep.</sup> a day.	7. Twenty-four hours in a day.
8. I wake up <sup>prep.</sup> 6:30.	8. I wake up at 6:30.
9. All <sup>prep.</sup> us know that...	9. All of us know that...

Table 19: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Preposition

17. Conjunction: *conj.*

Incorrect	Correct
1. We must divide our time not only for studying, <i>conj.</i> also for pleasure.	1. We must divide our time not only for studying, but also for pleasure.
2. I get up early, I take my breakfast, <i>conj.</i> I go to school.	2. I get up early, I take my breakfast, and I go to school.
3... eating, relaxing, <i>conj.</i> visiting my grand-visiting my grand-parents.	3... eating, relaxing, and visiting my grand-parents.
4. Time is money, <i>conj.</i> we cannot do many things without it.	4. Time is money, because we cannot do many things without it.
5. Time is very necessary, <i>conj.</i> we shouldn't neglect it.	5. Time is very necessary, so we shouldn't neglect it.

Table20: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Conjunction

18. Article *art.*

Incorrect	Correct
1. I have the power to work until <i>art.</i> end.	1. I have the power to work until the end.
2....at same time.	2....at same time.
3. I hate repeating <i>art.</i> same thing.	3. I hat repeating the same thing.
4. I will stay there for <i>art.</i> long period of time.	4. I will stay there for a long period of time.
5. At the end of <i>art.</i> day.	5. At the end of the day.
6. It is <i>art.</i> very interesting idea.	6. It is a very interesting idea.
7. We have <i>art.</i> right to dream.	7. We have the right to dream.
8... <i>art.</i> on other hand.	8... <i>the</i> on other hand.

Table 21: Cases of Corrected Mistakes in Article

### **3.1.3 Interpretation of the Results**

The analysis of the test shows that students made different mistakes in writing. The tables (4-21) show the corrected mistakes of students after providing feedback. Feedback takes the form of using correction symbols and students provided the correct forms depending on these symbols. We corrected Students' paragraphs and indicated the place and the kind of mistakes so that learners could distinguish between one kind and another. The obtained results have given an evidence of the effectiveness of correction symbols in enhancing self-correction.

## **3.2 The Students' Questionnaire**

The students' questionnaire aims at finding out learners' views about the writing skill and their attitudes toward their teachers' feedback.

### **3.2.1 Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire (see appendix 02) consists of (15) questions in three different sections. Most questions are close-ended: learners are invited to tick the correct answer. There are some open-ended questions where the informants are asked to provide explanations or further alternatives. The questionnaire consists of questions which required the students to complete them by using numbers from 1 to 4 following a scale of a decreasing order of priority.

#### **Section one: General Information (Q1)**

The first section consists of one question which concerns the background information about the informants: how long they have been studying English (Q1).

### **Section two: The Writing Skill (Q2 to Q6)**

This section's aim is to elicit students' views about the writing skill: their attitudes towards it (Q2) whether they find it easy to learn (Q3 to Q4), and if it is a necessary skill to develop (Q5 to Q6).

### **Section three: The Teacher's Role in Writing (Q7 to Q16)**

This is the longest section. The questions aim to find out the role teachers of Written Expression (WE) play in providing feedback: the frequency of the teacher's feedback (Q7), and which aspect he gives more importance to (Q8). This section also attempts to find out the techniques adopted by teachers in correcting the written work of their students; if they provide the correct form, show the mistakes using symbols, or cross the mistaken parts (Q9), and whether students prefer the first or the second technique (Q10). Questions 11, however, elicits what teachers do in correction, whether they correct every kind of mistake or specify one kind of mistake each time, and which technique students would prefer (Q12). The next question (Q13) tries to elicit whether teachers allow time for students to correct their mistakes. Question 14 tries to elicit if teachers of Written Expression encourage self-correction, and the last question of the section elicits whether students like correcting their mistakes (Q15).

#### **3.2.2 The Questionnaire Administration**

The case study consists of two groups of First-Year Students, at the Department of English, the University of Mentouri, Constantine. The questionnaire was handed in by the researcher to the same groups of students who were tested because they already knew the correction symbols. The questionnaire was handed in to both groups, and we decided to choose 25 from each group because it represents approximately half of the group, so we obtained a total of 50 questionnaire.

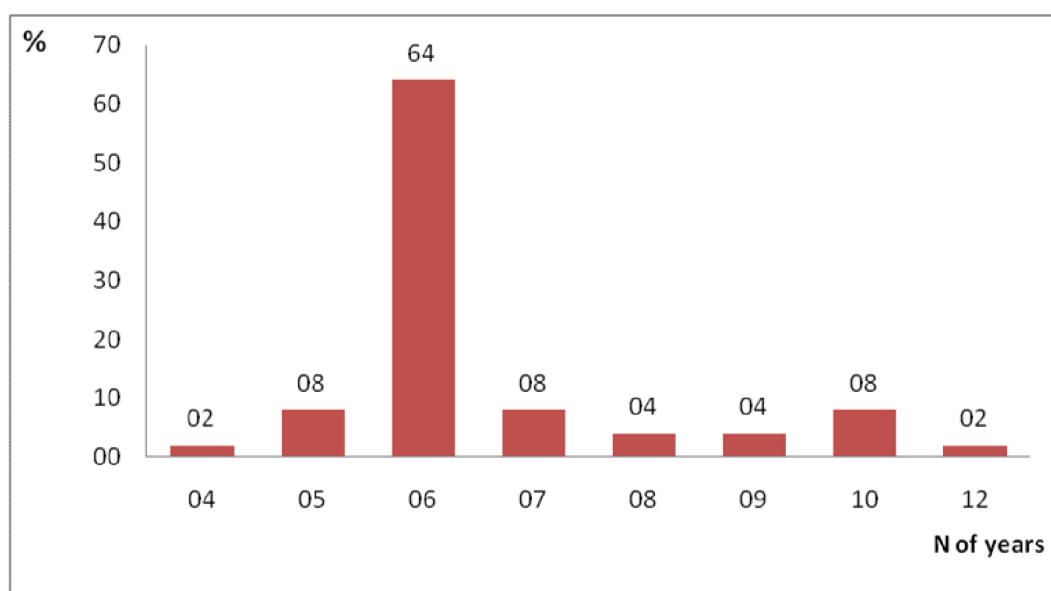
### 3.2.3 Result of the Questionnaire

#### Section One: General Information

##### 1-How many years have you been studying English?

N of years	N(number)	% Percentage
04	01	02
05	04	08
06	32	64
07	04	08
08	02	04
09	02	04
10	04	08
12	01	02
Total	50	100

**Table 22: Number of Years of Studying English**



**Graph 22: Number of Years of Studying English**

More than half of the surveyed students have been studying English for six years.

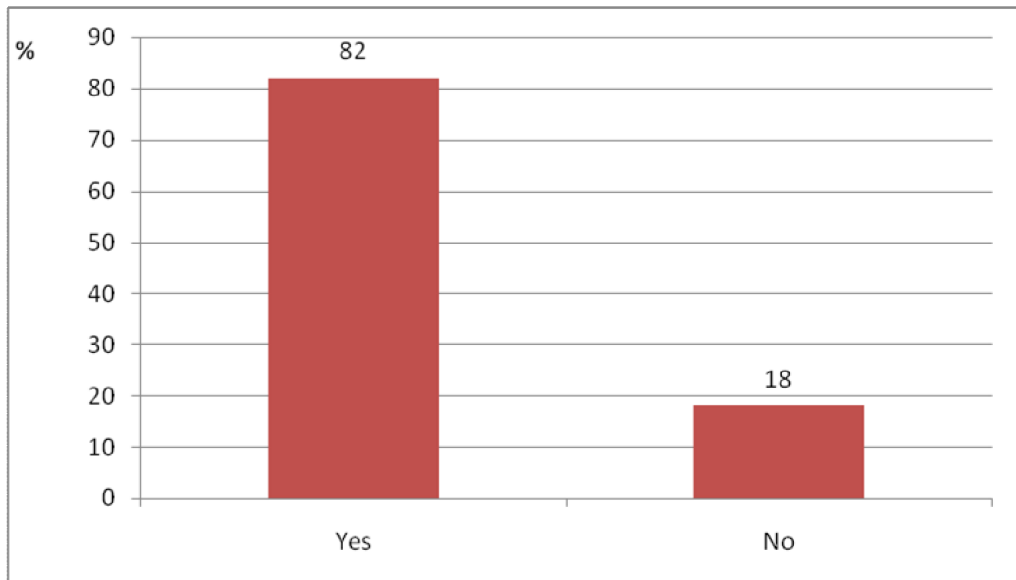
## Section Two: The Writing Skill

### 2-Do you like writing?

- a. Yes
- b. No

	N	%
Yes	41	82
No	09	18
Total	50	100

**Table 23: Students Attitudes towards Writing**



**Graph 23: Students Attitudes towards Writing**

The results show that 82% of the surveyed students said they like writing. This implies that they are aware of the importance of writing.

### 3- Writing is an easy task to learn?

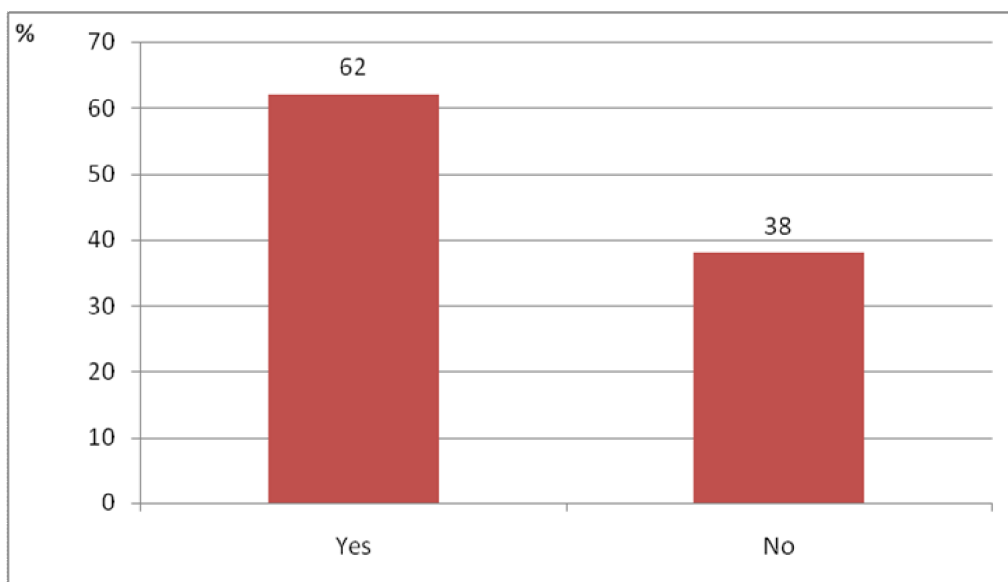
- a. Yes



b. No

	N	%
Yes	31	62
No	19	38
Total	50	100

**Table 24: Difficulty of Writing**



**Graph 24: Difficulty of Writing**

The results show that 62% of the surveyed students claim that writing is an easy skill to learn. These results show that students are just escaping the “NO” alternative.

**4. If “NO”, please explain why.**

.....

Sixteen (16) out of nineteen (19) students who answered “No” to Q3 gave explanations.

- “Because writing requires too much practice”. (04 students)
- “Because it has many rules”. (04 students).
- “It needs a rich vocabulary”. (02 students).

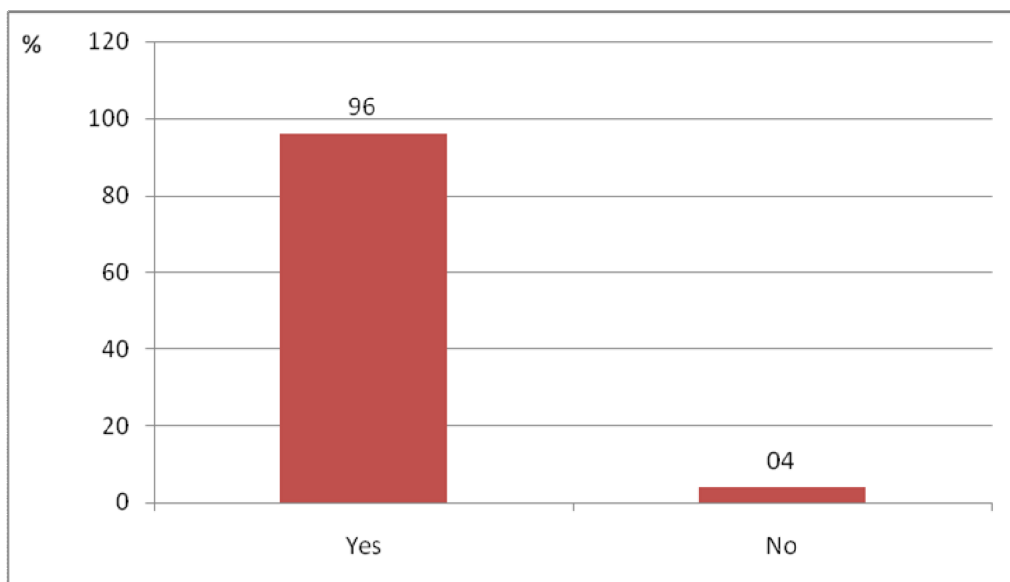
- “It is difficult”. (01 student)
- “Speaking is the easy task not writing”. (01 student).
- -“I have to know grammar”. (04 students ).

**5. Writing is a necessary skill to develop.**

- a. Yes
- b. No

	N	%
Yes	48	96
No	02	04
Total	50	100

**Table 25: Writing is a Necessary Skill to Develop**



**Graph 25: Writing is a Necessary Skill to Develop**

The results show that the vast majority, 96% of the respondents believe that writing is a necessary skill for them to develop. This implies that students are aware of the necessity of writing.

**6. If “No”, please explain why.**

.....

Only two (02) students think that writing is not a necessary skill to develop, but they didn't give explanations.

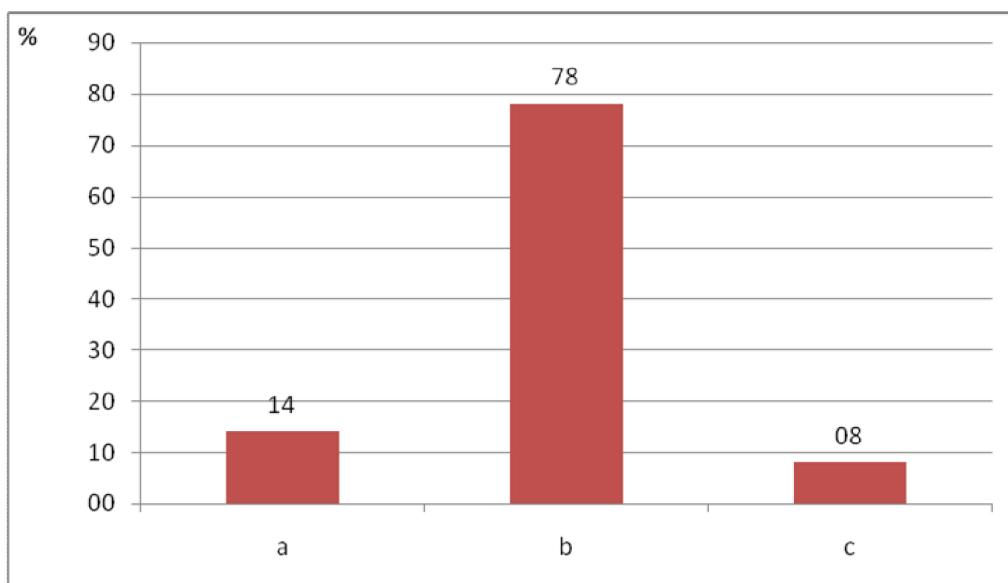
**Section Three: the Teacher’s Role in Writing**

**7- When your teacher of written expression corrects you paragraphs, does he give feedback**

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

	N	%
a	07	14
b	39	78
c	04	08
Total	50	100

**Table 26: Frequency of Teacher’s Feedback**



**Graph 26: Frequency of Teacher's Feedback**

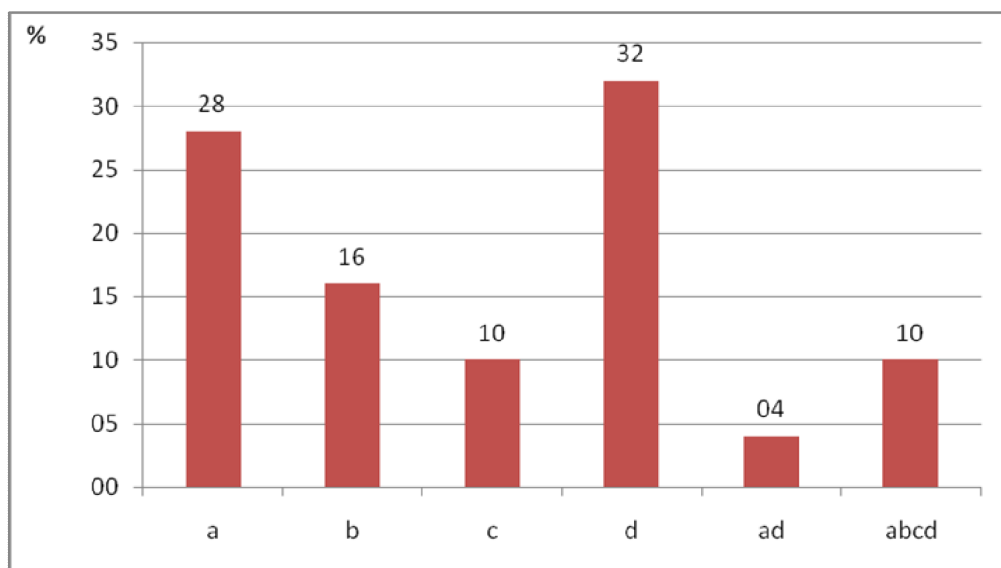
We can see from the results that 78% of the respondents said that their teacher sometimes give feedback, and 14% answered that he usually does, only 8% claim that he never gives feedback.

**8- Which aspect does he give more importance to? (You may for more than one).**

- a. Grammar
- b. Content
- c. Vocabulary
- d. Organization of ideas

	N	%
a	17	28
b	08	16
c	05	10
d	16	32
ad	02	04
abcd	05	10
Total	50	100

**Table 27: Priority in Providing Feedback**



**Graph 27: Priority in Providing Feedback**

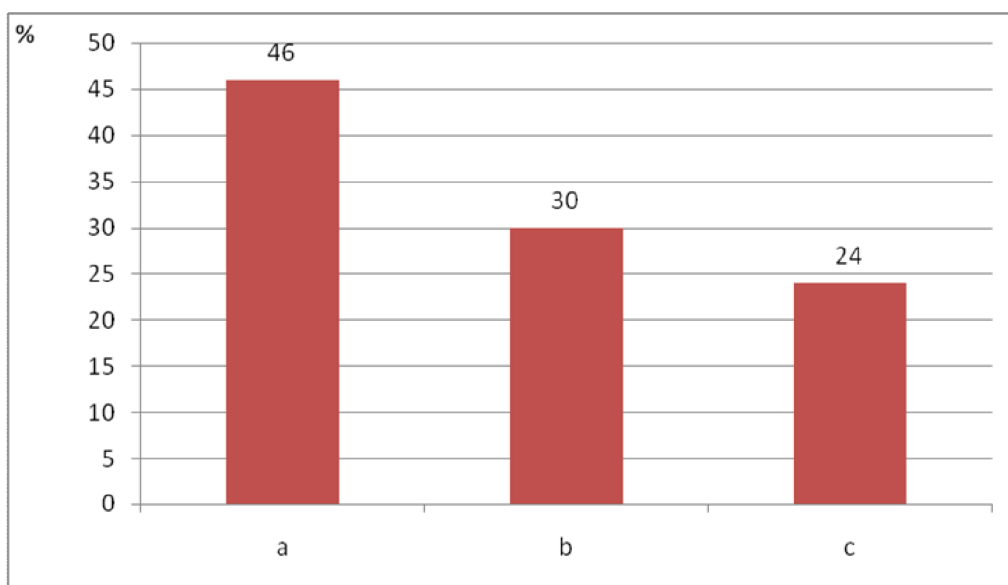
32% of the students said that the organization of ideas is given more importance by teachers while 28% said grammar. Few students said content while very few said vocabulary.

**9-How does your teacher of written expression correct your paragraphs?**

- a- Provide the correct form
  - b- Show the mistakes using symbols
  - c- Just cross the mistaken parts Other, please, specify
  - d- Other, please, specify
- .....

	N	%
a	23	46
b	15	30
c	12	24
Total	50	100

**Table 28: Techniques Used by the Teacher of WE to Correct Students' Paragraphs**



**Graph 28: Technique Used by the Teacher of WE to Correct Students' Paragraphs**

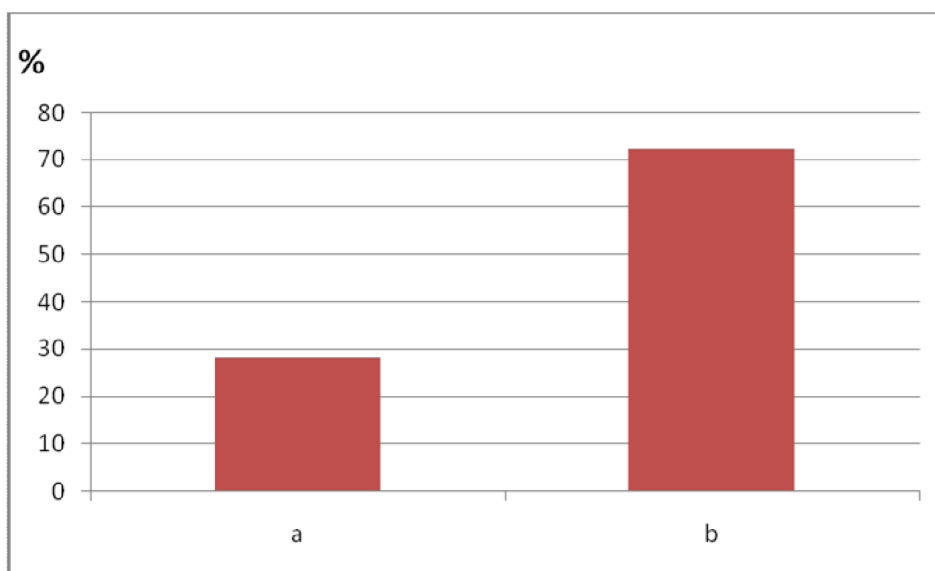
46% of the students said their teacher of WE provides the correct form, 30% claim he shows the mistakes using symbols. Twelve (12) students said he just crosses the mistaken part.

**10- Would you like your teacher to**

- a. Correct your mistakes?
- b. Show you the kind of your mistake?

	N	%
a	36	72
b	14	28
Total	50	100

**Table 29: Students’ Preferences of Teacher’s Feedback**



**Graph 29: Students’ Preferences of Teacher’s Feedback**

72% of the students would prefer that their teacher shows them the kind of their mistakes while 28% of them said they would like him to correct their mistakes.

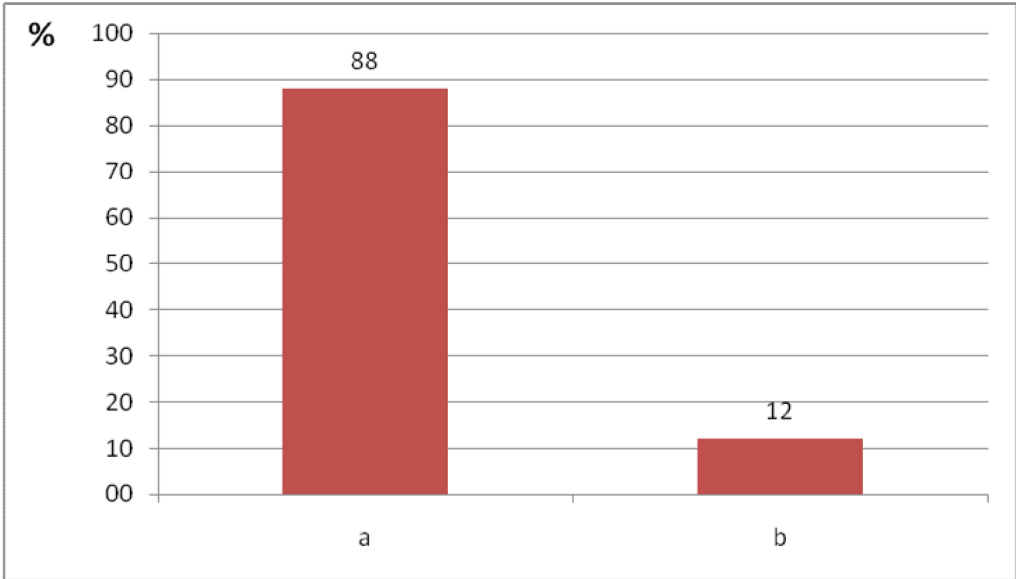
**11. When your teacher of written Expression corrects your paragraphs, does he**

- a. Correct every kind of mistakes?
- b. Concentrate on one type of mistake each time?
- c. Other, please, specify.

.....

	N	%
a	44	88
b	06	12
Total	50	100

**Table 30: Teacher’s Feedback**



**Graph 30: Teacher’s Feedback**

The results show that 88% replied that their teacher of WE corrects every kind of mistake, while 12% of them claim that he concentrates on one kind of mistakes each time.

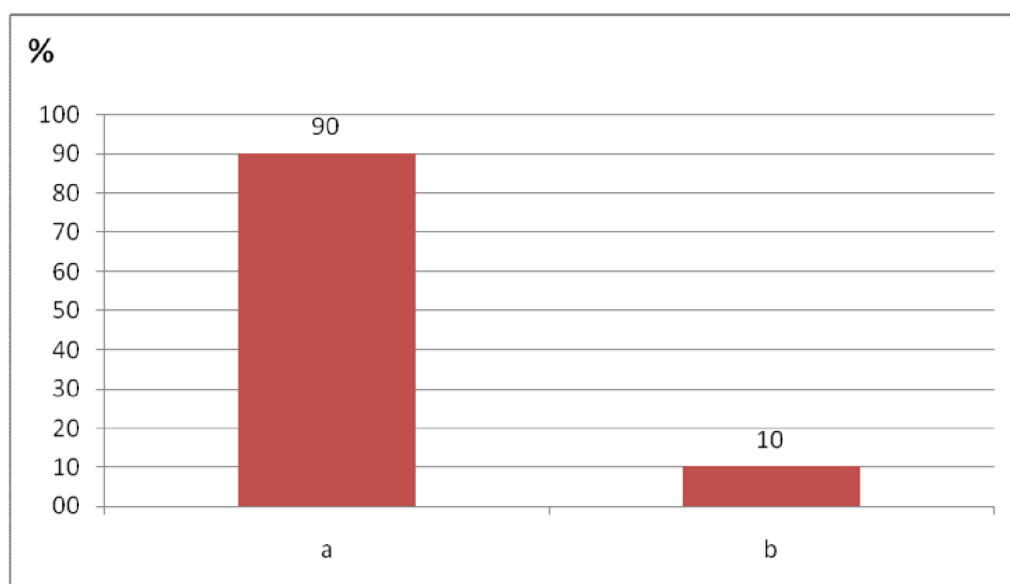


**12- Would you like your teacher to**

- a. Note every mistake you make?
- b. Concentrate on one type of mistake each Time?
- c. Others: please, specify.

	N	%
a	45	90
b	05	10
total	50	100

**Table 31: Students' Preferences in Correcting Mistakes**



**Graph 31: Students' Preferences in Correcting Mistakes**

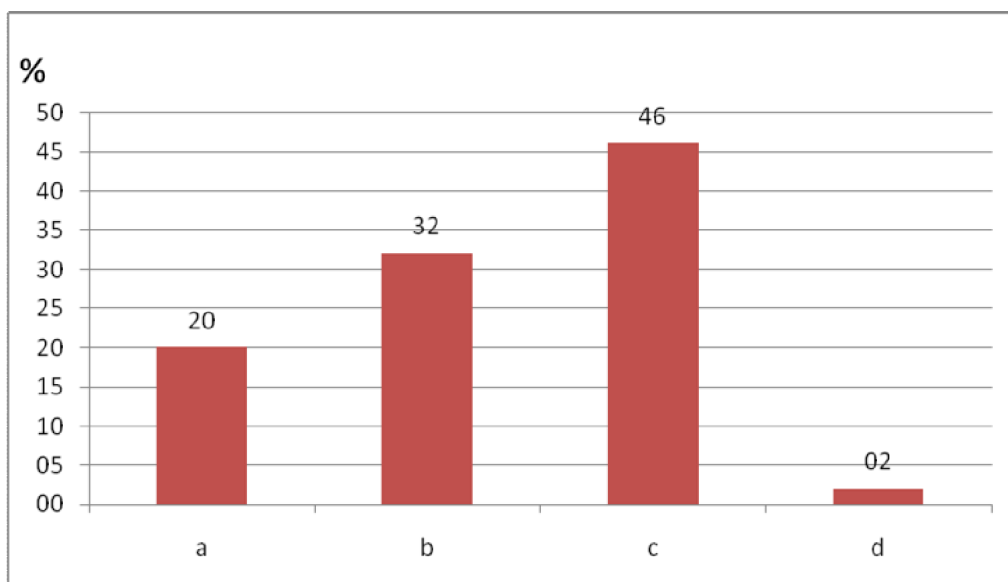
90% of the informants said they would like their teacher to note every mistake they make while just 10% would like him to concentrate on one type of mistake each time.

**13- Does your teacher of written Expression allow time to**

- a. Correct yourself?
- b. Your classmates to correct you?
- c. Use both ways?
- d. Other: please, specify.

	N	%
a	10	20
b	16	32
c	23	46
d	01	02
Total	50	100

**Table 32: Teachers Allocated Time for students to correct themselves.**



**Graph 32: Teachers Allocated Time for Students to Correct themselves**

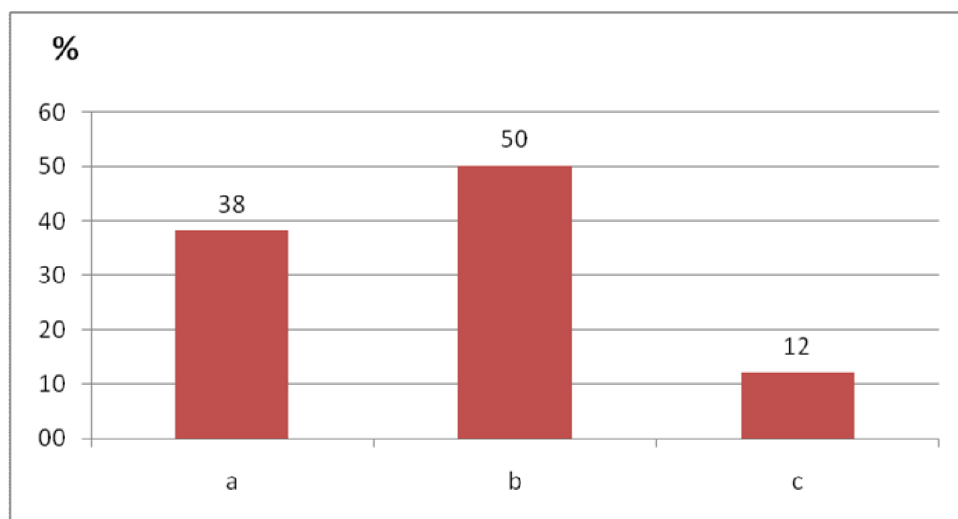
46% of the students said that their teacher of WE allow s time for students to correct their own mistakes and classmates to correct them , 32% said that their teacher asks their classmate to correct them, while 20% claim that their teacher allow s time for them to correct their own mistakes, just one (01) student said his teacher always corrects his mistakes.

**14- How often does your teacher of written expression encourage self -correction?**

- a. Usually.
- b. Sometimes.
- c. Never.

	N	%
a	19	38
b	25	50
c	06	12
Total	50	100

**Table 33: Teacher’s Encouragement of Self-Correction**



**Graph 33: Teacher’s Encouragement of Self-Correction**

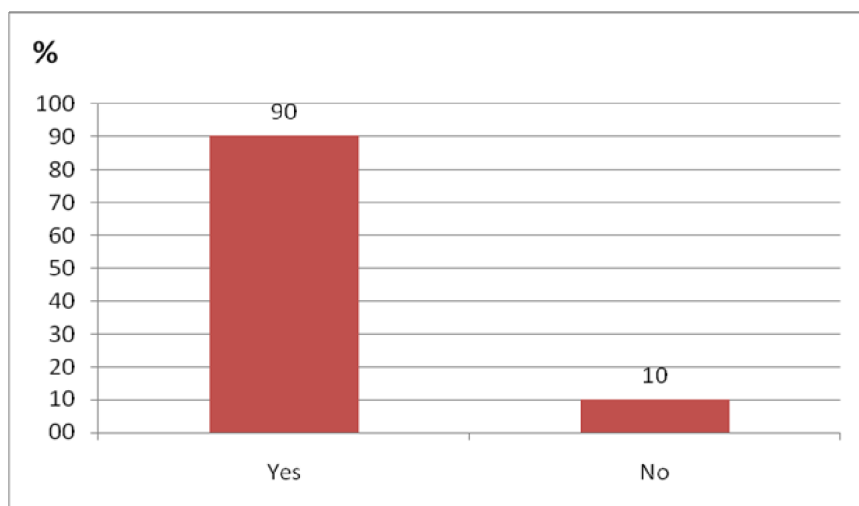
The results show that half of the surveyed students said that their teacher sometimes encourages self-correction, while 38% answered that he usually does, 12% claim he never does. This reveals that many teachers may encourage peer correction rather than self-correction.

**15- Do you like correcting your own mistakes ?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

	N	%
Yes	45	90
No	05	10
Total	50	100

**Table 34: Students’ Attitudes towards Correcting their Own Mistakes**



**Graph 34: Students’ Attitudes towards Correcting their Own Mistakes**

The vast majority 96% of the respondents said they like correcting their own mistakes.

### **3.2.4 Interpretation of the Results**

The results of the questionnaire show that most of the students have been studying English for a considerable period of time, which means that they are familiar with some English rules as grammar. This is shown in 64% of the informants who have studied English for six (06) years.

For the writing skill, most of the students like writing because they are aware of the necessity of developing this skill. But when 82% of them say that writing is easy to learn, it shows that they are just escaping the “NO” alternative which requires an explanation that they cannot provide since it was not easy to learn WE.

Concerning feedback, an important rate, 78% of the students said that their teacher of WE sometimes gives feedback. This means that he is aware of the importance of feedback. Concerning the aspect which the teacher gives the more importance, 32% of them said the organization of ideas. The teacher, as 46% of them said, provides the correct form, when correcting their mistakes, while 72% would like him to show them the kind of their mistakes. Moreover, the teacher notes every mistake they make, and students prefer this kind of correction. 46% of the students said that their teacher allows time for students to correct their mistakes and their classmates to correct them. The teacher sometimes asks students to correct their mistakes, and the vast majority said that they like correcting their own mistakes.

### **3.3 The Teachers' Questionnaire**

The Teachers' Questionnaire aims at finding out the teachers' attitudes towards the writing skill and the method used in providing feedback.

### **3.3.1 Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

Like the Students' Questionnaire, it consists of 15 questions in three sections (see appendix 01). Similarly, most of the questions are close-ended: teachers are invited to tick the correct answer and in some cases, the informants are asked to provide explanations and alternatives.

#### **Section One: General Information (Q1 to Q3)**

The aim of the first section is to elicit the background information of our informants: their qualifications (Q1), how long they have been teaching English (Q2) and how many years they have been teaching English to first-year students (Q3).

#### **Section Two: The Writing Skill (Q4 to Q7)**

These four questions allow us to find out the teachers' views about the writing skill: whether it is an easy skill to teach (Q4 to Q5), and if it is a necessary skill to develop in their students (Q6 to Q7).

#### **Section Three: The Teacher's Role in Writing (Q8 to Q15)**

This is the longest section. The questions aim to find out the role of teachers' of Written Expression role in developing the writing skill. The first question elicits whether teachers correct and give feedback (Q8), and the aspect they give more importance to is the topic of (Q9). We also wanted to find out what kind of feedback they give (Q10 to Q11). Next, we wanted to know if teachers allow time for students to correct their mistakes (Q12), and if they assign any follow up tasks (Q13). Question (Q14) tries to elicit teachers' attitudes towards learners' mistakes, and the last question elicits whether they encourage self-correction.

### 3.3.2 The Questionnaire Administration

The population of the informants consists of teachers of WE at the Department of English, the University of Mentouri, Constantine. We handed 15 copies of the questionnaire, and all of them were returned.

### 3.3.3 Results of the Questionnaire

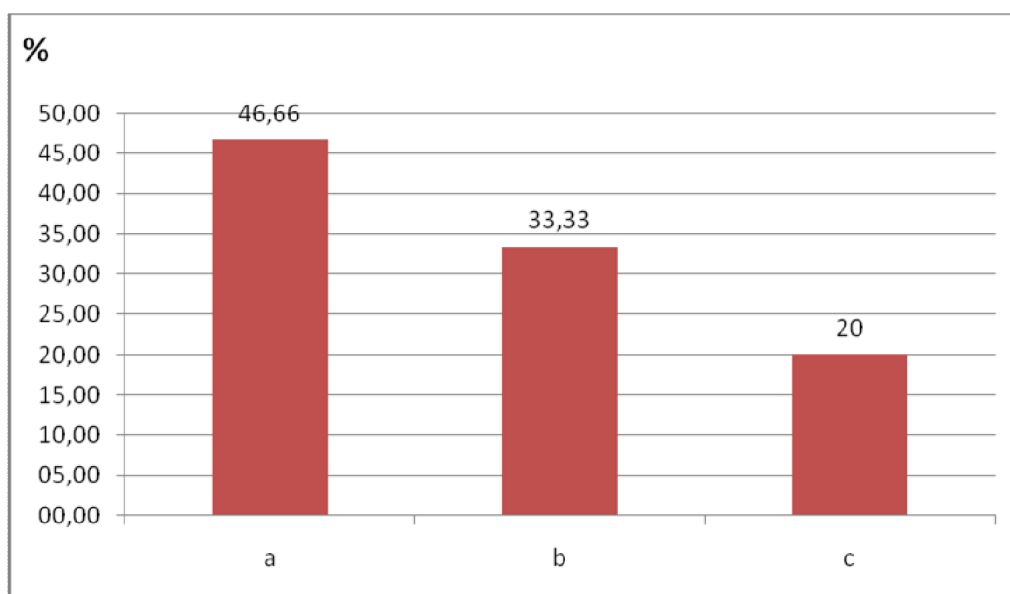
#### Section One: General Information

##### 1-What is your qualification?

- a. License
- b. Magister
- c. Doctorate

	N	%
a	07	46,66
b	05	33,33
c	03	20
Total	15	100

**Table 35: Teacher's Qualifications**



**Graph 35: Teacher's Qualifications**

Our population consists of 15 teachers, 46.66 of them have a License degree.

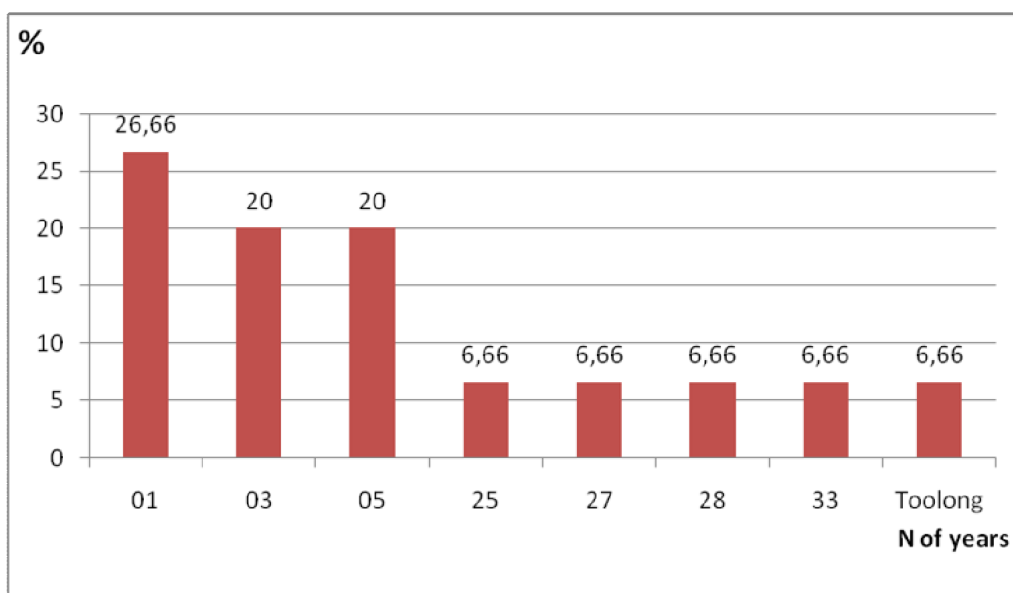
**2- How long have you been teaching English?**

---

N of years	N	%
01	04	26,66
03	03	20
05	03	20
25	01	6,66
27	01	6,66
28	01	6,66
33	01	6,66
Too long	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 36: Distribution of Informants according to their Experience**





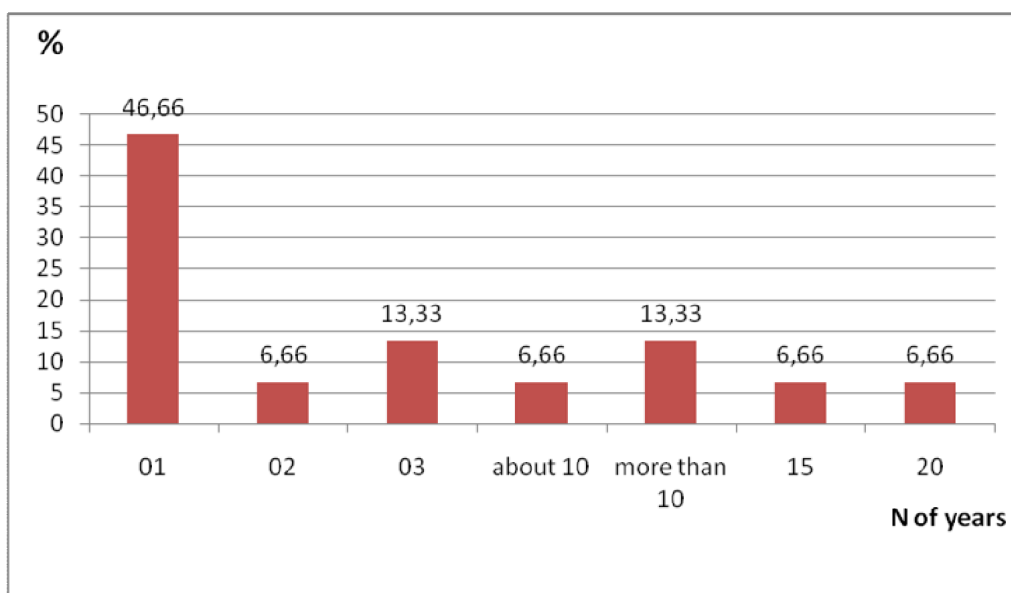
**Graph 36: Distribution of Informants according to their Experience**

33.3% of these teachers have a teaching experience of twenty -five (25) years and more.

**3- How many years have you been teaching writing to first-year students?**

N of years	N	%
01	07	46,66
02	01	6,66
03	02	13,33
about 10	01	6,66
more than 10	02	13,33
15	01	6,66
20	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 37: Experience of Teaching English to First-Year Students**



**Graph 37: Experience of Teaching English to First-Year Students**

73, 31% of the informants have been teaching writing to first-year students for less than ten (10) years, while 26, 65% of them have been teaching it for more than ten years.

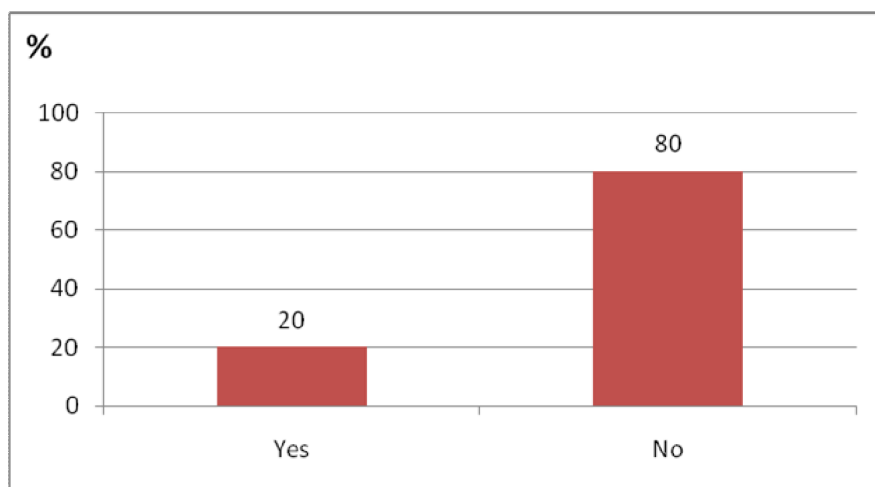
## Section Two: The Writing Skill

### 4- Writing is an easy skill to teach?

- a. Yes
- b. No

	N	%
Yes	3	20
No	12	80
Total	15	100

**Table 38: Difficulty of Writing**



**Graph 38: Difficulty of Writing**

The results show that 80% of the surveyed teachers claim that writing is not an easy skill to teach. This implies that teachers believe that writing is a difficult skill to teach.

**5- If “No”, please explain why.**

.....

All our informants who responded “No” to Q4 gave explanations.

- “It is about creativity, mechanic, coherence, surface features, etc”. (2 teachers).
- “Because most of the students have not the ability to write”. (2teachers).
- “We used to prepare three lectures a week ”. (1 teacher).
- “Lack of practice, because we are limited by time”. (3 teachers).
- “Students’ lack of motivation”. (2 teachers).
- “Because of large classes”. (2 teachers).

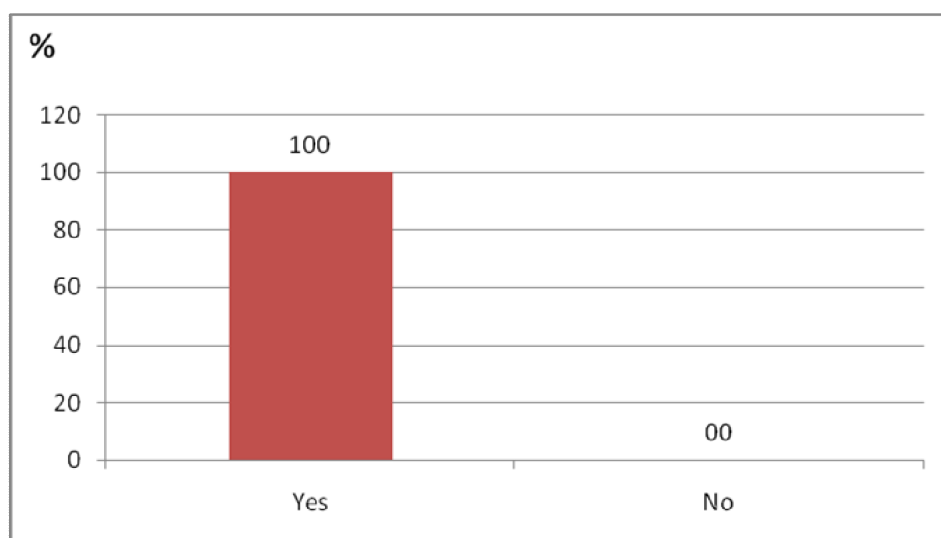
**6- Writing is a necessary skill to develop in your students.**

a. Yes

b. No

	N	%
Yes	15	100
No	00	00
Total	15	100

**Table 39: Writing is a Necessary Skill to Develop**



**Graph 39: Writing is a Necessary Skill to Develop**

All the informants think that writing is a necessary skill to develop in their students.

This implies that teachers are aware that writing plays an important role in language learning.

**7- If “No”, please explain why.**

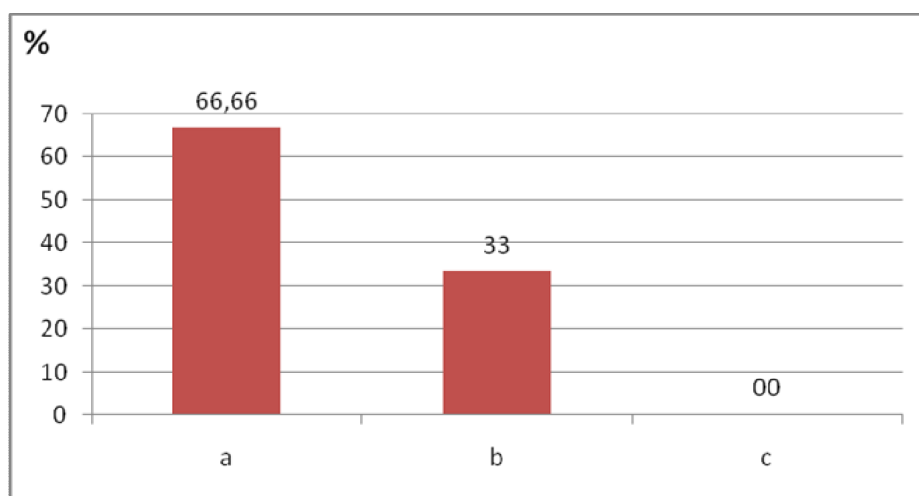
### Section three: the teacher's role in writing

#### 8- When your students write, do you correct and give feedback?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

	N	%
a	10	66,66
b	05	33
c	00	00
Total	15	100

**Table 40: The Frequency of Teacher's Feedback**



**Graph 40: The Frequency of Teacher's Feedback**

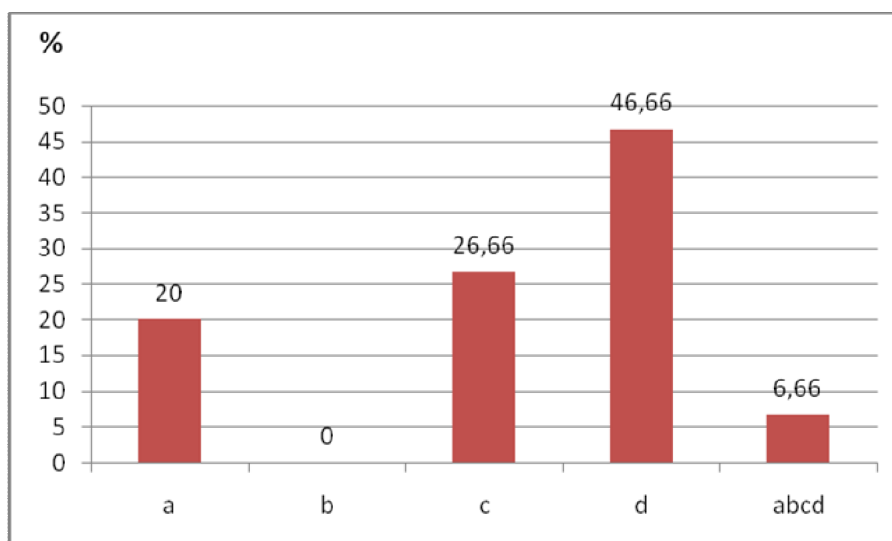
More than half of the informants said they always give feedback, while 33, 33% of them said they sometime do. This shows teachers' consciousness of the important of feedback.

**9- Which aspect do you give more importance to? (You may opt for more than one).**

- a. Grammar
- b. Vocabulary
- c. Content
- d. Organization of ideas

	N	%
a	03	20
b	00	0
c	04	26,66
d	07	46,66
abcd	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 41: Priority in Providing Feedback**



**Graph 41: Priority in Providing Feedback**

46, 66% of the informants said that they give more importance to the organization of ideas, while 26, 66% of them said content .One respondent replied that he gives more importance to all of them. This implies that the organization of ideas is an important aspect in writing.

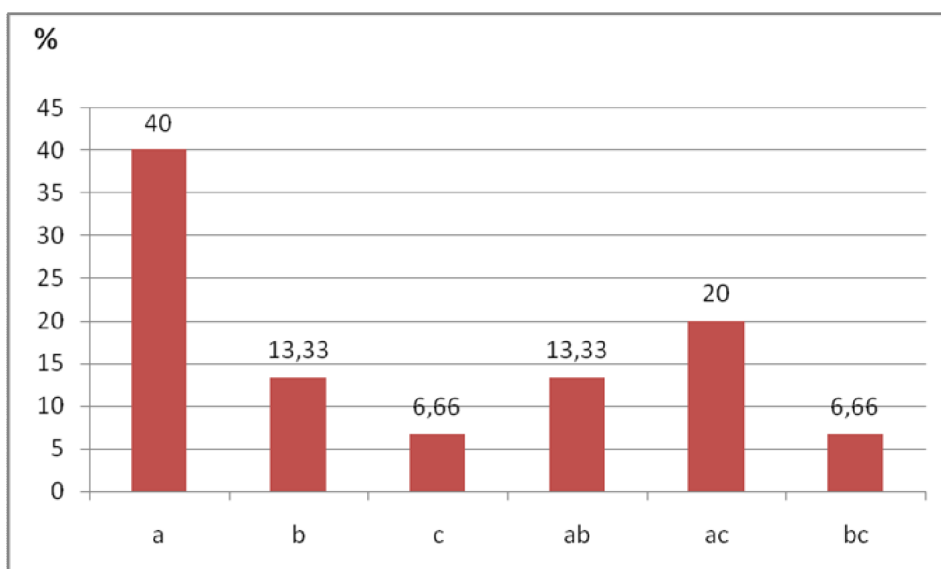
**10- When you correct you students paragraphs, do you**

- a. Provide the correct form?
- b. Show the mistake using symbols?
- c. Cross the mistaken part?
- d. Other; please, specify

.....

	N	%
a	06	40
b	02	13,33
c	01	6,66
ab	02	13,33
ac	03	20
bc	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 42: Techniques of Correction Adopted by T eachers**



**Graph 42: Techniques of Correction Adopted by Teachers**

The results show that 40% of the informants said they provide the correct forms, while 20% of them said that they provide the correct forms and cross the mistaken part. This implies that teachers do not give correction symbols much importance.

**11- When you correct, do you**

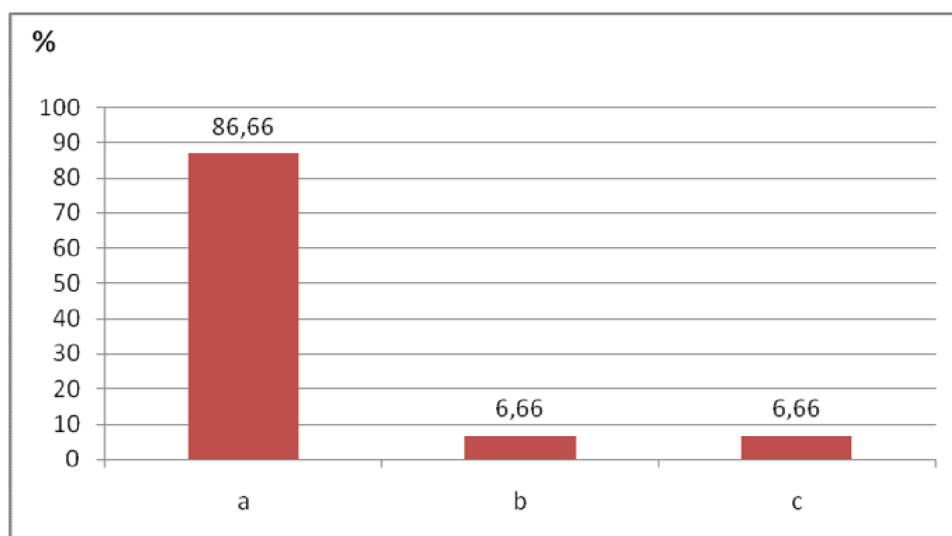
- a. Correct every kind of mistake?
- b. Concentrate on one kind of mistakes each time?
- c. Other: please, specify.

.....

	N	%
a	13	86,66
b	01	6,66
c	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 43: Teachers' Preferences in Correction**





**Graph 43: Teachers' Preferences in Correction**

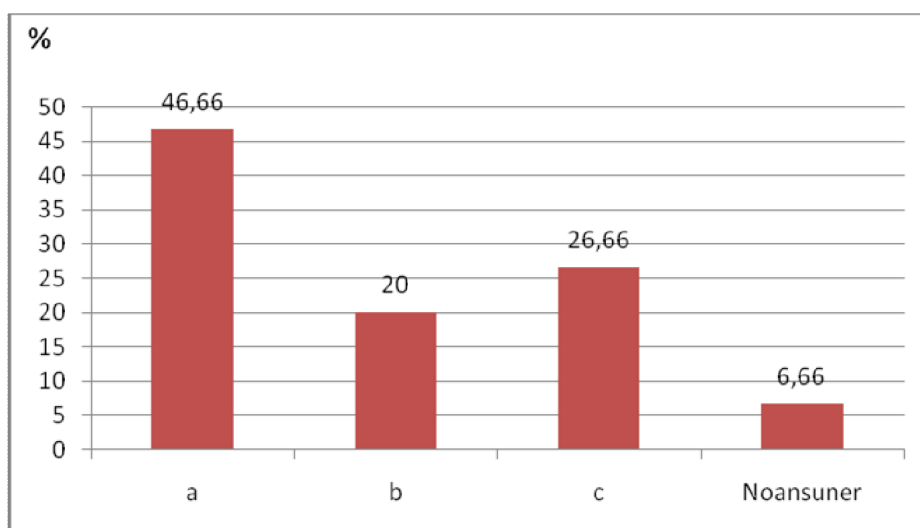
86,66% of the informants replied that they correct every kind of mistake, while 6,66 only concentrates on one kind of mistakes each time. One (01) respondent said that he corrects not every kind of mistakes but most of them.

**12. Do you allow time for students to**

- a. Correct their mistakes?
- b. Their classmates to correct them?
- c. Use both ways?

	N	%
a	07	46,66
b	03	20
c	04	26,66
No answer	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 44: Allocated Time for Students to Correct their Mistakes**



**Graph 44: Allocated Time for Students to Correct their Mistakes**

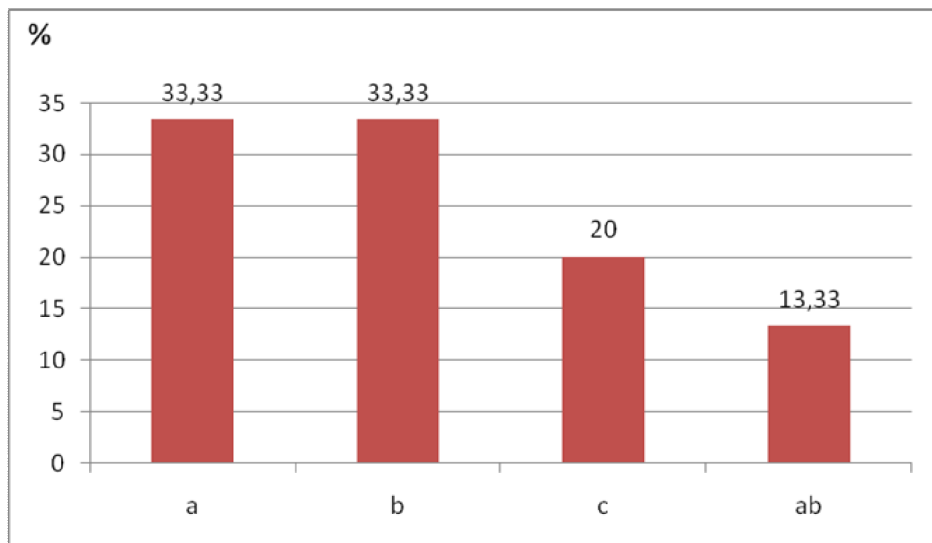
46,66 % of the informants replied that they allow time for students to correct their own mistakes, and 20% of them allow time for their classmates to correct them while 26,66% of them use both ways.

**13. When you hand in the students corrected paragraphs, do you**

- a. Ask them to correct their mistakes in class?
- b. Ask them to do that at home?
- c. Do not assign any follow up task?

	N	%
a	05	33,33
b	05	33,33
c	03	20
ab	02	13,33
Total	15	100

**Table 45: Follow up Activities**



**Graph 45: Follow up Activities**

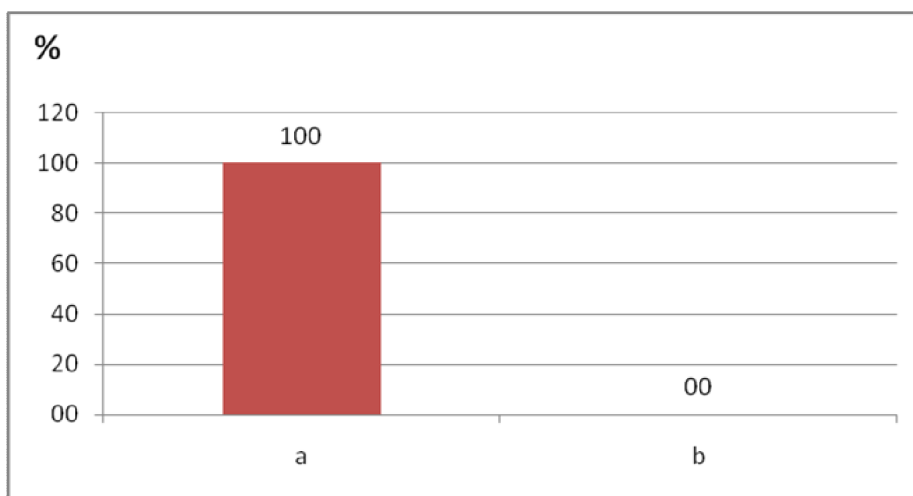
The results show that 33,33o% f the surveyed teachers said they ask their students to correct their mistakes in class, and 33, 33% of them said that they ask them to do that at home, 20% of them said that they do not assign any follow up task, whereas 13, 33% said that they ask them to correct their mistakes either in class or at home. This implies that teachers are aware of the importance of correcting mistakes either in class or at home.

**14. Do you think that mistakes should be**

- a. Neglected?
- b. Carefully treated?

	N	%
a	15	100
b	00	00
Total	15	100

**Table 46: Treating Mistakes**



**Graph 46: Treating Mistakes**

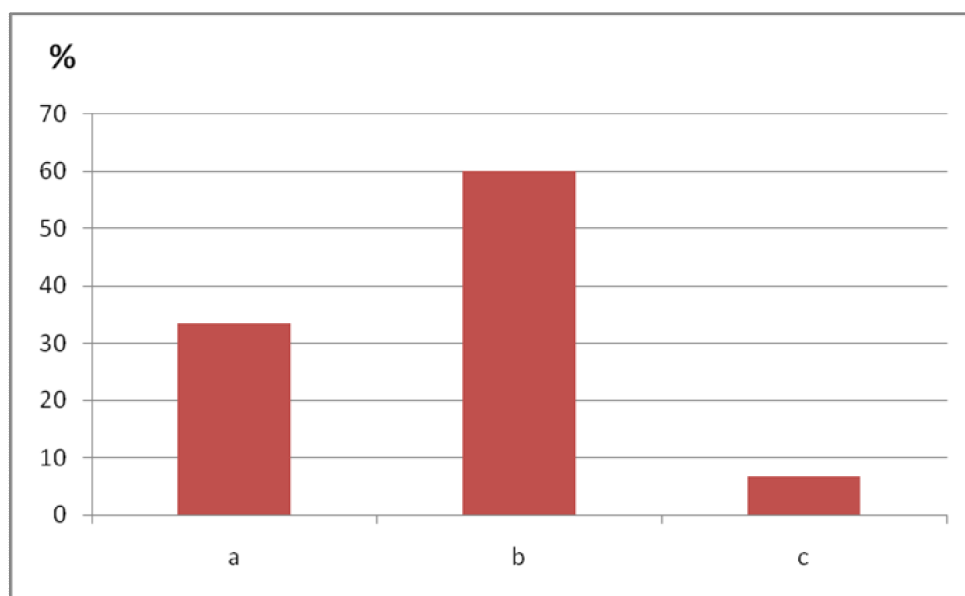
All the informants believe that mistakes should be carefully treated. This shows that teachers are conscious of the importance of treating mistakes for the learning process.

**15. How often do you encourage self correction?**

- a. Usually
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

	N	%
A	05	33,33
B	09	60
C	01	6,66
Total	15	100

**Table 47: Encouraging Self-Correction**



**Graph 47: Encouraging Self-Correction**

More than half of the informants said that they sometimes encourage self correction, while 33, 33% said that they usually do. Only one informant said that he never encourages self- correction.

### **3.3.4 Interpretation of the Result**

Concerning the writing skill, the very vast majority said that writing is difficult to teach. All of them are aware that it is a necessary skill to develop in th eir students; however they do not agree on the source of this difficulty.

Concerning feedback, more than half of the teachers always provide feedback, and they give more importance to the organization of ideas. 40 of them said that they provide the correct form, when correcting students' paragraphs, focusing on correcting every kind of mistake. 86 Teachers said that they allow time for students to correct their own mistakes. Some teachers ask their students to correct their mistakes in class under their guidance, others ask them to do this task at home, and 20 of them do not assign any follow up tasks and directly to the following lesson. All the surveyed teachers believe that students' mistakes

should be carefully treated. Concerning self-correction, 60 of the teachers said that they sometimes encourage this task.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of the test shows that correction symbols is an effective technique in enhancing students' self correction. Concerning the analysis of the students' and teachers' questionnaires, it shows that there are some concepts about the writing skill that need to be reviewed. In addition, there seems to be a gap between some of the students' preferences and needs and those of their teachers in providing feedback.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

It is an acknowledged fact that there is consensus in the teaching English as a second or foreign language context about feedback. Many teachers still favour some ways of providing feedback without taking into account students' preferences, however, they should examine their ways when responding to students' written production. Moreover, teachers should be aware of the effect of their feedback practices on their students through observing their improvement in writing, and identifying their attitudes.

Through this work, we have investigated the effects of correction symbols on promoting students' self-correction. The results show that students are interested in developing their writing skill and correcting their own mistakes, and therefore, want and expect their teachers to use correction codes in marking their written work. The study emphasizes that feedback cannot be rigidly based on any standardized practice derived from the opinions of teachers alone, but must be flexible enough to incorporate the attitudes and needs of the students. In addition, feedback should be used in which students benefit from it and they are encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning, and thereby, result in better learning.

The many aspects surrounding the issue of feedback call for a continued systematic research to investigate whether there are particular types of feedback should be followed and which are more effective than others, and to what extent this may be dependent on the attitudes of learners. It is our hope that this work has contributed to give a glimpse of the effect of correction symbols, and can pave the way for those interested in the different techniques used in providing feedback and their effects on learning.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 01: Correction Symbols

Appendix 02: The Students' Questionnaire

Appendix 03: The Teachers' Questionnaire

## Correction Symbols

Symbol	Meaning	Incorrect	Correct
p.	Punctuation	I live <sup>p.</sup> and go to school here <sup>p</sup> Where do you work <sub>.</sub>	I live and go to school here. Where do you work?
○	Word missing	I <sup>○</sup> working in a restaurant.	I am working in a restaurant.
cap.	Capitalization	It is located at <sup>cap.</sup> main and <sup>cap.</sup> baker streets in the <sup>cap.</sup> city.	It is located at Main and Baker streets in the City.
v.t.	Verb tense	I never <sup>v.t.</sup> work as a cashier until I <sup>v.t.</sup> get a job there.	I had never worked as a cashier until I got a job there.
agr.	Subject-verb Agreement	The manager <sup>agr.</sup> work hard. There <sup>agr.</sup> is five employees.	The manager works hard. There are five employees.
○	Make one Word or sentence	Every <sup>○</sup> one works hard. We work together. <sup>○</sup> So we have become friends.	Everyone works hard. We work together, so we have become friends.
sp.	Spelling	The <sup>sp.</sup> maneger is a woman.	The manager is a woman.
pl.	Plural	She treats her employees like <sup>pl.</sup> slave.	She treats her employees like slaves.

Ø	Unnecessary word	My boss <del>she</del> watches everyone all the time.	My boss watches everyone all the time.
W.F.	Wrong word form	Her voice is <u>irritated</u> . <i>W.F.</i>	Her voice is irritating.
W.W.	Wrong word	The food is delicious. <u>Besides</u> , The restaurant is always crowded. <i>W.W.</i>	The food is delicious. Therefore, the restaurant is always crowded.
ref.	Pronoun Reference error	The restaurant's specialty is fish. <u>They</u> are always fresh. <i>ref.</i> The food is delicious. Therefore, <u>it</u> is always crowded. <i>ref.</i>	The restaurant's specialty is fish. It is always fresh. The food is delicious. Therefore, the restaurant is always crowded.
W	Wrong word order	Friday <u>always is</u> our busiest night.	Friday is always our busiest night.
RO CS	Run-on OR Comma splice (incorrectly joined independent clauses)	Lily was fired <u>she</u> is upset. <i>RO</i> Lily was fired, <u>she</u> is upset. <i>CS</i>	Lily was fired, so she is upset. Lily was fired; therefore, she is upset. Because Lily was fired, she is upset. Lilly is upset because she was fired.
Frag	Fragment (incomplete sentence)	She was fired. <u>Because she was always late</u> . <i>Frag.</i>	She was fired because she was always late.

T	Add a transition	She was also careless. She frequently spilled coffee on the table.	She was also careless. For example, she frequently spilled coffee on the table.
S.	subject	Is open from 6:00 PM until the last customer leaves.	The restaurant is open from 6:00 PM until the last customer leaves.
V.	verb	The employees on time and work hard.	The employees are on time and work hard.
prep.	preposition	We start serving dinner at 6:00 PM.	start serving dinner at 6:00 PM.
conj.	conjunction	The garlic shrimp, fried clams, and broiled lobster are the most popular dishes.	The garlic shrimp, fried clams, and broiled lobster are the most popular dishes.
art.	article	Diners expect a glass of water when they first sit down at table.	Diners expect a glass of water when they first sit down at the table.
¶	Symbol for a paragraph		

## Appendix 02

### The Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire aims at finding out learners' views about the writing skill and their preferences of teachers' feedback.

I would appreciate your collaboration if you could answer this questionnaire.

Please, tick (×) the appropriate answer or make a full statement when necessary.

May I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Samia MAAREK  
Institute of Letters and Languages  
Department of English  
Mentouri University-Constantine



**SECTION ONE: General Information**

1. How many years have you been studying English?

.....

**SECTION TWO: The Writing Skill**

2. Do you like writing?

a. Yes

b. No

3. Writing is an easy task to learn.

a. Yes

b. No

4. If “No”, please, explain why.

.....

5. Writing is a necessary skill for you to develop.

a. Yes

b. No

6. If “No”, please, explain why.

.....

**SECTION THREE: The Teacher’s Role in Writing**

7. When your teacher of written expression corrects your paragraphs, does he give feedback

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Never

8. Which aspect does he give more importance to? (You may opt for more than one).

- b. Grammar
- c. Content
- d. Vocabulary
- e. Organization of ideas

9. How does your teacher of written expression correct your paragraphs, does he

- a. Provide the correct form
- b. Show the mistakes using symbols
- c. Just cross the mistaken parts
- d. Other: Please, specify.

.....

10. Would you like your teacher to

- a. Correct your mistakes?
- b. You the kind of your mistake?

11. When your teacher of written expression corrects your paragraphs, does he

- a. Correct every kind of mistake?
- b. Concentrate on one kind of mistake each time?
- c. Other: Please, specify.

.....

12. Would you like your teacher to

- a. Note every mistake you make?
- b. Concentrate on one type of mistake each time?
- c. Other: Please, specify.

.....

13. Does your teacher of written expression allow time to

- a. Correct yourself?
- b. Your classmates to correct you?
- c. Use both ways?
- d. Other: Please, specify.

.....

14. How often does your teacher of written expression encourage self -correction?

- a. Usually
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

15. Do you like correcting your own mistakes?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Thank you for you cooperation.

## Appendix 03

### The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is a part of a research work on teaching the writing skill. It aims at finding out the teachers' concepts about writing and the techniques used in providing feedback.

I would appreciate your collaboration if you could fill in this questionnaire.

Please, tick (×) the appropriate answer or make a full statement when necessary

May I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Samia MAAREK  
Institute of Letters and Languages  
Department of English  
Mentouri University-Constantine

**SECTION ONE: General Information**

1. What is your qualification?

- a. License
- b. Magister
- c. Doctorate

2. How long have you been teaching English?

.....

3. How many years have you been teaching writing to first-year students?

.....

**SECTION TWO: The Writing Skill**

4. Writing is an easy task to teach?

- a. Yes
- b. No

5. If “No”, please explain why.

.....

6. Writing is a necessary skill to develop in your students?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. If “No”, please explain why.

.....

**SECTION THREE: The Teacher’s Role in Writing**

8. When your students write, do you correct and give feedback?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

9. Which aspect do you give more importance to? (You may opt for more than one).

- a. Grammar
- b. Vocabulary
- c. Content
- d. Organization of ideas

10. When you correct your students paragraphs, do you

- a. Provide the correct forms?
- b. Show the mistakes using symbols?
- c. Cross the mistaken parts?
- d. Other: please, specify

.....

11. When you correct, do you

- a. Correct every kind of mistake?
- b. Concentrate on one kind of mistake each time?
- c. Other: please, specify.....

12. Do you allow time for students to

- a. Correct their mistakes?
- b. Their classmates to correct them?
- c. Use both ways?

13. When you hand in the students corrected paragraphs, do you

- a. Ask them to correct their mistakes in class?
- b. Ask them to do that at home?
- c. Do not assign any follow up task?

14. You think that errors should be

a. Neglected?

b. Carefully treated?

15. How often do you encourage self-correction?

a. Usually

b. Sometimes

c. Never

Thank you for your cooperation.

## Résumé

Le présent travail qui est une étude descriptive et analytique traite de l'aptitude des étudiants de première année universitaire dans la correction de leurs fautes à Mentouri Université, Constantine. On a estimé que la méthode des symboles de correction suivie par les étudiants d'anglais rehausse leur aptitude de corriger leurs fautes s'ils récrivent leurs paragraphes.

L'objectif donc est d'analyser les paragraphes qui sont réécrits par les étudiants et d'examiner s'ils peuvent corriger leurs fautes.

Pour réaliser cet objectif, on a procédé premièrement à tester les symboles de correction afin de déterminer leurs effets à rehausser l'aptitude des étudiants à corriger leurs fautes. Deuxièmement, on a analysé deux questionnaires: le premier est adressé aux étudiants pour essayer de connaître leurs modes de compréhension d'expression écrite et leurs attitudes envers le rôle de leurs enseignants à développer ce savoir-faire; et le deuxième est destiné aux enseignants pour connaître leurs attitudes envers cette méthode de correction utilisée en expression écrite et leurs rôles et modes de redressement.

L'analyse des résultats confirme notre hypothèse que l'application des symboles de correction par les étudiants rehausse leurs aptitude à corriger leurs fautes et de produire une bonne qualité du travail.



هذا العمل عبارة عن دراسة وصفية تحليلية لقدرة الطلبة على التصحيح الذاتي لأخطائهم بجامعة قسنطينة. بدأنا الدراسة بفرضية أن رموز التصحيح تزيد من قدرة تصحيح طلبة السنة أولى جامعي تخصص لغة انجليزية لأخطائهم عند إعادة كتابة موضوع إنشاء.

ويهدف هذا العمل إلى تحليل مواضيع الإنشاء التي تمت إعادة كتابتها من طرف الطلبة وملاحظة إمكانية التصحيح الذاتي لأخطائهم. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف، اعتمدنا على وسيلتين للبحث وهما: التصحيح و الاستبيان. وتم تحليل كتابة الطلبة بهدف معرفة تأثير رموز التصحيح في تعزيز التصحيح . أما الوسيلة الثانية فتتمثل في استبيانين: الاستبيان الأول للطلبة بهدف التعرف على تصورهم لمهارة الكتابة، وموقفهم تجاه الدور الذي يلعبه الأستاذ في تنمية هذه المهارة. أما الاستبيان الثاني فتم توجيهه للأستاذة بهدف التعرف على تصورهم للكتابة ومعرفة الدور الذي يقومون به لتنمية هذه المهارة لدى الطلبة وطريقة تقويمهم لكتاباتهم.

وأظهرت نتائج تحليل الاختبار أن لرموز التصحيح دورا فعالا في تعزيز إمكانية تصحيح الطلبة لأخطائهم، كما بينت نتائج الاستبيانين أن هناك اختلافا بين الطالب و الأستاذ في الطريقة المتبعة لتقويم الكتابات وهذا ما يجب أخذه بعين الاعتبار.