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**EFL Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions on Teachers' Feedback in
Writing**

**The Case Study of Third Year LMD Students of English at Mila
University**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

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Dedication

I, Anissa LECHEHEB, dedicate this work to:

My mother, Mammy, to whom my gratitude, love, and thanks can never be expressed in words. Thanks, you have been a great source of love, motivation, and inspiration.

My father, Pappitou, thank you for being my guardian during my educational career by supporting and encouraging me to believe in myself. I really appreciate your standing with me, because your love, power, support, and trust have sustained me in my life.

My deepest appreciation and love to:

My sisters Nadia, Samia, and Besma

My brothers Nor El Din, Ibrahim, Messoud, Aissa, and Mohammed

All my beloved friends and teachers who share with me the university career

And to you "Anissa", glad you have made it finally.

Dedication

I, Manel YAKOUB, dedicate this work to:

The soul of my mother 'Mom' although, you were not here beside me but I am sure you are proud of me.

My father 'Dad' thank you for everything you do for me and for your sacrifices.

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding TF in writing, also it aims to explore the importance of TF on learners' writing. Teachers' feedback (TF) plays a vital role in developing the students' writing accuracy and fluency. However, to increase the effectiveness of TF, on the one hand, the teacher is expected to provide the appropriate feedback to students in order to suit their needs and concerns; on the other hand, the students should take their learning seriously. This investigation is based on the hypotheses that third year English learners may have a negative attitude towards TF, and teachers of English may have a positive attitude regarding feedback provision on students' choice of words; besides, it is hypothesized that TF may promote learners' writing skill. For this purpose, two questionnaires are used to collect the needed data and check the advanced hypotheses. First, the learners' questionnaire is administered to 108 third year LMD students of English at Mila University, to obtain insights about their TF and its importance, in addition to their thoughts and preferences on that feedback. Second, the teachers' questionnaire is designed for 13 teachers of English of written expression, to get perceptions about the learners' errors, their obstacles that they face during their writing and the various techniques which are used in providing feedback to improve the writing skill. The findings show that teachers of English have a positive perception regarding the provision of feedback on students' writing indicating its importance in language teaching and learning. However, the EFL students also have a positive perception on their TF, as it is not expected, since it contributes to the enhancement of their writing level.

List of Abbreviations

EF	Effective Feedback
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EL	English Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FL	Foreign Language
LL	Language Learning
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
Q	Question
SL	Second Language
TF	Teacher Feedback
TW	Teaching Writing
WE	Written Expression
%	Percentage

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General Introduction

The writing skill is one of the most critical skills that students of English as a second language (ESL) or a foreign language (EFL) need to learn. Over years, writing is seen as only a support system for learning grammar and vocabulary, rather than as a skill in its own right. Recently, however, trainers and methodologists have looked again at writing in foreign language (FL) classroom and putting forward ways to teach this skill. Writing has also become more important as tenets of communicative language teaching, which is teaching language as a system of communication rather than as an object of study that have taken hold in both foreign language (FL) and second language (SL).

Teaching writing (TW) is not an easy task; planning what to teach within a curriculum is a part of the task. Whereas, the other part manifests it's self in how to teach such a complex skill. The teachers should consider the different approaches in TW; also they are the ones who choose the main approach that fit their students. Indeed, writing is one of the skills that are taught to have an important significance in FL learning. Therefore, teachers often aim to find better forms of teaching, including writing instruction, which is feedback, as it is one of the most common types of FL instruction.

Arndt (1993) says "Feedback informs the writing process, permeating, shaping and moulding it", and consider it as a "central and critical contribution to the evolution of a piece of writing" (as cited in Tsui& Ng, 2000, p. 148). Feedback has a dual effects on both improving students' writing products and motivating them to write more and better.

Moreover, feedback is taught to be the essence of teaching to foster and reinforce learning (Cohen & Robbins, 1976; Kepner, 1991; Leki, 1990; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986; Truscott, 1996), and the same idea realizes in the area of writing in FL for this purpose, teachers and researchers often try to figure out how to provide feedback in order to be efficient.

In addition to teachers, students also participate in the feedback process and their comprehension of the method of their instruction is therefore necessary. However, Lightbown and Spada (2006) claim that almost all students rely heavily on certain style in which they want to be taught, and that this particular method of teaching is the best technique to learn. Accordingly, impressions by students of the feedback type they are providing should be considered. Moreover, exploring the views of teachers is important since they spend a lot of time getting feedback.

Statement of the Problem

EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions on TF in writing have often been the topic of discussion. TF in writing to students' errors is definitely a key factor and integral part of the writing process. Indeed, it is intended to be the direction that students take through the writing process, and the methods they can construct a comprehensible productions. Although, teachers make an attempt to correct errors and spend long time seeking to understand what the students' writers want to do, and making suggestions for improving the written work. But unfortunately, they do not transmit their feedback in an appropriate or a motivating way that could makes students see it as a source of improvement and take it into consideration. Indeed, teachers need to be aware of students' differences and deliver their feedback based on that basis, besides giving it as a constructive criticism that enhance their written production not as a destructive one

which target students, and contributes in rejecting the TF and decreasing their writing skill. Thus, this gives the teachers more responsibility to understand the learners' preferences and what they are really in need for in order for their feedback to be effective, and to be taken into students' account.

Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is fourfold. The first aim is to examine teachers' practices in their writing class: The approaches used in TW, type of instruction, and indeed the role of the teacher in the process. The second aim is to identify the perceptions of the EFL third year students of English towards their TF in writing. The third aim is to investigate the teachers' perceptions towards their feedback provision to students' writing. Lastly, the fourth aim is to investigate the importance of TF, mainly the written one, in enhancing the student's piece of writing.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to know the learners' and teachers' perceptions towards TF in writing, multiple research questions are raised:

- What are the most writing problems that EFL learners face?
- What kind of errors do teachers of written expression (WE) mostly tend to correct?
- How TF contributes in performing achievement in students' writing?

Based on these questions, the research hypotheses would be carried in the following:

- Students may have a negative attitude towards their TF.

- Teachers may have positive attitude regarding the provision of feedback to students' writing.
- Teacher's feedback may contribute to the learners' writing achievement.

Means of Research

For the sake of understanding the teachers' and learners' perceptions to TF in writing, learners' and teachers' questionnaires have been chosen for gathering the needed data for the present research. The learners' questionnaire, which is designed for third year students at the department of English at Mila University, is designed to identify their perceptions towards their TF in writing. Concerning the teachers' questionnaire, it is given to the teachers of W E at the department of English at Mila University, in which it enquires about their teaching writing practices, type of feedback that they use, and their perceptions about students' response and preferences on their feedback.

Significance of the Study

This study is intended to give some clarifications about the EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions on TF in writing. It is significant because learning is a process in which errors exist and must be corrected. This study can be of great significance to teachers and learners. Thus, teachers of English can have all or some of their questions answered here, where this study tries to spot light on more effective strategies and principles of providing effective feedback to students' piece of writing. For the learners, this study is intended to make the EFL students aware of the importance of their TF in enhancing their written assignments.

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is composed basically of three chapters. The first two chapters are descriptive ones, and the third chapter covers the empirical part of the dissertation.

The first chapter is entitled “Teaching Writing”. It provides previsions into the term writing in general: includes definitions of it, its components, approaches to TW, stages of writing, as well as giving an account of the teacher’s role in the process. This is followed by outlining some writing problems and providing some features of effective writing. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of the importance of writing.

The second chapter is entitled “Teachers’ Feedback on Students’ Writing”. It starts with an overall view about error in terms of its definition, defining error treatment and discussing its approaches. Then, it presents the notion of feedback which includes different definitions of feedback, types, and its importance to the EFL students’ writing. Furthermore, it moves to discuss the issue of TF as well as its strategies and principals. Lastly, this chapter ends with a discussion of both students’ and teachers’ perceptions to TF in writing.

Chapter three is devoted to the field of investigation. It includes means of data collected, as well as describing the population and the sample. Then, it presents a detailed analysis of both the students’ and teachers’ questionnaires and to see whether the obtained results confirm or refute the hypotheses.

Definition of Key Terms

Perception: itis the ability to understand the true nature of something.

Feedback: it is an advice, criticism or information you get from the instructor (teacher, peer, parent, etc.) about how good or useful something or work.

Teacher Feedback: it is information given by the teacher to the learner about their performance relative to learning goals or outcomes.

Error: an error is the use of word, speech act or grammatical items in such a way it seems imperfect and significant of an incomplete learning (Richard & Renandya, 2002).

Writing: it is an intellectual activity of assessing and arranging ideas into a statement and paragraph to be understood by people (Nunan, 2003)

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Chapter One

Teaching Writing

Introduction

Writing effectively becomes an important aspect in people's global community, in which they consider it as a system of communication in both SL and FL settings. Researchers (Harmer, 2004; Weigle, 2005) in the field are always trying to find new ways to teach this skill more effectively since writing has been an essential skill in learning English as SL and FL. TW plays an increasing role in FL education, where students gain control over the writing skill through the TF. It is important in becoming more and more popular because its' role goes beyond being merely an effective English writer.

This chapter attempts to discuss the basic principles underlying the teaching of writing. It starts with a discussion about the writing skill in general and outlines the various definitions of the writing system, as well as comparing it with speaking, discussing its components, its approaches, its stages, and some writing problems and their causes. Then, it discusses the role of the teacher in the process for improving the students' writing skill. Finally, this chapter closes with highlighting some features of effective writing, and shedding light on the importance of writing.

1. Writing Skill

Trying to define writing tends to bring with it some level of complexity; this complexity is created by the nature of this ability that is substantially different from the speech that is naturally obtained. Indeed, Writing is one of the most effective vehicles to meet the need for expressing ideas and thoughts. Here, it is substantial to note that writing is a basic skill in English, and it needs to be given a lot of focus and significance. In addition, it is one of the

skills that are somehow difficult to teach because “learning to write requires cognitive and affective investments” (Rijlaarsdam, Bergh & Couzijn, 2005, p. 3). This is why it gains a lot of attention to it and how it is taught.

In this section, the definition of writing will be divided into two different ways. First, the distinction between writing and speaking which is useful to identify the different textual qualities and factors that governed writing. Second, the exploration of various definitions of writing by different scholars on which each scholar has his point of view.

1.1. Writing System

For thousands of years, peoples used to speak rather than to write until the discovery of writing in an ancient civilization of southern Mesopotamia around 3100 BC. At that time, peoples started to record their speech through using symbols and graphs as means of communication. Despite the fact that writing is a complex human activity, it involves the development of ideas, the mental representation of knowledge and the experience about a subject. Arapoff (1967) describes writing as “much more than an orthographic symbolization of speech. It is, most importantly, a purposeful selection and organization of experience” (p. 233); indeed, according to her, the term “experience” contains facts, ideas, thoughts, or opinions, whether acquired first hand through direct perception or second hand through reading and hearsay.

Therefore, the relationship between writing and speaking becomes a debated subject as Weigle (2002) claims:

The relationship between writing and speaking is important for language testing, among other reasons, because of the question to what extent writing can be seen as a special case of L2 language use and to what extent writing represents a distinctly different ability from speaking drawing on the many of the same linguistic resources but also relying on distinctly different mental processes. (p. 15)

Traditionally, linguists hold that speech is primary and written language has become a reflection to the spoken language. Other perspective has seems that educational research holds the position that the written form of the language is more correct than the oral one. However, in recent years researchers claim that there is no superiority between the written language and the spoken one but instantly obvious that each has specific features that vary from the other. Weigle (2002) states:

Neither oral nor written language is inherently superior to the other, but oral and written texts do vary across a number of dimensions, including (but not limited) textual features , socio-cultural norms and patterns of use, and the cognitive processes involved in text production and comprehension. (p.15)

In this regard, Sperling (1996) differentiates the written language from the spoken language by stating broader characteristics:

To talk of written and spoken language differences is to consider the range of communicative purposes to which either writing or speaking is put. In this sense, broader characteristics – such as what gets said, what remains implicit, what is a fore-grounded and back-grounded and what is stated by whom and under what circumstances – implicate the norms and the expectations of the range of contexts in which both writing and speaking are produced. (p. 56)

In other words, although speaking and writing frequently differ across features like vocabulary and formality, both have wider social and cultural context in which they are used. In addition, Sperling (1996) states that the most significant difference between writing and speaking is that in educational setting the written language is highly valued, and writing accuracy is more significant than speaking accuracy.

However, the term writing differentiated from one view to another which makes it a subject to discuss with multiple scholars. On the basis of structuralism originated with Saussure

(2006) and Chomsky's (1975) transformational grammar, writing is considered as a system of signs independent of its individual intentions. On this view, the basic premise is that texts are self-governing system that can be analyze and describes independently of the contexts; Tests are the combination of words, clauses, sentences by following rules which are orderly related to help the writers to cipher the intended meaning of the text or the writing in general. Moreover, Writing can be defined as an act of communication that allows people from different cultures to communicate (Hyland, 2003). In addition to Hyland, Weigle (2002) claims that writing becomes more important as dogmas of communicative language teaching, means that teaching language as a system of communication rather than as an object of study have takes hold in both SL and FL settings.

In addition to the previous scholars, Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1997) see writing as “an act that takes place within a context, that accomplishes a particular purpose, and that is appropriately shaped for its intended audience” (p.8).In this regard, Writing is sometimes considered as the physical and the cognitive effort of an individual. However, it is important to view writing not just the product of an individual, but as a social and cultural act. Besides, other scholars believe that writing is a beneficial process for both teachers and students. Urquhart and McIver (1950) believe that “Writing is a process of exploration that offers benefits to students and content area teachers alike” (p.3); according to them, students and also their teachers experience the fun of discovery when they write comprehensible and clear ideas.

1.2. English Writing

Writing is a continuing process of discovery to find the most effective language for communicating ones' ideas, feeling and convey messages to the reader in a very correct spelling, grammatical structure and pronunciation. Writing becomes to be seen as an essential component in the teaching process and assuming an increasing role in EFL education for

reasons. According to Harmer (2001), “The reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development learning style and, most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right” (p. 79). Harmer claims that being a good writer depends on the reasons behind the teaching and learning of the writing skill as the following identifications:

- Writing provides variety in the classroom.
- This skill seen as a mean of consolidating what has been learned which provide evidence for the students’ achievement.
- Writing is convenient and often accurate mode of assessing the knowledge of the language.
- Writing facilitates providing references and sources of different texts.

Through writing, students reinforce what is learned before in another mode like reinforces grammar using drills; this kind of writing helps the students to pay more interest on accuracy. In this area, students work on large units of discourse rather than sentences, by following strictly what is prescribed by the teacher or the text book. The writing in this way relates the available syntactic options to the meaning and the register; however, it ignores the whole process of writing. Through the writing for the purpose of communication, the focus is on the writer purposes and the audience; teachers predict audience, the audience is most fictive. Teachers provide the correction on the final draft by probably commenting on the linguistic errors.

Writing is an effective and important skill that helps the students to learn through the writing process, however, students learn new words and structures and facilitate remembering them. Besides, writing practices help the students to pay their attention on what they are learning. Hedge (1998) claims that in EFL context, the teaching of such skill is baffled by the

fact that SL writers often get disturbed because of the differences between FL and second language (L2). Hyland (2003) provides a list of the differences between first language (L1) and L2:

- Different linguistic proficiencies.
- Different preferences for ways organizing texts.
- Different understandings of text uses and the social value of different texts.
- Different classroom expectations.

Further, Silva (1993) notes that “L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in important ways from L1 writing” (p. 669). Then, the teachers need to take into account the proffered Implications through L1 and L2 differences in order to achieve effective classroom expectation and procedure assessment (Hyland, 2003). Therefore, students need to be provided with practice activities to develop their writing skill and ensure their success in school life.

To sum up, writing is considered as a means of communication in EFL context; such a skill acquires a set of competences that underlie knowledge in different language system. The writer goes through such a process to achieve a number of purposes such as: communicating ideas and provoke feelings.

2. Components of Writing Skill

In composing writing, the students are expected to show the management of a variety of writing aspects: content, form, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation spelling, etc. Harris (1969, p. 68) recognizes five general components:

- Content refers to the substance of writing and the ideas expressed.
- Form refers to the organization of the content (coherence).

- Grammar, which refers to the use of correct grammatical forms and syntactic patterns.
- Style refers to the use of structures and lexical items in order to give a particular tone to writing.
- Mechanics, which refers to the use of graphic conventions of the language.

Bell and Burnaby (1984) explains that:

Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. At the sentence level, these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts. (as cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 36)

In this regard, writing is a very complex and difficult skill, in which students should pay attention to content, word spelling, punctuation marks, grammar, purposes of their writing, and also pay attention to the structure and integration of the information or the ideas in a cohesive and coherent way.

3. Approaches to Teaching Writing

The teaching of writing has long been a central element in all educational system; teaching the writing skill is not easy to master. Richards and Renandya (2002) claim that “there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 students to master” (p. 303). Therefore, EFL teachers, theorists and researchers come up with different effective approaches that help in developing the practices in writing skill. At least three major of approaches will be identified and these are: The product approach, the process approach, and the genre approach. Previously, the product and the process approaches are the most used ones in teaching the writing skill in

EFL classrooms. Nowadays, the emergence of the genre approach influences the teaching of writing in a big way.

However, the views of writing approaches differ from one scholar to another. According to Hyland (2008), the approaches are viewed as “complementary and overlapping perspectives, representing potentially compatible means of understanding the complex reality of writing” (p.1); He argues that in any approach of writing, there must be four central elements which are: The writer, the reader, reality and truth, and also the texts. In addition, Harmer claims that if these elements in the approaches are not taking into account, there is nothing called so.

3.1. The Product Approach

This is the most widely used approach worldwide for TW. The product approach follows theories of behaviorism that entails the development of habit formation and imitation; students are enquired to imitate the prescribe texts, models, and who are good in writing in their teacher’s view (Coffin, C., Curry, M. J., Goodman, S., Hewings, A., Theresa, M.L., & Swann, J., 2003). According to Nunan (1991), “.....a product oriented approach, as the title indicates focus on the end of the learning process, what is that the learner is expected to be able to do as fluent and component users of the language” (p. 86); He claims that the focus of this approach as his name on final products to ensure that students achieve language fluency. Moreover, Hedge (1988) defines this approach as an approach to writing which examines “the features of writing test” (p.8). She explains that this approach may include the skill of “getting the grammar right, having a range of vocabulary, punctuating meaningfully, using the conventions of layout correctly, e.g. in letters, spelling accurately, using a range of sentence structures, linking ideas and information across sentences to develop a topic, developing and organizing the content clearly and convincingly” (p.8). Indeed, this approach emphasizes the accuracy and correctness at the expense of the writer, his idea and decision, and the process through which the texts are

produced. Then, the emphasized is to lead learners to achieve the pre- stated objectives as white (1988) puts it “...learners’ needs are carefully specified and the work of the materials designers and the teacher is to provide the means of enabling these needs to be realized” (p. 5).

In addition, the product approach called also the text focused approach which neglects the writer as the producer of the text and focuses on the text itself. The teacher’s role in this approach is just an observer to students’ errors and a corrector of the final draft, but not a facilitator to the learning to write activity since “often ends up the writing session abruptly without providing the feedback to help students revise their work” (Li Waishing, 2000, p.51).Therefore, the most common activities used in this approach as suggested by Hyland (2003) are: filling in the gaps, substitutions, writing from tables, and graphs; developing sentences and paragraphs from models of different sort, besides the most required copying and imitation. Indeed, these activities help the students to check comprehension by adding logical connectors, which in the final exercise students produce parallel texts. In their grading, the teacher focuses on the product, its clarity, originality and correctness.

3.2. The Process Approach

In the mid- 1970s, the process approach begin to replace the product approach. The process approach in TW focuses on the different stages the writer passes through in his writing process rather than on the product itself. According to Zamel (1982) “writing involves much more than studying a particular grammar, analyzing and imitating rhetorical models, or outlining what it is one plans to say” (pp. 196-199). Writing then, is a collaborative approach passes through different stages and series of draft rather than a pre-determined product.

In particular, the process approach emerged from two theories: Cognitivism and Expressivism. In cognitivists’ view the primary attention pays to the cognitive and mental process in writing, whereas, the expressivists’ view focuses on the students’ abilities and

encouraging them “to take power over their own prose” (Johns, 1990, p. 25). Therefore, the main concern of this approach is to know what the writers do when they are writing, as the researchers such as White and Arndt (1991) claim that there are six steps that the writer goes through in his writing such as: generating ideas, focusing on, structuring, drafting, evaluating and reviewing. These stages involve different pedagogical techniques employed in the process approach as suggested by Hyland (2003), includes: Brainstorming, planning, multiple draft, and peer collaboration.

Indeed, adopting this approach in the writing class makes teacher pay attention to what students can write in the class, giving a prior focus on how students approach writing task moving through different stages, and offering to writer’s opportunities to improve their writings through providing feedback, and giving time for revision. In this process, teachers can discover the difficulty that students can face at a particular stage and students are aware of the importance of interaction between them and the reader in conceiving ideas clearly. Moreover, the common practices that are exposed for the students includes free writing, writing extended narratives through cyclical process and publishing students’ writing. Although, the process approach has been criticized because it views the process as same for all the writers, regardless of what is written and who is writing; the process is widely accepted because it helps the students understand the steps involve in writing and to develop the writing skill.

3.3. The Genre Approach

In the 1980s, the genre approach becomes widely popular by taking different parts of the world with the notion that students’ writers can benefit from different types of written texts. However, the genre approach to TW attempts to make the learners aware of the different elements of writing: The topic, convention, and the style of the genre and the context where the piece of writing will be read and by whom. This approach pays its attention to formal discourse

characteristic of the text and the context in which this text is produced. According to Paltridge (2004), this approach focuses on “teaching particular genres that students need control of in order to succeed in particular settings” (p.1). Through the incorporation of textual and contextual aspects of a particular genre the writers’ aim becomes to achieve the same communicative function that is shown before in other text belonging to this genre.

“In a genre approach to writing learners study texts in the genre they are going to be writing before they embark on their own writing” (Harmer, 2001, p. 258); in particular, students before starting composing their writing, they might be provided by atypical model of the genre. Then, teachers’ role in this approach is much like the product approach, where the teacher provides feedback on the final text and limited the correction of grammatical short coming. Writing then, is perceived as a production not creative action where students in first stage gathering data through imitating particular models for particular genre. In the second stage, they have the freedom to decide what to write and how to deal with the gathered information. Although, the genre approach is criticized because it underestimates the processes to produce a text and see students as largely passive, it succeeds in showing the students how different discourses require different structures and bringing relevance to the writing process.

4. Stages of Teaching Writing

The process approach emphasizes on what students’ writers do when they are writing; the steps that they go through while they are writing such as generating ideas, structuring, and drafting in order to gain both the writers’ intention and the readers’ needs. Its concern is to make the students understand the different stages that the writers go through in order to help in developing their writing skills. Therefore, the stages divisions differ from one theorist to another (Hedge, 1998; White &Arndt, 1999; James, 2003; Nation, 2009). However, it is the same at some degree for all L1 and L2 writers that pass through. Moreover, William (2003)

claims that “these stages are hypothesized as universals which mean that, at least to some degree, all writers are to engage assumingly in these stages” (p. 101).

In addition, Nation (2009) provides seven part divisions for the process of writing; writing is not necessarily a linear process moving from one stage to another, but it is better to teach the stages of writing in a repetitive way since the writers can move freely from one stage to another. Indeed, he also claims that students can benefit from their teachers’ help because the teacher is the only one who can discover the difficulties that student may face in this process, as Nation (2009) claims “the main goal of a process approach is to help learners improve their skills at all stages of the process” (p.114).

4.1. Prewriting

Prewriting, or invention, is what writing scholars and teachers refer to as the first step in the composing process; it is the period where writers need to figure out what they are going to write about, gathering information, and organizing ideas into a particular plane before they write, as Murray (2001) says invention is anything a writer does before beginning a draft. Students need to be clear about the message they deliver, they should consider the audience, and should be aware about the purpose of their writing.

Prewriting activities are the key to generating ideas and planning as D’Aoust (1986, p.94) says “prewriting activities generate ideas; they encourage a free flow of thoughts and help students to say it on paper. In other words, prewriting activities facilitate the planning for both the product and the process”. However, the possible ways or strategies of generating ideas include: brainstorming, free writing, listing, outlining, asking questions, etc. Indeed, these strategies help students recognize what they know about their writing topics and help them frame their thoughts.

4.2. Writing

Writing or drafting is the production stage of getting ideas down using complete sentences and reflecting the general conventions of writing. It represents the challenging transition from planning, or prewriting, to formulating the words and putting them on paper. In other words, writers move from the abstract (ideas) to the concrete (written text).

Murray (1985) eloquently refers to this step as discovery. In this regard, writers' brain processes information as they write things down and find themselves making connections, and discovering new ideas as they are writing their first draft.

4.3. Post Writing

Post writing (the revising and editing stage) is the stage where writers review their work by examining the clarity of the message and make any necessary changes. In this stage, writers can make changes at both form and content of their first draft. Thus, when writers revise, they are attending to language quality and message cohesion, since Lindemann (1995) considers that when writers revise, they reconsider, rethink, reshape their writing, and wrestling with the stress created by what they meant to say, and the words that actually found their way to the page (as cited in Urquhart & McIver, 2005).

Additionally, when writers edit, they often concentrate and correct errors within grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling ... as it is explained "I think editing is the easiest part ... you just have to check for the obvious stuff: spelling, grammar, all that" (Lamm, as cited in Fletcher, 2000, p. 84).

5. Problems of Writing

5.1. Common Writing Problems

It is a truth that writing is a complex task, and it is the most difficult of all the language abilities to acquire. However, lot of students worry when they face a blank page; these worries come from the problems that they face in their writings.

Spelling is one of the problems that students suffer from. Due to the English pronunciations of sounds, EFL students may confuse in spelling words in their compositions. That is to say, there are some sounds in English pronounced in the same way but spelled differently. As argued by Nation (2009) “If learners have poor spelling skills, they will typically avoid writing tasks, and when writing will avoid words that they find difficult to spell” (p. 18).

Moreover, grammatical problems also face the learners in their writing since they have problems with subject verb agreements, pronoun references, and connectors. Besides, sentence structure is a problematic issue for the English language (EL) students. According to Zamel (1983), cohesive devices are crucial in writing. However, learners use run-on, incorrect, and fragmented sentences, and also are unable to combine sentences with the linking devices. Too, learners have difficulty in word choice; a good writing should consist of appropriate and varied range of vocabularies used along with proper grammar and varied range of sentence structures (Norish, 1983).

In addition, content, capitalization, punctuation, and organization are main problems that participate in the difficulty of writing. EFL learners meet problems in exploring ideas and thoughts. This may be because of the traditional methods teachers use in TW, in which they focus on the form rather than focusing on the message they attend to convey (Leki, 1991). Also, learners face problems with punctuations when they write a composition, like writing long sentences without respecting the pause and separating clauses for instance. As Carrol and

Wilson (1995) state “students' writing encounter punctuation problems as there are no universal rules of punctuation” (p. 191). Further, learners have the difficulty of structuring the paragraph or the whole discourse as West (1966) states “The most common students’ problem in paragraphing is either the paragraph is not limited to a single topic or the single topic is not developed or exemplified adequately” (as cited in Tsegay 2006, p. 17). Also, learners have difficulties in using capitalization properly.

Moreover, the interference of the mother tongue creates a major problem for learners when they attend to write an assignment, especially for FL students. Some learners, and not all of them, think in their mother tongue and translate words from their native language to the target language, for example from Arabic to English. However, this interference may cause problems of misunderstanding and confusion for the reader, as Gomaa (2010) indicates that students’ first language affects in learning their target language.

All in all, most writers make errors when they write. However, avoiding such errors needs to respect the rules and all the aspects of writing includes: grammar, vocabulary, organization, content, spelling and other aspects, and excluding the interfering of mother tongue.

5.2. Causes of Writing Problems

The first cause of the students’ writing difficulties is may be due to the lack of confidence as Phyllis and Mary (2008) claim “There are many reasons for finding writing difficult, but probably a fundamental one is lack of confidence” (p. 8). Because some learners feel that their capacities are not enough to write a good assignment. Davies (1998) states that learners will be encouraged to write if writing tasks motivate them and keep them interested. Thus, the desire of writing becomes more difficult for the writer if it is about something that they have no interest in.

Therefore, the teaching methods and environment are the main causes of students' weaknesses in English (Al-Khsawneh, 2010). Their qualification in English is related either to the lack of student motivation, or to teacher's interest. Thus, many learners use their mother tongue because of the isolated culture and background of that language.

Additionally, one of the most causes of writing problems is the lack of practice; practice is a key to master any skill, especially the writing skill, as Barras (2005) states:

To be good at any game, or to play any musical instrument well, you must practice regularly. Similarly, to write well you must practice writing...Just as in playing a game you can learn to play better by watching the best players, so your own writing will improve if you read leading articles in quality newspapers and books by authors who write well. (p. 29)

Thus, the best ways of learn any skill would be to practice it. To become a good driver, the best way is to drive. Similarity, to become a proficient writer, the best way is to write a lot.

Further, Teachers also may cause writing problems to their learners. In most cases, the TF does not help students promote their writing skill since it may be vague and unbalanced (Cohen & Cavalcanatic, 1990). However, if teachers respond to students' writing as genuine and interested readers rather than as judges and evaluators, their feedback becomes useful in developing their writing skill (Zamel, 1985).

As a conclusion, the cause of writing difficulty is related to both teachers and learners. On the one hand, teachers' problems are due to the poor feedback. On the other hand, learners' problems are linked to the lack of confidence, lack of practice, and the lack of writing features.

6. Teaching Writing

TW is therefore assuming an outstanding position in FL education. Traditionally, writing wins little interest from EFL learners compared to other skills. Now, writing becomes

an important skill in FL teaching and formed a part of the syllabus in teaching language as being a medium of communication. It is not easy for writing teachers to help students becoming self-sufficient, competent, and confident writers during the process, but they can do it by the instruction and guidance they provide for their students.

6.1. The Teacher's Role in the Process

Teacher role is a valuable issue in the process approach for improving the writing skill. Students benefit from the instruction and guidance that an able teacher provides; however, teachers who are knowledgeable about their content, teaching practices, and the profession of teaching, or what Shulman (1986) calls “pedagogical content knowledge”, understand how to present and integrate new and existing information in a way that is meaningful and attainable for students. However, the role of the teacher changes from being a source to a facilitator to that for helping students to make well structured compositions by teaching them step by step (Urquhart & McIver, 2005).

Harmer (2004) states five roles of writing teachers that help students become good writers: being as demonstrator, being as motivator, being as supporter, being as responder, and being as evaluator. Thus, the teacher should help students and motivate them especially when they lost ideas in writing tasks and support them when they are writing in class. Teachers also should react to their written work by responding to what they have said in a positive way not in a form of judgment, and evaluating their work by indicating where they wrote well, and where they made mistakes. However, this task of evaluating students is used not just for the grade but also as a learning opportunity.

Harmer (2000) states in another book that the role of teacher as responder and evaluator is grouped under a category called ‘feedback provider’:

Giving feedback on writing tasks demands special care. Teachers should respond positively and encouragingly to the content of what the students have written. When offering correction teachers should choose what and how much to focus on based on what students need at this particular stage of their studies, and on the tasks they have undertaken. (p. 261)

In this regard, effective teachers know how to balance their feedback between discussing what is working and what needs to be improved or changed.

7. Features of Effective Writing

Writing is a difficult task for any language user either native speaker or non native speaker. However, learners need to consider and make use of effective and efficient features in order to come up with a good writing product.

As writing is an important skill in teaching language; students, who study writing, need to learn and improve their writing through exploring the information structures, analyzing grammar and vocabulary, as well as focusing on relatedness of ideas and patterns that enable the reader to follow the flow of ideas through main parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.

Any effective writing instruction should cover features for the sake of helping students to become effective writers. Therefore, focus, organization, style, evidence and elaboration, and conventions are features defined by Shauna (2015) used to help students to be good writers. These features as follow:

1. Style: a good piece of writing should dress up or down to fit the specific context, audience, and purpose. The writer's style is evident through: word choice (the use of appropriate words and phrases to convey meaning), sentence fluency (the rhythm of sentences and phrases), and voice (essential elements of style that reveal the writer's personality).

2. Focus: a writer needs to establish a focus, after knowing the audience, so that the reader do not confuse about the subject matter, and elaborates details to word choice, sentence length, and punctuation.

3. Organization: the writer needs to establish for the reader a well- organized composition through text structure (beginning, middle, and ending), and also using logical expressions and related ideas (by using transitional ideas or phrases).

4. Evidence and elaboration: they are the extension and the development of the topic which include two important concepts: sufficiency (the amount of detail), and relatedness (the quality of details).

5. Conventions: they involve usage (word-order, verb-tense, and subject-verb agreement), sentence formation (structure of sentence, simple or complex), and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphs).

In sum, arranging those effective features helps writers to become good writers when they produce written assignments in the target language.

8. The Importance of Writing

Writing is a brilliant human innovation that has numerous advantages on multiple levels. An EFL writer can help to work all of his skills and thereby achieve some degrees of success.

8.1. Writing as an Aid to Communication

Due to its communicative role, writing is behind the reinforcement of communicative skills. Uso-juan (2006) explicitly notes that “the skill of writing plays a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of communicative competence” (p. 390). In other words, the writer builds up his communicative skills alongside his attempts to himself or others. Hence, the EFL learner must know how to interact utilizing various EL discourse modes, arguing or persuading, telling, explaining or narrating, and effectively employing the target language cultures. The

learner should in turn be able to inform his direct instructor and peers, as well as his community about himself and his learning; and therefore, to remain the contact process ongoing from one generation to the next.

8.2. Writing as an Aid to Thinking

Writing as the counterpart of learning helps to significantly develop the analytical skills of learners. Firstly, it increases the mental ability of the learners as stated by Krashen (1989) that “Writing is, however, a powerful intellectual tool for cognitive development—it can make you smarter... Writing enables us to explore and change the worlds of ideas and experiences the brain creates” (p. 116). Secondly, writing is involved in the creation of the force of sub-mental skills, and from one side, namely: focus, examination, criticism, description and reflection. At this point, Hodges (2010) claims that writing “compels students to concentrate and organize their ideas, and cultivates their ability to summarize, analyze, and criticize. On the other hand, it reinforces learning in, thinking in, and reflecting” (p. 64). Or put it that writing offers a space for the EFL learner or inspire and develop deep learning strategies; it is also an undeniable fact that writing supports memory extensively. Indeed, the writer takes notes to preserve details, helping to transfer this information from the short-term memory to the long one; these written notes will often be used as a guide in retrieval moments in the event of an oral or written performance.

8.3. Writing as an Aid to Learning and Academic Success

Writing is known as an EFL learning advice, and therefore academic achievement. First, the learner makes use of writing as a way of acquiring knowledge in his lessons. Writing, for example, can be used as means of rehearsing learned language or as a means of exercising at home (Barras, 2005). Second, writing can improve collaborative learning and group work (Elbow, 1998). In both points of view, it is certain that writing is used to develop sub-skill;

exercise the linguistic features as vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation... etc., learn the material of various subject areas, and also get strategic contact with peers in teaching learners. In addition, the national committee to reporting that writing is a real determinant of learning for learners (Graham & Hebert, 2010). Therefore, the success of an EFL learner is measured by his writing proficiency. The explanation seems to be that almost all subjects are tested by writing, i.e. exams are rarely free from written response that tends to influence the general learners' performance and thus grades. For this reason, learning to write is quite essential for students' academic success.

8.4. Writing as an Aid to Professional and Life Success

In addition to supporting students improve their academic profile, writing allows learners to build both a personal profile and a professional one. Learners and authors gain awareness of their human nature determined by other variables such as the accumulation of understanding, the fulfillment of interest and the need for wisdom (Graham & Hebert, 2010). Moreover, Elbow (1998) explains that the writer of the EFL learns to manage his learning and life activities by using writing to get out of a mess of thought that struggle in one's mind. In other words, writing teaches the learner to prepare all of his acts forward; another one that heightens concentration and motivation. Indeed, writing can act as personal way of self-discovery, power, and creation. Furthermore, the researcher also suggests that anyone who writes about himself should actually learn so much about his personality and psychology. For instance a learner who keeps a journal may realize his point of strength and weakness, and can place plans to fix his problems. However, writing can also act as psychological counseling which helps learners deal with stress in the classroom or in their private lives. Barras (2005) also notes that "improving your ability to express yourself clearly and convincingly in speaking and writing is part of your continuing personal development" (p. 7). Moreover, Field (1999) acknowledges in a common way that writing offers EFL learners with tools required for their

professional lives. In reality, a learner who wants to get an employment is typically checked in writing, or is expected to write a job application or letter of encouragement, and perhaps even afterward; his writing will be seen in his employment reports, or if he chooses to do more in postgraduate studies and research work. Equally significant, failure in a written review may result in severe consequences for the future (Reichelt, 2009). Appropriately, a learner who establishes a strong mastery of writing is essential to deliver effective professional life as reported by Graham and Perin (2007):

Helping these young people to write clearly, logically, and coherently about ideas, knowledge, and views will expand their access to higher education, give them an edge for advancement in the workforce, and increase the likelihood they will actively participate as citizens of a literate society. (p. 28)

Professional achievement is a part of the success of life and both involve the capacity to master the art of speech well, and any barrier to writing would seem to be a disability in whatever advancement is sought.

Conclusion

This chapter provides guidance into the writing skill where its teaching becomes a key in the instruction of languages. Indeed, it is likely more subject to pendulum swing than any of the other language competences. Although, writing seems to be the most complicated skill because its' teaching and learning require a deep knowledge of a long list of rules, and aspects. Thus, it is a basic and important aspect in language instruction that cannot be neglected. The writing process then, involves the cooperation of all sides: The teacher, and the learner in addition to significant effort synthesis which the teachers must respect. For that reason, all teachers are drawn to this demanding task and to accomplish it as effectively as it should be.

Chapter Two

Teachers' Feedback on Students' Writing

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Chapter Two

Teachers' Feedback on Students' Writing

Introduction

Responding to students' writing is one of the most challenging aspects of the writing instructor's job. However, the TF to student's writing is a key component and a crucial part of the writing process as it considered supposedly the guide, in which students follow to develop their writing proficiency with minimal errors and maximum clarity. Indeed, dealing with students' errors becomes a major concern to EFL teachers: what kind of feedback they should give? How? Does it useful for the students? ; Thus, teachers should manipulate their feedback and make it effective to promote the learning process.

The importance of feedback in promoting students' writing is a truth accepted by most researchers in the field of language teaching (Hyland, 2003; Winne & Butler, 1994; Hattie & Timperley, 2007), since it affects positively on students' revision and motivation. TF encourages students to continue their learning especially when the results of their writings are correct, motivates them to do better, and provides the learner with additional information in order to support, rich, as well as encourages the learning process.

This chapter starts with an overall view about error as an introduction to feedback: defining the term error, describing what error treatment means? and discussing its approaches. Then, it presents the notion of feedback: includes definition of feedback, types, and its importance to the EFL students' writing. Besides, this chapter is going to

examine the issue of TF, as well as its strategies and principles. However, this chapter ends with a discussion of both teachers' and students' perceptions on TF in writing.

1. Definitions of Error

In general, error is the production of a failed target language form. Harmer (2000) states that errors are perceived by the language instructor to be dismissed and inappropriate in which they actively tried to avoid them from appearing because they are inaccurate or unacceptable.

Indeed, the exact meaning of the word error is difficult to find as it can be used in various contexts, which is why it is interpreted in different ways and by different linguists. Liski and Putnanen (1983) define error as “an error occurs where the speaker fails to follow the pattern or manner of the speech of educated people in English speaking countries today” (p. 77). However, Lennon (1991) states that an error is a lingual type or collection of forms which does not, in all probability, be produced by native speakers in the same context and under similar terms (as cited in Brown, 2000). Furthermore, as Shastri (2010) points out, it is important to emphasize that an error cannot be corrected by the learner him/herself and can indicate certain lack of language competences. In EFL classrooms, the words “error” and “mistake” refer to the same concept due to the lack of distinction between them. Psycholinguist researchers distinguish between those two concepts as follow: Brown (1994) provides a significant difference between “mistake” and “error”; he defines a mistake as being “a performance that is either a random guess or slip, in that, it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly” (p. 205). In the other hand, errors are problems that a native speaker would not have; an error is a noticeable deviation from a native speaker’s adult grammar that reflects the inter-language.

However, Richard (1984) claims that a learner makes a mistake while writing or speaking, that is due to lack of concentration, exhaustion, negligence or other performance aspects; this means the mistakes are not due to one's ignorance of rules. In contrarily, Lee (2008) remarks error as any variation from the language system standard that relates to the competency of L2 learners. She adds that errors are linked to the phrase competency which commutates difficulties in the learners' basic knowledge. According to her errors are more serious than mistakes at the level of competence since they represent inadequate learning. Even Edge (1989) provides a helpful distinction between "error" and "mistake"; it maintains the term error to apply to those items that learners cannot correct themselves, and the term mistake for those items may be self-correcting, giving the term 'attempt' at language deviation that has not yet been taught.

These distinctions are extremely valuable to the teacher in determining when and how to handle a deviation although identifying the category of a deviation is really problematic.

2. Error Treatment

2.1. Definition of Error Treatment

The word treatment of errors often requires clarity. According to Chaudron (1988), the term tends to refer to "any teacher behavior following an error that minimally attempts to inform the learner of the fact of errors" (p. 150). However, the case may not be obvious to the student in terms of the response it provides, it can take considerable effort to obtain a revised student response. In addition, the term "correction" means an error cure because it modifies the inter language rule of the learner and thus prevents the error from further development.

In addition, Schachter (1991) brings attention to the usage of three key words in the fields of language instruction, language acquisition and cognitive psychology, respectively, which are “corrective feedback”, “negative evidence”, “negative feedback”; where they are most frequently used interchangeably. He argues further that feedback will occur in two ways: “explicit correction” (overt error correction) and “implicit correction” (confirmation checks).

However, Lightbown and Spada (1999) see that corrective feedback is some hint to the learners that their use of teaching language is incorrect; it contains different answers that may be either explicit or implicit. When a language learner says ‘He go to school every day’, for instance, “explicit corrective feedback” can be, ‘No, you should say goes, not go’. However, “implicit feedback” for instance can be, ‘Do not forget to agree the verb with the subject’; it may or may not include the meta-linguistic information (pp. 171- 172).

Moreover, Long (1996) suggests that two categories of teaching language feedback can be provided to the learners: “positive evidence” and “negative evidence”. The former determines how to provide students with examples of what is grammatical and appropriate in teaching language, while the latter provides students with direct and indirect knowledge on what is unacceptable.

To avoid ambiguity, using the terms discussed so far interchangeably to refer to the reaction or response of the instructor and the errors of the learners in general.

2.2. Approach to Error Treatment

The numerous fundamental assumptions of language learning (LL) have fully changes the attitudes surrounding feedback practices in classrooms.

Krashen's monitor theory (1985) brings forth popular ideas that questioned the entire function of classroom teaching and treatment of errors. Correction does not lead to the language's actual learning but only to the deliberate control of speech and writing by the learner. Hence, the teacher's main activity should be to provide input of understanding from which the learner can acquire language, not to correct it. Additionally, Slinker's inter-language (1972, 1992) and Richards' error analysis (1974) concepts provide a great understanding of the different causes of error and tend to encourage a more tolerant and sensitive reaction to error; they also emphasize the fact that errors are unavoidable and that a required part of LL is to correct them in order to get the inter language of the learner closer to the teaching of language.

In addition, Richards and Rogers (1986) believe that, influenced by behavioral psychology, audiolingualism advocates systematic through correction; it is based on the belief that LL is primarily a matter of habit-forming, and that good habits create by providing correct answers rather than making errors. Negative evidence should be avoided as far as possible because it serves as a punishment and can hinder or deter learning while promoting positive evaluation, as it confirms accurate responses and promotes learning; in which it progresses more recently in SL acquisition. Research and some adjustments in goals, promote by communicative and humanist approaches to language teaching, lead teachers to less interfere.

With the advent of communicative methodologies for language teaching, Ludwige (1982) states that emphasis appears to be on fluency and the capacity of the learners to express a word and making utter accuracy comparatively less of priority; it seems like this is in line with the idea that native speakers are more interested in what SL speakers say and how. The researcher notes high rates of acceptance of errors by native speakers, and suggests that the vast majority of errors under review have little

impact on understandability and certainly much less than teachers prefer to expect. Also, he claims that teachers appear to pay more attention to mistakes that have a significant effect on communication and intelligibility. Through the distinction between global errors, these are not easy to distinguish and local errors seem to be useful in this regard; not even mistakes must be corrected. According to Mc Donough and Show (1999), correction should concentrate on mistakes that interfere with LL main goal of receiving and conveying meaningful messages, not inaccuracies.

In particular, Mc Donough and Show (1999) claim another idea, in which they believe that the humanistic effect has meant that the risk of punishing learners by insensitive correction appears to be accentuated further where considering the importance role affective factors can play in LL. The essential role of feedback is to persevere and encourage the learner's positive self-image as an individual and as a language learner. Consequently, assessment should be constructive or non-judgmental.

3. Definitions of Feedback

Feedback is one of the crucial elements in both language teaching and learning, and it is a fundamental element of the process approach to writing. It may have a definition of input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision, usually in the form of comments, questions, and suggestions (Keh, 1990). It has long been a central aspect of L2 writing programs, both for its potential for learning and for student motivation (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). In relation to the learning context, Drown (2009) views feedback as a response to learners' productions, be oral or written language, and an indicator of how successfully an objective of the teaching learning activity has been accomplished. Feedback, then, has

effects in permitting learners to enhance their comprehension quality and promoting knowledge execution and skill.

Arndt (1993) believes that “feedback informs the writing process, permeating, shaping, and moulding it” and considers it as a “central and critical contribution to the evolution of a piece of writing” (as cited in Tsui& Ng, 2000, p. 148). Feedback also considers as one of the fundamental tools used for providing effective interaction in teaching-learning contexts. Narciss (2008, p. 292) defines the term feedback in any teaching context as “[the] post-response information which informs the learners on their actual states of learning and/or performance in order to help them detect if their states corresponds to the learning aims in a given context”.

Han (2001) defines feedback as a two-way interdependent process in which both parties are information providers; and negotiate a new identity. Thus, feedback occurs when two parties engage in an instructional process, in which one side is viewed as a knowledge giver and the other as a knowledge receiver of the subject matter. Hattie and Timperley (2007) also have their view concerning feedback, they define it as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding; in other words, feedback is employed to reduce contradictions between current understandings and performance.

Many researchers consider feedback as a useful tool that can be used to promote students’ revision and to foster the learning-to-write process (e.g., Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hyland, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Paulus, 1999; Sommers, 1982). Because of the importance of the TF in the step to step learning-to-write process, Harmer (2000, p.261) highlights the role of the teacher as “feedback provider” by considering it as a valuable aspect and central to the process approach to TW. Silver and Lee (2007) also

view it as a crucial variable in the process approach as it helps to pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses, and helps them to be motivated during the writing process. In addition, Peterson (2010) points out that teacher's written feedback informs the student writer on the reader's reactions; teachers provide feedback on students' writing to support their writing development and to nurture their confidence as writers.

Sommers (1982) states three main purposes for which teachers provide feedback on writing:

- To inform writers to see whether their written products have conveyed their intended meanings.
- To give the students' writers a sense of audience (their interests and expectations) and make them ameliorate their writings accordingly.
- To offer students an impetus for revision, without comments from a critical reader because writers will feel no need to revise thoroughly if they ever think about revision.

4. Types of Feedback

In EFL classrooms, feedback is a key element in developing the writing skill; which is provided by the teacher to build learners confidence. Because of the changes in the writing pedagogy, the feedback has fallen into different types according to who give feedback; conferencing, peer, and teachers' written comments constitute the most common types of feedback according to some researchers (e.g. Camel, 1985; Ferris & Hyland, 2003; Harmer, 2004), and these types are the most used one.

4.1. Conferencing

Conferencing is also called oral or face to face type, where there is potential for meaning and interpretation to be constantly negotiated. Hyland and Hyland (2006) define this type as “an approach lauded by L1 researchers as a dialogue in which meaning and interpretation are constantly being negotiated by participants and as a method that provides both teaching and learning benefits” (p. 5). In addition, Goldstein and Conrad (1990) find that only those students who negotiate meaning successfully in conferences are able to carry out extensive and better revisions to their writing. This idea is supported by Williams (2004) who finds that students take the teachers’ suggestions and advices as a term of revision, when the students actively participate and negotiate in the conferences, and when they write down their plans during their sessions with teachers. According to her, negotiation is a key element for higher level-based revision, although her study suggests that the majority of revisions link to conferences surface level ones. In order for writing conferences to be successful, the students’ writers need to be active participants in such a conversation as well; all that can be achieve by providing time for negotiation, ask questions about their writings’ strengths and weaknesses and look for its clarification (Hyland, 2003). Besides, the students’ writers can develop their text and abilities through the dialogue between them and the teachers (Williams, 2002). Teachers provide oral feedback to their students because it makes the students more focused and usable for the oral comments of the teacher rather than the written ones (Zamel, 1985); indeed, it makes the students’ writers with no chance for discussion (Mahili, 1994).

Moreover, Hyland and Hyland (2006) notice that the writing conferences are not successful in all the classes due to some reasons; in which Ferris (2003) also agree

on. First, apply such a technique makes the students obliged to master the oral skill in order to facilitate understanding the TF content. Secondly, there are students who suffer from some infarcts that inhibit their interaction with the teachers, and make them accept whatever the teachers suggest. Thirdly, there are also teachers who are in need for the right interaction skill and time to deal with each student individually. Ferris (2003) describes these reasons to suggest that conference is a possible rather than a technique of providing feedback.

4.2. Peer Feedback

Many researchers and teachers prefer to use peer response because it plays an important role in drafting and redrafting in the process approach of writing (Zamel, 1985; Mittan, 1989). This kind of feedback requires the students with collaboration among each other, where each student acts as a reader and at the same time as a corrector for his\her classmate's writing. Kroll (2001) defines it as "simply putting students together in groups and then having each student read and react to the strength and weaknesses of each other's papers" (p. 228).Peer feedback have found to be useful and as an improvement to the students' writing skill, since in peer feedback, the activity is between student and other students; peer feedback promotes student-centered activity not teacher-centered activity (Hirvela, 1999). Students talking time will be more than teacher talking time; students will be actively engage in the learning process while the teacher is only a facilitator to give help when it is needed. Indeed, effective peer feedback helps the beginner student's writer to understand how the reader see his work, as the researcher says "It is a part of the process approach to teaching and is widely used in L1 and L2 contexts as a means to improve writers' drafts and raise their awareness of readers' needs" (as cited in Oskourt, 2008, p.130).

In addition, Mendoca and Johnson (1994) see peer feedback as a way of giving more control and autonomy, since it involves them in the feedback process as oppose to passive reliance on TF to fix up their writing. However, other researchers (Freedman & Sperling, 1985; Mittan, 1989; Caulk, 1994) claim that peer response provides students with an audience for their writing, which is more authentic than teacher response tends to be. Thus, peer feedback provides the students' writers with self-evaluation ability by providing audience and checklist questions to apply their writings, as it helps them to develop their autonomy and self-confidence as writers (Chaudron, 1984; Curtis, 2001; Cotterall & Cohen, 2003).

In particularly, peer feedback is a failure in some ways because of two reasons. First, the students' preferences and beliefs about the relative value of the teachers and peer feedback impact on their use of feedback. Nelson and Carson (1998) make an interview with L2 university students, where they find that most of the students prefer TF and use it for their revision rather than the peer ones. Second, researchers (Leki, 1990; Lockhart & Ng, 1993; Nelson, 1992; Murphy, 1993; Mendoca & Johnson, 1994; Hyland F., 2000a) find that students have problems in finding errors and providing quality feedback. However, despite these issues, peer feedback is still popular where many teachers and course designers continue to incorporate it in their courses and to report positive experiences from students.

4.3. Teachers' Comments

The teachers' written comments play a crucial role in both SL and FL in writing classes. Hyland (2003) defines the written feedback as follow: "...written substantial comment on their papers, justifying the grade they have given and providing a reader reaction"(p. 178).He claims that many teachers feel the need for providing the students'

writing with comments in order to help developing their writing and clarifying their grades. Indeed, this kind of feedback is the most expected and welcomed type by the students as Ferris (2003) states “this type of feedback may represent the single biggest investment of time by instructors, and it is certainly clear that students highly value and appreciate it”(p. 41).Sommer (1982) also believes that providing such comments to students is not an easy work, but it is a challenge for teachers of writing since they target a number of issues such as: Motivate the students to revise and rewrite their works using the feedback, target the failure areas of the students in learning, and make the students understand and use the teachers’ suggestions in their writing. He (1982) claims that:

The challenge we face as teachers is to develop comments which will provide inherent reason for students to revise ; it is a sense of revision as discovery, as a process of beginning a gain, as starting out new, that our students have not learned. We need to show our students how to seek, in the possibility of revision, the dissonances of discovery- to show them through our comments why new choices would positively change their texts, and thus, to show them the potential for development implicit in their writing. (p. 156)

However, Hyland (2003) clarifies that “some students want praise, others see it as condescending; some want a response to ideas, others demand to have all their errors marked; some use teachers’ commentary effectively, others ignore it altogether” (p.180); he notices that the individual students are not the same in receiving feedback, so in order for the teachers’ written feedback or other kinds to be effective, the teachers need to pay attention on what each student exactly want. Truscott (1999) assumes that the teachers are the responsible ones for changing students’ attitudes regarding what they should expect from teachers response by adopting “correction-free approach” in

their classroom. However, some researchers (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Leki, 1991; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; Cumming, 1995; Ferris, 1995; Hyland, F., 1998; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Lee, 2004) believe that students expect from the teachers to comment on their written errors and frustrated if this does not happen. Other researchers (Ferris, 2003; Ellis, 2009) confess the importance of teachers' written comments whereas others made it as a subject to debate.

5. The Importance of Feedback to the EFL Students' Writing

Feedback has a great importance in enhancing the EFL students' learning and has benefits to the students' skills development, especially writing. Through feedback, learners will be able to know what their mistakes are and what areas in their writing need improvement. People usually write something that makes sense for them, but not understandable for other people, especially when someone translates something from his L1 to L2 or other languages; those kinds of misunderstanding and misinterpretation will be formed.

Providing feedback is beneficial since it supports students' writing development, and builds their confidence in writing as Hyland (2003) says "feedback helps the writer work out the text's potential and to comprehend the writing context, providing a sense of audience and an understanding of expectations of the communities they are writing for" (p. 177).

Feedback can be used for students to promote their writing. It is true that after receiving the feedback, writer or learner is going to be able to realize the weaknesses of writing, organize the ideas, restructure the sentences, and most importantly the feedback will last forever since it will come up with the memory and more understanding, as Winne and Butler (1994) state "feedback is information with which a learner can confirm, add to, overwrite, tune, or restructure information in memory,

whether that information is domain knowledge, meta-cognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive, tactics and strategies” (pp. 57-40).

Additionally, Yang, Badger, and Yu (2006) correctly state that two heads are superior to one; it means that having anyone give any comments or correct the mistakes will be very helpful, because sometimes there seems to be no mistake in someone’s writing until other people read it.

6. Teachers’ Feedback

TF has some benefits for the creation of skills for the students as they responsible for what to do with it; it builds the learning autonomy of the students and monitors their correction initiation. However, most studies show that TF is chosen as a source of input because of the teacher capacity in providing feedback, and its effects on students’ writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Stern & Solomon, 2006); indeed, the students view TF worth more than any other type of feedback, especially the peer one (Miao, Badger & Zhen, 2006). Rationally, the students regard their teachers as the only source whose have expertise in correcting mistakes of the writing aspects; it assumes that the correction of the teacher is trustworthy, professional and experienced in that field. In addition, study conducts by Cresswell (2000), titled “self-monitoring in student writing: Developing learner responsibility”, explains why TF is the most preferable then peer feedback and self-feedback; it is because students believe that the instructor knows what particular things their students need to develop and take care of. Lin (2009), whose case study performs in a large multilevel EFL writing class against multiple feedback experiences (peer, self, TF), records the same result of the previous study, he makes an interview with 43 participants asking them which source of feedback they prefer most?. The result of the interview shows that the participants in this study value TF as the first favorite source of feedback.

Additionally, a separate study documents TF problems, the truth is that what worries the students mostly about their writing and their TF is grade; thus, they need feedback from their teachers to get good grade and not to improve the quality of their writing. This situation makes them correct their errors based on the TF, because they only expect good writing to get good grade. TF is only available for short-term benefit, not for long-term benefit, as students are not involved in the process of thinking and learning (Muncie, 2000).

However, as feedback can be positive and helpful, it may be negative and not effective in promoting the learning process; sometimes students respond negatively to their TF since it can be misunderstood (Lea & Stree, 2000). Besides, another study (Valente, Carvalho, & Conboy, 2009) describes the misuse of TF; that is, some teachers centre their feedback on the student self and use it to judge, accuse, as well as punish rather than having the purpose of focusing on the task, and reducing the discrepancies about the students' performance. Thus, teachers should follow some strategies and principles in order to make their feedback effective and helpful.

6.1. Feedback Strategies

Brookhart (2008) believes that feedback strategies can vary in various dimensions: timing, amount, mode, and audience.

a. Timing

Brookhart (2008) states that "Feedback needs to come while students are still mindful of the topic, assignment, or performance in question" (p. 10); that is, teachers should choose the right time for providing their feedback especially while the students still think about their work. Thus, feedback should be given while the students are still thinking of the learning goal or purpose.

b. Amount

Brookhart (2008) argues that “ for real learning, what makes the differences is a usable amount of information that corrects with something students already know and takes them from that point to the next level” (p. 12). That is, teachers should give clear and understandable picture about what to do next.

c. Mode

Brookhart (2008) states that “feedback can be delivered in many modalities” (p. 15), in this sense, teachers should deliver their feedback in the most appropriate way; some kinds of tasks lend themselves better to written feedback; some, to oral feedback; and some, to demonstrations.

d. Audience

Brookhart (2008) claims that “like all communications, feedback works best when it has a strong and appropriate sense of the audience” (p. 17), this means that teachers need to know whom they are talking to; however, if the feedback provided is for a specific individual work, it works better to be addressed to the individual student in order for him or her to understand. Additionally to the feedback provision, this practice communicates to the students a sense of teachers’ caring about his or her progress.

6.2. Principles of Making Teachers’ Feedback Effective

Providing effective feedback (EF) is one of the many challenges that any teacher faces. In FL classrooms, teachers want to give the feedback that challenge, encourage, and motivate students to be better writers, but they do not always know how to give the EF to their students.

Feedback is the most effective influences on students’ progress as it promotes the relation between the teacher practice and students’ learning needs (Hattie, 2009).

So, providing EF to students influences the success of the learning process and meets the students' learning needs; however, teachers need to follow some principles to make their feedback effective and useful as follows:

a. It should be relevant to goals

Good feedback should always have a goal for the improvement (Krenk, 2012).

b. It should be understandable

Hattie and Timperley (2007) state that “teachers can also assist by clarifying goals, enhancing commitment or increased effort to reaching them through feedback” (p. 87), thus, TF should be understandable; where teachers should avoid ambiguous words or terms that the students may not understand in order to make their feedback effective. As the researchers claim:

If feedback is directed to the right level, it can assist students to comprehend, engage or develop effective strategies to process information intended to be learnt. To be efficient, feedback needs to be clear, purposeful, meaningful and compatible with students' prior knowledge, and to provide logical connections. (p. 104)

c. It should be specific

Teachers also need to be specific in their feedback because specific goals are effective than nonspecific ones as they affect on students' attention (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 87); this also may affect on the acceptance of feedback.

d. Using encouragement and constructive criticism for the sake of motivation

Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) believe that effective teacher feedback should contain both encouragement and constructive criticism (p. 190). Thus, teachers have to use constructive criticism because it considers as the foundation of motivation for learning. Teachers should focus just on the helpful side of providing feedback as Ferris (2003) claims that:

. . .teachers need to remember that written commentary, rather than being a tedious burden, is a critical instructional opportunity for both teacher and student. Reading a student paper and giving feedback that meets the student's needs allows the instructor to make a personal investment in each student's progress and to provide or reinforce instruction given in class. Bearing this in mind, the instructor needs to see the process of reading the paper, identifying and selecting key feedback points, and constructing comments in ways that communicate clearly and helpfully to the student as a dynamic, creative, cognitively demanding process. (p. 123)

e. Giving positive feedback

Before giving any feedback to students, teachers need to know that students should have a positive feeling about that feedback; as Brookhart (2008) directly claims "sarcasm has no place in feedback" (p. 36). Many teachers do not respect their student's feelings since they use comments in way of irony; this may make the students feel belittled, and teachers have to avoid such negative feedback towards their students because it affects negatively on students achievement and acceptance of TF.

To conclude, feedback is the most useful thing that a writing instructor can do for his/her students; thus teachers have to turn their attention to the previous discussed strategies for the aim of providing EF (Ferris, 2007).

7. EFL Students' and Teachers' Perceptions on Teachers' Feedback in Writing

While there are many studies like (Truscott & Hsu, 2008) that focus on the effectiveness of feedback and the types of feedback, there are other studies (Cohen, 1987; Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Ferris, 1995) that investigate both students and teachers' perceptions toward feedback and its types. Indeed, the term "perception"

explores the way teachers and students regard, understand, and interpret the TF; it is requisite to examine the students' perceptions to know whether they effectively follow the TF, and examining teachers' perception is also important because teachers need to feel comfortable while providing their feedback; in which they are the main concern of this dissertation.

7.1. Students' Perceptions on Teachers' Feedback in Writing

Many researchers, such as (Leki, 1991; Saito, 1994; Yang, Badger& Yu, 2006; Zhang, 1995), show that students treasure the TF and paid much importance to it than other types. The most investigations on students' preferences show that students are positive about receiving feedback on language issues; however, they want their teacher to comment on content, ideas of their writing, rather than on grammatical errors (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; Leki, 1991; Zamel, 1985). Yet, other studies make by Lee (2005) and Ashwell (2000) show that students want comments on their grammatical errors. However, Diab (2006) makes a study where he explores the EFL students' perceptions regarding feedback, he finds that most of the students on this study are concern on the accuracy of their writing and they think that the features of their writing are equally important. On this regard, Komura (1999) and Lee (2005) believe that because L2 students pay much importance on their accuracy, they are desirous to be all their errors corrected by the teacher. Moreover, some students prefer their errors to be corrected on the first draft while others prefer to correct their errors on the final draft (Diab, 2006); however, Ferris (1995) surveys 155 students and finds that students pay more attention to feedback given during the writing and the revising process rather than feedback given on a final draft. In addition, Chandler (2003) finds that students prefer their teachers to underline their errors in order to facilitate their progress in writing.

In particular, studies by Radecki and Swales (1998) show that students want direct (i.e. explicit) correction from their teachers rather than indirect one because they can incorporate easily. On this area, Lee (2008) looks at students' perceptions from different perspectives by collecting data in different ways such as students' questionnaire, teachers' interview and feedback analysis; he finds that students generally prefer more explicit feedback on their papers. Whereas, other studies made by Arndt (1993) and Hyland (2001) suggest that students prefer indirect to direct correction, where they give clues and more active role to play in the feedback process; since this study involves students with different ages, backgrounds, motivation and proficiency level, besides taking place in different classroom contexts, and contextual factors might influence the students' preferences.

Moreover, Leki's (2006) and Riazi's(1997) studies on L2 graduate students show that students see TF as a useful means to help them develop disciplinary literacy; the learners' differences may affect students' expectations and reactions to TF. Sakali (2007) makes a study with 20 pre-intermediate students, in which he finds that the students mostly change their preferences over time because of their progress in writing. In other study, Montgomery and Baker (2007) show that students generally prefer the type of feedback which is understandable and therefore can be used easily.

Indeed, the way students respond to TF may influence by the teacher who is the responsible for delivering the feedback; where students are welcome to receive both praise and constructive criticism (Gee, 1972; Ferris, 1995; Hyland, 1998) from the teacher by taking into account how feedback is given. In addition, Hyland and Hyland (2006b) suggest that students are more likely to find TF useful when it engages the student's writer, and when it is contextualized which gives a consideration to the individual student needs; thus students perceive the feedback as an effective issue when

the teacher uses to build a relationship with the students that target both their personality and needs. When investigating TF without reference to students' characteristic and classroom context, it is dangerous to generalize the result from one group of learners to another one with different characteristics because students are not the same. Hyland and Hyland (2006b) state that students are "historically and sociologically situated active agents who respond to what they see as valuable and useful and to people they regard as engaging and credible" (p. 220); thus, it is necessary to go beyond the feedback to know the factors that affect students' perceptions of the TF.

7.2 Teachers' Perceptions on Feedback Provision in Writing

Providing feedback to the learners' errors is considered as a very sensitive process as Allwright and Bailey (1991) point out:

Although it may seem that at a single moment a teacher corrects one error of one particular learner, the reality is slightly different. In the situations of group learning, as is generally the case in basic and secondary schools, the fact is that the output of one learner may serve as input of the other learners. When a learner uses a deviant form of the target language, the teacher's decision whether to correct will affect more people at the same time. (as cited in Boudraa, 2016, p. 26)

In the area of FL writing, studies on TF have focused on what the teacher think of his feedback in terms of its focus, its form, usefulness, and students' preferences. In the 1980s, most TF remained at the sentence level and was likely to be form-focused as it failed to deal with student essays as a whole (Zamel, 1987), but in the 1990s, when the process approach was widely adopted in the American context, the focus of TF was broadened to include composition issues such as idea development, organization, content, and grammar (Caulk, 1994; Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Ferris, 1997; Ferris, Pezone, Tade, & Tinti, 1997; Saito, 1994).

The focus of feedback is different from teacher to teacher, some of them prefer to give their feedback on content, others prefer providing feedback on the organization of ideas, and other teachers prefer to focus on grammatical errors. Scholars, such as Reid (1998), Truscott (1996), Frantzen (1995), claim that giving feedback on content should be prior to form; where other researchers argue that feedback on students' writing tasks should include comments on form (e.g., Zamel, 1985; White & Arndt, 1991; Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, 2002; F. Hyland & K. Hyland, 2006a). Through a longitudinal study of an experienced ESL writing instructor, Ferris et al. (1997) discover that only 15% of the feedback given by this instructor focused on grammar and mechanics, while the other 85% focused on students' ideas and rhetorical development. However, Conrad and Goldstein (1999) find that their three ESL students- Trinh, Marigrace, and Zohre - received many kinds of TF on a variety of areas ranging from coherence/cohesion, lexical choice, and paraphrasing to content development through examples, facts, or explanations.

In addition to examining the focus of feedback, scholars have also examined the forms feedback has take; that is, certain forms of TF, such as information questions and imperatives rather than questions challenging students' thinking and ideas, have been found to lead to a higher rate of incorporation into student revision (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Ferris, 1997; Ferris, et al, 1997). In addition to the various forms of TF, the research of Conrad and Goldstein (1999) has examined the different types of problems that TF highlights, and how these different types of feedback affect student revision. It has been shown that identifying issues related to use of examples, amount of detail, lack of coherence, and need for paraphrasing lead to more successful revision than issues involving a need for explanation, explicitness, or analysis.

Most teachers consider that their written feedback is beneficial since it contributes to the development of their students' writing. Providing students with written comments like marginal comments raises the learners' awareness to their errors; that is making them more attentive in locating the source of the problem to overcome the errors they made, and to succeed in producing the correct language form (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). Marginal comments are also considered to be more motivating since they show the reader actively engage with the writer's text (Goldstein, 2004). Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) suggest that end comments, kind of teacher's comments, are useful and a way of encouraging revision since they summarize major problems. Also, learner's error should be corrected in order to fill the learners' gaps caused by the lack of knowledge of the FL (Harmer, 1998).

Lastly, paying attention to students' views and preferences about the feedback provided plays a crucial role for helping learners to improve their learning in general. However, students' preferences for TF vary greatly according to writing contexts; some studies suggest that students prefer comments on form (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996), and other studies claim that students want teachers to comment on form as well as on content (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Leki, 1991; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996).

Several studies have been studied the students' preferences about feedback. The study of Cohen (1991) carries out about the students' preferences of TF on compositions as well as teachers perspectives; the study composes of 02 teachers and 13 EFL students and 19 Portuguese L1 students from two universities, where teachers did verbal report and finished a questionnaire. All students completed the questionnaire, and among them, 03 EFL and 03 Portuguese L1 students provided verbal report. After commenting on some students' texts, in the EFL case study, the teachers reported that students focused on all categories of feedback, and felt that they benefited more from

the comments on organization; and nearly half of the students preferred more emphasis on content and vocabulary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter presents the importance of feedback not only in teaching and improving writing skills in SL contexts, but also in FL classrooms. As mentioned above, teachers are also encouraged to be mindful of their own practices when offering feedback to students, as the strategies they use in many cases conceptualize the interpretation of feedback from students. However, the value of feedback on the learners' writing is due to the evolving attitudes towards errors and feedback from behavioral theory, where the errors of learners must be pounced on before they become unpleasant behaviors to a more sensitive reaction to errors in the sense of communicative teaching. Teachers should also be aware of the problems and difficulties they may experience when offering feedback.

Chapter Three

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Chapter Three

Field Investigation on EFL Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions on Teachers' Feedback in Writing

Introduction

The previous two chapters of the present research were devoted to a review of literature about feedback in writing; with more focus on the EFL learners' and teachers' perceptions on TF in writing. This chapter is aimed first to gain a deeper understanding of the students' perceptions on the feedback that they receive from their teachers, as well as its influence on their writing. In addition to highlight the problems they face during their writings. Second, this chapter aims to discover teachers' perceptions on feedback provision to students' writing, and to know the students' preferences towards their feedback as well. However, in order to investigate these results, and check the research hypotheses; teachers' questionnaire is used to confirm their perceptions towards their feedback. Besides, learners' questionnaire also used to investigate their perceptions about the way teachers provide them with feedback, their reactions and attitudes, and also their preferences among the feedback provided.

This chapter starts with an account for means of data collection. Besides, it presents the population and the sample before ending up with reporting the results obtained.

1. Means of Data Collection

In order to carry out this study, the learners' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire are used. According to Bell (2005), a questionnaire is a group of written questions used for collecting data; where the respondents are supposed to provide

written answers. The collected data in the questionnaire can be about the participants' thoughts, views, expectations, and desires about their TF in writing. For teachers' questionnaire, both open-ended and close-ended questions are used to check the teachers' reactions to their students' writing, their feelings, and perceptions on feedback provision. Concerning learners' questionnaire, it is also used both open-ended and close-ended questions because it is needed to know the learners' perceptions through their answers and their opinions about their TF.

2. The Population and Sample

The target population is third year university English students. The sample of the students is 108 English students who belonged to four groups of English classes at Mila University, and it composes of both males and females. The reason behind choosing third year classes is the fact that they are advanced students, as they can deal with the language, the terms used (like the term feedback) and they can express their opinions, perceptions, as well as their preferences clearly. This may help us in collecting data about their perceptions on their TF. For the teacher's sample, it was taken thirteen (13) English WE teachers in the department of English at the same university.

3. The Students' Questionnaire

3.1. The Description of Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire is designed in the fact of combining it with the literature reviewed in the first two chapters of the present research. It consists of twenty questions; it is given to one hundred and eight (108) third year LMD students at AbdElhafid Boussouf University of Mila. It is administrated on 04 March 2020; it is given to students of four groups and all of them give back it in the same session.

Students' questionnaire includes four sections: Background information, learners' writing skill, teachers' feedback to students' writing, and learners' perceptions to teachers' feedback. The chosen sample includes both males and females.

Section One: Background Information (Q1 to 3)

The first three questions in the first section are designed to collect general information about the participants through knowing their interest in the EL (Q1), if English was their first choice (Q2), and knowing their level in English (Q3).

Section Two: Learners' Writing Skill (Q4 to 7)

The questions of this section are aimed to obtain information about the informants' background in writing. Their interest in the writing skill and other skills (Q4); their ability of writing (Q5); whether they like writing individually, in pairs, in small groups, or in large groups (Q6); and the problems they face in their writing (Q7).

Section Three: Teachers' Feedback to Students' Writing (Q8 to 14)

In this section, there are seven questions. Those questions are aimed to examine whether the teacher of WE corrects the errors, and if yes whether the correction focus on all the errors, most of the errors, some of them, or comment on just the ideas (Q8 & Q9); how teachers of WE correct the errors and to which component of writing they give much importance (Q10 & Q12); investigating the importance of feedback in improving the students' writing (Q11); and whether students benefit from TF with justification (Q13 & Q14).

Section Four: Learners' Perceptions to Teachers' Feedback (Q15 to 18)

This section is intended to assess the learners' perceptions to TF. Their opinions about it whether it is simple, useful, discouraging, or useless (Q15); the students'

reactions: whether they read the mistakes, read just the grade, or correct them (Q16); their preferences for the form of feedback they would like their teachers to put: just the grade, the grade with remark, or providing correction to the errors, and the ways their teachers indicate their errors (Q17&Q18); their preferences for the focus of feedback they like their teachers to focus on (Q19); and finally a space provided for students to write their perceptions towards the comments they received from their teachers (Q20).

3.2. The Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Question 01: Are you interested in English?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Student	Percentage (%)
a	105	97 %
b	03	03 %
Total	108	100 %

Table 01: Learners' Interest in the English Language

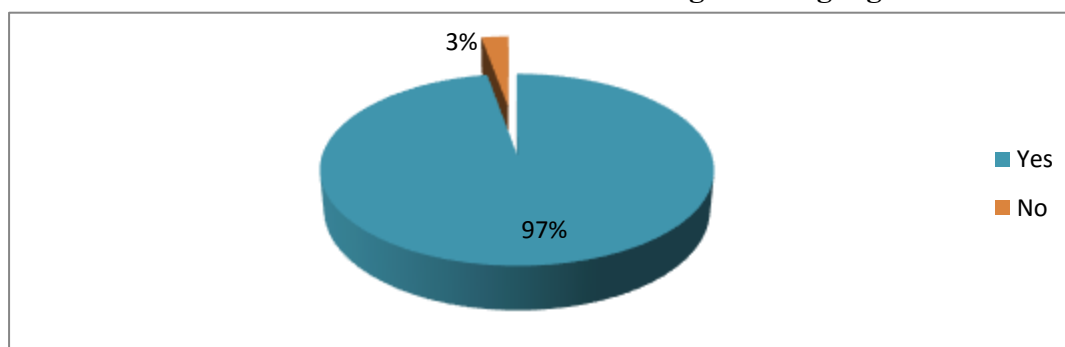


Figure 01: Learners' Interest in the English Language

As it is apparent from the table 01, most of students responded positively to this question. Most of students (97%) were interested in the EL. However, those students may have the passion to enhance their language, so they may accept their TF and consider it useful for the improving of their level. Whereas, the other students (03%)

showed that they were not interested in the EL, so they may consider it as a discouraging way for their progress; as well as may be because they were obliged to study the EL.

Question 02: Was English your first choice?

a- Yes b- No

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	67	62,04%
b	41	37,96%
Total	108	100%

Table02: Learners' Specialty Choice

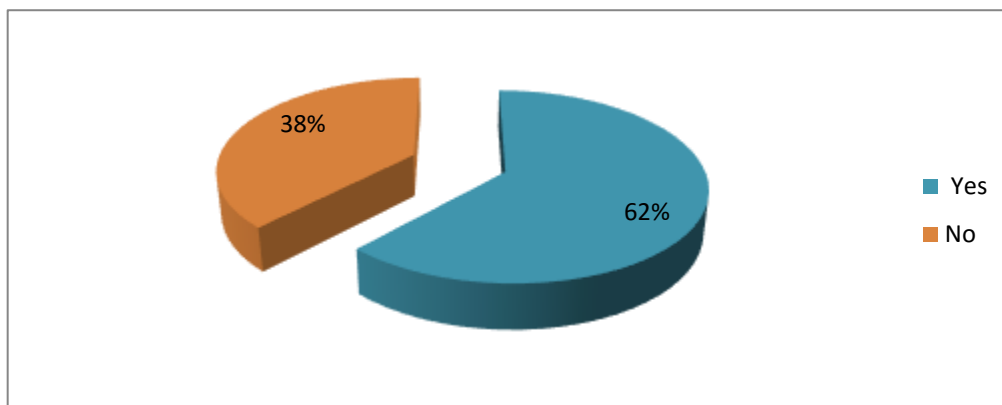


Figure 02: Learners' Specialty Choice

As it seems, the majority of students (62%) showed that English was their first choice, this means that they were anxious, motivated, and desired to learn the EL; also may be they like it that is why it was their first choice. Whereas, the remaining ones (38%) mentioned that English was not their first choice; this may be due to many reasons for example their marks do not allow them to study English.

Question 03: How do you consider your level in English?

a- Very good c- Average
 b- Good d- Poor

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	08	07,41%
b	55	50,93%
c	44	40,74%
d	01	0,92%
Total	108	100%

Table 03: Learners' Level in English

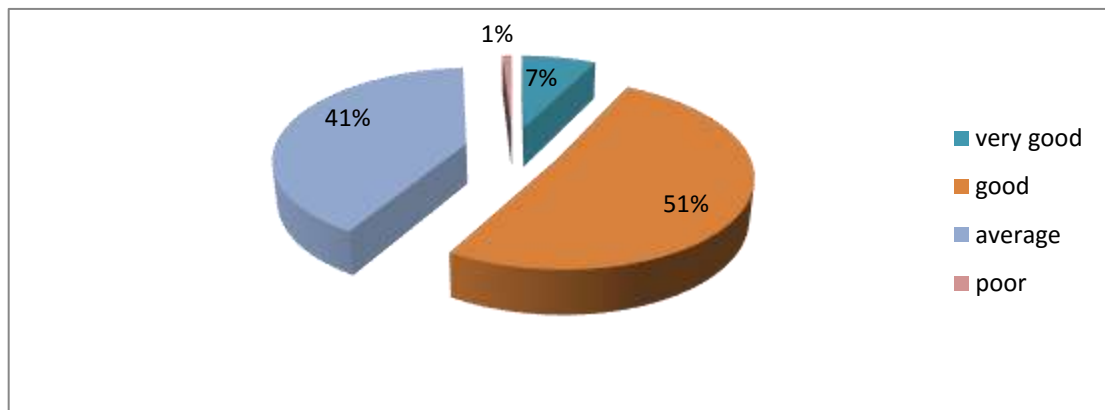


Figure 03: Learners' Level in English

As shows in the table 03, most of students (50, 93%) considered their level in English as “Good”, in which may be they are satisfied with their level in English. Whereas, many of them (40, 74%) declared that their level is “Average”, and only few of them (7, 41%) showed that their level as “Very good”, this could imply that they are excellent students in English. However, one student (0, 92%) considered his/her level as “Poor”.

Section Two: Learners' Writing Skill

Question 01: Which skill would you like to master most?

- a- Speaking c- Reading
b- Listening d- Writing

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	66	61,11%
b	14	12,96%
c	8	7,41%
d	20	18,52%
Total	108	100%

Table 04: Students' Preferred Skills

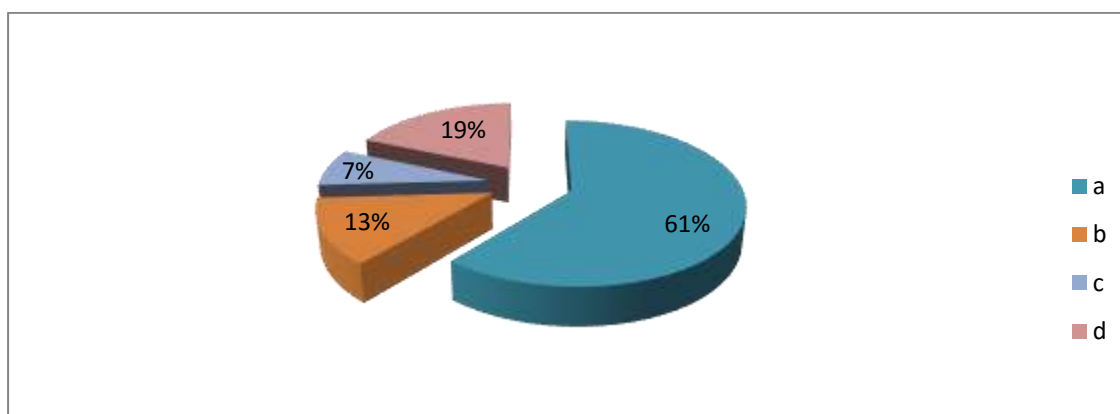


Figure 04: Students' Preferred Skills

As table 04 shows, the majority of students (61%) were interested in mastering mostly the speaking skill as being their essential aim in learning the EL; or their beliefs that in order to master a language they need to speak it, and understand it when it is spoken. Whereas, only (19%) of students chose the writing skill in the first place, this may be explained by student' negative attitudes to writing due to their poor experiences. Lastly, 13% of students classified the auditory skill (Listening), besides 7% of the students chose reading skill; these two skills are the last skills that students preferred to master most as it explains in the table 04.

Question 02: Your ability to write is:

- a- Good b- Average c- low

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	29	26,85%
b	75	69,45%
c	04	03,70%
Total	108	100%

Table 05: Students' Writing Abilities

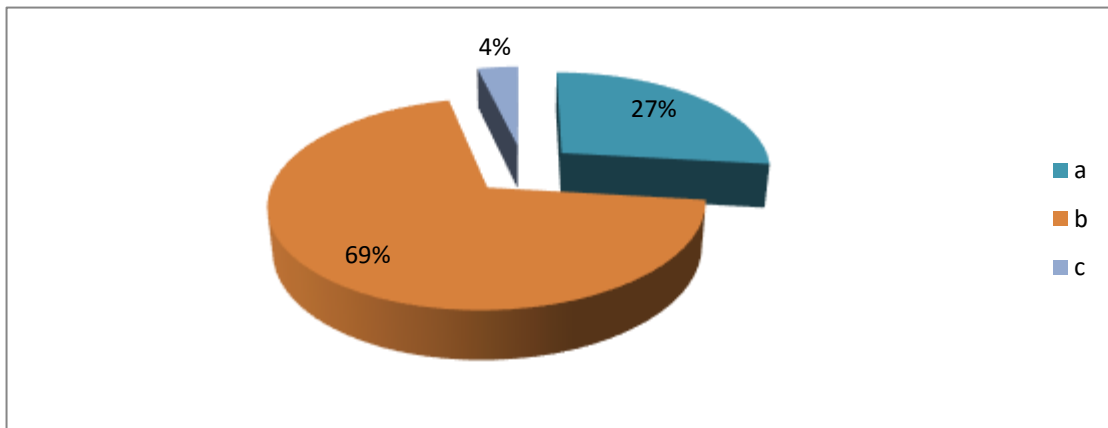


Figure 05: Students' Writing Abilities

As shows in the table 05, a great majority of students (69%) rated their level as average in writing, which means that they are not satisfied with their level of written output. However, 27% of students saw their level in writing 'good'; this could be due to their positive experiences in writing. However, the last category with 4% evaluated their level as low, may be because they are not interested in writing or the EL itself.

Question 03: In class, do you like writing

- a- Individually c- In small groups
b- In pairs d- In large group

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	58	53,70%
b	32	29,63%
c	13	12,04%
d	5	4,63%
Total	108	100%

Table 06: Writing Techniques

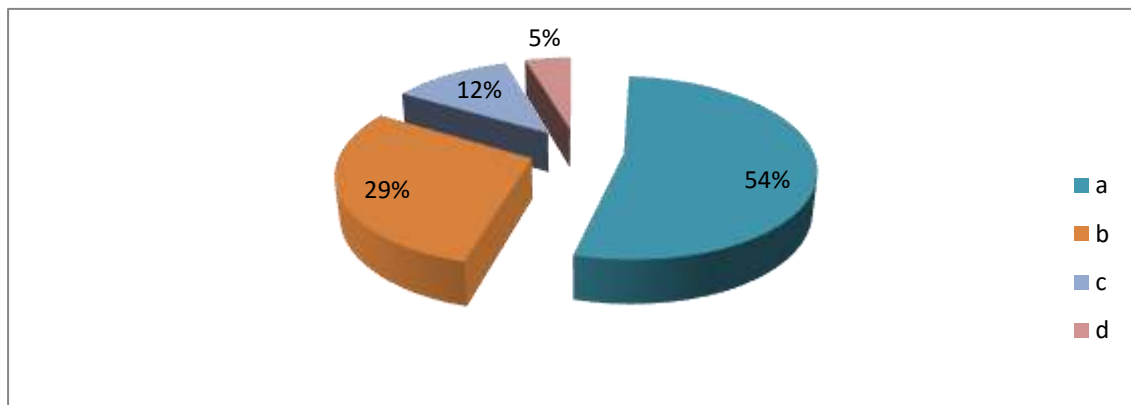


Figure 06: Writing Techniques

Table 06 shows that students typically tended to work either individually (54%), or in pairs (29%). This is a strong message to teachers to know that students feel comfort, efficient and secure by working individually or in pairs, where their voices are heard and opinions are respected. However, There were students who preferred to work within groups whether large (4%), or small (13%). All this depend on students' beliefs and opinions.

Question 04: Which aspect constitutes most a problem for you in writing?

- a- Grammar
- b- Vocabulary
- c- Content
- d- Organization and mechanics
- e- Mother tongue interference

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	20	18,52%
b	46	42,60%
c	21	19,44%
d	15	13,89%
e	06	05,55%
Total	108	100%

Table 07: The Most Problematic Issues in Writing

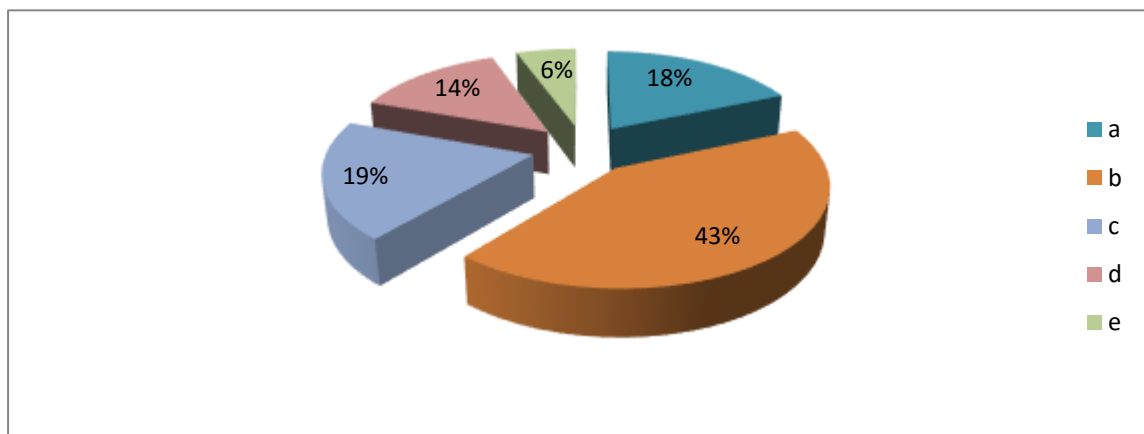


Figure 07: The Most Problematic Issues in Writing

The results above show that students categorized their writing difficulties as follow: vocabulary (43%), content (19%), grammar (18%), organization and mechanics with (14%), and finally 6% of students showed that their problematic issue is the interfering of their mother tongue. As a result, these findings indicate that students have more issues with the official language characteristics.

Section Three: Teachers' Feedback to Students' Writing

Question 01: Does your teacher of WE correct your errors?

- a- Yes b- No

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	90	83,33%
b	18	16,67%
Total	108	100%

Table 08: Students' Perceptions of Whether Teacher of Written Expression Corrects their Errors

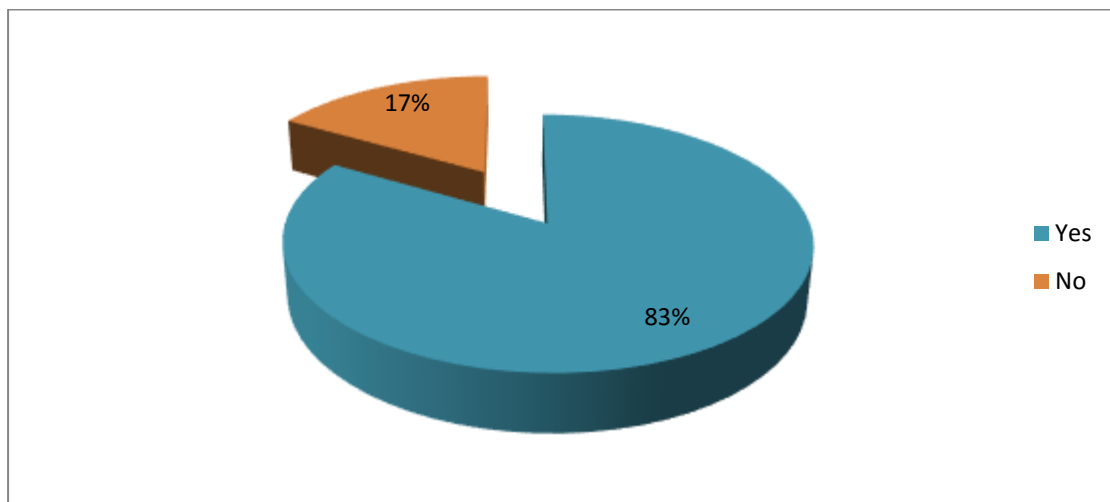


Figure 08: Students' Perceptions of Whether Teacher of Written Expression Corrects their Errors

The table above shows that the majority of students (83%) stated that their teacher of WE corrected their errors, whereas few of them (17%) declared that they did not receive feedback from their teacher of W E.

Question 02: If yes, what does she/he correct?

- a- All the errors
- b- Most of the errors
- c- Some errors
- d- Comment only on ideas you express

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	16	14,81%
b	16	14,81%
c	41	37,97%
d	17	15,74%
No answer	18	16,67%
Total	108	100%

Table 09: Number of Errors the Teacher of Written Expression Corrects

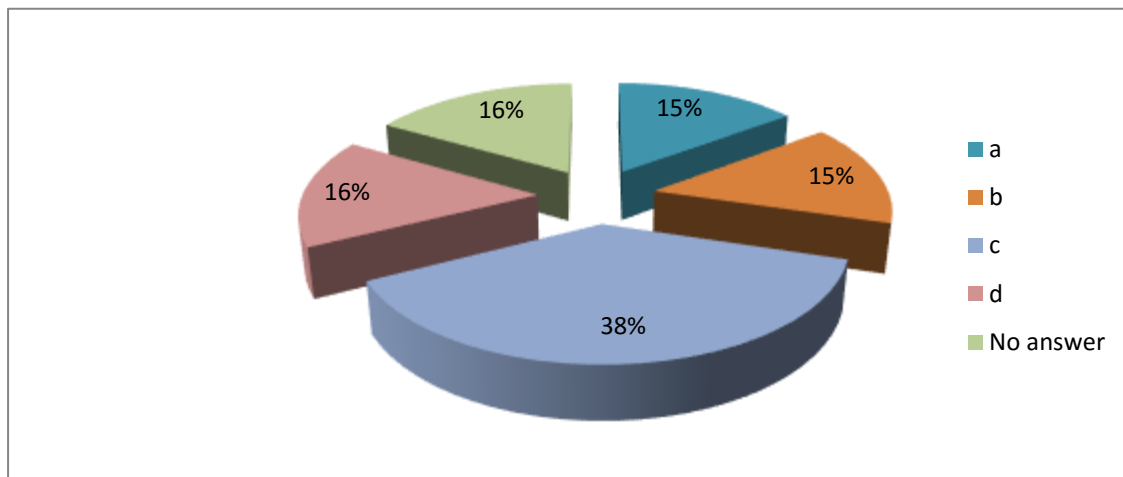


Figure09: Number of Errors the Teacher of Written Expression Corrects

It seems, as the table shows, that 37, 97% of students stated that their teacher of W E treated some of the errors in their written productions, however, 15, 74% from the sample mentioned that their teachers paid attention to the ideas they express. In addition, 14, 81% of the students claimed that their teachers treated all the errors, and other teachers corrected most of their errors (14, 81%). As this question is a follow-up to the previous one, 16, 67% of the students did not answer this question.

Question 03: How does your teacher of WE correct your errors?

a-Rewrites the sentence, the phrase or the word correctly

b- Only show where the error is

c- Other: please, specify.....

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	25	23,15%
b	69	63,89%
c	07	06,48%
No answer	07	06,48%
Total	108	100%

Table 10: Techniques Used by Teacher of Written Expression for Correcting the Students' Errors

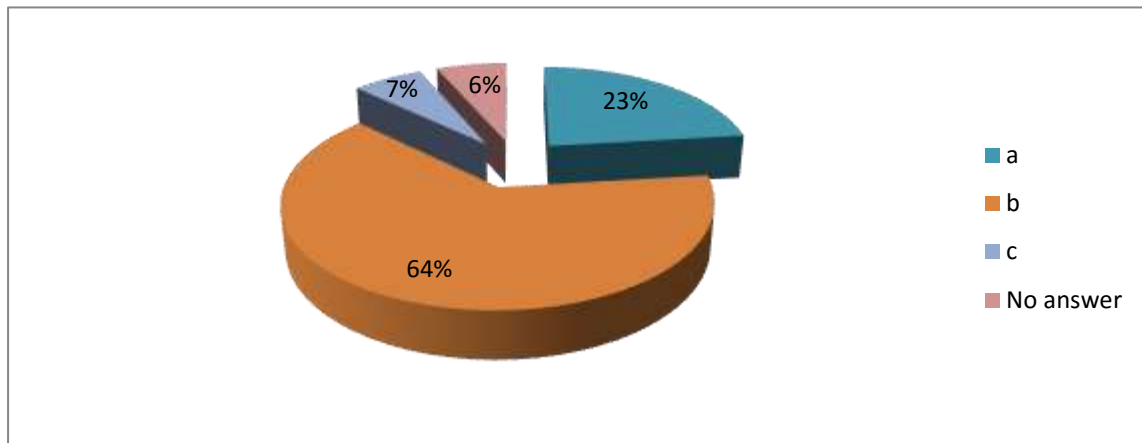


Figure 10: Techniques Used by Teacher of Written Expression for Correcting the Students' Errors

According to the table above, the results clearly show that teachers of WE used various techniques to draw the learners' attention to their mistakes in writing. However, 63, 89% of students stated that the most commonly used technique is to show only the errors on their writing, whereas 23, 15% from the sample claimed that teachers provide them with the correct version of their errors. Only few of them (6, 48%) gave other suggestions: other teachers use the technique of indicating the location of error and correcting it at the same time. 06, 48% of the learners did not answer this question.

Question 04: How is feedback important for the improving of your writing?

- a- Very important
- b- Important
- c- Not important

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	60	55,55%
b	45	41,67%
c	03	02,78%
Total	108	100%

Table 11: The Importance of Feedback

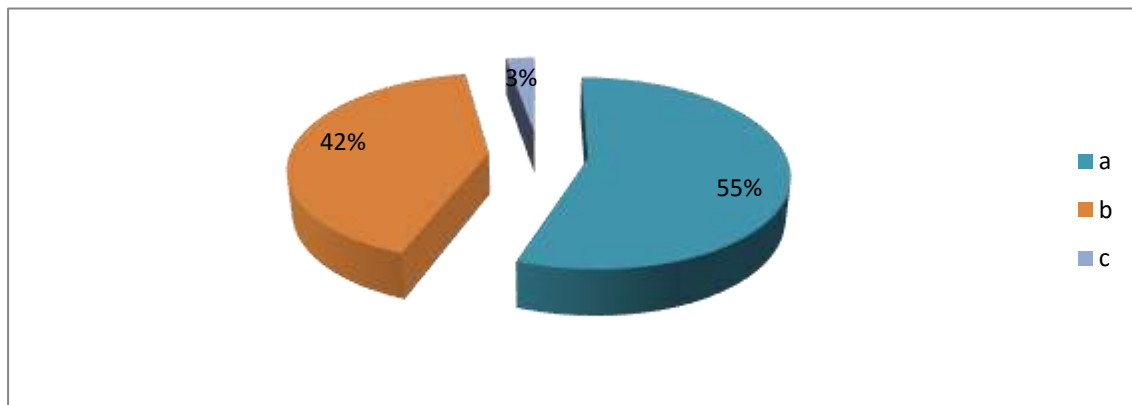


Figure 11: The Importance of Feedback

The present table shows that 55, 55% of learners indicated that TF is very important, and 41, 67% of them indicated that feedback is important; this is because they may benefit from it and it may increase their proficiency level. However, 02, 78% of learners claimed that TF is not important for them. Thus, it may decrease their motivation and their level as well.

Question 05: What is your TF usually about? (You may opt for more than one answer).

- a- Grammar
- b- Vocabulary
- c- Content
- d- Organization and mechanics

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
A	29	26,85%
B	08	07,41%
C	08	07,41%
D	13	12,04%
Ab	11	10,19%
Ac	12	11,11%
Ad	08	07,41%
Bc	07	06,48%
Bd	02	01,85%
Cd	02	01,85%
Abc	05	04,63%
Acd	02	01,85%
Abcd	01	0,92%
Total	108	100%

Table 12: Teacher's Focus in Correcting Student's Writings

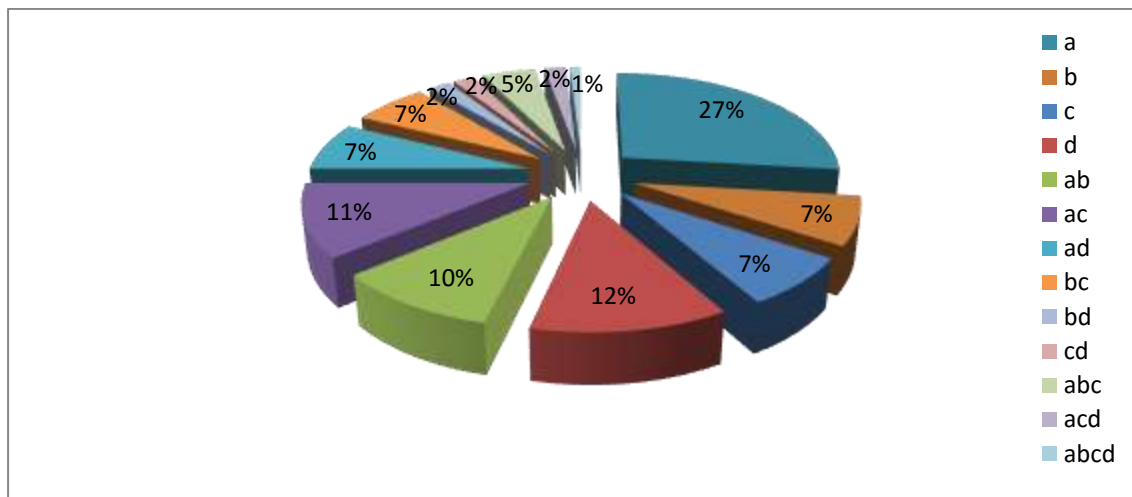


Figure 12: Teacher's Focus in Correcting Student's Writings

The analysis of the present results shows that grammar reached the highest scores (26, 85%), next organization and mechanics (12, 04%), followed by grammar

and content (11, 11%), then grammar and vocabulary (10, 19%). Whereas, few students (07, 41%) claimed that their TF is on content. This implies that teachers focus more on form rather than meaning; this may be due to the fact that teachers will often get the point that learners want to express, so meaning is secured; they prefer to concentrate more on form to eliminate their grammatical errors.

Question 06: Do you benefit from your TF?

a- Yes b- No

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	87	80,56%
b	21	19,44 %
Total	108	100%

Table 13: Students’ Perceptions about the Usefulness of Teacher’s Feedback

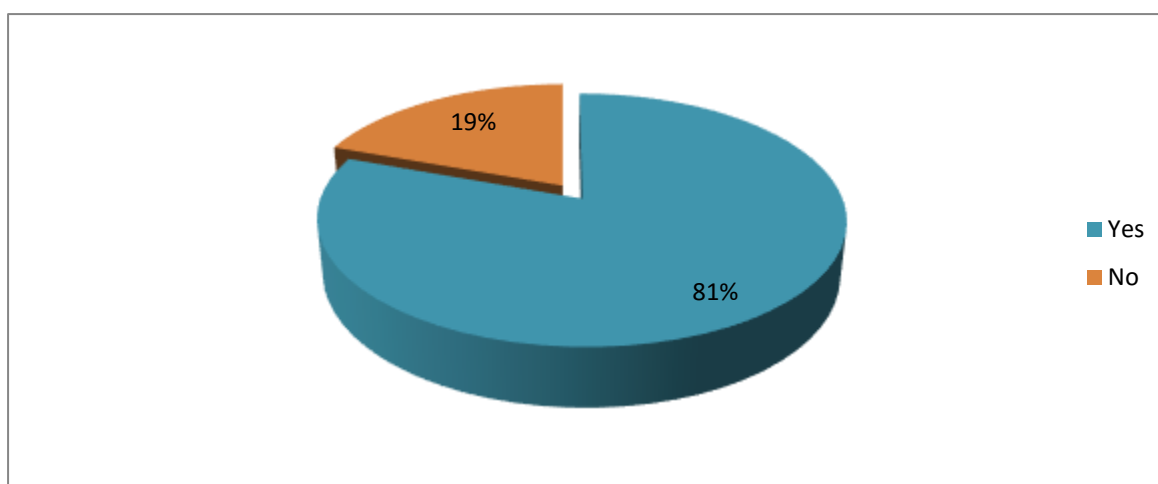


Figure13: Students’ Perceptions about the Usefulness of Teacher’s Feedback

As the results shows, the majority of learners (80, 56%) claimed that they benefited from their TF since it may results in their writing progression. Whereas, 19,44% of them answered by “No”, this may be because of their teacher’s way of

providing feedback like giving feedback in a way of criticism, sarcasm, or intimidation. This may discourage learners and results in the lack of motivation.

Question 07: If yes, mention what you benefit from?

As this question is a follow-up to the previous one (Q 13), 19% of students did not answer this question. The students' answers to this open-ended question vary from one student to another since each student expressed what he or she benefited from his/her TF. However, the majority of students claimed that it provides a priceless chance to make them learn from their mistakes, correct them, and avoid falling into the same errors or misconceptions in the future. Whereas, other students believed that TF is beneficial since it gave them the opportunity to discover new ideas and information, new words, new vocabulary as well. In addition, other students considered their TF as a motivator, guide, and helper for improving their writing skill and mastering the EL. Besides, they stated that it is beneficial as it makes them focus more on how they organize their ideas to be better writers.

Section Four: Learners' Perceptions to Teachers' Feedback

Question 01: What is your opinion about your TF?

- a- It is simple and clear b- It is useful
 c- It is discouraging d- It is useless

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	40	37,04%
b	58	53,70%
c	05	04,63%
d	05	04,63%
Total	108	100%

Table 14: Students' Opinions of Teachers' Feedback

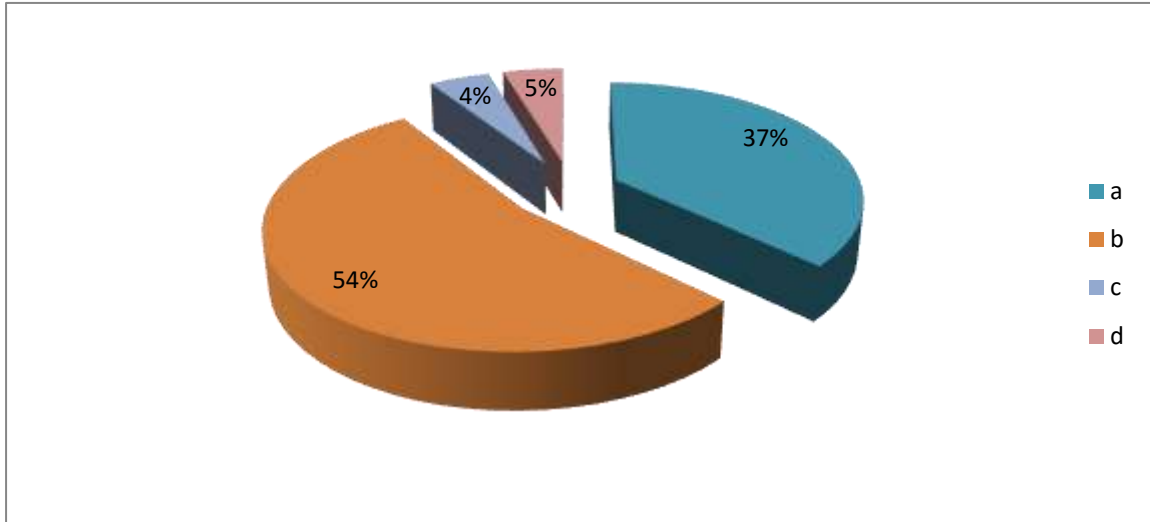


Figure 14: Students' Opinions of Teachers' Feedback

As the table 14 indicates that the majority of students viewed TF as useful (54%), or simple and clear (37%); this may be because they understand and benefit from it a lot. Whereas, 5% and 4% of students saw it as useless and discouraging, may be because the way the teacher gives his feedback is not good, and maybe he\she gives his\her comments as a criticism to the students in which it affects their attitudes negatively.

Question 02: What do you do when you get your TF?

- a- Only read the grade and throw the paper
- b- I read the comments and ask for clarification
- c- I correct the simple and clear mistakes

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
A	20	18,52%
B	51	47,22%
C	37	34,26%
Total	108	100%

Table 15: Students' Reactions to their Teachers' Feedback

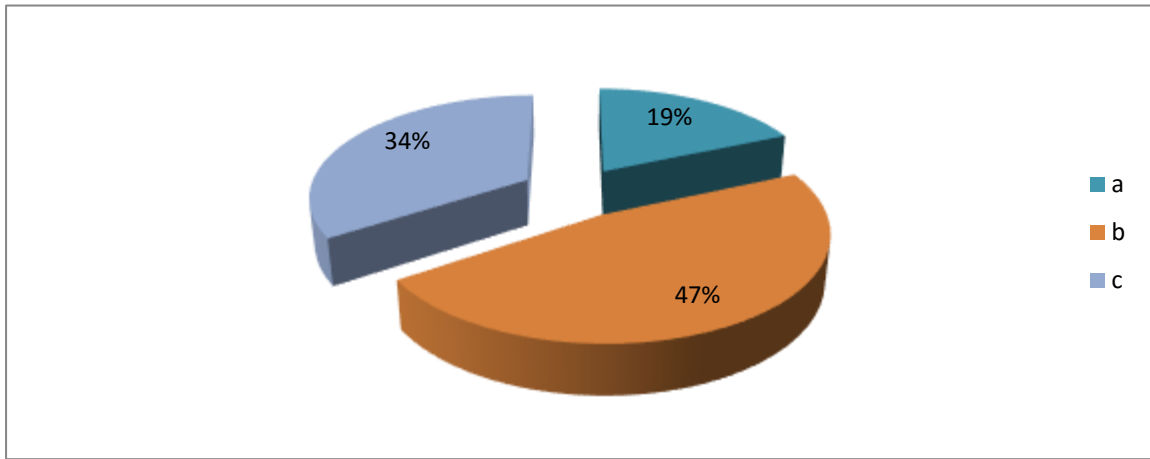


Figure 15: Students' Reactions to their Teachers' Feedback

The results of the present question show that 47% of students used to read the comments and asked the teachers for clarification when they received the TF; this may be because they want the teachers to convince them about their mistakes and explain them in order to benefit more. However, 34% of students chose correcting their simple and clear mistakes as first choice. Lastly, 19% of students chose to read the grade only and then throw the paper; this may be because they do not accept criticisms.

Question 03: How you like your teacher to correct your composition?

a-By putting the grade only

b- By putting remark and grade

c- By providing you with correction to your errors

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
A	4	03,70%
B	40	37,04%
C	64	59,26%
Total	108	100%

Table 16: Students' Preferred Type of Written Feedback

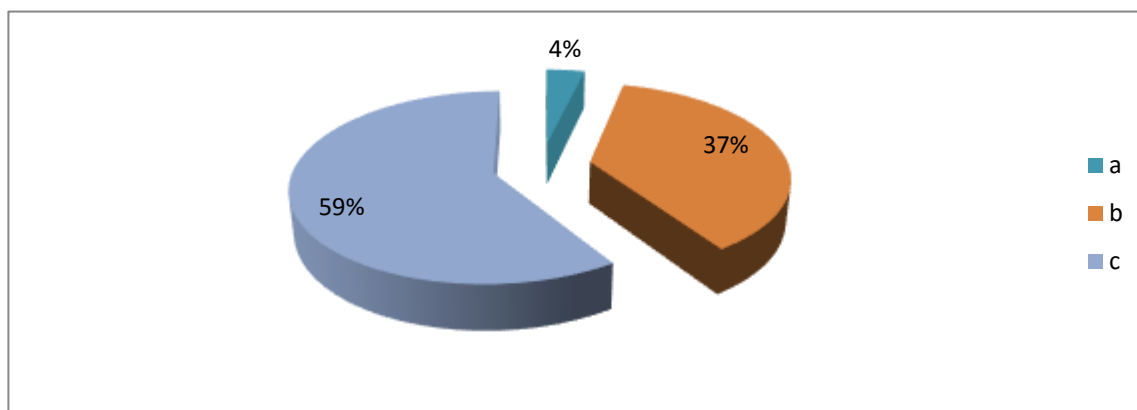


Figure 16: Students' Preferred Type of Written Feedback

According to the table above, the most of students (59%) preferred the teacher who provided their errors with corrections in order to benefit, and avoid falling in the same mistakes. However, 37% of them wanted correction of their composition by putting grade and remark only with no correction of their errors; may be because they feel disappointing when they see a lot of errors. In addition, the last and small category with 4% preferred teacher to put the grade only without any correction of errors or remark; this may be due to bad experiences with teachers' way of correction.

Question 04: How would you like your teacher to suggest error correction in your composition?

a- Underlying errors

b- Underlying errors and putting its correction

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
A	14	12,96%
B	94	87,04%
Total	108	100%

Table 17: Students' Preferred Teachers' Suggestions for Error Corrections

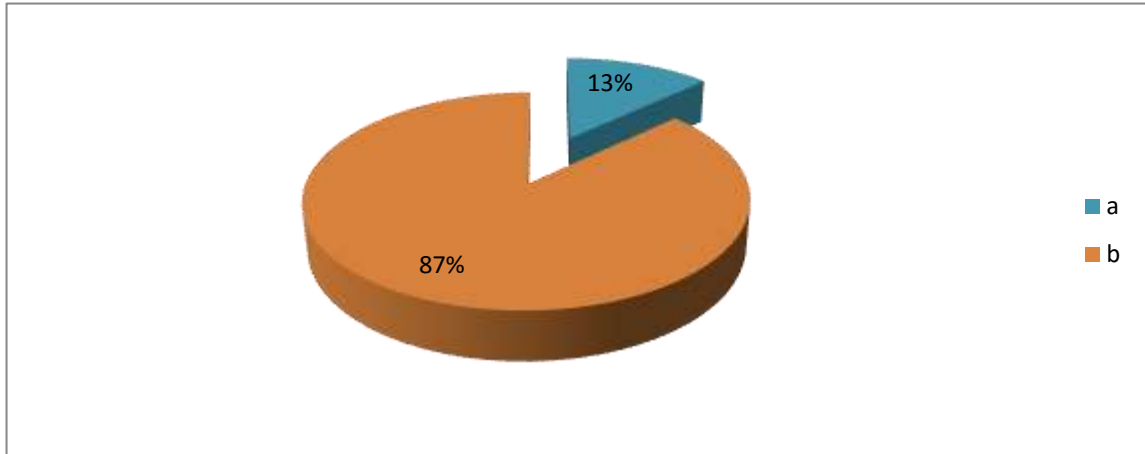


Figure 17: Students' Preferred Teachers' Suggestions for Error Corrections

Table 17 shows that the majority of students (87%) liked their errors to be underlined and corrected in order to benefit and improve their levels. However, 13% of students chose underlining their errors only with no correction; may be because they want to correct it by themselves in order to stick in their minds and never repeat it again.

Question 05: Which of the following statements you would agree on?(you may choose more than one statement).

- a- Teachers' written feedback should focus on content
- b- Teachers' written feedback should focus on grammar and vocabulary
- c- Teachers' written feedback should focus on organization and mechanics
- d- Teachers' written feedback should focus on language (including grammar and vocabulary) and content
- e- Teachers' written feedback should focus on all aspects of the writing skill

Options	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
a	1	0,93%
b	6	05,56%
c	0	0%
d	13	12,04%
e	9	08,33%
a b c d e	2	01,85%
b c e	3	02,78%
a d e	3	02,78%
c d	4	03,70%
b d c	2	01,85%
a c d e	2	01,85%
a b e	4	03,70%
b e	16	14,81%
a c e	2	01,85%
b c	6	05,55%
a c	3	02,78%
c d e	3	02,78%
d b	9	08,33%
a b	5	04,63%
b c d e	1	0,93%
b d e	8	07,41%
d e	5	04,63%
a b c	1	0,93%
Total	108	100%

Table 18: Students' Preferred Focus for the Teachers' Error Feedback

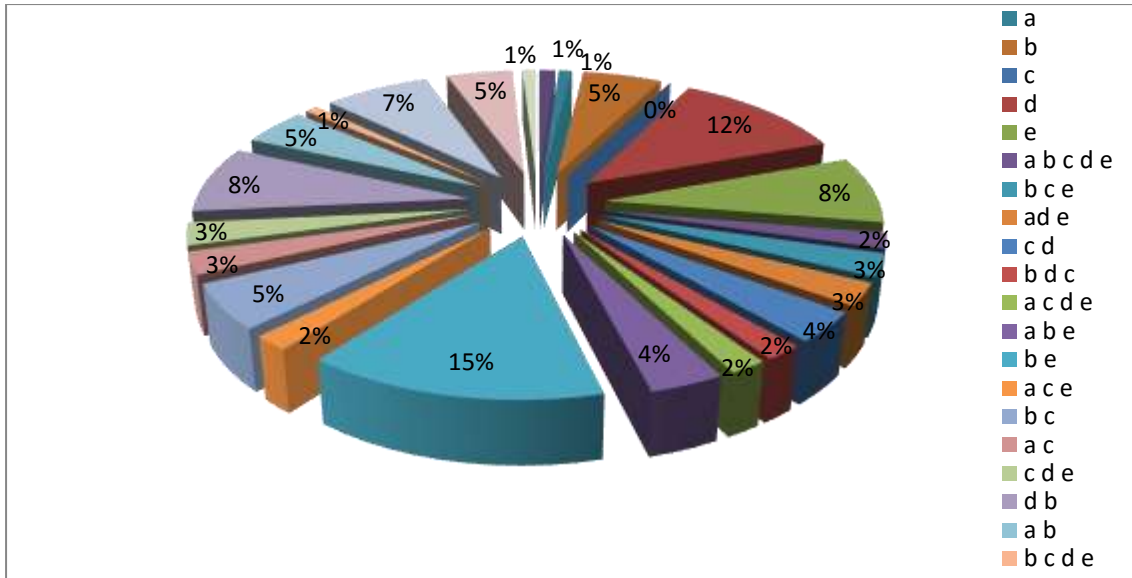


Figure 18: Students' Preferred Focus for the Teachers' Error Feedback

Again, and according to table 18, the majority of students (15%) liked their teachers' written feedback to focus on grammar, vocabulary and all aspects of the writing skill. This is the expected result; students liked their teachers to correct all aspects of their writing including grammar and vocabulary. Whereas, the next category with 12% chose their teachers' written feedback to focus on the language including all of the grammar, vocabulary, and content because they wanted from the teacher to take into account the content not only the grammar and vocabulary. The final categories divided to 1%, 2%, 5%, 7%, and 8% differ from one student to another according to what they wanted the TF to focus on; 1% of students chose TF to be on content, whereas, 2% preferred the correction to include all aspects of writing (grammar, content, vocabulary). However, 4% of students could not choose one from them and chose all of them because they saw all the aspects are equally important.

Question 06: What is your perception for the comments you received from your teacher in writing?

The last question is an open-ended one inviting the students to express their reactions for the teachers' comments. The majority of students viewed it as beneficial and useful type of feedback that helped them improve and develop their levels in writing. However, there were students who declared that they viewed it as discouraging because the teachers way of giving it is not good; according to their answers there were teachers who gave their comments as a distractive criticism that kill students' motivation, and make them feel weak and useless. As a result, the students will obviously lose interest in both TF and the language itself; students are looking for comments that help them to develop not to break them down. Often, those bad teachers' comments hurt the students' feelings because they target the person himself not his work. Consequently, this is a direct message for teachers to avoid the negative way of giving comments. They need to give their comments as an advice or as a constructive criticism that makes the students accept and take it into account.

4. The Teachers' Questionnaire

4.1. The Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The present teacher's questionnaire is designed to gather information about the teachers themselves, gender, their methods and approaches to teaching the writing skill, and their perceptions of feedback on students' writing. Indeed, this questionnaire holds seventeen (17) questions given to thirteen (13) teachers which are divided to four (4) sections: Background information, teaching writing, feedback provision, and teachers' perceptions of feedback provision on students' writing. This questionnaire combined a mixture of closed questions which require from the teacher to answer by "Yes" or "No"

or pick out the right answer from a number of options, and open questions, which require them to give full answers or to express an opinion.

Section One: Background Information (Q1 to Q5)

This section aims at specifying the teachers: gender (Q1); degree (s) held (Q2); how many years they teach (Q3); whether they teach written expression or not, and if not, do they teach written expression before (Q4 to Q5).

Section Two: Teaching Writing (Q6 to Q9)

This section is designed to explore the approaches which the teachers use to teach writing whether: The product approach, the process approach, the genre approach, or all of them (Q6); If their students follow the writing stages in their writings (Q7); the problems that teachers face in students' writing whether: Poor content, poor vocabulary, poor organization of ideas and mechanics, grammar errors, and interference of mother tongue (Q8); the aspects that the teacher focus on the most in students' writing: Content, vocabulary, organization and mechanics, and grammar (Q9).

Section Three: Feedback Provision (Q10 to Q14)

In this section, the questions are designed to explore the TF provision: The form that their feedback takes whether written or oral (Q10); whether they provide written comments on their students writing (Q11); what their feedback usually about: Feedback on content, vocabulary, organization and mechanics, or grammar (Q12); the way they spot errors on students' writing productions whether by indicating where the error is and indicates its correction, or by indicating the error only without any correction (Q13); and to know whether this feedback improve their students writing or not and if yes how it could improve it (Q14).

Section Four: Teachers' Perceptions of Feedback Provision on Students' Writing (Q15 to Q17)

The last section seeks to explore the teachers' perceptions of feedback provision on students' writing. In question (Q15), teachers are asked whether their students respond to their feedback or not. However, in (Q16) they are asked about the ways or methods which they use to make their students take their feedback into account, whereas the last question accentuates their opinions concerning how feedback enhance students' writing (Q17).

4.2. The Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Question 01: What is your gender?

a- Male

b- Female

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	03	23%
b	10	77%
Total	13	100%

Table 19: The Teachers' Gender

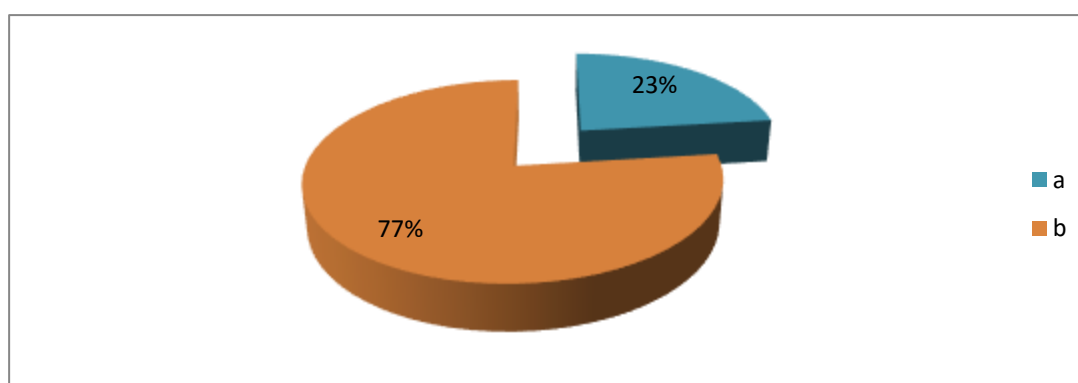


Figure 19: The Teachers' Gender

As the results show, the majority of teachers are females (77%), whereas, only 23% are men; this may be due to the Algerian mentality believing the job of teaching is more suitable for women than men.

Question 02: What is the degree (s) you held?

a-BA (Licence)

b- MA (Master)

c- PhD (Doctorate)

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	0	0%
b	9	69%
c	4	31%
Total	13	100%

Table 20: The Teachers' Degree (s) Held

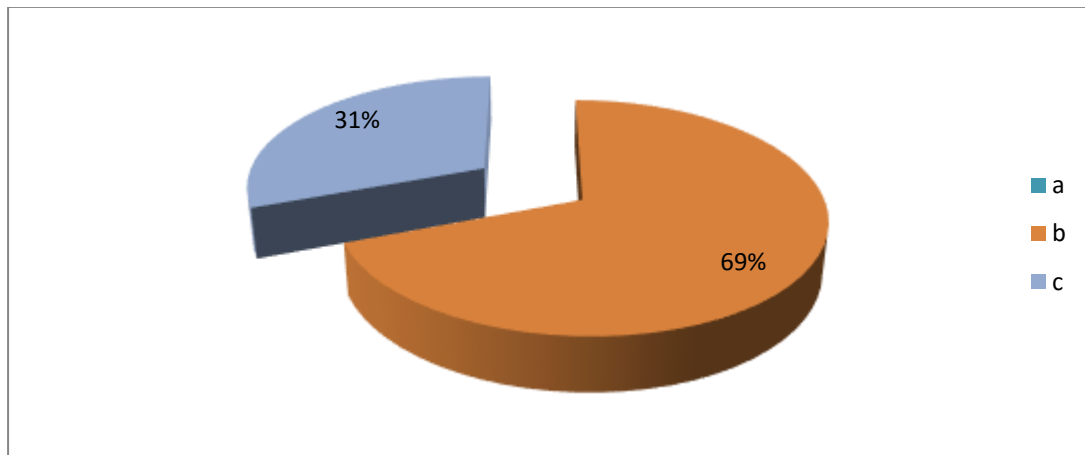


Figure 20: Teachers' Degree (s) Held

The purpose behind this question is to know the teachers' profiles which can interfere positively or negatively in their answers and thus affect the analysis. The results indicate that the majority of teachers (69%) hold MA degree whereas, only (31%) hold PhD degree; this may be because it is very hard to get PhD degree not any one can get it.

Question 03: How long have you been teaching?

a-Less than one year

b-1-7 years

c- More than 7 years

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
A	01	08%
B	04	31%
C	08	61%
Total	13	100%

Table 21: Teachers' Experience in Teaching

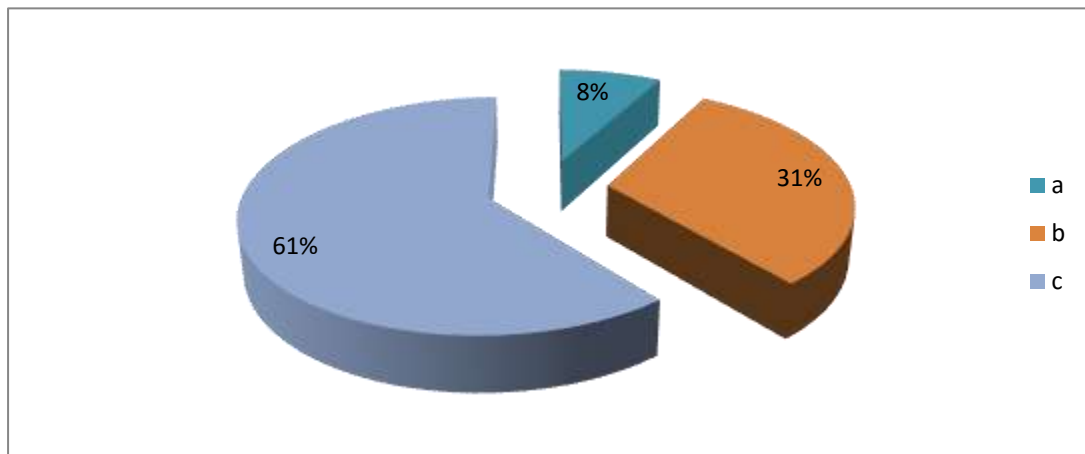


Figure 21: Teachers' Experience in Teaching

As the table above shows, the majority of teachers (61%) had experienced in teaching more than seven (7) years, whereas 31% of teachers claimed that their experience in teaching ranged from one (1) to seven (7) years. This means that, the majority of teachers in the present sample have extensive teaching experience, which allows them to know a lot about the teaching area including how to provide feedback to students regardless of their background. Finally, 8% of teachers had less than one (1) year experience in teaching. That is to say, this category of this sample is new in the field of teaching although they have knowledge, but it still theoretical.

Question 04: Do you teach written expression?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	10	77%
b	03	23%
Total	13	100%

Table 22: Teachers' Module

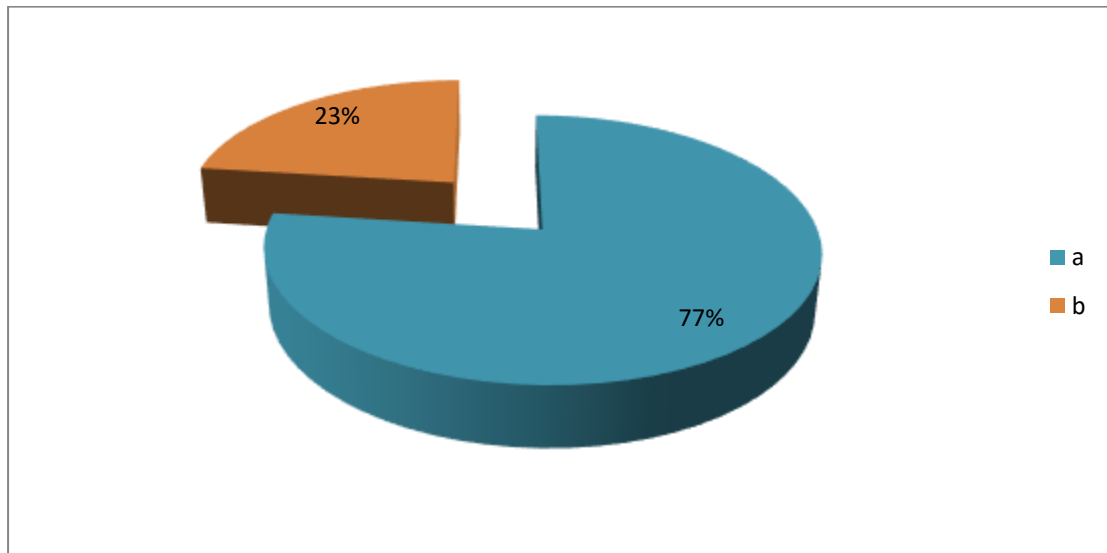


Figure 22: Teachers' Module

The results indicate that a great majority of teachers (77%) were teachers of WE, whereas, 23% of teachers did not teach this module.

Question 05: If no, have you ever taught WE?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	03	23, 08%
b	00	00%
No answer	10	76,92%
Total	13	100%

Table 23: Teachers' Previous Module

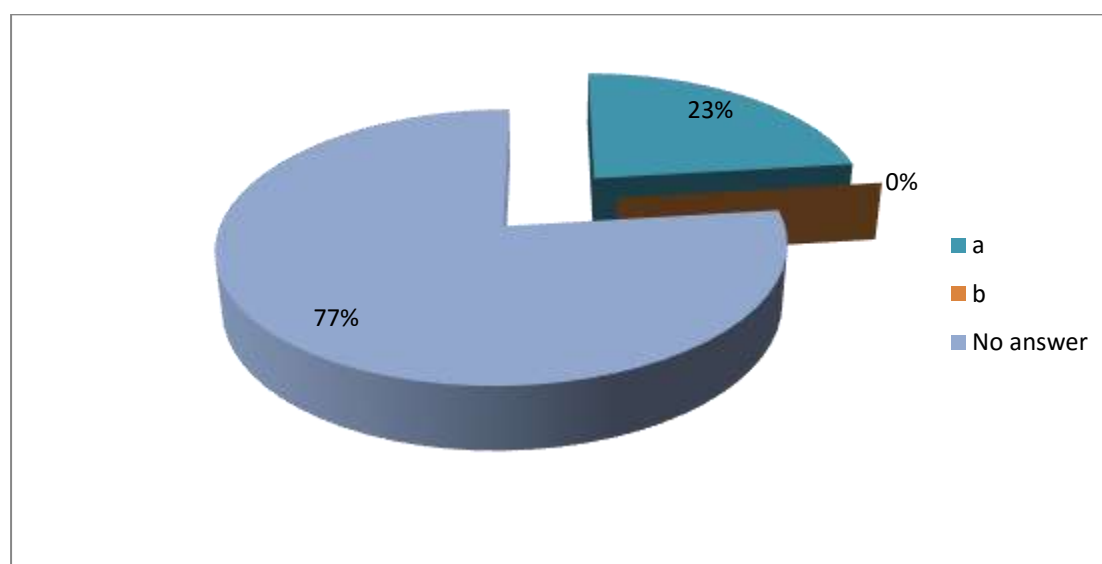


Figure23: Teachers' Previous Module

From the table above, the results illustrates that 23% of teachers claimed that they thought WE before, whereas no one answered by 'No'. The rest participants (77%) were with no answer; this happens due to the previous question, which contains 'If no', so they were not concerned with answering this question.

Section Two: Teaching Writing

Question 01: Which approach do you follow in teaching the writing skill?

a- Product approach

b- Process approach

c- Genre approach

d- All of them

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	2	15%
b	5	39%
c	0	00%
d	4	31%
a b	2	15%
Total	13	100%

Table 24: The Teachers Most Followed Approach in Teaching the Writing Skill

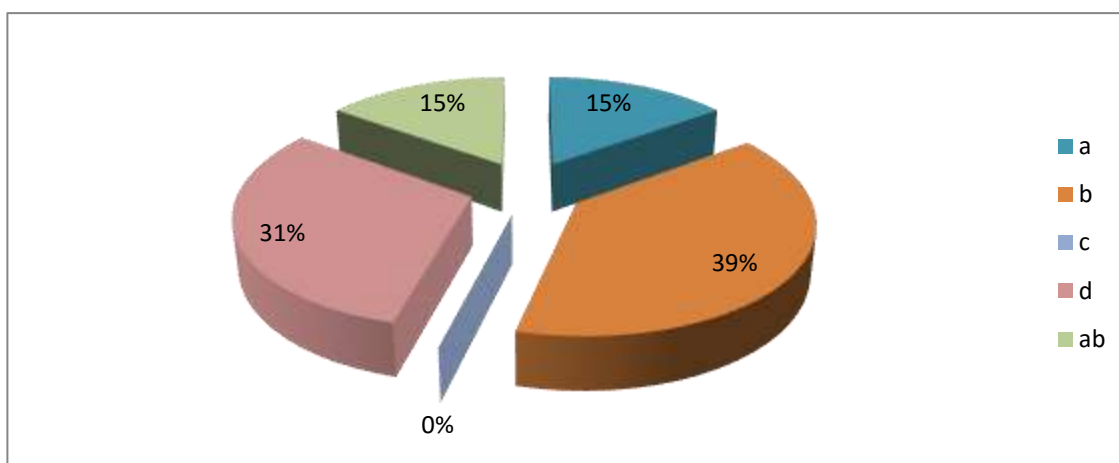


Figure 24: The Teachers Most Followed Approach in Teaching the Writing Skill

The results of this question indicate that most of teachers (39%) used the process approach in their teaching; because this approach allows the teachers to provide feedback for their students through the writing process before they gave the final

version, besides creating a collaborative work between both teacher and student. However, there were teachers who chose to mix all the approaches (31%), because they preferred to incorporate the crucial parts of each approach in order to be more beneficial for students. Whereas, other teachers chose to use whether the product approach (15%) alone, or incorporate it with the process approach (15%). This is all due to the teachers' ideas and ways of teaching.

Question 02: Do your students usually follow the stages of writing in their written assignment?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	8	61%
b	5	39%
Total	13	100%

Table 25: Learners' Writing

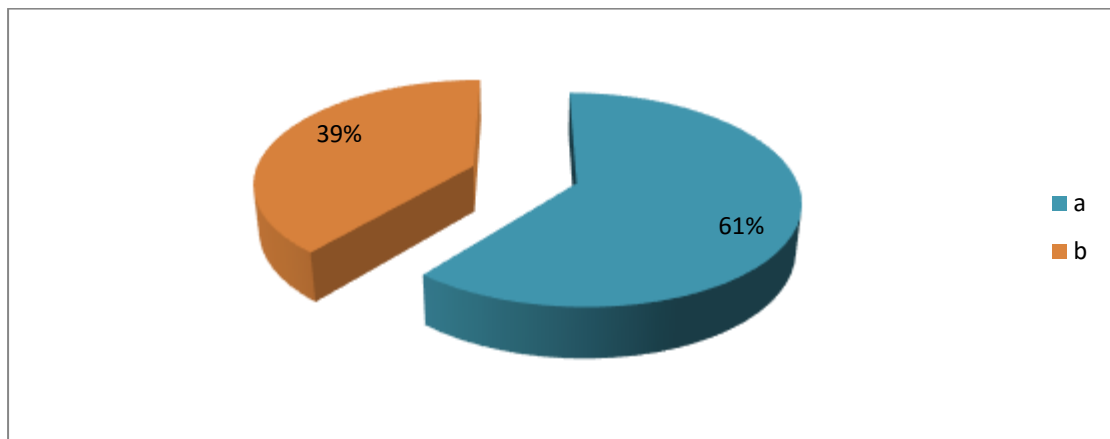


Figure 25: Learners' Writing

The table above shows that teachers were divided to two groups, the first group (61%), which answered by 'yes', claimed that their students follow the stages of

writing in their writing assignments. This may be because the teachers noticed improvement in students' writing. Whereas, the second group (39%), which answered by 'no', stated that their students do not follow the stages of writing. This means that teachers have noticed through the students writing process; they wrote directly on the draft without passing through the pre-writing stage, where the students take time to think and gather information about what they will write or other stages, but write directly what comes to their minds which creates lack of organization of ideas.

Question 03: What are the common problems that you face in your students' writing?

a- Poor content

b- Poor vocabulary

c- Poor organization and mechanics

d- Poor grammar

e- Interference of the mother tongue

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	1	08%
b	1	08%
c	2	15%
d	3	23%
e	1	08%
c d	1	08%
b c d	2	15%
a b c d	2	15%
Total	13	100%

Table26: Learners' Writing Problems

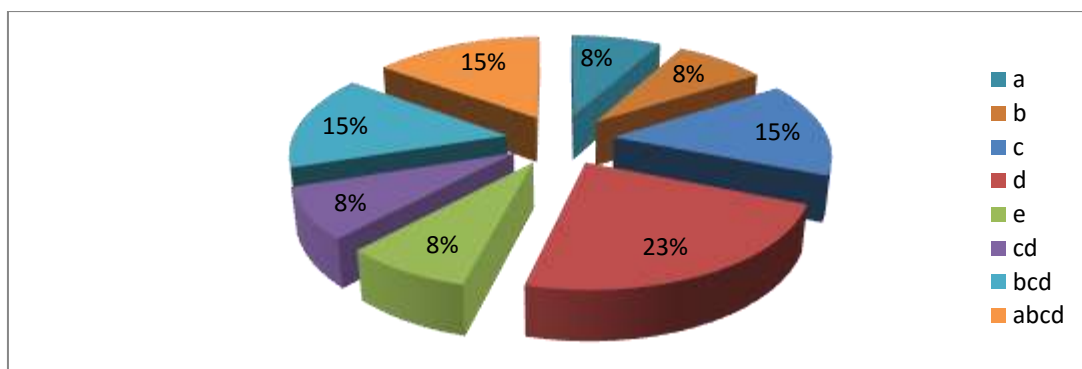


Figure 26: Learners' Writing Problems

The results show that most of teachers (23%) chose Grammar error as the most frequently chosen error. This supports the idea that the most frequent errors of FL students, especially the beginners, suffer from such problem. However, 15% of teachers opted for more than one answer mentioning poor grammar, poor content, poor organization and mechanics, and poor vocabulary; this may be because students usually made almost all the types of errors, including the interference of the mother tongue (8%).

Question 04: Which aspects of your students' writing do you focus on?

- a- Content
- b- Vocabulary
- c- Organization and mechanics
- d- Grammar

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage %
a	03	23%
b	00	0%
c	01	08%
d	03	23%
a c	02	15%
a b c d	04	31%
Total	13	100%

Table 27: Teachers' Focus of Students' Choice of Words

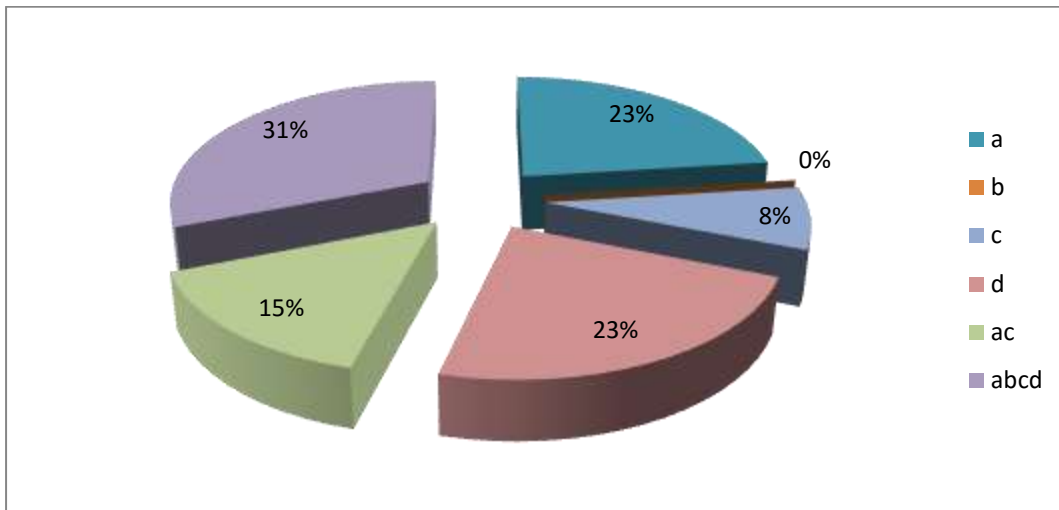


Figure 27: Teachers' Focus of Students' Choice of Words

The findings indicate that the majority of teachers (31%) opted to choose more than one aspect including grammar, content, vocabulary, organization and mechanics. This is because all these aspects are complementary, so they cannot choose one on the other. However, some teachers (23%) chose to focus more on content, maybe because they gave much credit to students' ideas over the language. Whereas, others chose grammar (23%), because they thought that after all students need to learn the language not the ideas. Lastly, few teachers (15%) chose content, organization and mechanics, maybe they focus more on the ideas and their organization.

Section Three: Feedback Provision

Question 01: Which form does your feedback take?

a- Written feedback

b- Oral feedback

c- Both

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	5	38,46%
b	4	30,77%
c	4	30,77%
Total	13	100%

Table 28: Forms of Teachers' Feedback

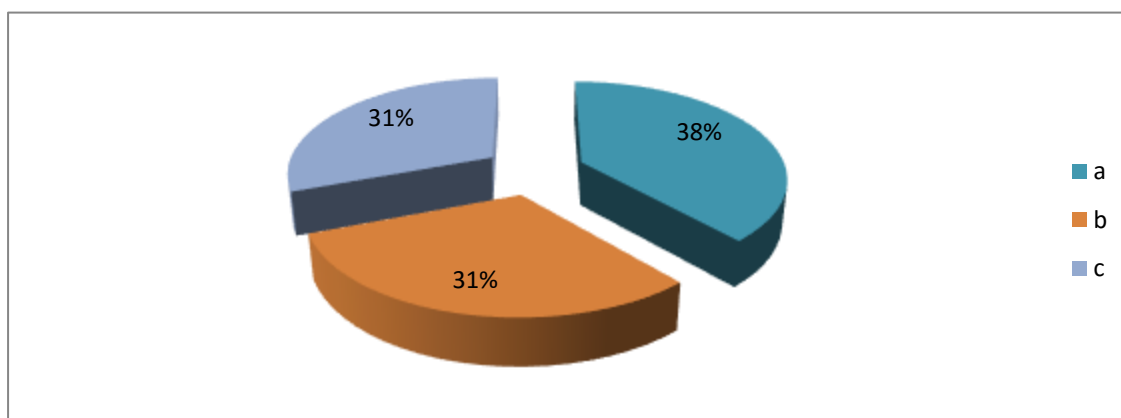


Figure 28: Forms of Teachers' Feedback

As table 28 shows, the majority of teachers (38%) said that they used written comments. Whereas, 31% used oral feedback, and 31% of teachers used both of them (both written and oral feedback).

Question 02: Do you provide written comments on your students' writings? Why?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	13	100%
b	0	0%
Total	13	100%

Table 29: Providing Comments on Learners' Writing

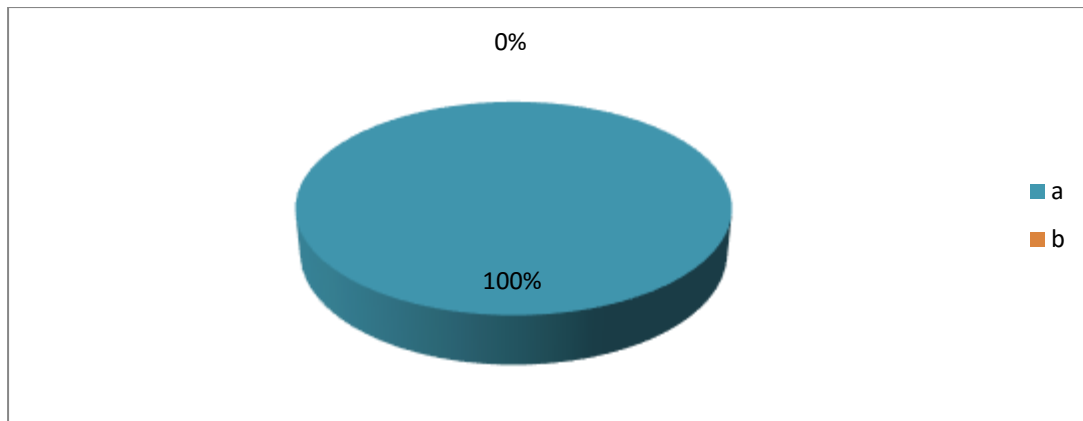


Figure 29: Providing Comments on Learners' Writing

The results reveal that all teachers (100%) gave written comments on students' writing. Whereas, no one answered by "No". This is because of the positive and useful effects of providing written comments. However, teachers justified their answers and provided a wider range of the reasons behind their choices. Their answers could be grouped into the following categories:

- ❖ Written comments is beneficial in enhancing their LL
- ❖ Written comments helped the students to organize their ideas and make them aware of their mistakes in order to improve their LL.
- ❖ Provide written feedback is important because there are shy students who prefer written feedback instead of oral one.
- ❖ Written comments offer the chance for the learner to correct slips, unintentional faults and helps in developing students' accuracy.
- ❖ Written feedback useful since it makes the students notice their mistakes and avoid such mistakes in the future.
- ❖ It is extremely important to provide written feedback, so that they can identify their mistakes and discover their areas of weaknesses. With the help of the teacher, students can manage to polish and improve their language.

Question 03: What is your feedback usually about?

- a- Feedback on content b- Feedback on grammar
 c- Feedback on vocabulary d- Feedback on organization and mechanics

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	1	07,69%
b	2	15,38%
c	1	07,69%
d	5	38,46%
b c	2	15,39%
b d	2	15,39%
Total	13	100%

Table 30: Teachers' Focus of Feedback

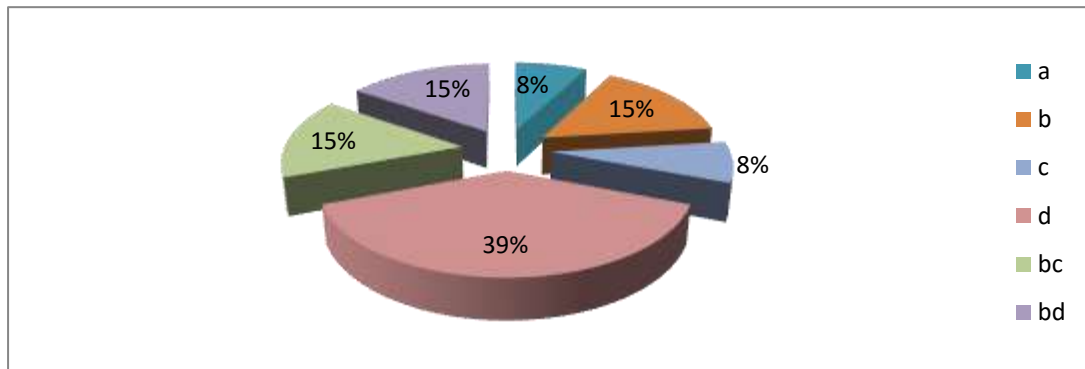


Figure 30: Teachers' Focus of Feedback

According to the table above, the majority of teachers (39%) chose option (d); teachers used to focus on paragraph organization and mechanics. Whereas, 15% of teachers used to focus on grammar, option (b c) with 15%, option (b d) scored 15% as well. However, content (8%) and vocabulary (8%) reached the lowest scores. This implies that teachers focus more on surface- level aspects of writing rather than meaning- level ones.

Question 04: How do you usually comment on errors you spot in your students' writings?

a- Indicate where the error is and provide the students with its correction

b- Indicate where the error is without correcting it

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	11	84,62 %
b	02	15,38%
Total	13	100%

Table 31: Teachers' Techniques of Indicating Errors

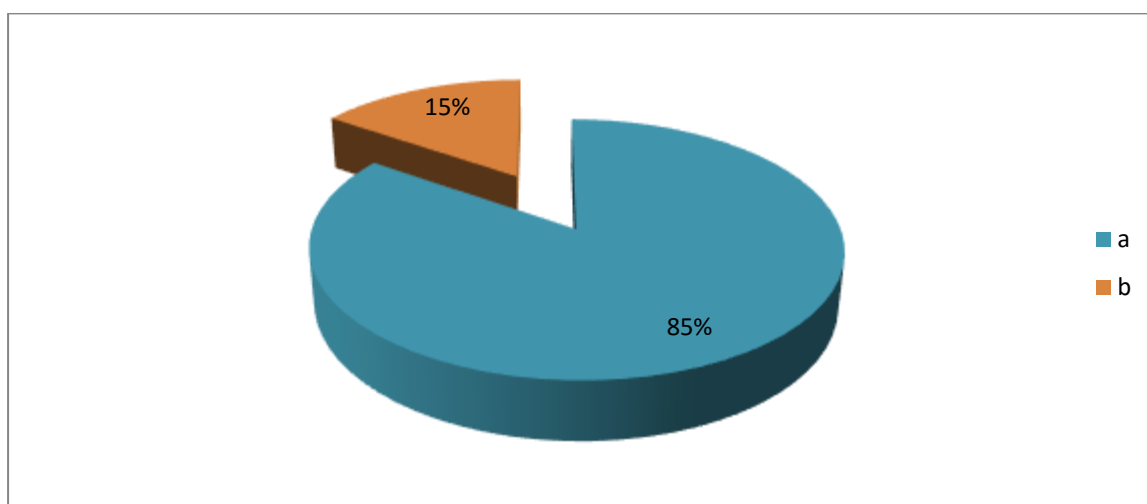


Figure 31: Teachers' Techniques of Indicating Errors

As it shows, in table 31, the majority of teachers (85%) claimed that they used to indicate the error where and provide its correction. This may be because it is the best way that affects revision and level improvement. Whereas, few of them (15%) preferred to indicate just the error where, this is may be in order to give them the chance to correct their errors by themselves.

Question 05: Does your feedback useful for the improving of your students’ writing skill?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	13	100%
b	0	0%
Total	13	100%

Table 32: The Usefulness of Feedback

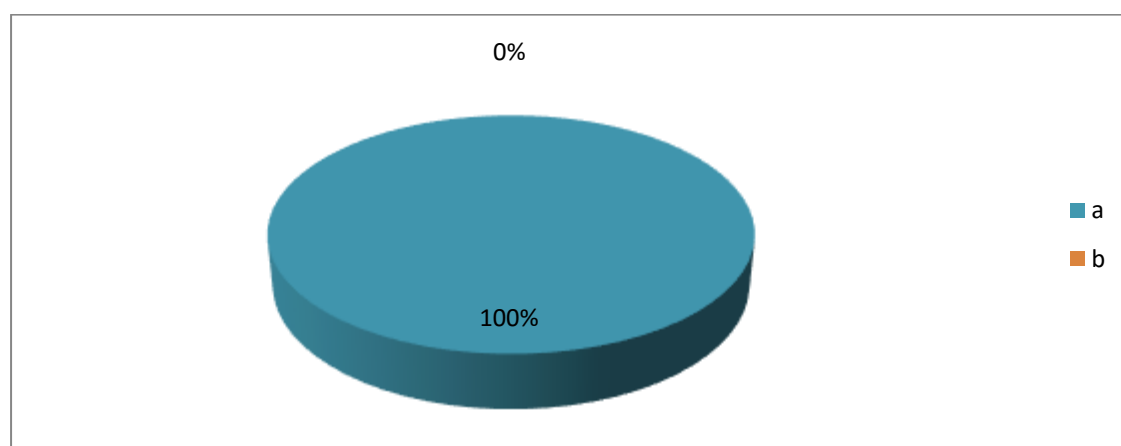


Figure 32: The Usefulness of Feedback

As table 32 shows, all the EFL teachers (100%) thought that their feedback is important for the improvement of students’ writing, while no one said “No”. This results shows that all teachers are aware of the effective ways of providing feedback.

Question 06: If yes, how?

This question is an open-ended one and a follow-up to the previous question as well. In this question, each teacher expressed his point of view about how his feedback can help students to improve their writings. However, the majority of teachers believed that by giving feedback, they helped learners to work more on their writing; this encourages them to be good writers and successful learners. As well as, they declared that students benefited from their feedback by knowing their mistakes, correcting,

and avoiding them in their future writing. Besides, other teachers claimed that without feedback, the learners would never know where they are making mistakes and how to correct them. Too, teachers believed that their feedback is beneficial since it fought the weaknesses that the students had and changed them to strengths.

Section Four: Teachers' Perceptions of Feedback Provision on Students' Writing

Question 01: Do your students respond to your feedback?

a- Yes

b- No

Options	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
a	09	69,23%
b	04	30,77%
Total	13	100%

Table 33: Students' Reactions to Teachers' Feedback

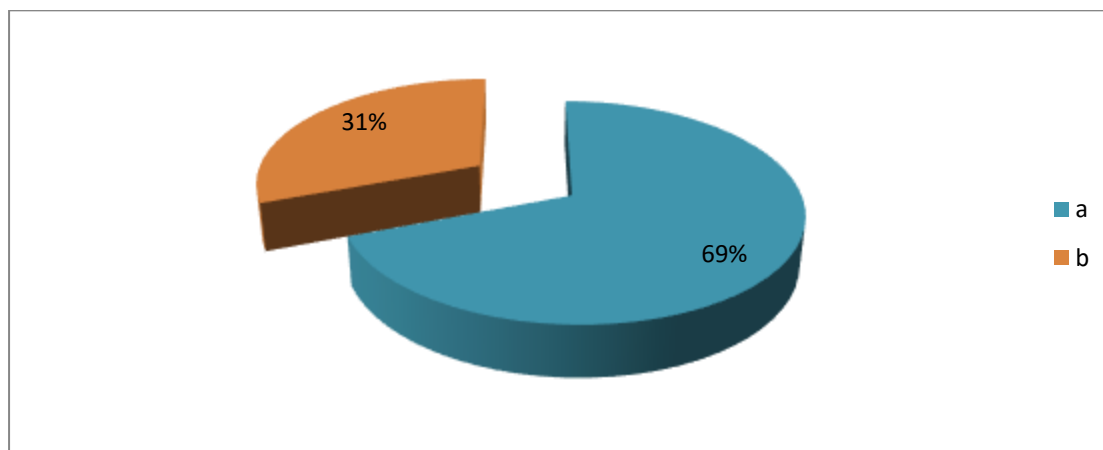


Figure 33: Students' Reactions to Teachers' Feedback

As the table above shows, most of teachers (69%) indicated that learners reacted and responded to their feedback. This is due to the learners' awareness of their errors and taking their TF into account by correcting the mistakes they produce. Whereas,

31% of teachers stated that their students ignored and did not respond to their feedback. However, this ignorance makes the teachers feel unsatisfied of their feedback.

Question 02: What do you do to make your students take your feedback into consideration?

The answers of this open-ended question are varying from one teacher to another. However, the majority of teachers believed that motivation and encouragement are the keys of getting acceptance of their feedback. It is needed to motivate and encourage students to learn from their mistakes by providing positive feedback, and giving rewards whenever it is needed. Some teachers stated that what makes students accept feedback is by attracting them to their mistakes, through the participation of all the class in the remediation activities and by using peer feedback. In addition, teachers considered that making the feedback accepted by students is by stimulating them and raising their consciousness about the value of the correctness, and also highlighting the importance of feedback for them. Finally, just one respondent stated that it depends on the student's seriousness; teachers can do nothing if the student is not serious.

Question 03: What is your perception of the feedback provided to students' writing?

This open-ended question is intended for the participants to give their perceptions towards the feedback provision on students' writing. Indeed, the majority of teachers saw feedback as a very important step in teaching WE, or other modules. And because writing is a very complex task, learners must be aware of their mistakes, whether in the level of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, or content in order for them to correct their mistakes and include the new information provided in teachers' comments in their future writings. However, some teachers believed that as feedback

can be helpful side, it can be a harmful side. So that, providing constructive feedback would help students to write in an acceptable way if the teacher know how to react to individual students' mistakes instead of destructing them. Further, other participants stated that giving students the feedback is not a harsh manner if teacher knows how to provide and manipulate his feedback proficiently.

5. Discussion of the Results

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions on TF in writing. To sum up, the results of both learners' and teachers' questionnaires show that there are positive attitudes on TF. On one hand, students' questionnaire shows that most of the participants indicate that the TF helped in developing their writing productions since they suffered from some errors and obstacles during their writing, they are bothered about them. So, they need the help of their teachers to correct and provide them with feedback in different forms when they commit the mistakes that hinder their writing. According to the students, they preferred most of their errors to be corrected by the teacher in order to know their weaknesses and try to work on them. In addition, they preferred to read teachers comments and ask for its clarification in order to understand their mistakes.

On the other hand, teachers' questionnaire shows the same result in which they believed in the importance of feedback in enhancing the students' writing through making them know their mistakes, and how to correct them. They claimed that their students encounter several difficulties, and it is up to teachers to help them overcome those letters by providing feedback to learners and helping them to realize their weaknesses. Moreover, teachers declared that feedback is seen as a tool to correct learners' mistakes through different forms. However, the majority of the teachers admit

that they prefer providing students with written feedback in order for them to check it at the time they forgot it. In order to improve the EFL learners' writing performance, the teachers stimulate the learners and raise their consciousness of the value of feedback.

6. Limitations of the Study

Through this research work, some obstacles were encountered while conducting this study. Firstly, in order to handle carefully the study, it was extended to Mila University English teachers. However, a research limitation involves the limited number of English WE teachers in the University of Mila. So that, if it involved broader sample, it would contain more generalized and detailed information. Secondly, the more going deeper in the writing process involving the TF and practices, the more complex it becomes. Finally, due to the world pandemic 'covid-19', which was unexpected disease that occurs in the beginning of this work and led to catastrophic consequences; it was obliged to use the Google forms, which was hard to collect the needed information. Also, it was necessary to change the instrument from 'teachers' interview' to 'teachers' questionnaire' because of the appearance of this disease.

7. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

This study has brought to light some issues related to the process of writing, and the perceptions of EFL teachers and learners on TF in writing. The following are some pedagogical implications resulting from this research, along with some recommendations which might guide future research.

First of all, it has seen in the present study that both EFL teachers and learners have positive attitude towards the TF in writing. However, it would be interesting to

find out which of teachers' strategies could be more beneficial to give the EF to the students.

Also, it should be effective to use the students' writing to discuss the role of TF in enhancing students' writing productions, which should deserve interest in the future research where the researchers need to focus more on the positive sides of TF, in order to motivate students to take their TF into consideration. Therefore, the teachers should know which type of feedback they should give to the students. In which it depends on the objective of the writing course; either the focus is on fluency or accuracy. Hence, students will understand what is expected for them from both the course and the teacher.

In addition, teachers should give feedback to only one minimal problem at a time. Thus, this will make students focus when they deal with feedback, at the same time see their problems and rectify them. Indeed, students are also advised to revise their writing production immediately after receiving the feedback; which provides as a chance for them to engage at teachable moment that makes them become more independent, and more responsible for their writing linguistic quality (Lalande, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Besides, students are in need to be aware that the LL does not take place in the classroom only but also outside the classroom provided. Thus, learners must be ready to take necessary action to respond to the given feedback.

Moreover, there is a need for more research on both EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions on TF in writing by using both qualitative and quantitative instruments like experiments and observation, in order for the collected data to be good and more reliable results, but this cannot reduce the importance of the research, and it should be conducted on large number of participants. However, in the present research only the

qualitative (questionnaire) instrument had been used, and teachers' questionnaire had been conducted on small number of teachers, which was not expected.

However, while conducting this research, some implications are raised. First, many teachers are worried about the degree to which they should concentrate on grammar form, content, style or other writing elements. Few, really seem to ask their students what they should be concentrating on. Thus, it is argued that EF relies on the awareness of teachers about the attitudes and expectations of teachers' responding behavior to their written productions. Teachers therefore need to assess properly attitudes and desires, then ultimately follow a feedback strategy, which ensures that any feedback given is comprehensible and useful in order to achieve enhancement in students' writing.

Secondly, teachers should take into consideration the students' personalities before deciding on what type of feedback to be used and how to deliver it. There are teachers who do not care about students' thoughts and feelings, but they expect them to accept their feedback even though it is useless. Thus, this way of providing feedback hinder students' abilities and writing, so teachers need to take into account students' personalities and try to provide the feedback in a way that show students their problems in kind way that achieve development in their writing.

To conclude, providing feedback to students' writing is definitely an important process to EFL teachers. Thus, knowing how and when to provide correction to students' errors is necessary because the way of providing feedback plays an important role for the students, which makes their writing decrease or increase. Finally, more research on the present topic should be conducted.

Conclusion

The present chapter is devoted to the data analyses which are collected through two instruments. In fact, the analysis of learners' questionnaire reveals that Third year EFL learners have positive attitude on their TF in writing. The majority of learners stressed the importance of TF in enhancing their writing and viewed it as a useful type of feedback for their progression, where some of them saw it as a discouraging tool. Besides, the analysis of teachers' questionnaire also reveals that EFL teachers have positive attitude on the feedback provided on students' writing. However, EFL teachers view their feedback as the most useful source of feedback in developing the students' writing skill, since teachers have the proficiency of providing feedback in the adequate time and place, and know the needs and preferences of their students. Too, TF as expected is a beneficial tool in promoting the learners' writing skill.

In addition, the results show that the learners face a lot of writing problems including all aspects of writing, so learners needed to take into account TF. As teachers also face all types of errors, they need to be more aware of learners' differences and to know how, when, for whom, and what type of feedback to provide. Thus, learners need to be serious concerning their TF in order to enhance their writing skill, as well teachers need to be aware of the difficulties that students' face and taking their preferences into consideration for the purpose of raising their motivation and progression as well.

General Conclusion

It is an acknowledged fact that TF is one of the most important techniques in teaching EFL. Making errors and correcting them are both considered as debatable topics in the field of teaching language and LL. However, making errors is a problem mostly faced by the EFL students in this country; where some people direct blame either teachers for not being competent to provide feedback properly, or learners who do not take their learning seriously. The EFL learners in the department of Mila University claimed having many problems dealing with writing, because many teachers select some ways of providing feedback without taking into account the students' preferences. So, the provided feedback should meet some features to be effective. One of the main aims of this research is to investigate the teachers' and learners' perceptions on TF in writing. As the first step, it was necessary to give clear explanation to the concepts of writing and feedback mostly. And of course for understanding the concept of TF, it was very important to give first an account of errors. Then, another aim of this thesis is to discover the importance of TF in the EFL students' writing.

The first finding of this investigation is that teachers in the department of English at Mila University have a positive attitude regarding the feedback provision on students' writing, since they believed in its importance and effectiveness in enhancing students' writing skill, and considering their feedback as the source of motivation and encouragement. Second, students have also a positive attitude towards their TF; however, this result was not expected since it was hypothesized that learners have a negative attitude towards their TF. This is due to the fact that students accept their TF and see it beneficial and useful in promoting their writing level. Too, students are interested in avoiding their writing errors, and also, they want their teachers to correct all the errors in their written assignments. Besides, this study investigates the

importance of TF in enhancing the learners writing skill. The results indicate that TF is beneficial for improving students' level of writing since students considered it as a tool for encouraging them to correct their mistakes and be good writers.

Finally, this study aims at giving insights to teachers and students about the importance of TF and its effectiveness in developing the students' writing skill. The results show that learners saw TF very important and beneficial in enhancing their writing skill by responding and taking it into consideration. This means that teachers know how to manipulate and give the EF, mainly the written one, to their students by knowing their needs and how to deal with the problems that they face while writing, as well as respecting their preferences.

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Appendix (A)

Learners' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is intended to gain insights into the feedback you receive from your teachers and its effect on your performance. (Feedback is the correction that the teacher gives to his students when they make mistakes). You are kindly requested to answer the questionnaire. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us in our research. Please use a tick (√) to indicate your chosen option.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Section One: Background Information

1- Are you interested in English?

a- Yes b- No

2- Was English your first choice?

a- Yes b- No

3- How do you consider your level in English?

a- Very good c- Average

b- Good d- Poor

3. How does your teacher of W E correct your errors?

a-Rewrites the sentence, the phrase or the word correctly

b- Only show where the error is

c-Other: Please, specify.....

4. How is feedback important for the improving of your writing?

a- Very important

b- Important

c- Not important

5. What is your teacher's feedback usually about? (You may opt for more than one answer).

a- Grammar

c-Content

b- Vocabulary

d- Organization and mechanics

6. Do you benefit from your teacher's feedback?

a- Yes

b- No

7. If yes, mention what you benefit from?

.....
.....
.....

Section Four: Learners' Perceptions to Teachers' Feedback

1. What is your opinion about your teacher's feedback?

a- It is simple and clear b- It is useful

c- It is discouraging d- It is useless

2. What do you do when you get your teacher's feedback?

a- Only read the grade and throw the paper

b- I read the comments and ask for clarification

c- I correct the simple and clear mistakes

3. How you like your teacher to correct your composition?

a- By putting the grade only

b- By putting remark and grade

c- By providing you with correction to your errors

4. How would you like your teacher to suggest error correction in your composition?

a- Underlying errors

b- Underlying errors and putting its correction

5. Which of the following statements you would agree on? (You may choose more than one statement).

a- Teachers' written feedback should focus on content

b- Teachers' written feedback should focus on grammar and vocabulary

c- Teachers' written feedback should focus on organization and mechanics

d- Teachers' written feedback should focus on language (including grammar and vocabulary) and content

e- Teacher's written feedback should focus on all aspects of the writing skill

6. What is your perception for the comments you received from your teacher in writing?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you

Appendix (B)

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is intended to gather information about EFL teachers and learners' perceptions on teachers' feedback in writing. We would be very grateful if you spend some of your worthy time to answer these questions to help us in our research. Please, use a tick to indicate your chosen answer or write in the space provided.

Section One: Background Information

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Degree(s) held: BA (Licence) MA (Master / Magister) PhD (Doctorate)

3. How long have you been teaching?

a- Less than one year b- 1-7 years c- More than 7 years

4. Do you teach Written Expression?

Yes

No

5. If no, have you ever taught Written Expression before?

Yes

No

12. What is your feedback usually about?

- a- Feedback on content
- b- Feedback on grammar
- c- Feedback on vocabulary
- d- Feedback on organization and mechanics

13. How do you usually comment on errors you spot in your students' writings?

- a- Indicate where the error is and provide the students with its correction
- b- Indicate where the error is without correcting it

14. Does your feedback useful for the improving of your students' writing skill?

- a- Yes
- b- No

15. If yes, how?

.....
.....

Section Four: Teachers' Perceptions of Feedback Provision on Students' Writing

16. Do your students respond to your feedback?

- a- Yes
- b- No

17. What do you do to make your students take your feedback into consideration?

.....
.....
.....

18. What is your perception of the feedback provided to students' writing?

.....

.....

Thank you

المخلص

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقيق في تصورات أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية وطلابها في تصحيح التعبير الكتابي، كما يهدف إلى إبراز أهمية هذه التقنية في إنتاج الطلبة. تلعب تقنية تصحيح الأستاذ دورا مهما في تطوير قدرات الطلاب في التعبير الكتابي ولزيادة فعالية هذا التصحيح من جهة، لابد أن يقدم الأستاذ ما يناسب احتياجاتهم واهتماماتهم. ومن جهة أخرى لابد من الطلبة اتخاذ تعليمهم بجدية. حيث بني هذا البحث على الفرضيات التالية: قد يكون لدى طلاب السنة الثالثة انجليزية تصور سلبي اتجاه تصحيح الأساتذة للكتابة، وربما يكون لدى الأساتذة تصور ايجابي فيما يتعلق بتقديم هذه الأخيرة. علاوة على ذلك، من المفترض أن تكون هذه التقنية لها دور ايجابي في تعزيز الإنتاج الكتابي لدى الطلاب. ولهذا الغرض، تم استخدام استبيانين لجمع المعلومات اللازمة والتحقق من الفرضيات السابقة. فقد تم تقديم الاستبيان الأول الى 108 طالب سنة ثالثة لغة انجليزية في جامعة ميله من اجل الحصول على تصورات وأولويات وأفكار حول تصحيح الأستاذ لكتاباتهم، بالإضافة إلى مدى أهميتها في مردودهم الكتابي. أما الاستبيان الثاني فتم تقديمه لـ 13 أستاذ لغة انجليزية من نفس الجامعة للحصول على تصورات حول أخطاء الطلبة والصعوبات التي يواجهونها أثناء الكتابة، وتقنيات التصحيح المختلفة التي تساهم في اكتساب مهارة الكتابة. وقد خلصت هذه الدراسة إلى أن العينة التي لدينا من الأساتذة لديها تصور ايجابي اتجاه تصحيحهم للتعبير الكتابي كدليل على أهميتها في تدريس اللغة وتعلمها. وعلاوة على ذلك، فإن طلاب اللغة الانجليزية لديهم أيضا تصور ايجابي اتجاه تصحيح الأستاذ لكتاباتهم، كما هو غير متوقع، كدليل على مساهمة هذه التقنية في تعزيز مهارة الكتابة لديهم.

Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude est d'enquêter sur les perceptions des enseignants L.L.E et des apprenants concernant les remarques des enseignants par écrit, et elle vise également à explorer l'importance des remarques des enseignants dans l'écriture des apprenants. Les remarques des enseignants jouent un rôle essentiel dans le développement de la précision et de la fluidité de l'écriture des élèves. Cependant, pour augmenter l'efficacité des remarques des enseignants, d'un part, l'enseignant est censé fournir les commentaires appropriés aux élèves afin de répondre à leurs besoins et préoccupations, d'un autre côté, les étudiants doivent prendre leur apprentissage au sérieux. Cette enquête est basée sur l'hypothèse selon laquelle les apprenants de troisième année en Anglais peuvent avoir une perception négative des remarques des enseignants, et les professeurs d'anglais peuvent avoir une perception positive des remarques sur l'écriture des élèves. En outre, l'hypothèse est que les commentaires des enseignants peuvent promouvoir les compétences d'écriture des apprenants. Dans ce but, deux questionnaires sont utilisés pour collecter les données nécessaires et vérifier les hypothèses avancées. Premièrement, le questionnaire destiné aux apprenants est administré à 108 étudiants de troisième année LMD d'anglais à l'université de Mila, pour obtenir des informations sur les remarques de leurs enseignants et leur importance, en plus de leurs opinions et préférences sur ces remarques. Deuxièmement, le questionnaire destiné aux enseignants est désigné pour 13 professeurs d'anglais d'expression écrite, pour se faire une idée des erreurs des apprenants, les obstacles auxquels ils sont confrontés lors de leur écriture et les différentes techniques utilisées pour fournir des remarques pour améliorer la compétence d'écriture. Cependant, les étudiants ALE ont également une perception positive des commentaires de leurs enseignants, car cela n'est pas attendu, car cela contribue à l'amélioration de leurs compétences en écriture.