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The contribution of critical writing skill to the EFL graduates' dissertations

The case study of Master 2 students of English at Biskra University

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DEDICATION

*To the memory of my father Abd Elrrachid, who left so early and didn't see me reaching
my success.*

To my dearest mother, the source of my happiness and the rose of my heart.

To my only dearest sister Dounia Elamel who makes me laugh in my sad times.

To my only brother Ayoub, who supported me in my study.

To my cousin Belkhir, who helped me during my study.

*To Ferial, my best friend, who has been with me in every single step and with whom I spent
the beautiful moments in the university.*

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Abstract

Critical writing skill is one of the crucial requirements for dissertations' completion. This skill is simply the ability to criticize, judge and evaluate authors' ideas and other types of sources that might refer to in a dissertation. most EFL students at Biskra university encountered different challenges when writing their dissertations. Those difficulties are in terms of judging and evaluating authors' ideas, making a critique about a certain source. This study is an attempt to investigate the way students rely on critical writing in order to complete their dissertations. For this end, we hypothesize that if students rely on critical writing, they can improve the quality of their dissertations. Furthermore, to achieve the main purpose of this study, a qualitative approach was adopted. Besides, in order to collect data for this descriptive research work, a questionnaire has been used as a data gathering tool administered to 41 Master two (M2) students of English during the current academic year 2020/2012. After the analysis and discussion of the collected data, the obtained responses revealed that students agree that critical writing helps in improving the quality of their dissertations.

Key words: critical writing, dissertation, EFL students.

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General Introduction

Writing is one of the crucial parts in education. It is a complex and a challenging task for students to master this process. It requires effort and practice in order to reach an acceptable level. It is important for students to master this skill in order to be engaged in the academic community. This skill has many types, the most important one is critical writing. This latter gives the opportunity for students to make judgments on authors' ideas, arguing where they mostly used in dissertations.

Conducting research as a final phase of the study is a challenging task where Master students are required to write their final dissertations in order to be graduated. Writing a research paper is a challenging task for most students especially non native speakers, it uses various processes and skills. Also, it requires the use of authors ideas and evaluation of sources, Where critical writing takes place. This study devoted to investigate the contribution of critical writing in the dissertation completion.

The present study aims at identifying the important role of critical writing in graduates' dissertations and how this latter improves the quality of the research paper.

Statement of the problem

Writing a dissertation is a challenging task where Master students (M2) are supposed to be engaged in the academic research as a final phase of higher educational system,

Master two students are expected to write their dissertations by relying on critical writing where it was noticed that most EFL students at Biskra university lack judging arguments, evaluate authors' views, review and analyze sources where critical writing takes place.

Master students (M2) write their dissertations without paying attention to the way how to write critically and academically, in order to have an effective work. Therefore, the main focus of the present study is identify the importance of critical writing in graduates' dissertations.

2.Literature review

Critical writing is a process where arguments being analyzed and evaluated; that many researchers and scholars assert that.

Critical writing is not only viewed as the criticalness of finding the research topic, but also provides the students to be able to elaborate, to organize, and to formulate research background, research problem, review of related literature, and research method in well-organized text. Well-organized text is dealing with the organization, content, vocabulary, mechanics, and language use. (Yamin, Oikurema,. 2020. P.151).

Another idea stated by Yamin, Oikurema (2020), that Critical writing strategies for conducting a research proposal become necessary and essential to state that writing critically dealing with a research proposal should be enhanced for undergraduate students. Improving those strategies mean to teach them to learn to find out the topics of research available with the passion of research topic.

Many scholars have focused on the importance of critical writing skills on graduates' dissertations. The role of writing in building critical appraisal skills is of particular relevance; especially for university students who are expected to represent their knowledge in writing by making critical connections within subject areas as finding the relationship between a subject and another, and generalizing ideas to other contexts. Commonly, difficulties with higher order processing, thought provoking questioning, and critical analysis affect students' ability to effectively demonstrate critical understanding in essays they write (Campbell et al.,1998; Golding, 2011)(cited in Bailey et al, 2015).

"In critical writing, an argument is usually a main idea, often called a " claim" or " thesis statement", backed up with evidence that support it". (Perelman, 2020).

Whatever you write as a student will be read critically by your assessors. If you progress to writing for a conference presentation or publication, anonymous reviewers and then the academic community will also be critical readers of your work. A secret of successful writing is to anticipate the expectations and potential objections of the audience of critical readers for whom you are writing. (Wallace and Wray, 2011).

Writing a dissertation for graduate's is a form of combination between critical reading and critical writing; as stated by Wallace, "This marriage of reading and writing has many benefits. First, you will develop a sense of what is and is not a robust piece of research – essential when come to plan your own empirical investigation (for a dissertation, say). Second, you will soon begin identifying where the existing research has left a gap that your investigation can fill. Third, the attention you pay to different authors' texts will naturally affect the quality of your own writing". (Wallace and Wray, 2011,P.7).

Critical writing has an effective role in enhancing the quality of dissertations.

3. Research question

- How would Master students (M2) rely on critical writing in order to accomplish their dissertations?.
- How does critical writing contribute in graduate's dissertations?.
- What are the expected difficulties students may face when writing critically in the course of their dissertation completion?

4. Research hypothesis

- Critical writing will help graduates to develop their dissertations.
- Critical writing will contribute effectively into the successful completion of graduates' dissertations.

5. Significance of the study

This study investigates the contribution of critical writing into graduate's dissertations, in order to find out its importance and its effectiveness in developing the dissertation. To reveal the effective role of critical writing in dissertation.

To find out how critical writing contribute into the dissertation.

6. Aims of the study

This study aims at determining the important role of critical writing in developing graduate's dissertations, and its main contribution while conducting a research and writing the dissertation. Also to raise EFL students' awareness about the effective role of critical writing while conducting a research.

7. Research methodology

7.1. Research method

We use the qualitative, descriptive research method in order to discover the role of critical writing in graduate's dissertation, and its effectiveness.

7.2.Sample

We select second year Master two students (M2)of both specialties (science of language and literature and civilization) as a sample of the study, in order to identify how critical writing contributes in their dissertations and to find its role in the developing dissertations.

7.3.Data gathering tools

We use questionnaire as a data gathering tool to some in order to have a closer idea about the effective role of critical writing when writing a dissertation and conducting a research.

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Introduction

Humans born with a strong desire to discover, find things and invent. They have an innate capacity of curiosity that caused them to produce, in order to feed the hunger of this curiosity. Research has become an initial part of life. Nowadays, research roots its background in tertiary education, it is important for students to have the opportunity to know more and enlarge their knowledge. Moreover, to spot light on the various issues that have found in education and trying to find solutions to them.

In the other hand, writing has a crucial part in education. It draws upon different perspectives from different angles. Writing is an important skill in searching, it comes in different types that are suitable for each process. Academic writing and critical writing are the main proper types for conducting a research .

This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section introduces concepts of both research and research paper; definition of research, objectives, characteristics of good research, significance of research paper, types of research paper, components of research paper and its elements, and characteristics of research paper, and finally the language of research paper. In the second section, it presents the main concepts of academic writing, definitions, features, characteristics, features, elements, the purpose of academic writing, components, types, genres of academic writing and the common characteristics of good writing. Then, the major part is the concept of critical writing, its definition, characteristics, features, its importance, the most crucial part of critical writing, purpose of critical review, requirements of effective critical thinking and finally examples of critical writing activities.

Section one: research paper

1.1. Introducing research

Research has an important role in education according to scholar's perspectives, its definition, purpose and objectives. All those concepts focus on the idea that research is searching for knowledge and information.

1.1.1. Definition of research

A research is the methodical investigation into a subject in order to discover facts, to develop a plan of action based on the facts discovered. (Shameem, 2017). According to Calvert and Martin, (2001). Who stated that research is a truth- seeking activity which contributes to knowledge, aimed at describing or explaining the world, conducted and governed by those with a high level of proficiency. Research is making a search or investigation on a fact or an event. In which Merriem- Webster's collegiate Dictionary, 2003; Oxford American Dictionary [McKean], 2005; Oxford English Dictionary .(Soanes & Stevenson,2004) (as cited in Chris ,2006), assert a composition definition of research; an investigation, or experimentation that aimed at the discovery of facts. In addition, Brown ,2005), (as cited in Brown, 2015) defined research as any systematic and principled inquiry in many ways.

1.1.2. Characteristics of research

A good research requires following a systematic method which requires certain characteristics in order to have an effective research. The following characteristics as mentioned by Brown (2005) as cited in (Brown, 2015): for a qualitative research, credibility,

confirmability, and transferability. While for quantitative research can be systematic in terms of its reliability, validity, replicability, and generalizability.

Also as mentioned by Sirajul & Samsudin (2020)that a good research should apply the following characteristics in order to be progressed systematically. First of all, research use scientific method in order to find solutions to distinct problems and to receive higher results. Also, a research is a continuous process in which it is persistent process that studies current data and develops new facts. Moreover, a research is a multipurpose activity in which it consists of predicting future and a series of data. Besides, it maintains objectivity and eliminates impartiality; which means that it is based on different procedures, collects various data in order to understand the research problem. Also, as stated in Silverman's headings (2000) that a good research paper constitutes of: conceptualization and theoretical basis of the work, analytical framework and hypothesis, research design, results and discussion, and conclusion of the paper. (cited in Hughes, 2001).

A research is based on an empirical nature where observation or survey can be used for conducting research. It also uses generalization in which it can be applied on a large population. Also, research contains controlled movement of the research procedure and a development of concepts and theories in which there are various factors that may affect the results, this latter develops concepts and theories.

1.1.3.significance of research

Research is an essential and powerful tool leading toward progress. It is important in both scientific and non scientific fields. Research is significant for the following reasons: (1) the research problem refers to a complexity which a research experiences. It calls for a systematic understanding and possible solutions.(2) research helps in identifying

applications of theories and concepts. (3) it is the source of knowledge. (4) it leads to the identification of new materials, new insights.(Sirjul & Samsudin, 2020).

1.1.4.Types of research

Research has several types in which it is organized according to specific methodologies and tools. As Kumar, (2011) suggested that research can be categorized into three types are: application of the findings of the research, objectives of the research and enquiry mode of the research. They are presented in the diagram blow.

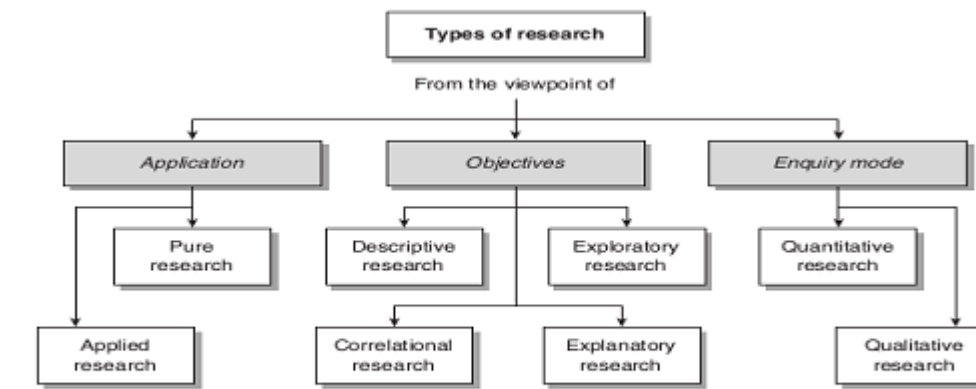


FIGURE 1.2 Types of research

Figure (1): types of research by Kumar, 2011, p.9).

Those types of research should be clearly defined by the researcher in order to identify which types he is willing to conduct.

1.2.Research paper

A respectable number of people engage in research process in order to prepare their master thesis or dissertations. Conducting a research demonstrates learning in one of the various types of research papers. Different scholars define research paper according to different

angles.(Winkler & Metherel, 2010, p4), believe that The research paper is a formal work that must abide by the rules of scholarly writing.

1.2.1.Definition of research paper

A research paper is one of the major forms of research, for a better understanding of the concept of research paper; there was a numerous definitions given by different scholars from different perspectives. They all agree on the point that a research paper is a piece of academic writing. The term "research paper" as stated by (Shameem, 2017) is a particular genre of academic writing, in which the writer's present their own interpretation, evaluation, or argument on a specific issue. In which, the findings and conclusions of such an investigation appear in the research paper. Also, Sierra College (2013), states that a research paper is an essay, it explains what have learned after dealing with a topic. In a research paper; an information from sources as books, articles, interviews, and internet sites will be included.

1.2.2.Characteristics of research paper

To have an effective research paper, it is necessary to follow a systematic approach beside the following characteristics: a research paper is systematic in which it should be structured with a specified steps with well- defined set of rules. It is guided by logical processes of induction and deduction and by rules of logical reasoning. A research paper is empirical/ tangible that focuses on that a research deals with concrete data provides a basis for external validity of the results. Besides, it is comprehensible and reductive; that it covers all the important parts of the topic and reduces the confusion of facts that language present. Moreover, a research paper is prolific that should produce new insights for future research, also be replicable in which to judge the quality of research. A relevant research should extract facts from a large quantity of

information also it should be well- executed that it should be conveyed in a formal form. (Shameem, 2017).

A good research paper follows different characteristics in order to be effective and valid.

1.2.3.Types of research paper

A good research paper has different types from different angles and perspectives; those types are: the reports of empirical studies, the description and analysis if a case study, the review articles that include meta-analysis of previous research, the theoretical articles to develop theory and the methodological articles to develop research methods.(publication manual, 2003) (cited in Mikk, 2006).

The previous stated types should be considered when conducting a research.

1.2.4.Elements of research paper

A research paper has different elements presented by Parlingdungan (2018) as follow:

- The title: it is a very important of research paper, it catches the reader's interest, reveals the nature of manuscript.(Hairston & Keene, 2003, p.73).
- Name of author(s): the purpose is to clarify the individuals presented in the research.
- Abstract: it is the summary of the research, it provides maximum information, covering (1) the gist of recent findings of the topic.(2) the objective; (3) materials and methods; (4) results; and (5) conclusions.(Yang, 1999, p.53).

The given elements of research paper should be clearly defined in order to have a better understanding of the research content.

- Introduction: it provides the reader with the initial background of information (a brief overview of the topic).

The general format of an introduction as follow: (1) statement of the topic area, by covering the problem in a broad scope.(2) specific problem; to be studied, reasons behind its importance to study by showing the finding gaps. (5) clear statement of objectives. (cited in Parlingdungan, 2018).

1.2.5.Objectives of research paper

All the steps and components of research papers are important, to conduct a research is to do it according to the objectives of the investigation. That it have to be precise, concise and clearly defined. The general objectives have elements as De Barrera, 2005 stated:

- 1) The idea being investigated.
- 2) The events or characteristic(s).
- 3) The units of observation in which it defines the characteristics of the study.
- 4) Time in which the study takes place.(De Barrera, 2005).
- 5) Context of the study by describing where the study takes place. (De Barrera, 2005).

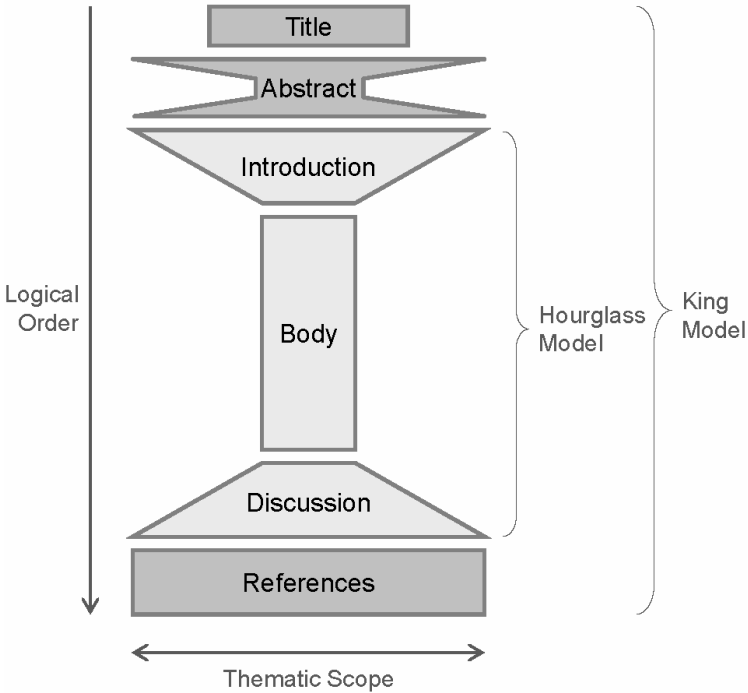
De Barrera, (2005) who states that research objectives has different levels as perceptual level where the information are explored. Apprehensible level in which the information is analyzed. Comprehensible level where its objective is to explain and predict information. While integrative level is the modification, confirmation and evaluation of information that takes place in a research. (Cited in Villeda De Trigueros, 2018).

1.2.6.The structure of research paper

A research paper should follow structure in order to have an effective work. The following structure was given by Mikk, (2006). That a research paper is structured by the following: an

abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, list of references and appendixes.

This structure is developed for research papers, but with other types of research paper; it needs to add some modifications. Also The structure of a research paper comprises three core parts, namely introduction, body and discussion. The introduction leads the reader from general motivations and abroad subject to a particular research question that is tackled in the body of the paper. The body of the paper stays within a tight thematic scope and describes the research methods and results in detail. Eventually, the discussion part aims to draw general conclusions and present implications from the results. (cited in Derntl, 2014).



Source: Based on Swales (1993)

Figure (2): the structure of research paper (cited in Derntl, 2014).

1.2.7.Components of research paper

The components of research paper are presented by De Figueiredo (2007) as follow: *A Title* which describes the essence of the paper in a logical, precise and concise way. The *Author and affiliation*: the names of author(s) are given below the title, followed by the indication of the institution to which the author belongs. An *Abstract*: it should clarify: the work of the authors did, the method that the author follow when doing his/her work, the key results and the impact of those results. results. The abstract is not the introduction of the paper, but it is a concise description of the whole research which spotlights on the relevant points. *Key words*: they are index terms that describe the topic, it is used to facilitate searching online for papers or topics related to those key words. *Introduction*: it should introduce the topic and its content, it should describe: the nature of the problem, the essence of the state in the domain of the paper, the aim of the paper and its relevance, the methods used in order to solve the problem and the structure of the paper.

Body of the paper: it is the description of all the relevant points of the topic, presented in various paragraphs and sections. *Conclusions*: it should be presented clearly, it must cover the following: a summary of what have been achieved in the work, an assessment of the limitations that have presented in the work, a description of the possible results presented and recommendations. *Acknowledgement*: the research's commitment should be acknowledged. And *References*: it is a list of book chapters, books, and other bibliographic elements that have been referenced in the paper. De Figueiredo, (2007).

1.2.8. Language of research paper

The use of proper language is an essential element in writing a research paper. In most cases research papers are often rejected due to the lack of language writing style. . Language of research works is different from the language of literature. Language of scientific papers

should be formal, straight forward, concise and brief. (Suharno, 2001). In addition, Day (1979), (as cited in Suharno, 2001) stated:

“In scientific writing, language need not be difficult; and the best English is that which gives the senses in the fewest short words. Literary tricks, metaphors and the like, divert attention from the message to the style. They should be used rarely, if at all, in scientific writing”.

Moxley (1992, p.13) notes, “each rhetorical situation-that is, different audiences and purposes-will strongly affect how you compose”. For research papers, regardless of the discipline, the aim is to inform the audience, which is an academic one

A language of research paper should be easy, well defined, concise and precise, and should not use literary devices.(cited in Evans, 2007).

1.2.8.1.Clarity and conciseness

The best style for writing good research paper is a direct, simple choice of words, prepared to convey meaning directly. The main purpose is to transmit ideas and information using an effective style that conveys meaning clearly.(Dr. Suharno, 2001). Other point that Suharno, (2001) shed light on clarity and readability. It is the right choice of words, that are simple, short, and should convey a meaning. In which Muir (1983), (cited in Suharno, 2001) advises that if writing is not clear, then the message will not be understandable.

Another idea was given by Baily, (2018) that *the features of good academic scientific style* are as follow: the use of clarity; in which the content of a research paper should be as clear as readable. A research paper should be concise that to avoid wordiness and redundancy. Besides being precise and explicit in conveying meaning by avoiding vague expressions and ambiguity. Another idea stated by Chandra, (2018) that the language of a scientific research should be formal, lucid, simple in tone and style, brief, exact and accurate. It has significant

features are: formal tone and impersonal style, it should avoid contractions or short forms, avoid using linking words and personal pronouns, uses ways of explaining.

Section two: Critical Writing

This section presents several concepts of both academic and critical writing, by focusing mostly on the main contribution of critical writing.

2.1. Academic writing

Academic writing is seen as a type of writing used by university students that serve as a basis on which their performance is assessed.

2.1.1. Definition of academic writing

Academic writing is an important skill that improves students to improve their performance, it is a demanding skill especially at the tertiary level. Several definitions have been submitted by scholars to the term of academic writing. These definitions differ in accordance with the context in which they are delivered. Murray (2005) asserts that “Academic writing is that set of conventions that can be seen in a thesis or a published paper.” (cited in Ambika, 2018). Academic writing is one of the steps through which scientists report situations about experiences, observations, and applications in order to find solutions to the problems found in the academic research process. (Bahar, 2014), (cited in Akkay & Aydin, 2018). To illustrate more, it is a type of writing that follows different approaches and strategies that makes it done in a systematic way. According to Ambika, (2018) academic writing is a kind of formal style of writing practiced mainly in universities and publications. In the same vein, Oshima and Hogue (2007) view that academic writing is a kind of formal writing used in high schools and college classes which differs from personal and creative writing. (cited in Ambika, 2018). In sum, academic writing is usually used to defend and convince about an idea, or to introduce a research work to a high level audience; also it is seen

as a type of writing used by university teachers and students that serve as a basis to assess student's performance.

2.1.2.Characteristics of academic writing

One of the important characteristics of academic writing is that it evaluates information through mental processes and interpretation. In which Day (2005) stated that in order to help colleagues evaluate observations, replicate experiments, and assess operations, an academic publication should be the first explanation. It will provide sufficient information to them. Furthermore, in academic writing, it is necessary to produce logical structured ideas, well organized thoughts, and verified points. (Gillet, Hammond & Martala, 2009). (cited in Akkaya & Aydin, 2018). Also Akim (2009) it is important for any type of academic writing to be clear, understandable, remarkable, and concise by ensuring coherence and coherence. (cited in Akkaya & Aydin, 2018).

Academic writing deals with facts and evidence. In other words without amelioration.

2.1.3.The purpose of academic writing

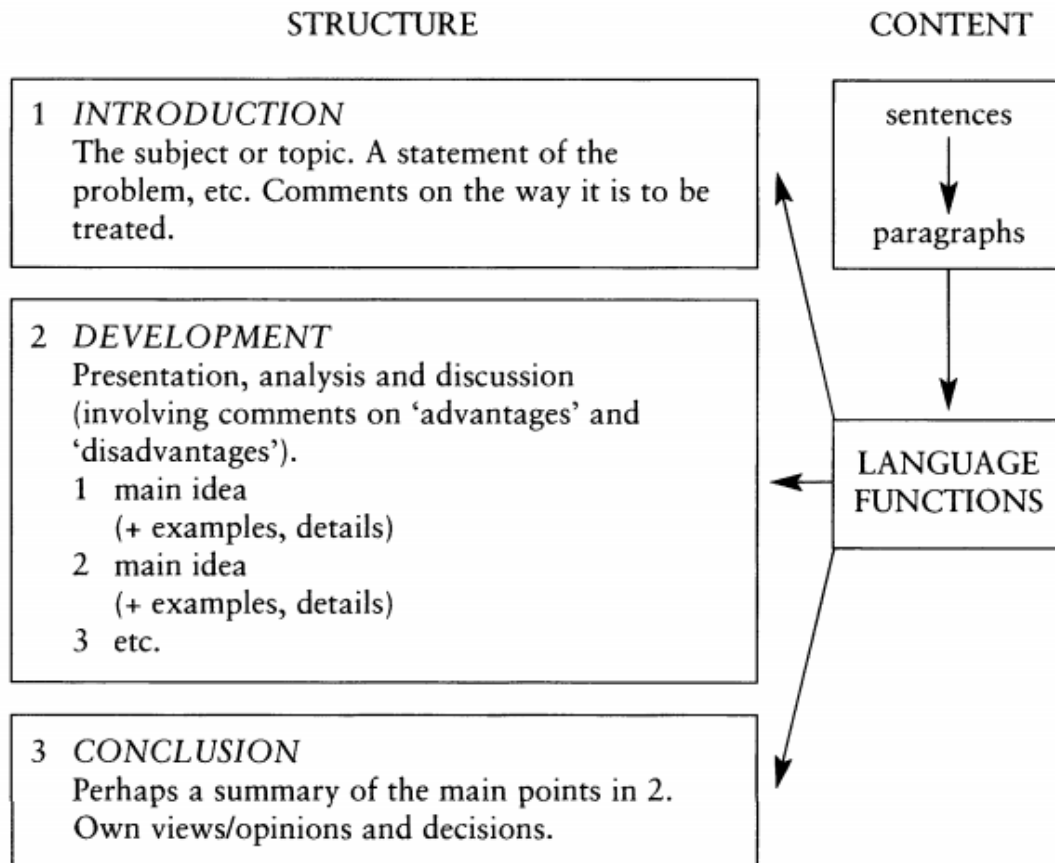
Writers often write for various reasons, in which Bailey (2015, p. 3) states the following purposes of academic writing:

- To report on a piece of research that the writer has conducted,
- answer question the writer has chosen.
- discuss a subject of common interest.
- give the writers' view and to synthesize research done by others on a topic.

The purposes of the academic writing give the validity of certain works.

2.1.4. Structure of academic writing

Most academic writing pieces share the same structure as Jordan (1999) stated in the following figure.



Figure(3). academic writing' structure (adapted from Jordan, 1999. P.9).

2.1.5. Accuracy in writing

Accuracy of grammar is an important aspect of good piece of writing, though nonnative speakers fail in writing while they dealt with academic writing and learned it. Moreover, rules of grammatical accuracy should be followed in order to be effective in such fields. Also, it is important that writing should be clear in that the combination between rules of punctuation and conventions of grammar in order to avoid ambiguity and redundancy. In addition to this,

it is needed to put emphasis on rhetorical and discourse features of written English when teaching L2 writing academically. As Hinkel (2004) views that in order to have a coherent academic work, L2 writers should construct the language tools (grammar and vocabulary). In other words, improving student's writing accuracy is an essential factor in effective writing.(Baleghizadeh & Gordani, 2012).

2.1.6.General overview of critical thinking

Critical thinking is an essential skill in education. This skill can be defined as Facione 1990, p.3) (cited in Widyastuti, 2018), stated that critical thinking is a judgment that results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation and inference as well as explanation of the evidential and contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based. Chane (1986) (cited in Hammod A& Ayassrah, 2017); on the other hand views critical thinking as the ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems. Paul (1989) critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content or program - in which a thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them. “critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action” (Fisher, 2001). (cited in Ahmadu, 2013).

“Critical thinking is a reasoned, purposive, and introspective approach to solving problems or addressing questions with incomplete evidence and information and for which an incontrovertible solution is unlikely” (Rudd, Baker, & Hoover, 2000), (cited in Perry, 2014).

Paul and Elder (2006) as cited in (Youssef Chaarawy, 2014) defined critical thinking as “the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it”(p. 4). Also Moore and

Parker (2007), (cited in Saputra,2018) state that critical thinking is the activity of evaluating specific claims through considering arguments plausibly. In addition to this, Duron, Linbach & Waugh (2006), (cited in Perry, 2014) view critical thinking as the ability to analyze and evaluate information. As well as Pithers & Soden (2001), (cited in Indah, 2001). states that critical writing is the use of reasoning and logic by focusing on what to believe based on the mechanism such as conducting conceptual and argument analysis for problem solving and decision making.

2.1.7.The relation between critical writing and critical thinking

Critical thinking has a strong relationship with critical writing, that Steplon (2001) as cited in Widyastuti, (2018) sets six elements of critical thinking, in which it has a relation with critical writing are: arguments, reasons, evidence, recognition, conclusion and fallacies; in which arguments are claims that are supported by a reason, while reasons are statements used to support claims. Evidence are statements that used to strengthen the argument. Moreover, recognition of opposition and refutation is to give viewpoints that is making contraire or serves interpretations. In addition, conclusions are series of statements in which a writer sets out what he wants the reader to believe. In addition, fallacies are errors in reasoning.(Widyastuti, 2018). Moreover, Northedge (2005) as cited in Ali Odeh, (2017) outlines key principles that characterize an academic discourse which are evident in writing but which also demonstrate critical thinking. The principles are - Debate: arguing different points of view; Scholarship: awareness of what else has been written and citing it correctly; Argument: developing points in a logical sequence which leads to a conclusion; Criticism: looking at strengths and weaknesses; Analysis: taking the argument apart; Evidence: ensuringthat the argument is backed by valid data; Objectivity: the writing should be detached, and Precision: anything that does not assist the argument should be omitted.

Furthermore, students need to express their ideas using critical writing as Dunn, Holonen, and Smith (2008) view writing as another form of critical thinking, where students write with the goal of sharing their ideas with others.

2.2.Critical writing

2.2.1 Definition of critical writing

Critical writing is an essential part of writing assignment, writing an assignment is the writing of a definite purpose (Skills for learning, 2018) claimed that the purpose is to answer the questions that has been set. According to the University of Leicester (2013), critical writing is an involvement in an academic debate. It requires a refusal to accept the conclusions of other writers without evaluating the arguments and evidence they provide. It is also the organization of the research in which Yamin; Purwati, (2020). Critical writing is not only viewed as the criticiness of finding the research topic, but also provide the students to elaborate, to organize, and to formulate research background, research problem, review of related literature, and research method in well-organized text. Another definition stated by Wilson (2000)," critical writing is the literary art of assessing or examining the merit of any work or art and giving judgment on it; on art which is employed in the textual criticism of books, artistic and aesthetic appreciation of plays, movies". It is also worth commenting at this point on the question of 'power' in critical discourse in postgraduate education. To be critical is to take on a powerful position. Such a position, or disposition, assumes skepticism towards given truths; reserves the right to develop its own position; weighs up different claims to the truth against the evidence, and/or via logical operations; and assumes a certain degree of knowledge in the field on the basis of which a critical position can be established.(Richard, 2007). (cited in Bello Way, 2013). Also Cottrel (2005) points out that critical writing is a presentation of a case through providing reasons using relevant evidence, comparing and evaluating alternative

arguments, weighing up conflicting evidence, and forming judgments on the basis of evidence. Also Wilson (2000) as cited in Ahmadu, (2013) says that critical writing is the literary art of assessing or examining the merit of any work or art and giving judgment on it; an art which is employed in the textual criticism of books, artistic and aesthetic appreciation of plays, movies, music, creative and fine arts and other public events. It, usually, involves a detailed critical examination. (cited in Ahmadu, 2013).

Critical writing can be used to question old notions that have never been examined by those who approve them unquestionably.

2.2.2.Characteristics of critical writing

Critical writing has different characteristics as cited in Aksu Atac(2015), the most characteristic features of critical writing are: a clear and confident refusal to accept the conclusions of other writers without evaluating the arguments and evidence that they provide, a balanced presentation of reasons why the conclusions of other writers may be accepted or may need to be treated with caution, a clear presentation of the own evidence and argument, leading to your conclusion, a recognition of the limitations in the own evidence; argument and conclusion.(University of Leicester,2009).

Also, Cottrel (2005) finds out the characteristics of critical writing among them the content. She that " in critical writing, the text is devoted to present a case, by providing reasons, using relevant evidence, comparing and evaluating alternative arguments, weighing up conflicting evidence, and forming judgment on the basis of the evidence". Critical writing is a process where critical thinking skills are needed to prevent students from falling in such problems.

The mentioned characteristics are relevant in order to have an effective work.

2.2.3.The importance of critical writing

The goal of critical writing is to directly assert ideas in the minds of the students to develop a concept and its influential aspects. The main purpose of critical writing is to represent views based on credible information translating that information into coherent piece of writing to produce an authentic critical work rather than merely presenting facts in a mechanical way. Thenerd, (2018).

2.2.4.Features of critical writing

Wilson(2000) (cited in Ahmadu, 2013) finds out that Critical writing has several features areas follows: it shows a clear perception of the appreciation of the qualities of an object. Then it passes judgments because it assesses the value of the work, also expresses an opinion about a performance or a book, and demands deep knowledge of the subject matter of measurements.

The given features of critical writing shows the important role of this process in education and writing.

2.2.5.Requirements of critical writing

According to Cottrel (2005) and Allen (2004), critical thinking shares the following skills with critical writing:

- ❖ Analysis: examine the materials by breaking it into parts to better understanding (identifying, classifying, categorizing).
- ❖ Synthesis: to combine materials from several sources, including prior knowledge, making connection between the parts of the whole.

- ❖ Interpretation: examining the connections between the parts and the whole to make inferences about the implications and meanings of the patterns (associating, inferring, decoding).
- ❖ Evaluation: forming judgments about meanings, qualities and values (justifying, critiquing, verifying, and deciding).
- ❖ Inference: seeking to understand what is suggested or implied, in order to identify elements to make reasonable conclusions.
- ❖ Explanation: stating the results of reasoning and justifying them according to different considerations.
- ❖ Self-regulation: applying skills in analysis and evaluation.(cited in Bello Way, 2013).

2.2.6.The most crucial part of critical writing

Critical writing is a different process from other types of writing, the most challenging part of this type is that the writer cannot dismiss or approve argument on the basis of personal opinion. The analysis of a writer should be logical when establishing facts, theories, research findings and events. (Thenerd, 2018).

2.2.7.Examples of critical writing activities

Practicing critical writing can be done through discussing an idea and trying to prove whether it is valid or not, it can be used in order to question old notions that have never been approved before, it also can be practiced when evaluating, supporting ideas, analyzing, judging, discussing, and reviewing. (Abdessalami, n. d).

The given activities are found in most works when dealing with evidence, facts or arguments.

2.2.8. The difference between critical writing and descriptive writing

Descriptive writing is relatively simple. Actually, with descriptive writing we develop argument; setting the background within which an argument can be developed. We are representing the situation as it is without discussion. (University of Leicester, 2009) as cited in AksuAtac, (2015). While, Abdessalami (n.d) stated that, Critical writing is based on questioning the facts. It is, thus, based on evidence, objective enquiry, reasoning, arguments, analyzing and so on; for this reason critical writing looks a little more complex than simple descriptive writings.

DESCRIPTIVE WRITING	CRITICAL WRITING
States what happened...	Identifies the significant points of what happened.
States what something is like...	Evaluates the strengths and weaknesses attributed to something.
Explains the story...	Evaluates certain information against other research and theories that are prevalent within the topic area.
Explains what the theory is about and the key academics that have developed the theory.	Discusses the relevance of a theory in relation to the topic. Examines how different academics have interpreted and developed the theory in various ways.
States the methods that are used within the research.	Identifies exactly why the methods are useful for the certain type of research and aims/questions.
Describes the time at which research/events occurred.	Why is this time significant? Clearly identify outside effects!
Lists the different interpretations of a theory.	Critically compares/contrasts each theory – which one is the most relevant to your research/essay question?
Offers broad and sweeping conclusions.	Draws well-defined and concise conclusions that reflect and summarise the content of the essay and argument.
Lists the various links between theories.	Clearly develops the links between each theory, considering the effect that this understanding has upon the topic area.

Adapted from: Cottrell, S. (2003) *The Study Skills Handbook*, p.232. 2nd ed. London: Palgrave

Figure (4): difference between critical writing and descriptive writing by Cottrel (2003).

In descriptive writing, the setting of the background within which an argument can be developed, it is the representation of the situation as it stands without presenting any analysis or discussion. Descriptive writing is relatively simple. It presents but transforms information, it reports ideas but does not take them forward limit in any way. While with critical writing, it participates in the academic debate. It is necessary to consider the quality of the evidence and argument that have been read, identify key positive and negative aspects that can comment upon them and assess its relevance to the debate that are engaged in for the assignment.(university of Leicester, 2009) as cited in Aksu Atac, (2015).

2.3.Critical reading:

Critical reading is a more active than reading. Shannon as cited in (Jongsma, 1991) views critical reading as a means for understanding one's way of living in connection to the current social structure in order to have equal participation of all the decisions in life. (cited in Rujani, 2019). While, Flynn (as cited in Taglieber, 2018) defines critical reading as an interactive process that uses several levels of thought as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.(cited in Rujani, 2019). Also, Valleé (2006) as cited in (Othmand, 2013) stated that critical reading is a reading technique to understand the main idea despite some unfamiliar tone and complex subjects.(cited in Rujani, 2019).Critical writing is the process of evaluating texts in which Harris & Hodges (1981) as cited in Tran Quang (2015) defines critical reading as: (1)the process of making judgment in reading, an evaluation of the text has been read. (2) the act of reading by questioning, making logical analysis, and inference. And (3) the judgment of validity of what is read.

2.3.1. Critical reading toward critical writing

Wallace and Wray (2011) claims in his book that this relation between reading and writing has many benefits. First, it will develop a sense of what and is not a robust piece of research – essential when you come to plan your own empirical investigation (for a dissertation, say). Second, you will soon begin identifying where the existing research has left a gap that your investigation can fill. Third, the attention you pay to different authors' texts will naturally affect the quality of your own writing." Wallace and Wray (2011). In the same idea, as stated by Knott (n. d) that critical writing depends on critical reading. Most of the written essays will reflect on the reading texts, a careful critical reading of sources is needed when writing the analysis of subject or the research. Furthermore, Tran Quang (2015) claimed that The skill of critical reading lies in assessing the extent to which writers have provided adequate justification for the claims they make. This assessment depends partly on what the writers have communicated and partly on other relevant knowledge, experience and inference that you are able to bring into the frame.

Conclusion

Research is an important feature in tertiary education. Master students will be able to conduct their research paper at the end of their study. This latter requires a high level of writing in order to have an academic work. Critical writing is a type of writing used in order to improve the quality of the dissertations. Student had to practice how to write critically, that to have an academic and accepted work. This chapter has attempted to provide the background setting on both research paper and critical writing ,by shedding lights on the different sides of them, by focusing on how do critical writing contributes in the dissertation.

In addition to the different views that has a relation with critical writing in order to enclose the angle between critical writing and dissertation.

Chapter Two: Research Design

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Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the contribution of critical writing into the completion of the graduates' dissertations and the way Master students rely on it when writing their research papers in order to improve the quality of their research works at the level of Biskra University. This methodology chapter aims to provide some clarifications about the used methodology and research design. This chapter presents different perspectives of the research methodology from various angles. It represents an introduction, an overview of the research approach, research design chosen in this study besides research methods, research methods, sampling strategy, instrument design, methods of data analysis, procedures, ethical considerations, problems and limitations and finally conclusion.

2.1 Research approach

2.1.1. Definition

The current study is a qualitative research, it describes and analyzes the way Master students rely on critical writing when writing their dissertations, and find its contribution into the quality of their dissertations. Also this study aims to determine the important role of critical writing in the dissertation, to answer the research questions, and validate the suggested hypothesis. As Creswell, (2003)(as cited in Williams, 2007) describes qualitative research as an effective model that occurs in a natural setting which enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from being highly involved in the actual experiences. Qualitative research is based on observation that rises questions the researcher attempts to explain.

2.2. Research design

2.2.1. Definition

Research design is a list of procedures that a research follow. As Creswell, Plano (2007) defines research design as collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies. It is also the plan followed in order to collect data for a certain research. Grey (2014) states that research design puts the procedures, the methods needed in order to collect and analyze the required data, which aims at answering the research questions. Similarly, MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) (cited in Lelissa, TB, 2018) defines research design as a plan for selecting subjects, research methods and data collection in order to answer the research questions. In addition, Lelissa (2018) sees that research design is the overall plan that connects the research problems with the empirical background of research.

The qualitative research design used in this study is eventually applicable for this research, where the relationship between the two variables is well defined. The qualitative research is chosen to identify the current relationship between the two variables; namely, critical writing and dissertation writing. It is also chosen to determine the contribution of critical writing in the dissertation and to find answers to the open – ended questions and interpret them into non numerical data. The qualitative research is obtained in order to investigate the students' opinions regarding the subject. For this reason, an online questionnaire is administered. This qualitative tool serves to elicit data, validate the hypothesis, and strengthen the validity of the research.

2.3.Review of research methodology

Research methodology attempts at identifying the methods and techniques applied in order to gather data and reach results for the study. As Leedy & Ormrod, (2001)(as cited in Williams, 2007) define research methodology as the general approach that the researcher takes in carrying out the research project, it involves the learning of various techniques that can be used in conducting research.

2.3.1.Research methods

The present study aims at identifying the contribution of critical writing on the dissertation, analyzing its effective role in the dissertation. In order to validate the hypothesis and answer the research questions, an online questionnaires is administered. Therefore, it has been chosen for the research approach that to describe the way graduates rely on critical writing in their dissertations. Also, it reveals the important role of critical writing in conducting a research.

2.4.Data gathering tools

In order to obtain the main objectives of this study and to validate the hypothesis, an online questionnaire has been used as a tool, it has been administered to Master two students at the level of Biskra University, to collect their views and opinions concerning the study being investigated. In order to collect relevant data, an online questionnaire is administered to 41 Master students of English at Biskra University during the present academic year (2020/2021). Analysis and interpretation of the results will be provided to find out explanation to the research questions based on participants' responses.

2.4.1.Population and sample of the study

From a population of 275 Master two (science of language and literature and civilization) EFL students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, only 41 participants responded to the questionnaire. Master two students have chosen for two main reasons. First, they will be able to conduct their final dissertations. The second reason is that EFL students have dealt with critical writing.

2.4.2. students' Questionnaire

Questionnaire is the chosen data gathering tool for this study, it is an effective and reliable method in order to collect information from different respondents in a short period of time. As Babbie, (1990, p.377) (cited in Bidhan, 2010) defines questionnaire as a document that contains different types of questions and items designed to collect information in order to be analyzed. It is one of the data collection methods as Devaus, (2002) explains in which each respondent is asked to answer a list of questions that are presented in a predetermined order.

Students' questionnaire is organized in order to understand their views on critical writing and how they apply it when writing their research, namely their graduation dissertation in order to have an effective quality of work.

2.4.3.The aim of students' questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed for Master graduate students (N=41) especially graduates who are concerned with writing their final dissertations by trying to understand the way Master students rely on critical writing and the parts of the dissertation critical writing is mainly used. Furthermore, it investigates the important role of critical writing in the dissertation completion and the difficulties students encounter when writing critically.

2.4.4.distribution of the students' questionnaire

An online questionnaire was posted in the Facebook pages of Master two students of English of both specialties; sciences of language and literature and civilization graduates of the current academic year (2020/ 2021) from Biskra University. The questionnaire was designed for the purpose of collecting valid information from Master students who will be a part of the academic community. It took one week to receive completed responses (the total submitted responses is 41). The choice of Master two (M2) students was based on the basics of critical writing and are supposed to implement it in their research projects.

2.4.5.Description of the students' questionnaire

The questionnaire contains three sections. Each section contains either closed-ended questions that require selecting the appropriate answer(s) from a list of choices, or open-ended questions which require full answers and justifications for their choices.

Section one is entitled " general information " (from Q1 to Q3): it consists of four (4)questions which aim to provide personal information about the participants, mainly

questions related to gender, the choice of English as a study subject at university (was it personal choice or imposed?), and if writing is their favorite subject.

The second section is about Academic writing. It contains four (4) questions, it tends to investigate students' self-evaluation of their academic writing level of proficiency, teachers frequency of giving writing assignments to students, feedback about the assignments and students difficulties in dealing with the given assignments in terms of writing them critically.

The third section contains questions addressing issues about Critical writing. It includes eight (8) questions which mainly seek to find answers to issues related to difficulties students may face when writing critically, its contribution in the dissertation as well as the importance of critical writing in the dissertation.

2.6.Sampling strategy

In order to gather information and answer the research questions, we use the random sampling method or the probability sampling because the population is not selected and the research method is an online questionnaire.

In the current study, we decided to choose Master two(M2) students of English at Biskra University, because they have already dealt with critical writing. At the same time, Master students are required to write their dissertations as a final phase of their studies. Therefore, the sample is selected by using an online questionnaire in different Facebook groups on the web. The questionnaire delivered to students in order to have a clear picture about the important role of critical writing.

2.7.Methods of data analysis

There are several tasks and procedures that this study aims to analyze the data gathered through the online questionnaire. Qualitative data analysis is needed in order to analyze the

information of the present study and provides quantifiable results that aims at completing detailed description for the results obtained from the questionnaire. Since it is a descriptive research, the collected data relies on coding and finding themes in the data gathered, for this reason it is needless to use any numerical data. Also, it is useful for obtaining insights from difficulties that participants faced and the meanings given by students' responses. As Donald et al ,(2006) explained that data analysis is a process where researchers make search and arrange it in order to enhance their knowledge of the data and to present what they learned to others (cited in Siti Nur, 2015) . In order to analyze the data gathered, it will be preferable to use requesting basic frequencies which are an easy way to make relevant analysis of this type of study. The results of the questionnaire will be presented in a form of percentages displayed in tables and graphs (pie charts and bar graphs).

2.8.Ethical considerations

the current study was subject to certain ethical issues. As it was mentioned before, participants responded to the delivered questions through the online questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered ethically. Participants were asked to answer the questions. The participation of respondents to the questionnaire is voluntary, and they were free to withdraw from it at any point and for any reason.

2.9.Problems and limitations

The present study would be more valid by applying other methods. A teachers' interview would be an effective method for this study in order to enrich the results. This interview will be reliable in order to consolidate the data and to gather extra information that serves the current study for testing the hypothesis. Also, a review of previous dissertations in the previous years in order to find out how does critical writing contribute in dissertations. Those research methods were not opted due to the current circumstances and short timing. There are

other Several problems and limitations encountered when conducting the current study. First, the small number of participants and responses to the questionnaire delivered which may cause gathering a small amount of data. Second, the restriction of time which determined the easy choice of the method in order to collect data for this study. Furthermore, the results of this study are only connected with the participants and cannot be generalized to the total population of both English specialties. While the participants proved a big interest to the data gathering tool used, an additional tool might create different results or strengthen these findings.

Also, the results of this study are related to a particular method, namely descriptive method. Using a different approach might not achieve the same results, that further research is clearly needed to explore the generalizability of these findings.

Conclusion

The present methodology chapter explains the choice of the design and the research method. The nature of the present research opted for the qualitative research method. The only research tool used is an online questionnaire delivered to Master two (2) students. Also, the participants were targeted through random sampling technique and the results were analyzed through the use of data analysis tools, they will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Analysis of the results

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Introduction

The current study aims at reporting and analyzing the data gathered from the questionnaire used in order to collect data concerning the contribution of critical writing in the dissertation completion. the online questionnaire was used as a data gathering tool in order to collect data for the present research. Data were gathered from Master two (M2) students' responses. It is necessary to analyze the data collected in order to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions. As already indicated in the preceding chapter, data is interpreted in a descriptive form. This chapter presents the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results from this study. it is mainly a qualitative analysis of data.

3.1. Analysis of the results

the current study is a qualitative research that uses descriptive methods in order to analyze data about the way critical writing contributes in the successful completion of students' dissertations. For the requirement of the descriptive method. An online questionnaire was used in order to collect information from Master two (2) students' opinions and views about how they rely on critical writing when writing their dissertations. In addition, it aims to identify its important role in the dissertation. The questionnaire delivered consists of three sections, including 17 items. They are either closed-ended which require from participants to choose the appropriate answer(s) from a number of choices, or open-ended which opt for full answers and justification for their choices.

3.1.1 Analysis of the questionnaire

An online questionnaire was organized and distributed to Master two (M2) students in Facebook groups, only 41 participants responded to the distributed questions from 203 Master students. Data was gathered through the online questionnaire. The responses to the given questions are presented in percentages using tabular forms. The data collected are presented graphically in forms of pie charts or bar graphs.

3.1.1.1. Section one: background information (Q1-Q4).

Item 1: gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	7	17,1%
Female	34	82,9%
Total	41	100%

Table (1) . students' gender.

As can be seen in table (1) that from 41 respondents to the questionnaire, 17,1% are males from 41 students responded to the delivered questions, while the rest 82,9% were females. This indicates that females are the prevailing category in Master two year LMD students.

Item two: How was your choice of English?

Choice	Number	Percentage
Personal	39	95,1%
Imposed	2	4,9%
Total	41	100%

Table (2). Students' choice to study English

The results shown in the following table indicates that most participants have chosen English with their personal, that makes 95,1% of the total participants. In contrast, only 4,9% of respondents was imposed to choose English as a field of study. This implies that most students are interested and motivated in English as a field of study. Also, they see that they will have several job opportunities with English.

Item four: Is writing your favorite study subject ?.

4. Is writing a favourite study subject?
41 responses

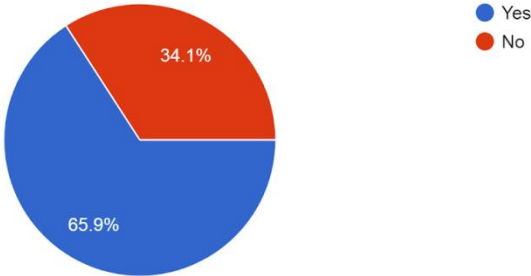


Figure (4). writing as a favorite study subject.

It is noticeable in the following pie chart that over half of participants 65,9% have responded that writing is their favorite study subject. While 34,1% of respondents writing is not their favorite study subject. This indicates that most of the participants are interested in writing as subject. It also implies that writing will improve their level and they find themselves good writers in the future.

Item four.1. if no, please give reasons?

This is a sub- question was asked in order to identify the reasons behind those students who answered that writing is not their favorite study subject. It is important that not all participants answered this question. Their answers was that writing takes time, familiarity about the topic to write about, and it requires cognitive efforts.

3.3.Section two: Academic writing.

Item one: How do you self evaluate your academic writing level?

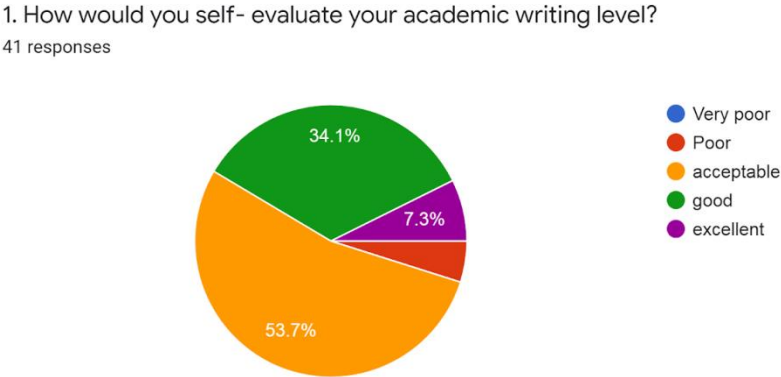


Figure (5). academic writing self- evaluation.

The following pie chart presents students' academic writing self - evaluation. Over half of the participants (53,7%) replied that they have an acceptable level in academic writing, while 34.1% of participants viewed that they have a good level when writing academically.

Whereas others(7,3%)consider themselves as an excellent academic writers. The least ones (4,9%) claimed that they have poor level in academic writing. This means that students are interested in academic writing and see themselves that they will improve their level in the future.

Item two: How often do your teachers give you academic writing assignment?

2. How often do your teachers give you academic writing assignment?
41 responses

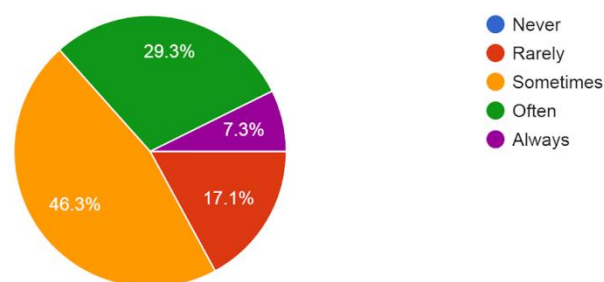


Figure (6). Teachers' feedback towards students' academic assignments.

Figure (6) shows that most participants (46,3%) have sometimes received assignments in academic writing from their teachers. Others (29,3%) have often received assignments from their teachers of academic writing. While only (7,3%) of participants reported that they have always been assigned in academic writing. However, 17,1% of participants said that they have rarely assigned an academic writing. this indicates that teachers of academic writing have different procedures and styles when assigning students.

Item three: Do you receive feedback on your assignments?

3. Do you receive feedback on your assignments?
41 responses

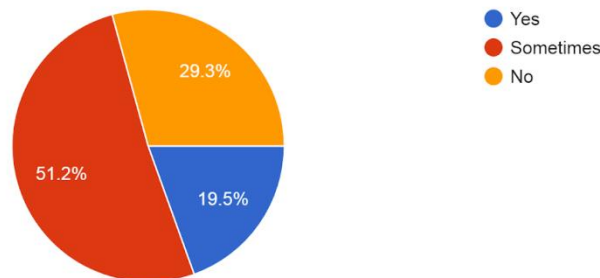


Figure (7). Feedback on Students' assignments from teachers.

The following figure shows the percentage of teachers' assignments frequency of providing feedback to students' assignments. In other words, do students receive feedback on their assignments or not. Half of the participants (51,2%) responded that they have sometimes received feedback on their assignments when other participants (29,3%) said that they have not received feedback on their assignments. The rest of participants (19,5%) have answered that they have received feedback on their assignments. This indicates that teachers make efforts to provide feedback to students' assignments for the sake of improvement.

Item four: How difficult are academic writing assignments?

4. How difficult are academic writing assignments (paragraphs, essays)?
41 responses

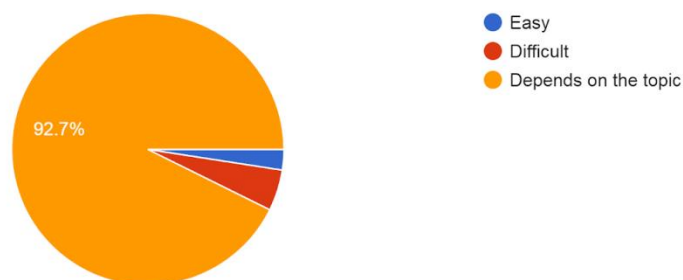


Figure (8).Academic writing assignments' difficulty.

Figure (8) presents the percentage of students' view about academic writing assignments' difficulty (paragraphs, essays). The results shows that most participants (92,9%) replied that academic writing assignment' difficulty depends on the topic they are writing about. While (4,8%) of participants found writing assignment difficult. the rest of participants (2,4%) responded that writing assignments are easy. This shows that teachers give different academic writing topic assignments to students.

3.4. Section three: Critical writing (Q1-Q4).

Item one: Are you familiar with critical writing?

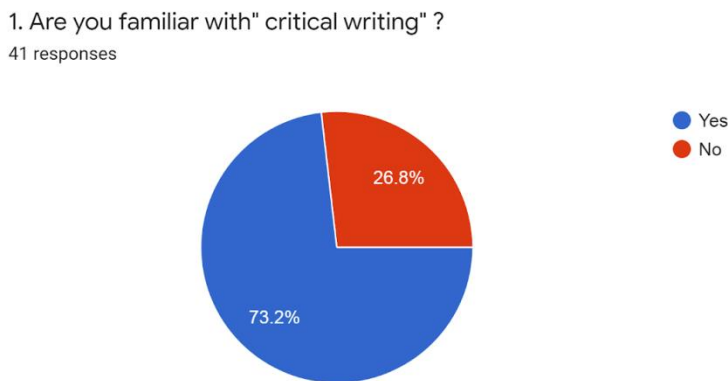


Figure (9). Students familiarity with critical writing.

The present figure shows to how extent students are familiar with critical writing. Majority of participants (73,8%) said that they are familiar with critical writing while the rest (26,2%) replied that they are not familiar with critical writing. This indicates that students are aware and have a previous background about critical writing and they are interested about it.

Item two: Do you think it mainly refers to:

2. Do you think it mainly refers to:
41 responses

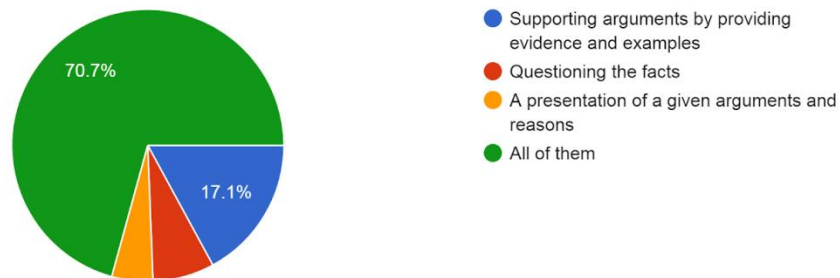


Figure (10) . Students' perceptions towards Critical writing meanings.

The following figure presents the percentage of critical writing' meanings chosen by students. The majority (70,7%) said that critical writing refers to all of the following definitions: 1) supporting arguments by providing evidence and examples. 2) questioning the facts and 3) a presentation of a given arguments and reasons. Others (17,1%) said that it mainly means supporting arguments by providing evidence and examples. Another part (7,3%) reported that it refers to questioning the facts. While the last part (4,9%) viewed that it refers to a presentation of a given arguments and reasons. This indicates that critical writing does not stand just for one definition. It has several definitions that can be used in different perspectives. Also, students are aware of it and it holds all the above meanings.

Item three: When writing academic assignments, how often do you rely on critical writing?

3. When writing academic assignments, how often do you rely on critical writing?
41 responses

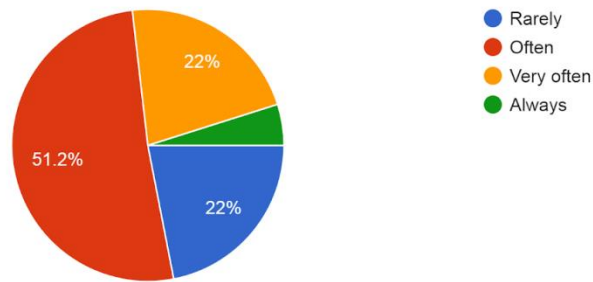


Figure (11). Frequency of relying on critical writing when writing academic assignments.

The present figure (11) presents the students frequency of relying on critical writing when writing academic assignments, half of the participants (51,2%) stated that they often rely on critical writing when writing academic assignments. While, (22%) of participants claimed that they very often rely on critical writing, similarly (22%) of participants said that they rarely rely on critical writing when writing academic assignments. Others (4,8%) responded that they always rely on critical writing when writing academic assignments. This means that students are familiar with the importance of critical writing. Also, that they often rely on it and the need to practice it.

Item four: Do you find it difficult to write critically?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	24	58,5%
No	17	41,5%
Total	41	100%

Table(2). students' perception about the difficulty of writing critically

4. Do you find it difficult to write critically?
41 responses

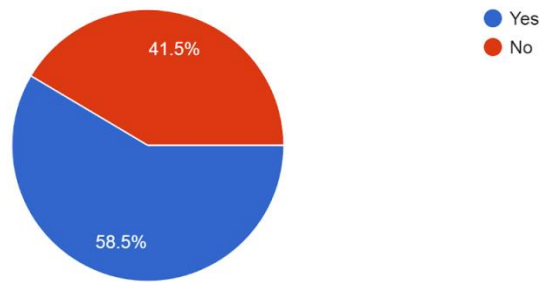


Figure (12). Students' perceptions about the difficulty of writing critically.

The following figure presents students views about critical writing difficulty, the majority of students (58,5%) agreed that critical writing is difficult. While others (41,5%) disagreed that critical writing is difficult. This indicates that most students find critical writing difficult as they mentioned some difficulties as: it takes time and mental energy, finding difficulties in understanding the author's ideas. This indicates that critical writing is hard skill that requires efforts in order to master it. In other words they find obstacles when writing critically.

Item four.1. If yes, please state some difficulties?

This sub- question aims to identify students' difficulties they usually face when writing critically. The participants listed different difficulties as the following: it is difficult when providing arguments, evaluating information. Others replied that it depends on the topic, following its rules. The inability to understand and evaluate writers' ideas and views.

Item five: As a Master student, do you think that critical writing is important when writing your dissertation?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	37	90,2%
No	4	9,8%
Total	41	100%

5.As a Master student, do you think that critical writing is important when writing your dissertation?

41 responses

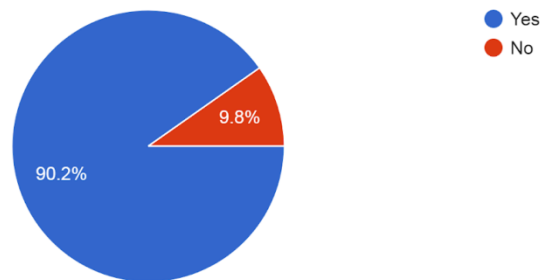


Figure (13) . Critical writing's importance in writing a dissertation.

The following table and figure (13) presents students estimation on the importance of critical writing when writing dissertation, the majority of respondents (90,2%) have agreed on that critical writing is important when writing dissertations. Contrary, others (9,8%) viewed that critical writing is not important when writing dissertation. They have stated that critical writing is important when writing the dissertation as: it helps in supporting ideas being discussed, it gives logical reasoning. Also, analyzes and evaluates data. This indicates that students are familiar with the role of critical writing in the dissertation.

Item five.1. If yes, how critical writing is important in the dissertation completion?

This sub –question was posted in order to obtain information about respondents' perception about the importance of critical writing. The majority asserted that critical writing is important in providing opinions and views supported by evidence from scholars, helps in collecting information and link them to ideas related to the topic. Moreover, others viewed

that it is an essential skill in which it analyzes the data and evaluates the literature review, supports ideas. Also, it gives logical reasoning and development of ideas, and to convince the reader with a valid data.

Item six: In which section of the dissertation do you find critical writing essential?

7. In which section of the dissertation you find critical writing essential? you can choose more than one option

41 responses

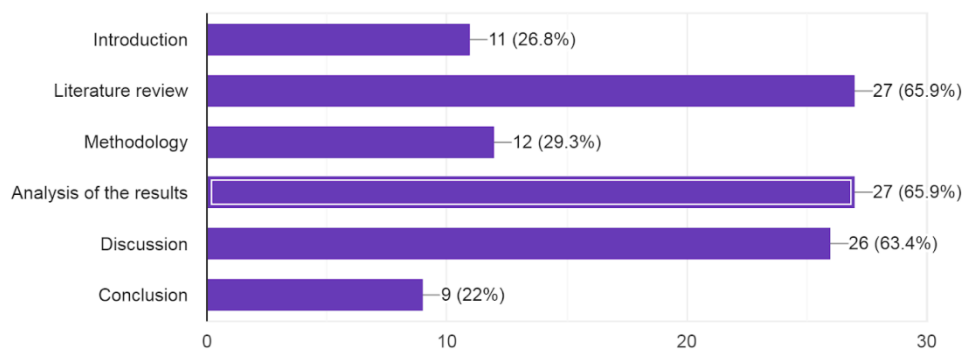


Figure (14).The essential of critical writing in the dissertation sections.

The shown figure (14) presents the section in which critical writing is important. The majority of the participants (65,9%) said that critical writing is important in the part of analysis of results and literature review sections, others (63,4%) view that critical writing is important in the discussion section. While, (29,3%) of participants viewed that critical writing is important in the section of methodology. Whereas, (26,8%) pointed that it is important in the introduction of the dissertation. Others (22%) viewed that critical writing is important in the conclusion. This indicates that students see that critical writing is important in all sections mainly in the section of analysis of the results. Also, they have different information about where do critical writing takes place in the dissertation. In addition, analysis of the results rely on critical writing because this section evaluates the hypothesis and answers the research papers.

Item six.1. In what way do you find critical writing contributing in dissertation completion?

This is a sub- question, was raised to know in what way do critical writing contribute in the dissertation completion. Participants viewed that critical writing contributes totally in the dissertation. According to them, it makes the dissertation credible, academic, enhances the quality of the dissertation.

conclusion

This chapter presented an analysis of the results gathered by the questionnaire distributed via email and Facebook groups. This questionnaire is about Master students' views and opinions concerning critical writing and its contribution in the dissertation writing. It is found that the majority of students were familiar with critical writing and they used it their in assignments. Also, respondents (Master students) showed their opinions on the important role of critical writing in the dissertation completion. This latter mainly contributes in various section in the dissertation mainly in the analysis of the results. The results also indicate the difficulty of critical writing that most students considered it.

Chapter Four: Discussion and interpretation

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Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to provide an evidence to support the hypothesis that critical writing will improve the quality of the student's dissertations, it also aims at answering the research question posed previously. This chapter presents the discussion of the analysis of the results gathered from the online questionnaire. In this chapter we attempt to discuss the relationship between the finding of literature review (previous studies) and the results gathered by means of a questionnaire which was administered to Master students at the level of Biskra University. Moreover, it aims at finding a relationship between the findings and the research questions. This chapter includes a discussion of major findings which are related to the contribution of critical writing into the dissertation's completion. Moreover, it includes discussion and future research possibilities to help answer the following research questions:

Q1: how do Master students(M2) rely on critical writing in order to accomplish their dissertations?

Q2: how does critical writing contribute into the writing of graduate's dissertation?

Q3: what are the expected difficulties students may face when writing critically in the course of their dissertation completion?

4.1. Summary of the findings

To review the main purpose of the present study was to investigate the contribution of critical writing into the completion of graduates' dissertations. It is aimed to identify the way critical writing contributes in graduates' dissertations and how it will improve the quality of this latter. Moreover, the current study shed lights on the importance of critical writing in the dissertation and brings the students' attention to the necessity of its role, because they are required to rely on this skill when writing their dissertations. Similarly, it intended to raise the teachers' awareness to the need to teach students how to rely on critical writing in order to enhance the quality of their dissertations.

The findings that have been drawn from the analysis of students' questionnaire were positive in many aspects. On one hand, the questionnaire revealed that students are familiar with the concept of critical writing, as they are aware of its meanings and key concepts.

Furthermore, the collected findings from the online questionnaire shows that students are interested in critical writing. Also, it reveals the important role of critical writing in graduates' dissertations, in which students viewed that it helps them in improving the quality of their dissertations. In addition, this skill will improve the quality of the research paper especially in the section of the analysis of results where critical writing takes place.

4.2. Interpretation of the findings

This part of the study presents a discussion of the results by means of an online questionnaire. In order to answer the research questions raised in this study; the questionnaire was administered for Master two students (M2) (N= 41), who are expected to write and submit their final dissertations. The finding revealed that most of the respondents who were interested in writing as a study subject claimed to have an acceptable level in academic writing. The findings of the questionnaire also indicate that critical writing has an effective

role in the dissertation completion especially in the section of discussion and analysis of results, as reported by respondents. The findings revealed that the majority of Master two students' participants (M2) are familiar with the concept of critical writing and most students reported that they write critically in their dissertation.

The delivered questionnaire was organized in three sections: the first section was about the personal information of the participants as: gender, choice of English at University, and writing is a preferred study subject for many of them. The findings indicated that students' choice of English was personal. The second section emphasized the frequency and difficulty of the given academic writing assignments, students' self evaluation of the academic writing proficiency level, and teachers' frequency of providing feedback to students' assignments. Meanwhile, the third section is about critical writing and its important role in the dissertation accomplishment. The obtained results indicate that students' academic writing self- evaluation was acceptable. this is due to the lack of having enough practice in order to develop a set of sophisticated writing skills, it is also because students encountered some difficulties concerning writing academically as dyslexia.

The research questions of the present study were answered through the results found by means of an online questionnaire. The first research question seeks to know if students rely on critical writing when writing their dissertations. Most findings (65.9%) of the administered questionnaire indicate that the majority of Master two (M2) students' participants rely on critical writing when writing their dissertations by focusing on some sections, especially in literature review, analysis of the results and discussion section. As Yamin; Purwati, (2020). Stated that Critical writing is not only viewed as the criticness of finding the research topic, but also provide the students to elaborate, to organize, and to formulate research background, research problem, review of related literature, and research method in well-organized text.

Those sections require critical writing because they judge and evaluate authors' ideas and review the findings.

However, the second research question addresses the way how critical writing contributes in the dissertation writing. In other words, how does critical writing help in order to have an effective quality of research work. The obtained results indicate that critical writing contributes effectively in the dissertation writing, and that it has an important role in the dissertation. Most respondents (90.2%) asserted that critical writing is important in the dissertation. Because when using critical writing in research, it means engaging in the academic debates. While the last research question indicates the expectations and difficulties students encounter when writing critically in the process of writing a dissertation, it is found to be dominantly used in various sections in the dissertation as: literature review, analysis of the results and discussion section.

The results indicate that critical writing has an important role in the process of writing the dissertation. It is that critical writing contributes effectively in the dissertation writing to have an acceptable work in the academic community. Thus, The obtained results have answered the research questions of the current study. Students' reported answers confirmed relationship between a good dissertation and the reliance on critical writing.

As Yamin. Oikurema, (2020) state that Critical writing is not only viewed as the criticalness of finding the research topic, but also provides the students to be able to elaborate, to organize, and to formulate research background, research problem, review of related literature, and research method in well-organized text. Well-organized text is dealing with the organization, content, vocabulary, mechanics, and language use. The following statement indicates the importance of critical writing in the dissertation and supports the hypothesis of the present study. Which states that critical writing will help

graduates to develop their dissertations, which means that critical writing is a helpful process when writing the dissertation, it organizes, elaborate and formulate the research background. In addition, the results supported the hypothesis that critical writing will contribute effectively in the dissertation. it indicates that critical writing helps improve the quality of the work.

Also Wallace & Wray (2011, p.7) asserted that:

"This marriage of reading and writing has many benefits. First, you will develop a sense of what is and is not a robust piece of research – essential when come to plan your own empirical investigation (for a dissertation, say). Second, you will soon begin identifying where the existing research has left a gap that your investigation can fill. Third, the attention you pay to different authors' texts will naturally affect the quality of your own writing".

This means that critical writing answers the hidden questions of the research, fill the gaps found in the research , and serves in planning the research ideas.

In line with the hypothesis, critical writing is a useful process that Master two (M2) students might use in order to help improve the quality of their dissertations. They rely on this process by judging authors' ideas, evaluating, reviewing, and analyzing results. Also, this latter has a crucial role in the dissertation; it provides the dissertation with the important explanations in order to enrich its content.

4.3. Research Implications

while previous research have focused on the idea that critical writing is an essential process in the dissertation that helps enhance the quality of the research. The present study results opens the door for new insights that critical writing contributes effectively in the accomplishment of the dissertation. it indicates the necessity to apply it different sections of the dissertation. Moreover, the results add to the previous research that critical writing is a difficult task when

applying it during writing the dissertation. Some of those difficulties have encountered by students is the lack of understanding authors' ideas, lack of understanding its roles and steps to master it, and the way how to evaluate an idea. In addition, most academic writing assignment rely on critical writing. Because academic writing depends on evaluating sources, and defend or convince a piece of writing.

The given results should be taken into consideration when writing a dissertation, because critical writing has a crucial part in enhancing the quality of the dissertation, it improves its ideas, thoughts, and give logical reasoning of the thoughts.

The results supported the previous studies who viewed that critical writing helps in organizing the dissertation which leads to the improvement of the quality of this latter. As mentioned previously, critical writing has an important role in enhancing the quality of the dissertation.

4.4.Recommendations

It has been viewed that most students encounter different challenges when writing critically. The current study recommend for future studies to put emphasis on applying critical writing as an important skill in the dissertation. Moreover, to shed light on practicing critical writing in the classrooms. Students will be able to master this skill which results in enhancing the quality of their dissertations. Furthermore, designing different assignments concerning how to use critical writing in the dissertation. here are some suggested tips for practicing critical writing:

- Give students a model of how to write critically.
- Provide students with different cases according to evidence and ask them to make a reasoning (judgment).

- Teachers should share with their students different ways of how to develop an argument in order to string ideas together.
- Provide students with assignment questions that needs development in order to improve their level in writing and practice on writing critically.
- Teacher should discuss with students some ideas that needs development and make a review about them.

There are also some suggestions for students as:

- students should read critically and think critically.
- Organize certain ideas of a given thoughts in order to make a review.
- Make an outline or a map out of all the main points of a certain source.
- write different paragraphs in which you evaluate and analyze different ideas and submit them to your teacher in order to assess your work.
- Show a healthy skepticism about what you are reading.
- Make a clear stand point about what you are writing about.
- Practice on writing structured paragraphs in order to succeed in writing critically.

Critical writing has a crucial part in the dissertation, it requires practicing this skill in order to improve the quality of the dissertation.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the discussion of the data gathered by means of an online questionnaire. It is used in order to answer the research questions of this study and to validate the research hypothesis, which states that critical writing will develop graduates' dissertations, and this latter contributes effectively in the dissertation. This chapter discussed the interpretation of the findings, implications and recommendations. The obtained results from the questionnaire indicate that critical writing has a crucial part in the dissertation as it is discussed in the interpretation part.

General conclusion

Critical writing is an important process that English language learners need to master in order to improve the quality of the research paper. The main focus is on the way Master students of English rely on critical writing in order to complete their dissertation. Critical writing refers to the students' ability of how to analyze, evaluate, judge, critique authors ideas; it is developed to have a valid and a good quality of research paper. The present study was conducted in order to investigate the contribution of critical writing in the completion of the dissertation.

Making students aware about the important role of critical writing in the dissertation and how it contributes in the dissertation are the main purposes of the current study. A qualitative research was adopted in order to fulfill the research objectives. Moreover, an online questionnaire was used as a data gathering tool, it was delivered to Master two (M2) students of English at Biskra University (N= 41). The obtained responses revealed that students' familiarity with the importance of critical writing in the dissertation accomplishment.

On the other hand, students showed their interest about critical writing and their lack to master this skill, this issue was not previously given enough attention in terms of practice, and this might be because of the lack of motivation and inspiration. This made students face different challenges when writing their research papers. Therefore, it is important to provide students with critical writing activities in order to enhance their ability to write critically. In addition, teachers should prepare students for the process of writing their research papers by providing them with samples about how to rely on critical writing when conducting research.

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Appendix

Students' questionnaire

Personal information

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information as a requirement to Master dissertation. It aims at investigating the contribution of critical writing into the completion of graduates' dissertations, and finding out how Master students rely on critical writing when writing their dissertations. I will be thankful to your participation. Please choose the appropriate option and provide full answer when needed.

**Required*

1. 1.Gender*

Mark only one oval.

Male

Female

2. How was your choice of English?

Mark only one oval.

Personal

Imposed

2. 3.How long have you been studying writing? how many years?

.....
.....
.....*

3. 4.Is writing a favorite study subject?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

NO

Academic writing

4. 1.How would you self-evaluate your academic writing level?

Mark only one oval.

Very poor

Poor

Acceptable

good

excellent

5. 2.How often do your teachers give you academic writing assignment?

Mark only one oval.

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

6. 3.Do you receive feedback on your assignments?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Sometimes

No

7. 4.How difficult are academic writing assignments (paragraphs, essays)?

Mark only one oval.

Easy

Difficult

Depends on the topic

Critical writing

1.Are you familiar with "critical writing"?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

8. 2.Do you think it mainly refers to:

Mark only one oval.

Supporting arguments by providing evidence and examples

Questioning the facts

A presentation of a given arguments and reasons

All of them

3. When writing academic assignments, how often do you rely on critical writing?

Mark only one oval.

Rarely

Often

Very often

Always

4. Do you find it difficult to write critically?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

NO

9. If yes, please state some of these difficulties?*

5. As a Master student, do you think that critical writing is important when writing your dissertation?

Mark only one oval.

yes

No

6.If yes, how is critical writing important in dissertation completion?*

7.In which section of the dissertation you find critical writing essential?you can choose more than one option.

Tick all that apply.

Introduction

Literature review

Methodology

Analysis

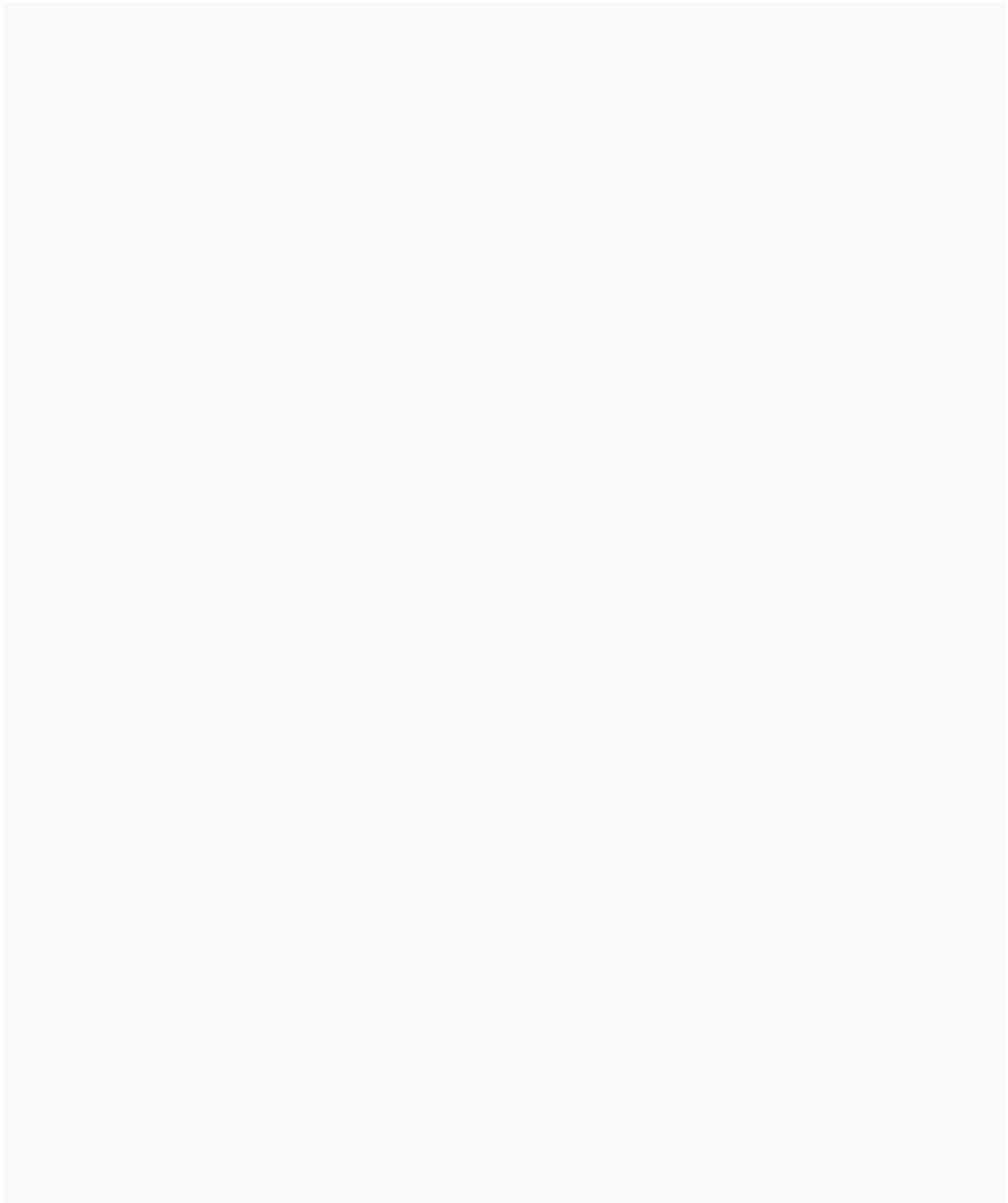
Discussion

Conclusion

1. 8.In what way you find critical writing contributing in dissertation completion?

*

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المخلص

تعتبر الكتابة النقدية أحد المتطلبات الحاسمة والنتائج المرجوة في أطروحات الطلاب. هذه النتيجة هي ببساطة القدرة على نقد أفكار المؤلفين وأنواع أخرى من المصادر التي قد تشير إليها في أطروحة والحكم عليها وتقييمها. واجه معظم طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة بسكرة تحديات مختلفة عند كتابة أطروحاتهم. هذه الصعوبات تتعلق بالحكم على أفكار المؤلفين وتقييمها ، ونقد مصدر معين. هذه الدراسة هي محاولة للتحقيق في الطريقة التي يعتمد بها الطلاب على الكتابة النقدية من أجل إكمال أطروحاتهم. على نفس المنوال ، نفترض أنه إذا اعتمد الطلاب على الكتابة النقدية ، فسيحسنون جودة أطروحاتهم. علاوة على ذلك ، لتحقيق الغرض الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة ، تم اعتماد نهج نوعي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، من أجل جمع البيانات لهذا العمل البحثي الوصفي ، تم استخدام استبيان كأداة لجمع البيانات يتم إدارتها لـ 41 طالب ماجستير 2 (M2). بعد تحليل ومناقشة البيانات التي تم جمعها ، كشفت نتائج النتائج أن الكتابة النقدية تساعد في تحسين جودة أطروحات الطلاب. نستنتج أن الفرضية المذكورة من قبل قد تم تأكيدها وتم إثبات النتائج.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكتابة النقدية ، الأطروحة ، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

Résumé

L'écriture critique est l'une des exigences cruciales et des résultats souhaités dans les mémoires des étudiants. Ce résultat est simplement la capacité de critiquer, de juger et d'évaluer les idées des auteurs et d'autres types de sources qui pourraient se référer dans une thèse. la plupart des étudiants EFL de l'université de Biskra ont rencontré différents défis lors de la rédaction de leur thèse. Ces difficultés concernent le jugement et l'évaluation des idées des auteurs, la critique d'une certaine source. Cette étude est une tentative d'enquêter sur la façon dont les étudiants s'appuient sur l'écriture critique pour terminer leurs thèses. Dans la même veine, nous émettons l'hypothèse que si les étudiants s'appuient sur l'écriture critique, ils amélioreront la qualité de leurs thèses. De plus, pour atteindre l'objectif principal de cette étude, une approche qualitative a été adoptée. Par ailleurs, afin de collecter des données pour ce travail de recherche descriptive, un questionnaire a été utilisé comme outil de collecte de données administré à 41 étudiants de Master 2 (M2). Après l'analyse et la discussion des données collectées, les résultats ont révélé que l'écriture critique contribue à améliorer la qualité des dissertations des étudiants. Nous concluons que l'hypothèse énoncée avant a été confirmée et les résultats ont été prouvés.

Mots clés : rédaction critique, mémoire, étudiants EFL.

