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The Impact of Extensive Reading on Improving Students' Academic Writing: a Case Study of Master One Students at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra

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Dedication

I dedicate this work :

To my dear parents

To my awesome brothers

To all my family members

To my closest girl ever “**Besma**”

To my lovely girl “**BICHOU**”

Acknowledgement

All my greatest gratitude is to my supervisor, Mrs. **Mansouri Amina**. I appreciate her patience, direction, and endless help throughout the conduction of this dissertation. Without her inspiring guidance and insightful feedback, this work could never be brought to light.

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Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the extent to which extensive reading affects Master one students' academic writing to produce well-written essays. The participants in the current study are thirty Master one students of English and five teachers of academic writing at Mohammed kheider University of Biskra registered for the academic year 2018/2019. To achieve the purpose of this study, a descriptive analytical approach was used through combining both a questionnaire for quantitative data and an interview for qualitative data. After the interpretation of the results, the study confirmed that extensive reading plays a pivotal role in developing students' academic writing.

Key words: Extensive reading, academic writing.

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List of abbreviations

AW: Academic writing

EFL: English foreign language

EX: Extensive reading

General introduction

Teachers of English language throughout the world are frequently looking for methods of improving their students' language proficiency namely in the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Different studies have found positive relationship between extensive reading and academic writing. Thus, they have created various strategies to combine them in order to achieve their goals of producing not only a skillful reader but also a competent writer.

1. Statement of the problem

Most of the students, that study English Language at the University of Mohamed Kheider Biskra, have difficulties in their writing which are caused by many reasons among which lack of reading. This research seeks to uncover the relationship between Master one students' extensive reading and their academic writing.

2. Significance of the study

Many students struggle with writing in English and it can seem like a real challenge to improve. Therefore, teachers employ the extensive reading as an essential mean to enhance the academic writing. This research pursues to encourage EFL learners to read extensively in order to write academically.

What one reads will feed directly what one writes. By reading, one expands his vocabulary, masters English spelling and improves his grammar and learning language structure. So, extensive reading is considered as a tool to improve academic writing.

This research is for all students of English language who face problems in writing and want to enhance their academic writing by adopting the extensive reading approach. To find

concrete meaning and use about what it is mentioned above, we will administrate a questionnaire to Master one students and an interview to teachers of academic writing.

3. Research aims

- **Main objective**

This study aims at examining the impact of combining extensive reading with the improvement of Master one students' academic writing.

- **Sub-objective**

This study aims to encourage students to read extensively and write academically.

4. Research questions

This research is aiming to answer the following questions:

- 1- Why is academic writing difficult for Master one learners of Biskra University?
- 2- Does extensive reading enhance Master one students' academic writing?
- 3- How can Master one students of English language read extensively?

5. Research hypothesis

The researcher hypothesizes that:

- Extensive reading may be useful for improving Master one students' academic writing.

6. Methodology

In this research, we conduct a descriptive study as a method to gather information and we aim to describe the impact of extensive reading on improving Master one learners' academic writing. This research is based on the mixed methods approach which will be used to collect and analyze data, as well as participants of this study are Master one students and teachers of academic writing of the University of Mohamed Khieder Biskra because they are prepared to read a lot in order to produce correct pieces of academic writing. Hence, this research will include two data collecting tools: a questionnaire for Master one students and an interview with teachers of academic writing. Those tools will help the researcher in her study, also will facilitate getting information.

7. Structure of the study

This study consists of three chapters. Through the first chapter we will deal with the academic writing via definitions of writing skill, its types and processes. After that, we attempt to give some definitions of academic writing and its features. Also we will discuss techniques that are used to improve AW. Then, we will uncover the relationship between academic writing and extensive reading. In the second chapter we will give a brief overview on reading by providing definitions, process and product, models and types. Then, we will define extensive reading and state its characteristics, benefits, strategies and importance. The last chapter is for the field work which will discuss the data analysis of the questionnaire and the interview. This dissertation will conclude with a general conclusion.

Introduction

Academic writing is basically an essential skill in examining the learners' performance and measuring their writing proficiency. Most of EFL learners find it a stressful, challenging and demanding task because of the already mentioned requirements. Consequently, teachers have tried several strategies in order to improve their learners' writing proficiency. In this chapter, we start by some definitions, processes and types of writing. Then, we attempt to define academic writing and state its features and sub-types. Also we discuss techniques that are used to improve AW stages and development. Moreover, the chapter presents factors that prevent Master one students to write correctly, academically and uncovers the relationship between AW and ER.

1. What is writing?

Writing is a method used to represent a certain language in visual form. It is the symbolic representation of speech. Emig (1977) defined writing as “originating and creating a unique verbal construct that is graphically recorded”. (p. 123). In the same path, Widdowson (2001) declared that writing is the adoption of the visual means to establish the graphological and grammatical system of the language. In other words, writing is a symbol that is used to express or reproduce speech.

Writing is the activity of producing a piece of written language which is designed to be read. Richards and Renandya (2003) claim that writing is concerned not only with generating and organizing ideas but also translating these ideas into readable texts; besides, Collins (2003) declared “writing is generally a group of letters or symbols written or marked on a surface as a means of communication.”

Byrne (1991, p. 4) explains that writing is a difficult activity because it is neither a natural nor a spontaneous activity. “The problems related to writing are usually grouped under three headings which overlap to some extent: psychological, linguistic and cognitive”

All in all, these definitions highlight the fact that writing is the activity of being able to communicate with language via graphic representation of ideas. However, writing is much more than the production of graphic symbols; these symbols have to be arranged according to some conventions to form words and to combine them to form sentences. It is also a difficult, sophisticated, prestigious social activity of communication and an important skill for language learners and native speakers.

2. Process of writing

Before students write, they take into consideration many procedures in order to construct a relevant composition and creative expression. Hillocks (1987) and Murray (1982) said that writers concentrate on writing as a recursive process in which they have the opportunity to plan, draft, revise, and edit their work (cited in Kamehameha Schools, 2007, p2). The writing process is a series of steps to help students write a paper. It is like using a map to get to an unfamiliar place. The writing process encompasses five steps:

2.1. Prewriting

Murray (1982) argued that the first step in the writing process is called pre-writing. It accounts for a high percentage of the writing time (cited in Kamehameha Schools, 2007, p3). Pre-writing is the stage during which students transfer their abstract thoughts into more concrete ideas; also it allows students translate their raw insights into a form that will communicate meaning to audiences (Schmitz, 2012, p.380). Before writing, students begin by brainstorming ideas for topics, organizing an outline, and developing a plan using their meaningful ideas (ibid, p.381).

Thus, prewriting exercises may involve drawing, talking, thinking, reading, listening to tapes and records, discussion, role playing, interviews, problem solving and decision making activities, conducting library research.

2.2. Drafting

It is a transition from prewriting to writing a first draft. The writer begins to write all of the details which are relevant to his/her topic on a paper. In the drafting stage, since the focus is on ideas, not the structure of the composition, there is no matter to worry about mistakes. It is the stage in which students develop a first version of writing. The students develop an introduction to the topic, main points and supporting details, and write a concluding paragraph (Schmitz, 2012, p.408).

2.3. Revising

This stage involves student to check his or her draft and makes possible changes (Harmer, 2001, p. 258). Students, in this step, begin to evaluate and check out their paper. Therefore, the role changes from a writer to the role of a critic (Andy & Schmitz, 2012, p. 424). So the student determines the different mistakes and corrects them, it may include additions, deletions, and changes in syntax, sentence structure and organization. In this context, Schmitz (2012, p. 224) claimed that writers examine a piece of writing for clarity of ideas. Hence, revising includes adding, deleting, moving, or changing information in order to make the ideas more accurate, more interesting and more convincing.

2.4. Editing

In this stage, the writer includes some kinds of changes for the improvement of the draft like spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting. As Schmitz (2012) states “Editing, often, involves adding or changing words, and fixing any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure” (p. 424). The editing step is a touch after proofreading to obtain an

effective final draft. After proofreading, students make improvements in their piece of writing.

2.5. Publishing

When writers have completed the final draft, they again make sure that they did not miss any mistake, such as spelling, punctuation, and paragraph indentation. Hence, writers transmit the written text to its expected audience.

3. Types of writing

Writing types differ depending on what the writer wants to create. There are great numbers of forms that writing can take, and each one has its own guidelines and its own importance. In this research, we will mention four types that are commonly used.

Personal writing is a writing type that people use mainly for communication or in diaries, portfolios, emails, facebook messages, letters, and invitation cards using casual language. However, journalistic writing is very different than any other form of writing. It informs the public about local, national and global and events in newspapers, magazines, television, and broadcasts. This type of writing is featured by short paragraphs and sentences. Monipally and Pawar (2011, p.76) define creative writing as "...expressing oneself, one's experience or imagination or a combination of both through the written word". In other words, Creative writing is writing that expresses ideas and thoughts in an imaginative way. This type is found in novels, poetry, stories and plays. Among the various types of writing which one needs to know, there is academic writing, which is the major focus of this chapter.

4. Definition of academic writing

Academic writing can be defined as a type of writing used by university students that serve as a basis on which their performance is assessed. According to Bailey (2003), AW is designed for anybody who is studying at universities and has to write essays and other assignments for exams or coursework. Geyte (2013) defines AW as a kind of writing done by scholars.

Academic writing is the process of presenting ideas in a systematic way and supporting these ideas with examples and evidence. According to Crème and Lea (2003) and Borg (2008), in AW, it is important that when a claim is made it is backed up by reasons based on some form of evidence; it is expected that the author takes a critical approach to the material being explored. (Cited in *Developing your academic writing skills: a handbook*, p.7). Students, professors, and researchers from distinct disciplines use AW to convey ideas and communicate arguments which are supported with evidence in an impersonal tone (Valdes, 2009).

5. Features of academic writing

Academic writing is characterized by specific features and requirements concerning grammar, organization, purpose, clarity, word choice, unity, coherence and cohesion, use of evidence and register and style.

5.1. Grammar

It is defined by Harmer (2007, p. 32) as “knowledge of what words can go where and what form these words should take”. Besides, it is expressed by Crystal (cited in Sharaf 2011, p. 13) as “the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way we use language”. That is to say, grammar is the application of the language rules.

5.2. Organization

Shannon (2011) added that there are two types of techniques used to organize the written material formally and informally. On one hand, the informal techniques which include brainstorming, free writing and mind mapping are used in order to guide the organization of the paper. On the other hand, the formal technique is the classic outline which contains the general idea and its details which are well developed and organized so that they can help the author.

5.3. Purpose

Academic writing tends to demonstrate knowledge generally, and to explain, inform and persuade specifically. Monippally and Pawar (2010) argue that this type of writing is also used to document research findings. In fact, the purpose depends on the chosen topic ; the way in which it is going to be developed as well as the target audience. Also, it may include analyzing, revising and evaluating a subject under study.

5.4. Clarity

The writers try to explain their point of view clearly without any ambiguous points by using precision or descriptive words (Richard & Walker, 2010, p10-11). i.e, the writers make the reader recognize as clearly as possible what is written down.

5.5. Word choice

Shannon (2011, p.18) notes: “Authors should always aim for the most precise language possible in writing. In academic and scholarly writing, that principle is even more important”. Correct use of words ensures the understanding of the written work and is the best way to convey the ideas accurately.

5.6. Unity

Writers write sentences related to the topic sentence in order to ensure that each sentence follows the main sentence to maintain the unity of the whole paragraph. In other words, the writer should be consistent in his or her ideas. That is to say, he or she should not jump from one topic to another.

5.7. Coherence and Cohesion

The writers write in sequential order to let the reader understand the ideas written down. As Murray and Hughes (2008) said, “coherence is perhaps the single most important element in any kind of writing” (cited in Hadda. D, 2016. p11). That is to say, the writers should organize the ideas which are flowed in mind by following crucial features such as the use of transitional words, phrases, and the correct tense to show the chronological order.

5.8. Use of evidence

Evidence is another feature that distinguishes academic writing from other forms of writing. Writers need to support their claims and arguments through relevant strong evidence which comes in a form of facts, statistics, empirical research findings and expert opinions as well (Ng, 2003). Consequently, ideas and paragraphs need to be connected so that arguments flow smoothly with the appropriate tone.

5.9. Register and style

An important feature of writing at university is style and register. The choice of register for a particular text or part of text will vary depending on the genre and who will be reading the text. Therefore, knowing the targeted audience before starting the writing process will have an impact on the stylistic choices. (Cited in Lund University, 2011)

Academic writing characteristics are considered to be one important element, students need to know and explore. That would enhance the development of the learning process generally and improve the writing skill awareness more specifically.

6. The sub-types of academic writing

Murry and Hughes (2008) assert that in reading an academic piece of writing, the reader differentiates a number of types: definition, description, comparison and contrast, classification, cause and effect, and argumentation. Each type indicates a certain objective that the writer tends to reach.

6.1. Definition

Defining terms is regarded as a crucial thing in conducting academic writing. Writers at the beginning of the assignment try to clarify the terms they use to best reflect what they want address; the accurate and appropriate use of words show to the reader the degree of understanding of the terms that the writer uses (Gillett & Hammond, 2009). According to Vandermeij and Meyer (2012, p. 232), “Writers compose definitions for a number of reasons to correctly define a misunderstood term, to deepen or redirect its meaning, to plumb a term’s history, or to entertain readers.”

6.2. Description

Gillett and Hammond (2009, p. 117) state that “In your writing, you will often have to describe something: an object, a system, an organization or a process”. When students are asked to describe an object, they have to explain its function and give certain details. When they describe a system they are required to provide characteristics that support the description, and the process of description requires an explanation of how things are done or made.

6.3. Comparison and Contrast

Vandermeij and Meyer (2012, p. 182) claim that writers compare and contrast subjects in order to understand their similarities and differences. Their purpose may be to stress the similarities between seemingly dissimilar things or the differences between things that seem quite similar. This type tends to compare and contrast between two subjects or more to show similarities or differences.

6.4. Classification

According to Vandermeij and Meyer (2012, p. 200):

Classification is an organizational strategy that helps writers make sense of large or complex sets of things. A writer using this strategy breaks the topic into individual items or members that can be stored into clearly distinguishable groups categories.

The writer in this process classifies the text into separable and manageable parts following logical order so that the reader could clearly understand.

6.5. Cause and Effect

In this type of writing, writers are supposed to present a comprehensible discussion of the subject to the reader giving reasons and justifications to the cause and the effect of a certain subject. In this respect, Vandermeij and Meyer (2012, p. 163) declared that in a cause and effect essay, the writer develops the thesis through cause and effect reasoning. That is, she or he analyzes and explains the causes, the effects, or both the causes and the effects of a phenomenon.

6.6. Argumentation

The writer in this type has two different opinions in which he embraces one and tries to support his point of view by giving arguments. Wyldeck (2008, p. 17) asserts that “this type of essay focuses positively on the side the writer believes is correct, and finds fault in the

opposite point of view. The writer's job is to argue well enough to convince his readers that he is right." Vandermeij and Meyer (2012) confirm that the writer in this type presents the topic objectively by describing the opposite point of view reasonably, and supports his view using arguments that are based on logic and evidence in order to convince the reader.

7. Techniques used to improve academic writing

7.1 Using pictures technique

Teaching the academic writing via using pictures is a technique in which students observe a given material, after that they will need common language forms and vocabulary in order to discuss and interpret the visual object into graphic symbols. Furthermore, a picture can be used for a variety of tasks. At the end, picture use, inside classroom, arouses students' concentration and establish actuality (Raimes, 1994).

7.2. Using reading technique

Reading is a useful technique in raising students' cultural awareness as well as new vocabulary, new ideas, and other benefits.

Students can realize this awareness either by imitating the writers' ways of choosing particular grammatical and logical features, or developing a text of their own by summarizing, completing, speculating, or reacting. Lastly, this technique can solve students' problems of writing if it is repeatedly utilized by the teacher (Raimes, 1994).

8. Factors that prevent EFL students from writing correctly

Students' academic writing is influenced by various factors interfering to inhibit writing proficiency. In this study three main factors are going to be studied;

8.1. Lack of motivation to write

Motivation inside classroom has been regarded as an important factor to achieve success; it helps students reach the objectives they desire in whatever situations they study (Harmer, 2006). That is to say, motivation inside classroom is an important factor to achieve success. According to Boscolo and Hidi (2008), “There are two questions that language skill teachers frequently pose to writing. First, why are students so often not motivated to write? Second, how can their motivation to write increase?” (p. 7).

Harmer (2006) answered by considering many obstacles that reduce the students’ motivation to accomplish specific writing level through: fear of failure is the first obstacle which makes students think that they are unable to achieve certain goals in a given context of skill or performance. The former obstacle is accomplished with fear of rejection which means that students think that their writing achievements will be rejected, because of the mistakes they made. Accordingly, teachers should help students to write by making writing enjoyable and letting them express their ideas and feelings without restrictions as it is declared by Byrne (1991) who states that learners appreciate writing, if only they feel more at comfort and easy going atmosphere.

8.2. Influence of first language on writing in English

According to Friedlander’s (1997) study, “writers do any of their work in their first language”. (p.109). In other words, students may incorrectly transfer the structures specific to their first language writing, which affects their L2 writing.

Blanchard and Root (2004) added that:

It is like driving a car, if you have ever driven in another country, you know that some of the rules of the road may be different. Just as the rules of driving differ from country to another (p. 1).

This means, writing strategies vary from one language to another which makes it difficult to be experienced by anyone. Writing is a difficult and complex skill to acquire.

8.3. Lack of reading

According to Byrne (1991), reading is more important than writing, but the two skills are interrelated; there is a great relationship between them. Good writers are always good readers, and finally better readers have a tendency to compose a desirable piece of writing (Eisterhold, 1997).

As mentioned above, there are many factors that may prevent EFL learners from writing accurately. These factors can be summarized into: lack of reading; a lot of students are not interested in reading activities, lack of motivation; students cannot be bothered to write, and the influence of the first language; students think in the L1 and then translate in their second language. So, writing is a very important skill that should be developed and improved by reducing the factors mentioned before.

9. The relationship between academic writing and extensive reading

Large numbers of researchers have agreed that reading and writing are strictly intertwined and connected. Olness (2005), Tsai (2006) both consider reading and writing as similar processes of composing in which the reader or the author interact with a text. Good readers are mainly good writers (Williams, 2003). Krashen's (as cited in Williams, 2003) explains that the skill of writing is similar to second language skill in which its mastery comes out of a comprehensible input over a period of time. Thus proficiency in writing is a result of a sufficient and a comprehensible reading input.

Furthermore, Krashen (1985) relates writing development to "... extensive reading in which the focus of the reader is on the message, i.e., reading for genuine interest and/or pleasure" (p. 23). When considering the perspective of reading as a way of improving writing

proficiency, Krashen (1981a) introduces the reading hypothesis which is a way of explaining differences of students' writing ability. As a result, he claims that (a) "good writers will have done large amounts of pleasure reading" (p. 3); (b) "good writers, as a group, read and have read more than poor writers" (p. 3); (c) "reading remains the only way of developing competence in writing" (p. 9).

However, Williams (2003) does not completely support these arguments, for he acknowledges the importance of reading as a factor in writing development but not as the only one (p. 166).

In general, it is apparent that reading and writing are interrelated in terms of processes, and the tight impact which reading has on writing. Moreover, drawing on the fact that reading is a contributing factor in developing students' writing ability, this can also imply that reading may inhibit writing ability if not practiced often. Furthermore, reading is encouraged to be integrated when teaching writing, without neglecting the effective instruction from the part of the teacher.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have seen the general overview, process and types of writing skill. We have discussed the basic features of academic writing concerning the grammar, organization, purpose, clarity, word choice, unity, cohesion and use of evidence. We have mentioned types of AW as follows: definition, description, comparison and contrast, classification, cause and effect and argumentation. . Therefore, we have stated two techniques used to improve AW which are pictures techniques and reading techniques. Also, we have emphasized on factors that prevent EFL students from writing correctly: lack of motivation to write, influence of first language on writing in English and lack of reading. Moreover, we have uncovered the relationship between academic writing and extensive reading. The next chapter will deal with extensive reading.

Introduction

Reading is viewed as a complex activity. It allows us to develop and expand our knowledge. In addition, reading is one of the outstanding skills that allow language users to gain language proficiency. Thus, it plays a large role in ameliorating the other language skills such as writing. This chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part we attempt to introduce the term “reading” by providing different definitions, process and product, models and types. The second part is devoted to extensive reading in which we give various definitions of ER then, we state its characteristics, benefits, strategies and importance.

1. What is reading?

Reading is an important language skill in learning a foreign language. Many theorists and researchers have attempted to define reading based upon different research purpose(s).

Urquhart and Weir (1998, p.22) reading is often defined in simple statements much like the following: “Reading is the process of reviewing and interpreting information encoded language from the medium of print”. Or, “comprehension occurs when the reader extracts integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known” (Koda, 2005, p.04).

Goodman (1973, p.162) states that the learner: “Interacts with a message encoded by the writer. He concentrates his total prior experiencing concepts he has attained as well as the language competence he has achieved”, Dr. Kimberly defines reading in his web site (2014) “a dynamic process in which information from the text and knowledge possessed by the reader interact to enable him to construct meaning before, during and after”.

2. The process and product of reading

It is important to make a distinction between the process of reading, and the result of that process: the product.

2.1. The process of reading

Alderson (2000) affirms “the process is what we mean by ‘reading proper’: the interaction between a reader and a text”. According to him, during this cognitive activity many operations may happen, including looking at print, deciphering the marks, recognizing the words and deciding what their meaning can be and how they are related to each other, as well as, how they are related to the context in which they occur. Alderson (2000) adds also that the process of reading is silent, internal and private, and at the same time is dynamic, variable and different not only for the same reader on different texts at different times, but also for different readers, on different texts at different times and with different purposes.

2.2. The product of reading

Alderson (2000, p.03) claims that the earlier researcher concentrates on the product approach, this means that researchers would typically design text of understanding of particular texts; administer the text to suitable information they research about the relationship between the results of the texts of variables of interest. But this approach has two major problems which are: the method used to measure the process and variation in the product. Also, they concentrate on the messages that send from the writer to the reader, we mean that the successfully understanding depends on the strategies that the reader uses them during the reading of text which are:

- Reading the lines to get linguistic comprehension.
- Reading beyond the lines; is attempting to interpret what they are reading.

- Reading between the lines; to infer implicit information and meaning another thing that is worth mentioning is that achieving successful understanding also it depends on three interrelated elements which are: the reader, the text, the activity. (Alderson, 2000, p.03)

3. Models of the reading process

Broadly speaking, there are three influential models of the reading process: the bottom-up, the top-down and the interactive.

3.1 The bottom-up model

The bottom-up model has been presented by figures like Gough (in Davies, 1995, p. 57-60). It sees reading as a mere operation of decoding script. The reader, in a consecutive gradual way, connects the printed shapes with the sounds they stand for moving from the bottom up till the top. That is, he combines smaller units into larger clusters: letters into words, words into phrases and sentences, sentences into paragraphs and paragraphs into idea units and text as a whole. At last, Comprehension takes place after vocalizing every bit of the text elements (Orasanu & Penney, 1986, p. 1). The reader's aim from this sequential decoding of the text is to identify the textual meaning and achieve a good comprehension from the piece of the written discourse.

So, within the bottom-up model, reading is seen as the ability to decode written words, which includes essentially the mechanics of reading such as visual processing, letter shape, and perception of meaning through preliminary units and relationships between sentences.

3.2. The top-down model

Carell (1988) explains that this model is rather a psycho-linguistic one in which reading is regarded as a guessing game. As a matter of fact, the reader does not decode in a sequential way, and pays little attention to the textual input. The reader rather infers meaning by

expectations and predictions based on his background knowledge. To put it differently, the reader anticipates what he is reading by forming hypotheses from the information displayed in the text, and combining it with his pre-existing knowledge to construct at the end a coherent structure of meaning and achieves a textual comprehension.

3.3. The interactive model

Stanovitch (1980, p. 31) affirms:

An interactive model of reading appears to provide a more accurate conceptualization of reading performance than do strictly top-down and bottom up models. They provide a better account of the existing data on the use of orthographic structure and sentence context by poor and good readers.

According to this model, the bottom- up and top-down models can work together interactively as parts of the reading process. The reader can make use of the textual clues on the page as he can rely on his pre-existing linguistic knowledge, otherwise known as schemata. Hence, reading in this model, as explained by Alderson (2000, p. 18), means that the reader is able to “synthesize a final hypothesis from the text from multiple knowledge sources interacting continuously and simultaneously.”

4. Types of reading

Reading types are the various behaviors adapted by the reader during the reading activity. They are categorized according to the speed and concentration which, in their turn, are dictated by the purpose the person has in mind when approaching a piece of writing (Davies, 1995, p. 136). Broadly speaking, four reading styles are delineated in the literature: skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading.

4.1. Skimming

Skimming is a quick selective reading to get the gist of a selection. Here, the reader is concerned with finding out what the text is about; for this reason, he moves his eyes rapidly throughout the page selecting only few parts to read (Grellet, 1981, p. 84). The latter are the beginnings and the endings of passages where the main points are generally summarized (Baudoin et. al., 1997, p. 70).

4.2. Scanning

Scanning is a quick unfocused reading where the reader searches for a particular detail such as a name, a date, a number ...etc (Wallace, 1980, p. 27). Baudoin et. al., (op.cit. 22) advice to follow some steps when scanning a text for a specific bit of information:

- the reader limits the targeted datum clearly, before starting looking for it
- he uses an appropriate source
- he lets his eyes run over the print skipping all unnecessary words
- he stops only at the information needed and picks it up without going beyond.

4.3. Intensive reading

Intensive reading is concentrated and less relaxed. It concerns shorter texts and aims at attaining learning goals (Harmer, 2001, p. 204). This implies that reflection upon the material and its contents is applied to reach detailed understanding and meet the predetermined study goals.

The fourth type is extensive reading that is the focus of this chapter.

5. What is extensive reading?

Extensive reading is a language teaching procedure where learners are supposed to read large quantities of materials or long texts for global understanding, the principle goal being obtained pleasure from the text (Bamford, 2004).

Extensive reading is also defined as “the reading of large amounts of material in the second language over time for pleasure or interest, and without the addition of productive tasks” (Tudor & Hafiz, 1989, p.04). This means that students do self-selected reading with only minimal accountability, writing brief summaries or comments on what they read, for example to take a book or newspaper and enjoy with no interruptions for questions as assessments; just read for pleasure.

Grabe and Stoller (2002, p.259), state that ER is reading that involves long texts and that expose learners to “large quantities of material within their linguistic competence”. Day and Bamford (1998, p.13), define ER as “an approach to the teaching and learning of second language reading in which learners read large quantities of books and other materials that are well within their linguistic competence”.

While scholars give different definitions to ER, the main idea behind their opinions is that students read for pleasure in large quantities from a wide variety of self-selected interesting, pleasurable and challenging materials.

6. Characteristics of extensive reading

In order to have a better understanding of extensive reading it is essential to have a clear view of the characteristics of ER.

Day and Bamford (2002, p. 136) mentioned that apart from ER’s impact on language and reading ability, it can be a key to unlock all the important taste for foreign language reading among students. They offered ten principles of extensive reading in regard to teaching ER as a tool for professional development of EFL students.

6.1. Easy reading material

The reading materials is within the learner’s language level that contains few or no unfamiliar items of vocabulary and grammar. This method differs from other foreign language

teaching approaches. Day and Bamfoed (2002) state “for extensive reading to be possible and to have the desired results, texts must be well within the learner’s reading competence in the foreign language”.

Hitosugi and Day (2004) mentioned that text becomes easier to read when the learners do not find more than one or two unfamiliar words on a page. These kinds of materials are well within the learners’ reading comfort zone. Moreover, reading easy materials helps the learners to read. Learners realize that they are able to read foreign language materials. So when they read more books they can notice themselves as becoming a reader in the target language (Hitosugi & Day, 2004).

6.2. A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics must be available

Having a variety in materials allows students to find their desired material that they want to read. Hitosugi and Day (2004) suggested that “different kinds of reading material also encourage a flexible approach to reading. Students learn to read in different ways (e.g., skimming, scanning, and more careful reading) and for different reasons (e.g., entertainment, information, passing the time)”

A successful ER highly depends on attracting students to read. Day and Bamford (2002, p. 137) said that there should be some diversity in materials available in the library so that students can choose what they want to read. The range of materials should contain books, magazines, newspapers, fiction, non-fiction, text that inform, text that entertain, general, specialized, light, serious.

6.3. Learners choose what they want to read

Self-selection enables students to be in a different role from that in a traditional classroom where reading materials are chosen by the teachers. The students find this method of ER really enjoyable as it gives them the opportunity to choose their own material

(Tomkova, 2008, p. 20). Day and Bamford (2002, p. 137) stated that having freedom to choose means the students can pick texts they expect to understand, learn and enjoy from. They further added that learners are free or more likely encouraged to stop reading any material which they find difficult or is not suitable to their taste.

6.4. Learners read as much as possible

The benefit of ER in language learning comes from the quantity of reading. The more one reads, the greater the benefits become (Hitosugi & Day, 2004).

6.5. The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding

According to Day and Bamford (2002, p. 138) in terms of an ER approach the reading outcomes focus shifts away from comprehension achieved or knowledge gained to reader's personal experience. They also stated that a learner's goal in ER is to have sufficient understanding to fulfill reading purpose like gathering information, enjoyment of a story or passing of time. This separates extensive reading from traditional classroom purposes.

6.6. Reading is its own reward

Hitosugi and Day (2004) mentioned that the goal for learners is to experience reading of which they are not required to demonstrate their understanding by answering comprehension questions. However, the teacher might need to ask the students to complete follow-up activities after reading for several reasons. The reasons are: to find out students understanding and experience from reading; to keep track of what students read; to monitor the student's attitude towards reading; and to link reading with other aspects of the curriculum. (Hitosugi & Day, 2004).

6.7. Reading speed is usually faster than slower

In extensive reading learners read material that they can easily understand, as a result they begin to read faster. As time passes, learners become fluent readers Hitosugi and Day (2004) suggested that students should not use dictionaries as it interrupts the reading process. It makes fluent reading impossible to achieve.

Since ER discourages learners from using dictionaries when they come across any unknown words, it gives the students the opportunity to practice strategies as guessing or ignoring unknown words or passages and to go for understanding the general meaning. This also makes students comfortable with a certain level of ambiguity (Day & Bamford, 2002, p. 139).

6.8. Reading is individual and silent

Extensive reading means learners read at their own speed. The students can do it in their own pace when and where they choose or it can be done inside the classroom when part or all of a class period is set aside for silent and self-selected reading. This allows the students to read silently (Day & Bamford, 2002, p. 139).

6.9. Teachers orient and guide their students

The student needs to be carefully instructed about ER and its benefits. Teachers can explain to the students that reading extensively not only leads to gain in reading proficiency but it also brings overall gains in language learning (Day & Bamford, 2002, p.139). The students will gain vocabulary knowledge, reading, writing, and oral fluency (Hitosugi & Day, 2004).

6.10. The teacher is a role model of a reader

Nuttall has a famous saying: “reading is caught, not taught” (as cited in Day & Bamford, 2002, p. 139). Effective ER teachers are themselves reading role models who guide the students through their attitudes and behaviors as readers (Day & Bamford, 2002, p. 140).

Based on the above characteristics, it is clear that ER can be an effective approach to encourage the students to learn the target language.

7. The benefits of extensive reading

Extensive reading is seen as a beneficial means for enhancing the skills of reading comprehension, reading speed, and word meaning guessing (Bamford & Day, 1997). Another benefit of free reading is that it allows learners to develop a deep interaction with the material (Day & Bamford, 2002), which can increase their confidence in their ability to individually read and comprehend (Hopkins, 1997).

Nation (1997) mentions three simple reasons that make ER an effective way of learning. First, in extensive reading, learners read according to their will, reading takes place without the support of the teacher, they read independently and they pick the material at their own level. Second, since they choose what to read on their own, without any kind of imposition, their motivation for reading will increase gradually. Third, ER offers a great deal of opportunities for language learning to occur out of school. This makes ER appropriate for learners who have limited target language input outside of the class.

Although, it is stated above that ER occurs out of school, in some cases the effects of in-school free reading were also measured. According to Hafiz and Tudor (1990), the learners who participated in a sustained silent reading program made better progress compared to the ones who were in a traditional program. Elley (1991) posits that free voluntary reading had a profound effect on second language learners.

8. Strategies of extensive reading

The selection of appropriate and interesting texts seems to be crucial for the success of extensive reading because “It increases motivation, which is a significant factor in the development of reading speed and fluency” (Williams, 1986, p. 42). Supporting this view, Brumfit (1986, p. 189) mentions the general criteria of texts’ selection: “Linguistic level, cultural level, length, pedagogical role, genre representation, and classic states”. Choosing a material for ER involves also: Looking through various titles, scanning through books, and, skimming over a few pages to check to see if it is accessible and likely to be interesting to read. In accepting or rejecting reading material, students develop internal judgment criteria that they use to assess language input. (Gilner & Morales, 2010, p. 17)

In an extensive reading approach, the students’ main task is reading. Writing summaries is available not only to provide a means for teachers to check but also to improve comprehension (Smith, 1988). In addition, this practice helps students to improve their writing ability (Robb & succer, 1989). Another task can be adopted for ER is the Standard exercise, a set of open-ended questions that can be designed to suit most books available to students in a course (Scott et al, 1984). The teacher’s role in the ER procedure is to encourage and help students with their reading during or after class time and by checking and commenting on written summaries that students do of their reading. These summaries give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in reading and allow teachers to determine if students understand their books at an acceptable level. If not, the teacher’s task is to guide them to books that are more appropriate.

To sum up, a teacher should be careful while choosing activities for an ER procedure. He has to avoid boring activities that require from students to remember things from their reading or that test them through comprehension questions. In contrast, a teacher should focus

on ER activities that allow students to respond on a personal level to their books which encourage them to read and allow them to enjoy what they have read.

9. The importance of extensive reading

Nation (1997, p.15) claims that over the years, numerous studies have reported that extensive reading plays an important role on language learners in a variety of ways. These studies claim that prolific readers noticeably improve their reading proficiency, reading habits, reading fluency, and vocabulary retention, as well as writing and spelling. In addition, Day and Bumford (1998, p.33-38), claim that “students who engage in extensive reading increase their reading speed, comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, motivation and positive reading attitudes”. Furthermore, Hill and Holden (1995, p.92) emphasize that students may make better progress in reading comprehension and vocabulary development through ER than in traditional instructional reading, if they are encouraged to read whatever they want in “self-selected reading”.

Moreover, Bamford and Day (2004, p.01) state that “students who read more will not only become better and more confident readers, but they will also improve their reading, writing, listening, speaking abilities and their vocabularies will get richer”. They also raise the motivational aspects of ER, seeing its importance in developing positive attitudes towards the foreign language and increasing the motivation to learn that language.

Conclusion

This chapter focuses on two main related literatures: the theory of reading and extensive reading. It has reviewed a theory of reading including definitions, process and product of reading, basic approaches to understanding reading with models of reading. The chapter, then, presents definitions and characteristics of ER and its benefits. It also has explored the importance of ER. The next chapter deals with the research methods used in the study.

Introduction

The previous chapters presented an overview of academic writing and the importance of using extensive reading as a solution to overcome learners' writing difficulties. The third chapter is devoted to the analysis of the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. The aim of these tools is to understand how students perceive AW and how they perceive benefits of ER in improving one's AW. Hence, to get an overview about teaching and learning the module of AW and the role of ER, the method that is selected to conduct this research is the descriptive method. In this chapter, we will discuss the results of the students' questionnaire and teachers' interview in order to check the validity of the research hypothesis.

1. Students' questionnaire and teachers' interview

1.1. Administration of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was administrated to thirty Master one students chosen randomly from the English department branch of Mohammed Kheider University. The choice of Master one students was based on the consideration that they have already been introduced to English academic writing. The administrated questionnaire discusses an issue that is shared by almost all Master one students; the majority of them face the same difficulties in AW in that they attempt to improve it through the reading skill in general and through extensive reading in particular.

1.1.2. Description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of sixteen (16) open-ended and multiple-choice questions divided into three sections as follow:

- **Section One:** General Information (Q1-Q2):

It contains two questions and tries to obtain personal information about participants such as: gender, and whether studying for the Master degree was a personal choice or imposed.

- **Section Two:** Academic Writing (Q3-Q8):

It is about describing academic writing. It aims at exploring how students deal with writing, the difficulties they face while writing and the solution to these difficulties.

- **Section Three:** Extensive Reading (Q9-Q16):

This section is devoted to collecting data about extensive reading and its effects on students' writing proficiency.

1.2. Teachers' interview

It is another tool that we rely on in order to test the hypothesis, consolidate our data and gather extra information that serve our study. Moreover the interview has been administrated in the Department of Foreign Languages at Biskra University; the reason behind conducting this interview is to collect information about the impact of extensive reading on improving Master one students' academic writing.

The sample of our population is AW teachers whom we have chosen randomly. The aim behind choosing these teachers is that they know more about their students' level and their style in writing.

Questionnaire

- Section one : General information

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	4	13%
Female	26	87%

Table 1: Student’s gender distribution

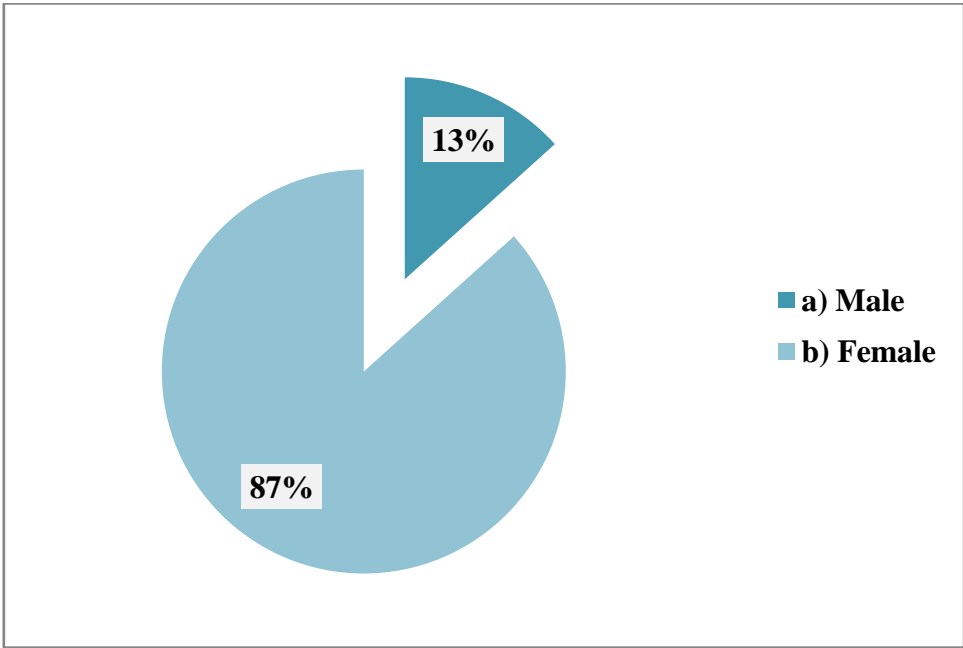


Figure 1: student’s gender distribution

Table (01) reveals that 26 out of 30 participants were females. This is about 87% which consolidates the claim that females are generally more interested in studying foreign languages and English in particular. Males in general tend to prefer scientific and technical branches. Therefore, we found only 4 males out of 30, i.e. a percentage of 13% that prefers to study English.

2. Choosing to learn English in Master studies is:

choice to learn English	Number	Percentage
Your own choice	28	93%
Imposed on your	02	7%

Table 2: student's choice to learn English in Master studies

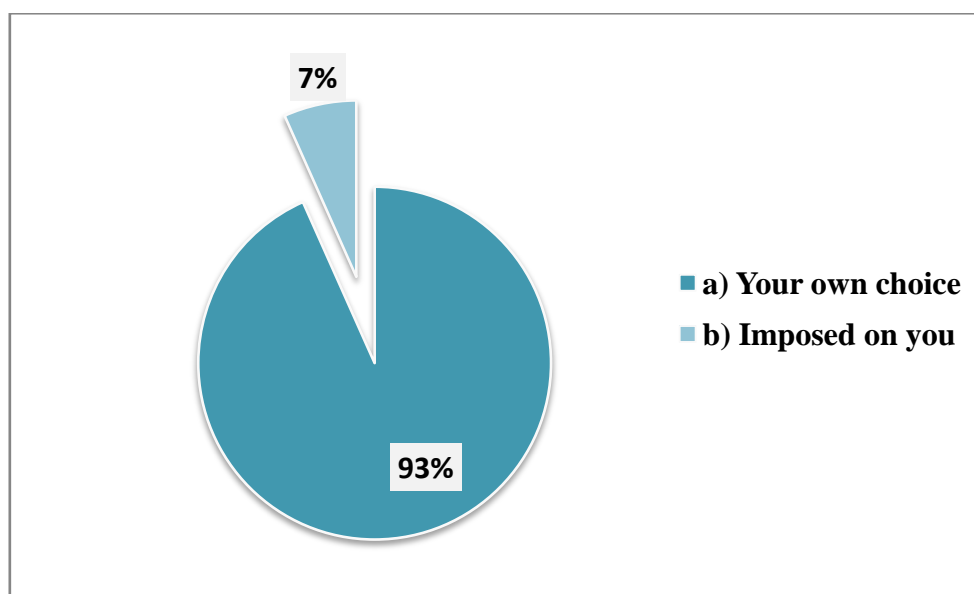


Figure 2: student's choice to learn English in Master studies

According to Table (02), we notice that 93% of our participants have chosen to pursue their Master studies as a free choice because they like the English language and they want to develop their level. While 7% of students did not choose freely to pursue their Master studies because of some reasons like parents' pressure as they see English more appropriate for their future or for some other reasons.

- **Section two: Academic Writing**

3. How do you evaluate your level in academic writing?

Level academic	Number	Percentage
Good	10	33%
Average	18	60%
Weak	02	7%

Table 3: Student's level in academic writing

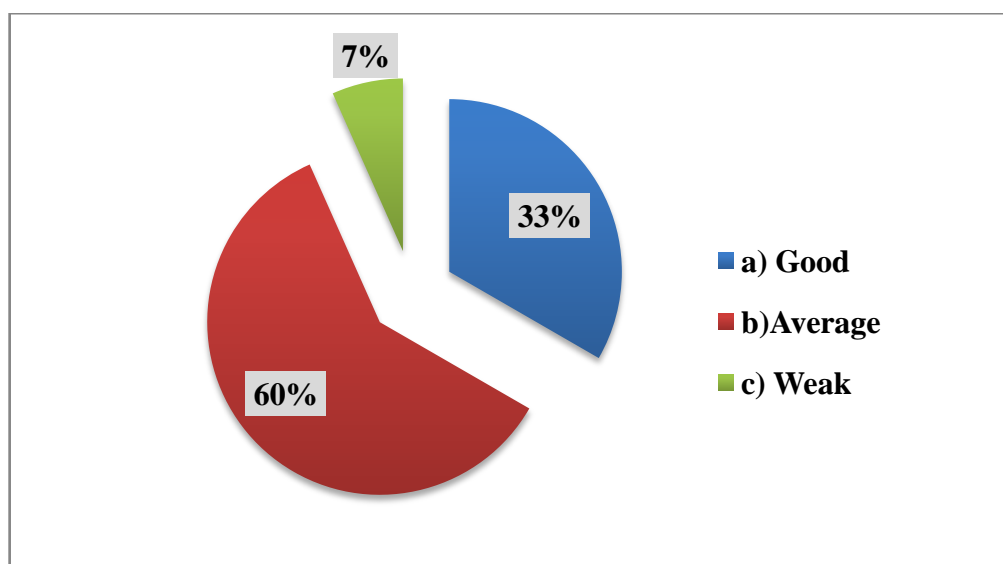


Figure 3: Student's level in academic writing

We can notice from the table (03) that 60% of the whole population have an average level. However, 33% of the participants are sure to have a good level in academic writing; then, the percentage is 7% in weak level in AW.

4. Do you use all the stages of writing? (Pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing)

Using stage of writing	Number	Percentage
Yes	26	87%
No	04	13%

Table 4: Student's use of stages of writing

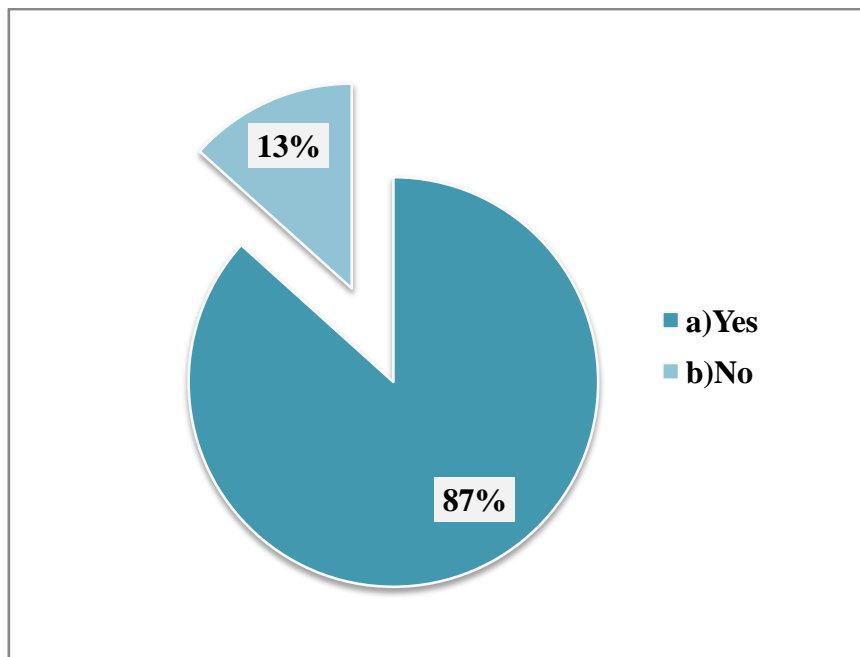


Figure 4: Student's use of stages of writing

Results in table (04) show that 87% of participants use the stages of writing. However, few students 13% do not use the stages.

5. In your opinion, which stage is more difficult? Explain.

From the analysis of this question, most of students agreed that revising is more difficult than other stages. In this stage, students should master grammar, use the appropriate language and style and apply the appropriate vocabulary in order to achieve a good piece of writing.

6. In your opinion, what is the most important component of academic writing?

most important component of academic writing	Number	Percentage
Organization	08	27%
Spelling	03	10%
Punctuation	01	3%
Grammar	08	27%
Sentence structure	10	10%

Table 5: Student’s opinion about the most important component of academic writing

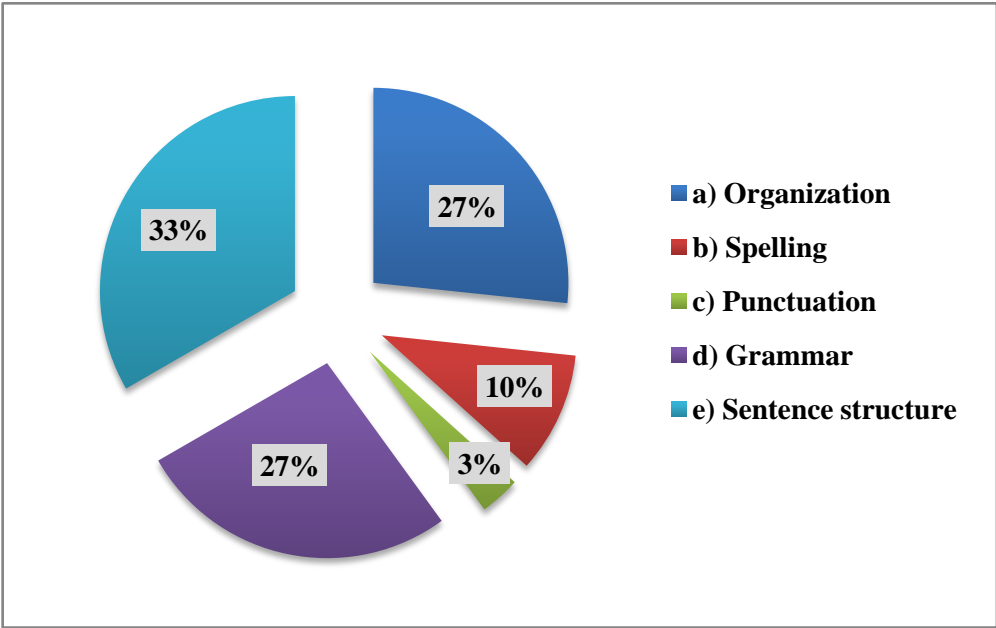


Figure 5: Student’s opinion about the most important component of academic writing

According to the above table, 33% of our respondents see sentence structure as the most important component. 27% see that the most important component is organization, while 27%

view grammar as such, whereas 10% mention spelling as the most important one. 03% however think that punctuation is the most important component.

7. What is the main difficulty you face when writing?

difficulty of writing	Number	Percentage
Lack of vocabulary	13	43%
Spelling	03	10%
Grammatical rules	08	27%
Process and organization	06	20%

Table 6: Student's difficulty in writing

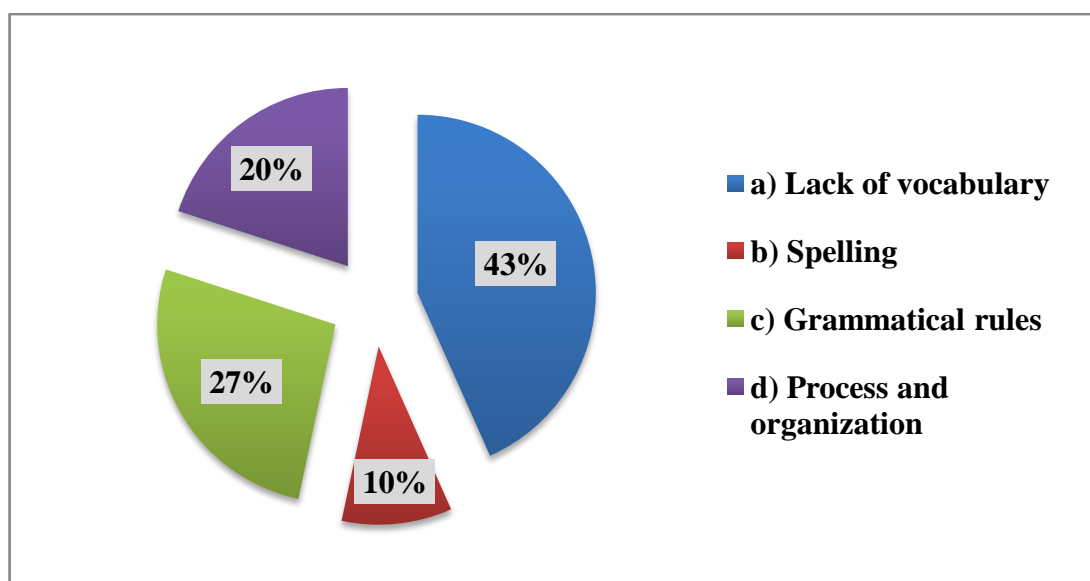


Figure 6: Student's difficulty in writing

Table (06) shows that about a half of students 43% answered that lack of vocabulary is the most difficult element in writing. Then, grammatical rules come with a percentage of

27%, process and organization is mentioned with a percentage of 20% and finally spelling considered as a difficulty with only 10%.

8. What is the solution in your opinion?

Solution	Number	Percentage
Teacher's help	03	10%
Additional sessions	06	20%
Readings	21	70%

Table 7: Student's proposed solution

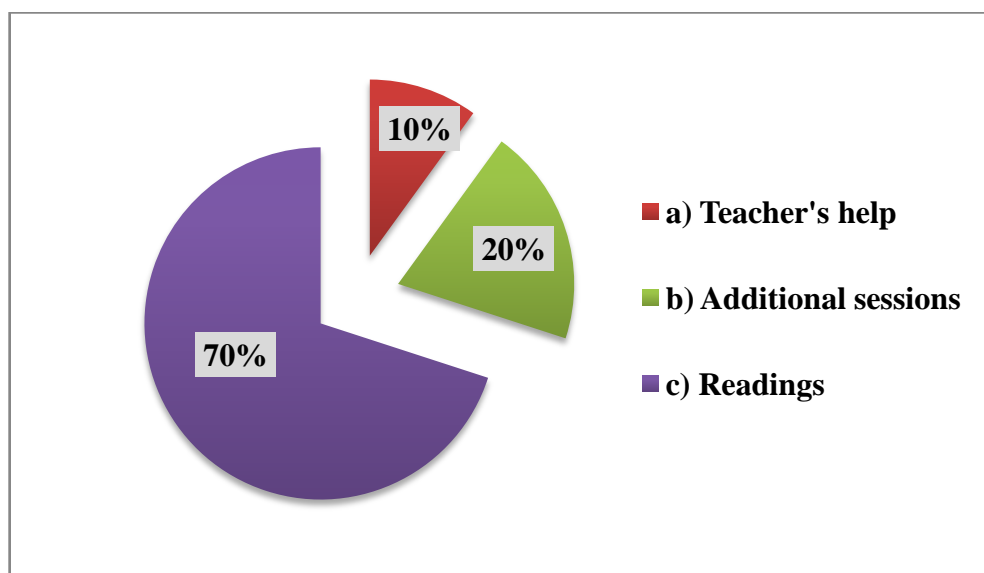


Figure 7: Student's proposed solution

According to table (07), 70% of students see reading as the appropriate solution. Additional sessions come next with a rate of 20%. Only 10% of our sample chooses teacher's help as a solution.

- **Section three:** Extensive Reading

9. What kinds of materials do you enjoy reading?

Materials enjoyment	Number	Percentage
Books	17	57%
Magazines	04	14%
Articles	07	23%
Short stories	01	3%
Others	01	3%

Table 8: Student's materials enjoyment

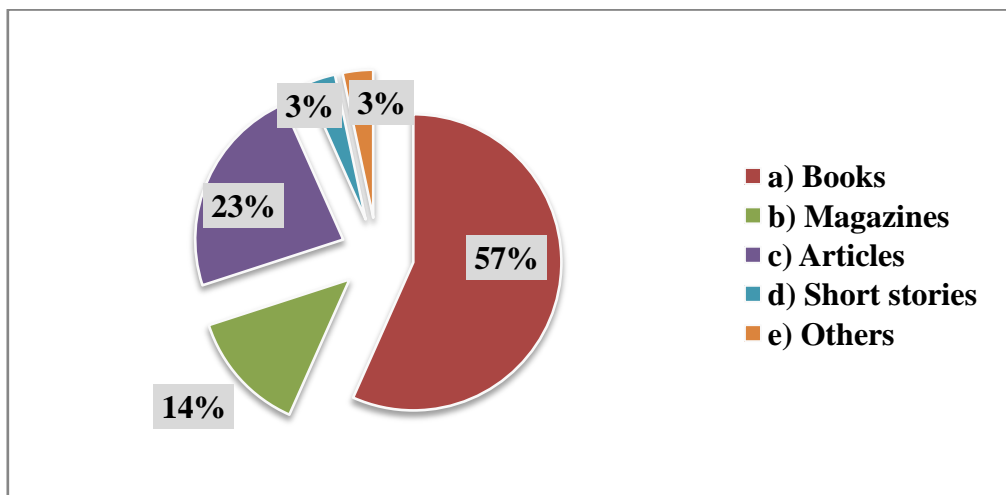


Figure 8: Student's materials enjoyment

According to table (08), 57% of our respondents enjoy reading books, 23% like articles, and 14% prefer magazines, while just 3% enjoy short stories and only 3% of students prefer to read other types of materials.

10. In your opinion, what are the advantages of reading a lot?

From the analysis of this question, we have noticed that students see the benefit of reading a lot in enriching their vocabulary, and others state that reading a lot helps in obtaining new ideas to explore during the writing process and enriching their general

knowledge. While some students claim that reading a lot helps them learn more about the target language and to facilitate the process of learning.

11. Do you read extensively?

Reading Extensively	Number	Percentage
Yes	26	87%
No	04	13%

Table 9: Reading extensively

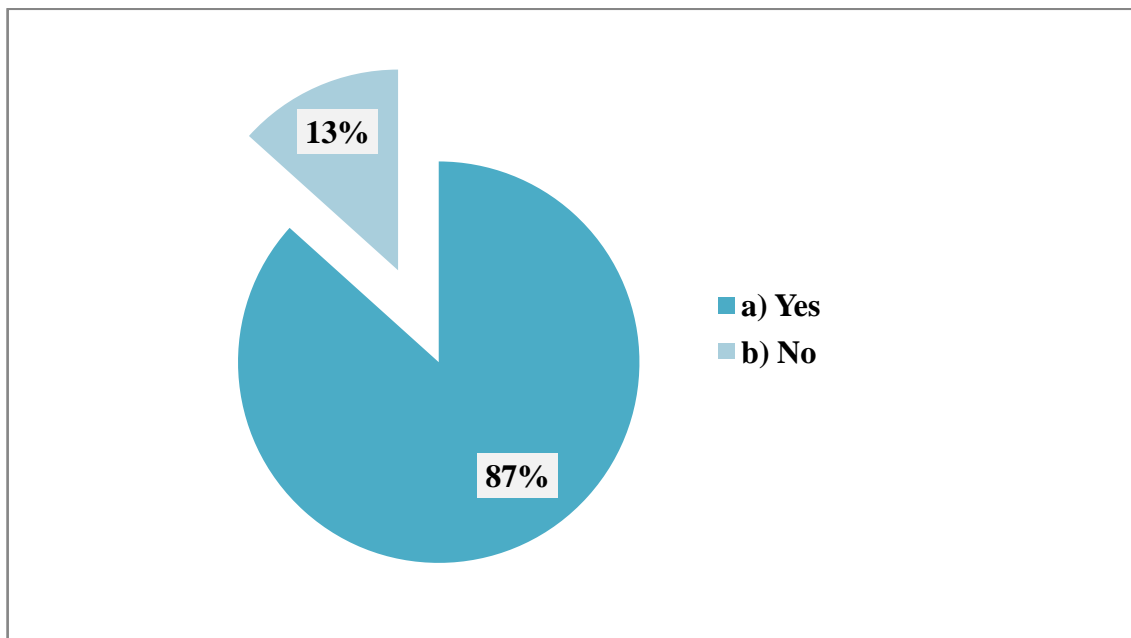


Figure 9: Reading extensively

Table (07) shows that the majority of the participants in the questionnaire 87% do read extensively, while only 13% do not read extensively.

12. How often do you read extensively?

frequency of reading	Number	Percentage
Daily	12	40%
Weekly	15	50%
Monthly	03	10%

Table 10: Student’s frequency of reading

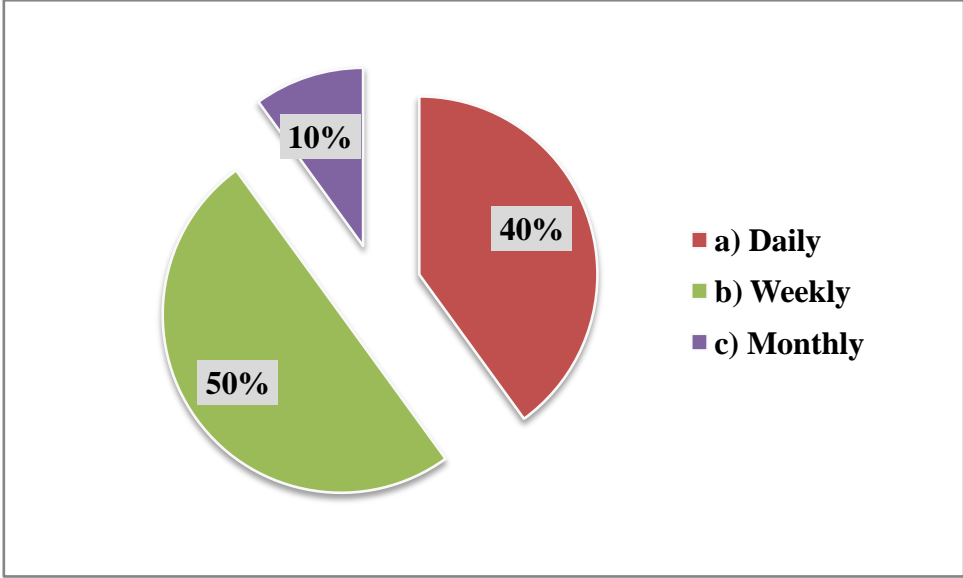


Figure 10: Student’s frequency of reading

According to the results obtained from table (10), 50% of the respondents report that they read weekly; 40% of the respondents indicate that they read daily. Whereas, 10% of students declare that they practice reading monthly.

13. Do you use the dictionary when you read?

Using dictionaries	Number	Percentage
Yes	23	77%
No	07	23%

Table 11: The use of dictionary while reading

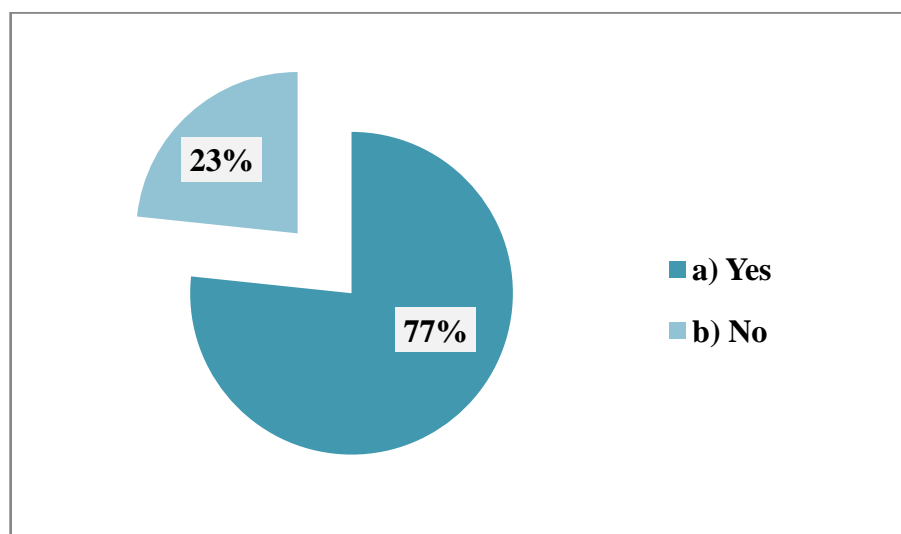


Figure 11: The use of dictionary while reading

The table above indicates that 77% of participants use the dictionary while 23% of students do not use the dictionary when they have to look for the meaning of certain words.

14. If yes, which type of dictionaries do you use?

Table 12: Dictionaries' type used by students

dictionaries' type using	Number	Percentage
Monolingual	08	27%
Bilingual	06	53%
Specialized	16	20%
other	0	0%

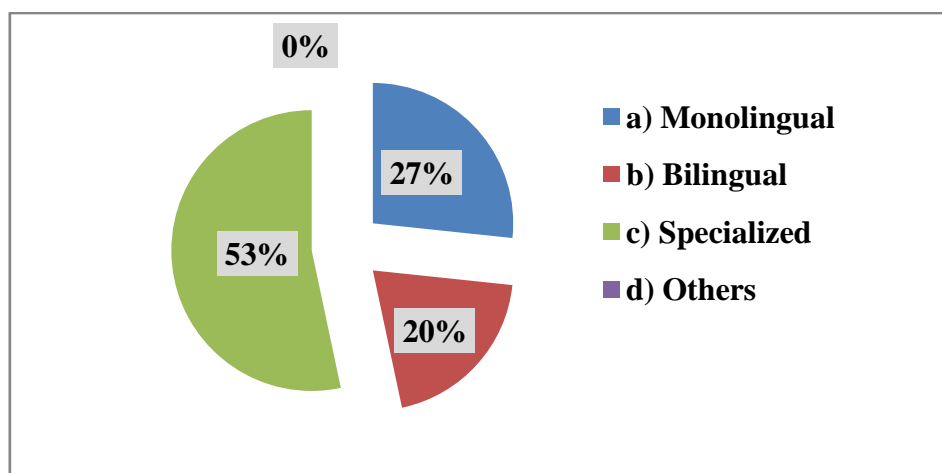


Figure 12: Dictionaries' type used by students

According to table (12), 53% of our respondents utilize specialized dictionary, 27% use monolingual dictionary, 20% utilize bilingual dictionary.

15. Do your teachers motivate you to read extensively? If yes, how?

Teachers' motivation to read extensively	Number	percentage
Yes	23	77%
No	07	23%

Table 13: Teachers' motivating their students to read extensively

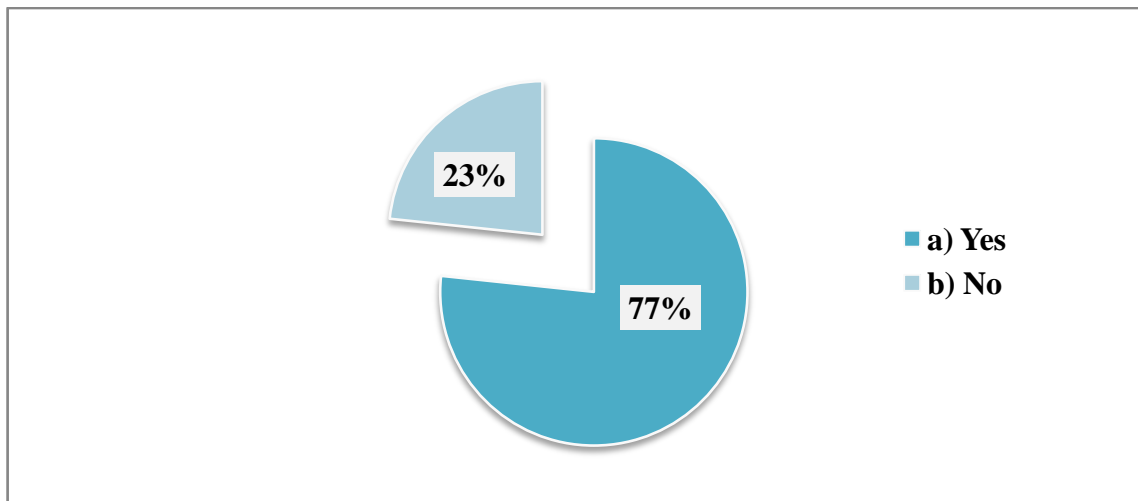


Figure 13: Teachers' motivating their students to read extensively

Table (13) demonstrates that 77% of students answered 'yes': their teachers do motivate them to read extensively. Whereas 23% of participants claim that their teachers do not motivate them to read extensively.

If yes, how?

According to the result of this question, most students mentioned that their teachers motivate them by providing titles of books, sources, articles and novels to read outside the class.

16. Does extensive reading help you to enhance your academic writing?

Extensive reading helping	Number	percentage
Yes	27	90%
No	03	10%

Table 14: The enhancement of academic writing by reading extensively

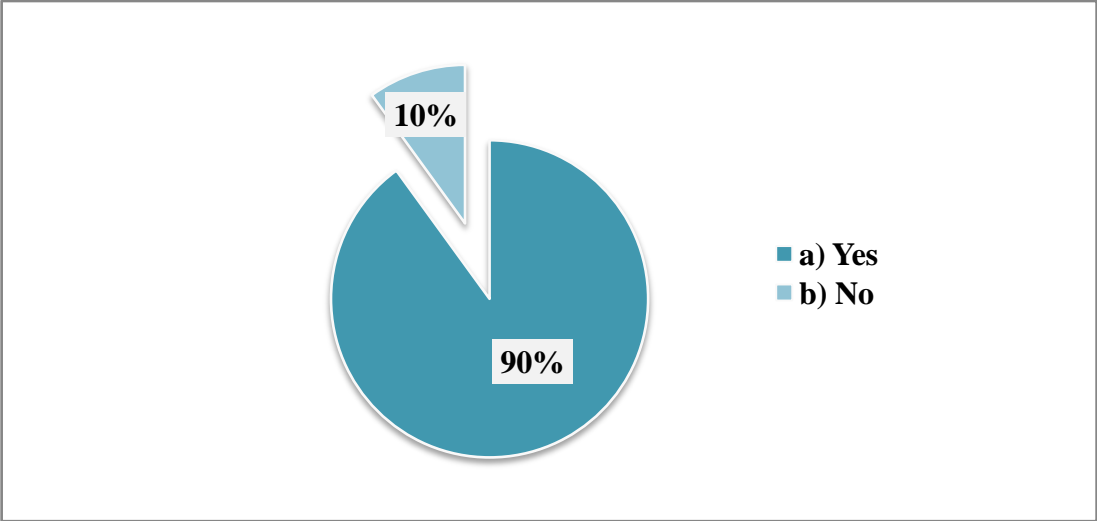


Figure 14: The enhancement of academic writing by reading extensively

Table (14) reveals that 90% of the sample says that reading extensively improves their academic writing; however, 10% of participants think that ER does not enhance their AW.

Teachers' interview

Teachers' data collection process began by distributing five (5) copies of the interview to non-randomly chosen teachers of academic writing. During each interview, further clarifications were requested in order to achieve depth in information. In this regard, teachers' answers have been divided into four parts: general background information and teachers' attitudes towards the impact of extensive reading on improving Master one students' academic writing.

Number of the interviewee	Educational degree	Teaching experience
Teacher 01	Magister degree	08 years
Teacher 02	Doctoral degree	15 years
Teacher 03	Doctoral degree	15 years
Teacher 04	Magister degree	08 years
Teacher 05	Doctoral degree	12 years

Table 15: Teacher's background information

According to the results, teachers' experience ranges between eight to fifteen years of teaching English. Moreover, most of our participants hold a Doctoral degree while the other two hold Magister degree.

- **Teachers' approach to teaching AW**

Q3: What kind of activities do you use to teach academic writing?

Based on the analysis of the third question of the interview, teachers views were varied, but most of the teachers use group work as an activity to teach academic writing.

Teacher 01

“Different activities are used either individually, in pairs or in groups”

Teacher 02

“Using authentic texts as models of good style, correct syntax, lexis as well as good coherence. (Connecting ideas appropriately using linking words and transitional signals)”

Teacher 03

“Focus on summarizing and synthesizing, using mainly the product approach and the genre approach”

Teacher 04

“Making students use formal / academic language including formal vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. Using group work for students to interact, share ideas and correct one another (Peer assessment and peer feedback)”

Teacher 05

“Show students the pattern of organization then I give them an example and then out of these ideas, I ask students whether in pairs, individually or in groups on a particular topic, we discuss in class. Sometimes I give them free choice, they chose the topic. Sometimes I ask them to write essays at home”

Q4: When assessing your students, do you focus more on form, content or language and style?

From the analysis of this question, all the teachers focus on all of them.

Teacher 01

“I personally focus on all of them because all of them guarantee effective academic writing”

Teacher 02

“All of them should be considered”

Teacher 03

“All of them are crucial”

Teacher 04

“Actually, I focus on all of them because they are all part of academic writing”

Teacher 05

“All of them should be focused on”

Q5: Which skill do you think students should master before they write?

This question entails that all teachers agreed that the reading skill is the one that students should master before they write.

Teacher 01

“Reading first because good writers are good readers and vice versa”

Teacher 02

“The reading skill”

Teacher 03

“Reading skill because reading makes you good writers”

Teacher 04

“Reading skill”

Teacher 05

“Reading comes first, the more you read the better you become exposed to different texts, different styles, and different structures, learn more vocabulary. Listening also helps, when you listen to authentic passages you learn vocabulary and you learn also sentence structure”

Q6: Do you motivate your students to read extensively? How?

From the analysis of this question, all teachers motivate their students to read extensively. Most of teachers motivate their students by giving them some titles of books, sources to read outside the class.

Teacher 01

“Yes I do, this year I have introduced a new lecture about reading critically via both extensive and intensive reading”

Teacher 02

“Yes I do, by giving them some titles of books to read outside the class”

Teacher 03

“Of course yes, I advice, guide and motivate them to read”

Teacher 04

“Yes, by assigning books to read and make book reviews to be discussed in class, by recommending some titles of books/sources/websites to read outside the class”

Teacher 05

“A part of my classroom policy is reading. I always advice them to read a lot at home because reading helps them to develop their writing, I ask them to read whatever comes in their hands, II tell them to read everything (essays, articles from internet, books if they have) at least to develop the habit of reading, especially extensive reading”

Q7: Do you use reading techniques within your classroom? State them

Here the teachers’ views were varied because each teacher prefers a different way to teach.

Teacher 01

“Yes I do, students skim any given text, and they also have pre-reading, during reading and post-reading activities”

Teacher 02

“For the time being, I do not use them”

Teacher 03

“Namely extensive and intensive readings”

Teacher 04

“I rarely use reading because of time. But skimming and scanning are the two most used techniques”

Teacher 05

“I sometimes do, I bring a text to them as stimulus or as reference, we read together a story or a text we discuss about them and ask them to write something about that”

- **Difficulties faced by students in AW, according to teachers**

Q8: What is the main role of the teacher in academic writing?

Concerning this question which was given to all teachers, the main role of the teacher in academic writing is: a guide

Teacher 01

“Teach students how to write academically, avoiding any informal utterances of course with a lot of practice”

Teacher 02

“It is to instruct the students how English writing should fit the academic purposes”

Teacher 03

“His / her main role is enable learners to know what academic rules he / she needs to consider and follow while writing”

Teacher 04

“To assure that students master all steps of writing (from the pre-writing stage till publishing stage). To assure that students master the form and structure of an essay (thesis statement, ...). Make students practice as much as possible by writing on diverse topics in order to vary vocabulary and style. Correcting students’ productions (as frequently as possible) and delivering appropriate feedback for the student to know his/her strengths and weaknesses. Raising students’ awareness about the necessity of using formal language and organizing well their ideas. Raising their self-confidence, showing that making mistakes is part of the learning process and telling them that the more they make mistakes, the more they learn”

Teacher 05

“Teacher as monitor first, I monitor and students work. I even stimulate students to write about certain topics, I evaluate, I guide as well and I assess their whole production”

Q9: What are the difficulties that you face while teaching academic writing?

This question entails that most teachers face problems related to the level of their learners and how to motivate them to write.

Teacher 01

“Teaching crowded classes prevents the teacher from individual tutoring. Thus, we tend to rely on peer evaluation to cope with the situation”

Teacher 02

“The level of students in writing, they do not read enough English texts that enable them to avoid spelling and grammar mistakes”

Teacher 03

“I think the main problem is that: students are poor in writing, students are not motivated to write”

Teacher 04

“Difficulty to motivate all students to write (it can be a boring task for some students)
Difficulty to find topics that fit all students’ likes and interest. Difficulty to make students practice in class because of time constraints and their large number. Difficulty to correct all papers because of the large number. Difficulty to deliver feedback for all the class. Not enough time to practice reading in class. Difficulty to make students follow correctly all the stages of writing (many students do not revise and proofread)”

Teacher 05

“I face difficulties with students who have poor linguistic levels, sometimes I ask students to write an advanced essay and I find that many of them are struggling with word choice, sentence structure, vocabulary, grammar, so instead of focusing on the content I focus on the form”

- **Teachers’ opinions**

Q10: What are the common problems that Master one students face in their written productions?

Concerning this question, teachers views were varied, some of them noticed that the common problems were in grammar and style. Others observed that learners’ common problems were in cohesion and coherence.

Teacher 01

“Grammar, punctuation, mastery of some cognitive skills such as summarizing, paraphrasing...”

Teacher 02

“In addition to grammar and spelling, students do not know how cohesions and coherence should be elaborated in a written text”

Teacher 03

“Poor writing, they do not write. They ignore the academic writing requirements / rules”

Teacher 04

“Students tend to not follow all the steps/stages of writing: some students do not pass by the prewriting stage (brainstorming; they start directly drafting without any plan) or do not proofread their compositions. Consequently, there are a lot of mistakes. Students produce poorly written productions in terms of style, grammar, vocabulary use, punctuation and ideas. Moreover, some compositions may lack unity or coherence. Negative language transfer (students think in their mother tongue then translate ideas into English). This results in errors, misunderstandings, wrong structures...”

Teacher 05

“They produce good and correct sentences but when it comes to coherence or cohesion within the ideas many of them struggle with these”

Q11: In your opinion, does extensive reading contribute to the development of students’ skills in academic writing? Please explain.

This is a crucial point in our work, all teachers agreed on the contribution of extensive reading in improving academic writing. All teachers see that good writers are good readers.

Teacher 01

“Yes it does, since it helps learners to have more information, to know more vocabulary and identify new writing styles. I encourage my learners to read a lot”

Teacher 02

“Sure, through reading we gain a prior knowledge and store information about grammar, spelling and even about coherence and cohesion”

Teacher 03

“Yes, it is obvious. The more learners read the better they can handle the writing skill”

Teacher 04

“Yes. Through reading, students become more competent in writing: they can check correct vocabulary use (in context) or gain new vocabulary, correct grammar, spelling, formal style, correct cohesion and coherence, correct form and structure, elaborate ideas. They can also discover cultural insights and see how language varies (in form and content according to specific contexts) they can check how the read set a specific purpose of writing and how they developed their ideas accordingly. Extensive reading enhances motivation as students have at their disposal plenty of materials (that they can select themselves) that fit their likes, needs and interest; i.e. they can read for pleasure+ learning”

Teacher 05

“Good readers are often good writers, when you read you learn more about the language, more about sentence structure, vocabulary, grammar, coherence, and get familiar with the topics”.

2. Research finding and discussion

The results of the questionnaire could be interpreted as follows. Extensive reading is found to be an effective way to develop students' academic writing. The analysis of the questionnaire shows that with this approach, students will be able to know their mistakes and correct them. Moreover, it is shown that ER contributes to developing students' writing in terms of using the right punctuation as well as eliminating some problems concerning the spelling mistakes. On this ground, it is noticed that using this approach improves students'

linguistic level. To sum up, it is found that students' skills in AW are enhanced when adopting ER as an approach.

The results of the interview show that teachers consider ER as an effective approach in developing students' academic writing, as all the interviewed teachers report. Furthermore, ER enhances students' AW through ameliorating different aspects of their linguistic performance including vocabulary, grammar as well as punctuation and spelling. This is compatible with the results obtained from the questionnaire.

Conclusion

To conclude, the findings show that Master one students have some difficulties in writing academically due to lack of reading. From the analysis of students' questionnaires and teachers' interview, the majority of students should enhance their performance in academic writing, by practicing extensive reading.

General conclusion

The reading skill is one of the most skills in a language; it is considered as an important skill that affects the development of other language skills, especially writing. This study aims to prove that extensive reading affects the improvement of EFL learners' writing proficiency. Hence, the study hypothesizes:

- If Master one students read extensively, their academic writing competence will be increased.

The first chapter introduces the theoretical overview of the writing skill and is divided into two sections. In the first section, we have provided definitions of writing, its processes and types. In the second section, we have identified academic writing and stated its features and types. After that, we have introduced techniques that are used to improve AW stages and development; also we presented factors that prevent Master one students from writing correctly and academically. Finally, we uncovered the relationship between AW and ER.

The second chapter is concerned with the reading skill. The first part of this chapter introduced the term "reading" by providing different definitions, process and product, models and types. In the second part, we mentioned ER in which we gave various definitions of ER then, we stated its characteristics, benefits, strategies and importance.

The third chapter is a practical part; it aims to test the research hypothesis. It investigated improving students' academic writing through extensive reading via the analysis of the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. The main goal of these tools was to understand how Master one students perceive benefits of extensive reading in improving their academic writing.

The results of the study revealed that Master one students face many problems when writing such as: organization, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and other

General conclusion

aspects that affects their writing production. They stated that ER helps them to reduce their difficulties and enhances their language aspects. Also teachers have shown their awareness of the reading-writing relationship. They claimed that the two skills have a complementary function and they work in parallel.

Recommendations

Based on the different theoretical and empirical findings which emphasize the impact of extensive reading on improving Master one students' academic writing, some suggestions and recommendations are addressed to students and teachers in the following.

For students

- Students must be aware of the relation between reading and writing and how they complete each other.
- Students should be exposed to different topics, genres, and styles of writing. This will give them the chance to learn the different linguistic features that create cohesion.
- We recommend students to read everything written academically in order to write academically.

For teachers

- Teachers should train learners how to choose suitable reading material and how to read it.
- Teachers have to convince the students to view reading from a pleasurable side rather than as a boring task.
- We recommend teachers to focus more on practicing extensive reading inside the classroom and motivate students to read outside the classroom.

References

Appendices

Questionnaire

Dear student, you are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire, which is a part of my Master dissertation. This latter is about the impact of extensive reading on improving Master one students' academic writing. Your contribution will be very importance for the success of study. Please tick the appropriate answer and write full statement whenever necessary. Thank you for your time effort and collaboration.

Section one : General information

1. Gender :

a) Male

b) Female

2. Choosing to learn English in Master studies is :

a) Your own choice

b) Imposed on you

Section two: Academic Writing

3. How do you evaluate your level in academic writing:

a) Good

b) Average

c) weak

4. Do you use all the stages of writing? (pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing)

a) Yes

b) No

5. In your opinion, which stage is more difficult? Explain.

.....
.....

6. In your opinion, what is the most important component of academic writing?

- a) Organization
- b) Spelling
- c) Punctuation
- d) Grammar
- e) Sentence structure

7. What is the main difficulty you face when writing?

- a) Lack of vocabulary
- b) Spelling
- c) Grammatical rules
- d) Process and organization

8. What is the solution in your opinion?

- a) Teacher's help
- b) Additional sessions
- c) readings

Section three: Extensive Reading

9. What kinds of materials do you enjoy reading?

- a) Books
- b) Magazines
- c) Articles
- d) Short stories
- e) Others

10. In your opinion, what are the advantages of reading a lot?

.....
.....

11. Do you read extensively?

a) Yes

b) No

12. How often do you read extensively?

a) Daily

b) Weekly

c) Monthly

13. Do you use the dictionary when you read?

a) Yes

b) No

14. If yes, which type of dictionaries do you use?

a) Monolingual

b) Bilingual

c) Specialized

d) others

15. Do your teachers motivate you to read extensively?

a) Yes

b) No

If yes, how?

.....
.....

16. Does extensive reading help you to enhance your academic writing?

a) Yes

b) No

Teachers' interview

Dear teacher,

The present study aims at investigating the impact of extensive reading on improving students' academic writing. We would appreciate you in taking time to answer the following questions based on your own experience. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

General background

- Which kind of diplomat do you have?

.....

- How many years have you been teaching English language at the university?

.....

Teachers' approach to teaching AW

- 1- What kind of strategies do you use to teach academic writing?

.....
.....

- 2- When assessing your students, do you focus more on form, content or language and style?

.....
.....

- 3- Which skill do you think students should master before they write?

.....
.....

4- Do you motivate your students to read extensively? How?

.....
.....

5- Do you use reading techniques within your classroom? State them please.

.....
.....

Difficulties faced by students in AW, according to teachers

6- What are the difficulties that you face while teaching academic writing?

.....
.....

7- What are the common problems that the Master one students face in their written production?

.....
.....

Teachers' opinion

8- What is the main role of the teacher in academic writing?

.....
.....

9- In your opinion, does extensive reading contribute to the development of the academic writing? Please explain.

المخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من مدى تأثير القراءة الواسعة على مهارة الكتابة الأكاديمية عند طلبة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية حتى تكون مقالاتهم من الجودة بما كان. وقد اخترنا لهذا الغرض ثلاثين طالبا من السنة الأولى ماستر من قسم الآداب و اللغة الانجليزية و خمسة مدرسين للكتابة الأكاديمية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة للعام الدراسي 2019/2018. و قد تبيننا المقاربة الوصفية التحليلية من أجل الوصول لمبتغي دراستنا، فقمنا بمزاوجة الاستبيان ذي المعطيات الكمية مع المقابلة ذات المعطيات النوعية. و بعد تحليلنا للنتائج تأكدنا أن القراءة الواسعة لها دور محوري جدا في تحسين مهارات الكتابة الأكاديمية للطلبة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : القراءة الواسعة، الكتابة الأكاديمية.