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Faculty of Letters and Languages

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Sciences of the language

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Submitted and Defended by:

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**Investigating the utilized teaching writing approaches to  
enhance the students' writing skill**

**The case of third year English students at Mohamed Kheider  
University of Biskra**

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A dissertation Submitted to the Department of English and Literature as Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Sciences of Language

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### **Declaration**

I Mohamed GRIMETdo hereby declare that this submitted work is my original work and has not previously been submitted for any institution or university for a degree. I also declare that a list of references is provided forward indicating all the sources of the cited and quoted information. This work was certified and completed at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.

Mohamed GRIMET

**Dedication**

*To the most precious people to my heart*

*To those who give me strength and motivation*

*To my father Lakhdar*

*To my mother Fatima*

*To my brothers and sisters.*

*To all of my friends*

## Acknowledgements

Always and forever, I am grateful to **Allah** who created me and made me Muslim.

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### Abstract

Foreign language writing is one of the complex processes for EFL learners. It is always considered complex to draw a straight line that guides to the mastery of the foreign language writing. Accordingly, this research aims to investigate the used teaching writing approaches that help students to raise their level in foreign language writing. It also aims to know the possibility to make a combination of more than one approach. And to know the awareness of the students of those used approaches. In order to test the validity of the hypotheses which say that it is possible to use more than one approach in teaching writing, and that not all of the students are aware of the used approaches, a descriptive study has been conducted and questionnaires were used as data gathering instruments. Those questionnaires were submitted to both of the teachers and students of the department of English at Mohamed Khider University- Biskra. The results show that it is possible to use more than one approach in teaching writing, and that most of students are not aware of those approaches that are applied by their teachers and that they face many difficulties that can be fixed only with practice.

***Key terms:*** teaching writing, writing approaches, third year, Biskra University.

## **List of Abbreviation and Acronyms**

**EFL:** English as a foreign language

**ESL:** English as a second language

**L1:** The first language

**L2:** The second language

**WHS:** W H Questions

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# **General**

# **Introduction**

### **Statement of the Problem**

Learning a foreign language is not an easy process. Most people find obstacles while they are learning that language, especially when they look for fluency. Psycholinguists show that thinking in that language will facilitate reaching the fluency. Sociolinguists point out that the first obstacle with that is the relation between the mother tongue and the target language. If the relation between the first language and the target language is weak, it can lead to the weakness with one or more learning skills. Reaching fluency in an academic way needs not just a good communicator as people say, but also needs a good writer, listener, speaker, reader, and thinker.

Having a weak writing skill is a serious problem among students in the field of EFL. The question that every student at a certain level could ask is: "how to write?" Others ask about the reasons that make writing so difficult. EFL students may not have problems with how to combine words to make a sentence, or even to combine sentences to make a paragraph. The main problem for them is how to make a good combination of words and sentences to reach being a good writer. Writing teachers witness problems in EFL student's writing skills every day. Some of them because of lack of practice, others are because of the lack of the linguistic knowledge, and the other kind of problems is that which consider the teachers. It can be common between teachers that this job needs a certain manner in conveying pieces of information at every level of students. In the case of teaching writing, applying a certain manner for all level of students does not help them all, it needs to be changeable according to the students' need and their development in writing.

Approaches in teaching writing represent a systematic steps and manners that suit the students' needs in and outside the classroom, as an individual act and as an act that needs the students' collaboration. These steps are the results of the different ways of understanding

writing, weakness in writing, and the students' needs. Applying the suitable approach in a well organized way for a certain level of learners can be the key point for developing that level and enhancing their writing skills.

### **Significance of the Study**

Due to the complexness in the writing act's rules and approaches, and the long time that is needed to develop the writing skill, with a lot of practice, this study shows the difference between teaching writing approach, the most used approach among EFL learners, and if it can be available to use more than one approach at the same time to acquire the benefits of each one. This study may attract the interest of writing teachers, EFL students, especially the less writing skilled EFL students.

### **Aims of the Study**

#### **General aim**

This study aims to investigate the useful approaches in teaching writing and their influence on the third year EFL students of Mohamed KHIDER University in the side of writing skill.

#### **Specific aims**

1. The more used approach in teaching writing by teachers of Writing
2. Investigating whether writing teachers can mix between more than one approach or not
3. Investigating if students apply the steps and the stages of the used approach.

## **Research Questions**

This research is aimed to answer the following questions:

- What is the most utilized approach among university writing skill teachers?
- Is it available to use more than an approach simultaneously and get benefits from them?
- Are EFL students aware of the approach that is used by their teacher and the most appropriate for learning?

## **Research Methodology**

This research is purely qualitative. Investigating the approaches in teaching writing required a primary qualitative research that is due to the data that will be collected and analyzed which will be also qualitative. At the level of data collection, this research will use the descriptive method by using semi-structured questionnaire that will be given to the student and written expression module teachers. At the level of data analyzing, content and thematic analysis method will be used to analyze the answers that are given in the questionnaires as sentences and paragraphs.

## **Population and Sampling**

The population of the study is represented by 273 third year English students at Mohamed Khider University; we submitted the questionnaire via a link that is shared in their Facebook group. We gave up receiving responses when we reach the target percent that is required to the study which is between 15% and 20%, we received exactly 49 responses which represents almost 18% of the general population. We also submitted another questionnaire via email to 50 teachers at the English department; however, only 11 of them sent back their responses.

### **Data Collection Tools**

To gather data about this issue, we submitted a semi-structured questionnaire to third year English students and to the teachers of English department at the faculty of letters and foreign languages of Biskra University.

### **Limitation of the Study**

Due to the huge number of master 2 students that they will search and ask other students, not all students will be interested in answering the questions of the others; even they will do, not all of them will give useful answers that help the research or give reliable results of the research. So, it is expected that the return rate of the questionnaire will be 20%. Some teachers do not like to answer the unstructured questions because they do not waste their precious time.

# **Chapter1: Approaches to Teaching Writing**

## **Introduction**

Writing is seen as the way of the academic achievement. People write to gain a good mark in the exam, to get an employment, and even to communicate. For students, writing is a way to demonstrate knowledge (Graham & Harris, 2004). They find it complex and difficult to write and to learn it also. Teachers consider teaching writing as a challenging task (Graham et al., 2008). There is a relation between the quality of teaching writing and the students' written level (Fisher & Twist, 2011).

This chapter intends to discuss and investigate writing as it is viewed by teachers and instructors. It will discuss teaching writing; specifically, it tends to give a short historical background about teaching writing. It is important also to investigate some techniques in teaching writing.

The major interest of this chapter is in teaching writing approach. We tend to investigate what scholars and instructors found out concerning those approaches at the beginning of the 1980s until the 2000s, and investigate the most common approaches. We tend to investigate the most common on in the field of EFL, and to find how each one of them could be helpful in the classroom.

## **Historical Background**

Several theories had been emerged since the beginning of the 20th century that supported the teacher's effort to understand the nature of L2 learning in general and writing, and specifically writing. Most of those theories has been adopted, translated to methodologies, and taught in the classroom. Each one of them was treated as another addition to this field (Hyland, 2003). At that time, it would be impossible to refuse a theory and replace it with another.

What made it difficult to refuse or reject a theory at that time is the different focuses of them. Each theory had a different view to writing, which differed to their focuses. Most of those theories focused on the following aspects of writing (Hyland, 2003):

- language structures
- text functions
- themes or topics
- creative expression
- composing processes
- Content
- genre and contexts of writing

According to these specific purposes and focuses, scholars emerged approaches that contain a definition a description, and a model of how writing can be taught.

### **Definition of Teaching**

According to Merriam Webster's dictionary (2022), teaching is the act, practice, or profession of a teacher.

In much modern usage, the words 'teaching' and 'teacher' are wrapped up with schooling and schools. One way of approaching the question 'What is teaching?' is to look at what those called 'teachers' do – and then to draw out key qualities or activities that set them apart from others. The problem is that all sorts of things are bundled together in job descriptions or roles that may have little to do with what we can sensibly call teaching (Smith, 2020)

To teach is to engage students in learning; thus teaching consists of getting students involved in the active construction of knowledge. A teacher requires not only knowledge of subject matter, but knowledge of how students learn and how to transform them into active learners. Good teaching, then, requires a commitment to systematic understanding of learning. The aim of teaching is not only to transmit information, but also to transform students from passive recipients of other people's knowledge into active constructors of their own and others' knowledge. The teacher cannot transform without the student's active participation, of course. Teaching is fundamentally about creating the pedagogical, social, and ethical conditions under which students agree to take charge of their own learning, individually and collectively. Teaching, learning, assessment, curriculum and pedagogy. (n.d.)

### **Meaning of Teaching Writing**

Teaching writing is a complicated act and a long journey. It requires the well understanding of the teacher that writing cannot be taught as a simple lecture to be understood by the learner. To teach writing means following the learners' level and giving instructions according to it, Its meaning can be the same as its objectives, so teaching writing means to develop the learners' writing skills and shaping their voice to make them able to communicate and translate their thoughts, ideas, and feelings into written words (Thomas, 2019)

### **Principles of Teaching Writing**

Teaching writing requires several principles to be taken into consideration. Nunan, (2003), suggests four principles: understand your students' reasons for writing, provide many

opportunities for students to write, make feedback helpful and meaningful, and clarify for yourself, and for your students, how their writing will be evaluated.

### **Understand Your Students' Reasons for Writing**

The teacher has to take into consideration that his students do not write to write, but they write to develop this skill and use it in their learning career. It is important to understand and know the other courses that will be taught to the students and design a type of writing according to that (Nunan, 2003). For instance, if the students are learning for academic purposes, the suitable writing style will be the academic writing, and not any other style.

### **Provide Many Opportunities For Students To Write**

In the field of the syllabus design, writing considered as a task-based syllabus. Teaching the students about writing or giving them instruction about the writing process could a mistake. Writing and practicing could be better than talking about it or giving instruction about it (Nunan, 2003).

### **Make feedback Helpful and Meaningful**

It could be important to be a motivating teacher. Students are always looking for the teacher's feedback about their writing pieces. The motivating teacher will try to give them instruction while giving feedback. It could be a mistake from the teacher to correct the student's grammar mistakes. Rather than that, it could be helpful to give him comments on his paper that are written as instruction (Nunan, 2003).

### **Clarify For Yourself and For Your Students How Their Writing Will Be Evaluated**

It is familiar that student do not feel satisfied about their writing mark in the exam. The teacher could have the opportunity to avoid being subjective in evaluating the students' writing pieces by building an evaluating scale depending on these questions :

1. On a scale of 1-10, how important is creativity, or originality of ideas?
2. on a scale of 1-10, how important is following a particular written format (such as a research report, book report, letter, etc.)?
3. On a scale of 1-10, how important is grammatical accuracy?
4. On a scale of 1-10, how important is it that the assignment includes recently taught material?
5. On a scale of 1-10, how important is accuracy in spelling and punctuation?

(Nunan, 2003, p. 94)

### **The Roles of the Teacher in the Writing Classroom**

The teacher has several roles as the principle resource of information. In the writing class, the teacher has three major roles (Harmer, 2007, p. 330)

#### **Motivator**

The principle role of the teacher in writing tasks is motivation. Students need a teacher who motivates them to make the maximum effort, creates the required conditions to make them generating new ideas for their writing benefits, and who brings helpful tasks and lets the students extract the maximum benefits from them (Harmer, 2007).

**Resource**

The writing teacher could be the principle guide in the class, according to that, he lets an impression on the students that he is a reliable source of information, and can be a valid guide that provide them with information and fix their writing problems when necessary (Harmer, 2007).

**Feedback Provider**

The teacher should give positive feedback to the student and think carefully about the students' needs. Giving positive feedback has a positive impact on the students' psychology which leads them to be more creative and make more effort depending on the teacher's feedback (Harmer, 2007).

**Approaches to the Teaching of Writing**

At the beginning of the 20th century, writing had not this special interest from researches and teachers until the 1960s. Teachers and scholars began getting interested in the writing skill and it can be taught. Several methods began used in teaching, this led the teachers to think about the shift from teaching at the sentence level to teaching at the discourse level.

Teachers then found great difficulties in shifting to the new orientation. Strickland et al (2001) saw that teachers found it challenging to shift from their instructional practices that were based on teaching Grammatical and syntactic form to the new way of teaching writing depending on these methods and approaches.

When it comes to the elements and features that are included in the application of writing practices, Raimes (2010) claims that the writer should take as content, organization,

word choice, the writing process, grammar and syntax as elements to measure the quality of writing. Most of the teaching writing approaches pay attention to both of form and content of the language when producing a piece of writing.

### **Classification According To Selected Authors during the Selected Period**

Beginning from 1983 to 2001, four authors suggested different teaching writing approaches and methods depending on their own view of writing at that time. Raimes, Bryne, Tribble, and Harmer were the prominent methodologists who emerged different approaches that brought new ideas or criticized the past approach/s at that period.

#### **Approaches by Ann Raimes**

Raimes (1983) presented six teaching writing approaches. She added that the principle purpose of that is that the teacher should make a combination between those approaches and do not stick to one of them, and advised the teachers to get benefits from them all. She argued that the implementation of the approach can be changed according to the teaching method. She gave her own understanding of writing which argues that the piece of writing contains nine features and elements.

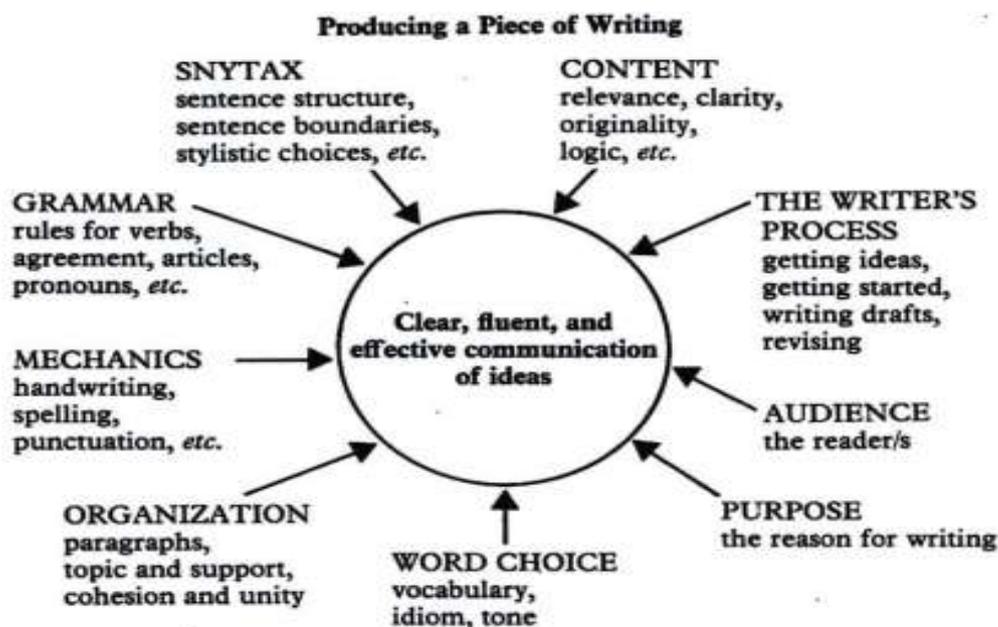


Figure 1. Diagram to produce a piece of writing (Raimes, 1983, p. 6)

According to the suggested diagram which represents how Raimes explained writing, she represented the following approaches:

- The controlled-to-free approach
- Free-writing approach
- The paragraph-pattern approach
- The Grammar-syntax-organization approach
- The communicative approach
- The process approach

#### **Approaches by Donn Bryne**

Bryne's (1988) represented approaches were quite different from Raimes's version of approaches. He relied on observing the difficulties and the problems that students face in the writing process, and designed four approaches according to that. It seems that he just supported some of the past approaches that were given by Raimes (1983) but with some

modification. He suggested an implementation of the four approaches together in a part he named it "The state of art" (Bryne, 1988, P. 23, 24) which is not quite different from the communicative approach of Raimes. According to his point of view, he suggested the following approaches:

- Focus on accuracy
- Focus on fluency
- Focus on text
- Focus on purpose

### **Approaches by Christopher Tribble**

Tribble (1996) began from the three ways of approaching that Raimes suggested before, those three ways are: focus on form, focus on writer, and focus on reader (Raimes, 1991). Depending on that, he suggested only three approaches that two of them were similaire to Raimes approaches and the third were a new one. The three suggested approaches by Tribble were:

- Process approach
- Text based approach
- Genre approach

### **Approaches by Jeremy Harmer**

Harmer (2001, p. 325-328) begin this part in the book with advising that there are many approaches to be used and every teacher should decide which focus is better to teach writing for the students. He described the process and the genre approach, and stood against the product approach saying that it focuses only on the final product of writing. Unlike the other

authors, he suggested two new approaches. According to Harmer, there are four approaches to teaching writing:

- Creative writing
- Cooperative writing
- Genre approach
- Process approach

The following table concluded the suggested and used approaches to teaching writing according to the selected authors in the period 1983-2001. The similar color represents the same approaches or the approaches that have the same attitudes or methods.

Table1.

*The teaching writing approaches according to the selected authors during the selected period*

Ann Raimés (1983)	Donn Bryne (1988)	Christopher Tribble (1996)	Jeremy Harmer (2001)
Controlled-to-free approach	Focus on accuracy	Text-based approach	Creative writing
Free-writing approach	Focus on fluency	Process approach	Process approach
Paragraph-pattern approach	Focus on text	Genre approach	Genre approach
Communicative approach	Focus on purpose		Cooperative writing
Grammar-syntax-organization approach			
Process approach			

### **Controlled To Free Method**

In the middle of the 20th century, the audio-lingual approach was the most common used approach. Writing at that time was just a way to reinforce and enhance the speech and speaking skill in general. Guided composition was based on that approach which was based on the habit formation and to reach the level of the absence of errors.

#### **The nature of the controlled to free method**

It was commonly believed that the familiarization with the Grammar can lead to the mastery of language, especially its spoken form. This led to the attention on writing as a way to reinforce speaking in EFL.

Kroll (1990) stated that the use of language is the manipulations of patterns, those patterns can be learned only by imitation. The imitation itself is the copying from the original. Practice in writing is included in the formal use of language. The teaching methodology includes manipulation and imitation (substitution, transformation, completion... etc) of a model piece of writing constructed and classified to reaching vocabulary and improving the grammar level of the student.

In the classroom, the teachers provide their student with different passages and ask them to make Grammatical and lexical changes on them. For instance, they ask them to change the tense of the verbs from the past tense to the present, or to change the single to the plural, or making a modification on the order of the sentence by changing the active voice to passive. These kind of practices will help the students by letting them write more, give them the chance to have an idea about the piece of writing, and even write without making any mistakes because they are controlled. After passing this initial stage, the students will be able to generate their own ideas and write without being controlled. Moving from the controlled

composition to the free writing stage requires the writing instructions from the teacher.

Crookes and Chaudron (1991) stated that this stage called the semi-controlled stage.

While moving from controlled to free composition, there are several exercises that used to provide the students with different aspects of language. The guideness of the teacher decreases gradually according to the development of the students' level in writing. Abbot and Wingard (1992) suggested that the given exercises should also be balanced and suit the current level of the student. Using unsuitable exercises for the students' level could lead to dullness or confusion. It could be important that teachers should have an idea about the level of their students and stay predictable. Nammouchi (2014) stated that the controlled to free writing approach focus more on accuracy rather than fluency. He argued that it focuses the structural aspect of the language rather than its communicative aspect. Raimes (1983, p. 76) stated that "this approach stresses three features: grammar, syntax, and mechanics."

### **Limitations of the controlled to free method**

By the end the sixth decade of the past century, the controlled to free method became traditional and not enough to fill in the students' needs. Silva (1990) stated that these were the weaknesses of that approach:

- Writing was considered as a habit formation where the student is required to manipulate the past written works
- The only one who can give feedback on the students' works was the teacher who was giving attention to the linguistic forms with ignorance of the quality and the order of ideas in the text.
- A total ignorance of the audience and the purpose of writing because of the limited context (classroom and teacher).

- Writing itself was not considered as a skill, but as an activity to serve other skill especially to reinforce the speaking skill.

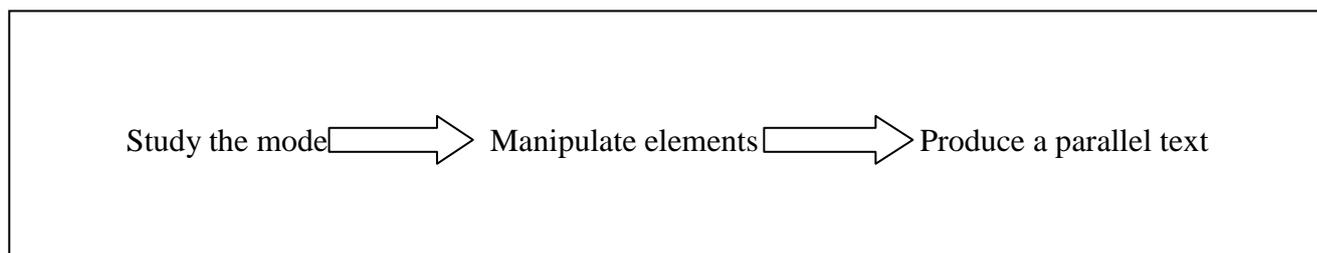
### **The Product-Oriented Approach**

As its name indicates, the product approach focuses on the final state of the writing process. Its origin is from the rhetoric which gives attention to the textual features and grammatical conventions. It consists on identifying the strengths and the weaknesses of the student. It is also concerned with letting the student know the linguistic aspect of the language with giving attention to the quality of the used vocabulary and syntax (Pincas, 1982b). According to the description, this approach focuses more on accuracy rather than fluency.

#### **The Nature of the product-oriented approach**

The product oriented approach focuses on letting the students familiarized with the high-quality passages to lead them to the imitation. Following the instruction of this approach, the teacher gives the students a passage as a model and motivates them to simulate its ideas to write another work with their own words (Soonpaa, 1984). According to what is said, it seems that the imitation and transformation are the common practice in the classroom. The imitation was the basic practice to let the students be familiarized with the written product and be more competent.

White (1988, p. 5) sated the stages of the model-based approach as follows:



*Figure2.* The product-oriented approach model

Badger and white (2000) give an explanation of that by saying that the model text gets described and viewed from different aspect such as grammar, content, organization of ideas...etc. After getting around the entire model, the students will be asked to produce another one with their own word.

Soonpaa (2007) comments on this model, he said that it requires teaching writing at the beginning, while product comes at the end of it. White (1988) adds that it begins with others' writing. In other words it occupies the product at the beginning. He commented that this model does not show how this product came; it means that it totally ignores the writing process.

Pincas (1982a) argues that the product approach is consisted of four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. She claims that the teacher should begin the first stage with making a topic as a classroom discussion until they get enough information about it. After that, the students will be ready to the next stage which is producing a piece of writing with the guideness of the teacher. If they master the two stages, they will not need the instructions of the teacher, this stage called the free writing stage. She argued that it is teacher-centered approach.

The product-oriented approach has some benefits they will be mentioned as follows. Crawford (2008) claims that it has a positive impact on the learners' linguistic knowledge. He added that it provides the learner with how the written products should be organized.

Nunan (1999) listed some characteristics which let the product-oriented approach different from any other approach. These characters are as follows:

- One draft
- Individual
- Giving attention to the organization of the ideas
- Emphasis on the final product

### **Limitations of the product-oriented approach**

Although it has several positive impacts on the students' writing products, the product oriented approach is not complete and still weak in some aspects in giving attention to the final product with peripheral or ignorance to the process of writing. It also gives attention to the linguistic aspect of the language such as grammar and spelling with no attention to the content, the ideas, and how it can be generated. This makes a gap in how writing can be done as process.

Harwood (2005) criticized this approach by describing it as it totally ignores the modifying and the revising stage. He added that it goes against the motivation of the learner and considers it as a repetitive process. Criticizing the teacher's role in this approach, he stated that the only role of the teacher is assessing the final product and that he ignores his role as a guide in the writing process. Halsted (1975, p. 75) stated that following the steps of this approach leads only to serious "writing blocks". Mahon (1992) argued that it does not let any chance to the learner to use his imagination

### **The Process-Oriented Approach**

The past six previous decades brought significant change in the movement of writing. The first ideas about teaching writing began when it was based on controlled or guided

composition. In the sixth decade of the last century, teachers felt that the controlled and the guided composition is not enough for students. The 1970s brought the shift the new approach which was the product approach. It did not stay so long; the same decade witnessed the shift from the product to the process approach. The latter emerged in contrast to to the product approach. It criticized the product approach and argued that is did not meet the exact need of the students (Kroll, 1990). Hyland (2001) stated that the emergence of this approach was because of two reasons. The first was because of the researchers' recognition of the new development in the field of the ESL writing. The second was from teachers where they recognition of the students' needs. However, teachers and students were not convinced of the new approach at that time. They saw that it did not fix the problems that students faced at that time. Reid (1984) claimed that it did not bring specific writing task for the practice of the student.

### **The nature of the process-oriented approach**

During the period in between the 1970s and the 1980, the new teaching writing approach began appearing to the field of ESL and EFL in general, and to the writing teachers and the students specifically. The process approach shifted the attention from the final product of the piece of writing to the manner and how it can be done. It focused mainly on the steps of the writing act.

In a several studies as cited in Spack (1984, p. 650), Flower and Hayes (1980), Perl (1979), and Pianko (1979) made different empirical studies of the writing composition on native proficient and novice English writers. According to their results from the studies, they claimed that "the writing process is a series of overlapping and interacting processes".

This approach considers the writing act a process that should be learned by students, and not taught by teachers, so it is considered as a learner-centered-approach. The exact role

of the teacher is to provide the students with several writing task, and to try to facilitate the several steps of the writing process for them.

None of the scholars gave a specific definition of this process, but some of them gave describe it as it facilitates the writing process for the learner, and it raises his awareness about his writing method and to find his own style in writing. Murray (1992) gave a description that was close to the definition to the process approach. She stated that it is an approach that focuses on letting the student aware of the writing process. Rather than the product approach which considers it as an initial stage, this approach considers it as a final stage in the whole process. The process oriented approach includes four stages that the writer goes through: pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing. These stages let the writer to go back and forth without effecting on the order of hid ideas.

Another description made by Soonpaa (2007) who stated that this approach focuses more on the writing process by letting the writer imply several writing techniques such as brainstorming, planning, outlining, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing to raise the quality of his written product, and to let the student discover his own style of writing. Sun and Feng (2009) referred to many scholars who described this approach from their own points of view. Steel (2004) stated that this process focuses more on the classroom activities which foster the development of the language use. Nunan (1991) stated that this approach allows the writer to produce of writing. He added that no one of them is perfect.

The process approach contains four steps to produce a written product: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Raimes (1983) stated that the writer reorder those stages before the final draft or the publishing stage.

### **Limitations of the process oriented approach**

Recently, the process oriented approach criticized by many scholars. Cope and Kalantzis (1993) argued that it totally ignored the role of the teacher, and that teacher could do nothing to help and develop the learners. Badger and White (2000) stated that this approach treated all types of writing within the same steps as they are similar. They added that it made the student struggling with the lack of input. Antikson (2003) rejects the positive effect of this approach by stating that it totally ignores the cultural and the social aspect of the language. Reid (1984) showed his dissatisfaction with the basics of the approach by claiming that it did not solve any of the writing issues. He added that it neither employed the different role of the teacher, nor designed a specific task for the students as an input in place of the teacher's input.

### **Comparison between the Product and the Process Approach**

The product and the process approaches made heated points of view between the scholars. Some of them stand with the product, the other part stands with the process. To differ between the two approaches, it could be important to listen to third part. Some scholars tried to state the similarities and the differences between those two approaches.

McCrimmon (1994) made a comparison between the two approaches and stated the following. Process is a way of knowing or getting knowledge. On the other hand, product is way of telling and producing the output. So, he distinguished between them from their specific purposes.

Murray (1992) compared between them from another point of view. He stated that every one of the approaches uses the revision for a specific aim. Using revising technique in the case of the process approach is to clarify the meaning for the writer himself. On the other hand, using the revising technique in the case of the product approach is to clarify the

meaning for the reader. Flower (1985) concluded that by claiming that one of them is a writer-centered approach, and the other is a reader-centered approach.

Nunan (2001) stated that every approach of the two has its specific way to facilitate and develop the writing and the writing skill of the learner. He sees that the product approach implemented by providing the students with different written products and letting him imitate and transform until he get his own piece of writing. Whereas, the process approach provides the student full description of how to make a piece of writing and lets him generate his own ideas until and write them down until he makes the final draft.

### **The Genre Approach**

In the 1980s, the scholars began showing their dissatisfaction with the process approach because of its narrow view to the writing. The specific reason for their negative feedback about it after implementing it for years was its total ignorance to the social context and the writing genres. Depending on that, scholars recognized that it is highly required to create a new approach that can fill in the gaps that were made and the issues that had not solved by the product and the process approaches.

#### **The nature of the Genre approach**

As its name denotes, the genre approach is concerned with teaching different genres that the students have to gain control of in order to use them appropriately in several situations. In other words, that means using different functions of the language to write for different situations and purposes.

Before understanding the specific characters of this approach, it could be important to know what is genre. Swales (1990, p. 58) referred to genre as “a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes”. This description

shows that there is an associated link between the different conventions and the purpose of writing. For instance, the personal letter starts with an amicable phrase or an informal greeting to maintain a good relationship with others.

According to Swales (1990) and Martin (1984), all genres manipulate a variety of expressive aims within certain social situations. To put it another way, the structural quality of each genre is determined by its communication aim. Consequently, the range of communication goals and structural aspects could be important to be taken into account. In a particular writing course, a variety of genres is used, the structural characteristics that makeup. The term "genre" refers to a set of organizational and linguistic guidelines. Hammond (1992) argues that different given texts to the students will lead them to gain variety of skills and wide acquired knowledge.

Harwood (2005) sees that the genre approach is the way that let the students in which genre they will write about. Tang and John (1999), Hyland (2000), and Salager-Meyer (1994) made studies and got results which assert that reading a given genre as a sample facilitates the writing in the same given genre.

The Genre Approach views writing as the act of recreating a text depending on the genre offered by the teacher. Imitation and exploration are thought to be the conduits via which learning occurs. As a result, students are exposed to a variety of genres in order to determine their ability to write effectively in a specific genre. By exposing learners to texts, they can capture the special configurations of that genre and thereby utilize their experiences while creating a new work of the same genre (Miyoun, 2006).

In the case of teaching writing, the implementation of the Genre approach is classified to three aspects. Hyon (1996) stated three uses of this approach in the field of ESP, Australian Genre-based Educational Linguistics, and North American New Rhetoric Studies. ESP

scholars go with that the genre approach helps the learner to know the communicative purpose of his written product.

Hyon (1996) defines a genre as "a systematic functional linguistics that is concerned with the link between language and its function in social circumstances" under the influence of Holiday's functional grammar (p. 696). This suggests that the unique properties of language govern the manner in which the provided text is analyzed, with each genre demonstrating a certain sort of text. Receipts, for example, are widely assumed to take the form of a directive. The Australian Genre Theory was also created with non-professional contexts in mind, such as elementary and secondary schools, rather than universities and professional domains.

In contrast to the two previous models of genre studies which mostly focused on linguistic approaches for defining genres, the new rhetoric style of genre study lays a strong emphasis on the social circumstances in which genres are utilized, as well as ethnographic description. According to Freedman and Medway (1994), genre should be considered in the context of "the complex social, cultural, institutional, and disciplinary elements at work in the production of individual pieces of literature" (p. 235). This means that the Genre Approach must take into account not just the mode of communication but also the social action it is intended to achieve. As a result, the New Rhetoric Approach emphasizes the need of considering what sorts of social situations form a certain genre in order to increase the efficiency of the genre. The Genre Approach provides a number of benefits. It gives learners a thorough grasp of a specific communication style by examining its social environment. as well as the goal The Genre Approach is extremely helpful in bridging the gap between the formal and informal worlds. by highlighting the close relationship between structural and functional aspects of a language in writing instruction There are connections

between them. In this regard, Bhatia (1993) claims that "it is significant for In order for writing teachers to connect the formal and functional aspects of a language, to increase students' understanding of how and why linguistic rules are used rhetorical impacts in particular" (p. 6). Students can establish a group as a result of this sort of analysis Type of background that can be used in a future learning circumstance

### **Limitations of the genre approach**

Along with the above described benefits, the Genre Approach has been accused of having a number of flaws. The "disjunction between the assertion that meaning is embodied in textual objects, genres as autonomous systems, and the avowal of a social constructionist functional model of language" (Freedman & Richardson, 1997) is one example of such a critique. The issue arises, theoretically, from an overemphasis of genre formal elements and the accompanying downplay of writing's socially placed nature. Pedagogically, the issue derives from the fact that the study and application of certain genres is often approached primarily from a linguistic perspective rather than a true focus on the communicative aim.

The Genre Approach is also seen to miss key content-creation abilities and degrade students' self-sufficiency (Byram, 2004). The Genre Approach calls for teachers to spend the whole class period expanding on how to use language for certain objectives with a range of audiences. As a result, learners are thought to be completely reliant on and passive recipients of knowledge. As a result, such an approach is seen to limit learners' creativity and marginalize the natural and mental processes connected with creativity (Badger & White, 2000)

## Conclusion

It seems easy to convey an idea by writing it, but it is not when combining between a set of ideas to make a formal written product that translates the exact intended meaning. Learning writing and developing the writing skill does not follow a direct straight path. Every approach, method, teacher, and every learner has his own special strategy how to learn or teach this skill. The different points of view, ideas, methods, approaches, models are all emerged and developed according to that discrepancies between scholars in the way of teaching writing.

In this chapter, we tried to discuss writing according to the teachers and the scholars. Specifically, we made a research on the teaching writing approaches according to their creators, developers, or supporters in the period of the last two decades of the 20th century. We choosed this period of time because it was the area that witnesses the conflict between the scholars in what is the best approach to teach writing. We took only the five approaches that are widely used in EFL and ESL classes and concluded their history, characteristics, nature, and weaknesses.

# **Chapter2:**

# **The Writing Skill**

## **Introduction**

Writing is a convoluted skill in the field of foreign language learning. Reaching a high level in such skill is not easy at all. Achieving professionalty in this skill needs a well-planned curriculum, well understanding of the skill it self, a lot of practise, and readiness for complexity. This complexity comes from the nature of writing it self, which required awareness and mastrey in linguistic, cognitive, and psychological factors associated with such a skill. It is not weird that even professional writers find difficulties to give the exact concept and the specific suitable solution for mastering this skill.

In this chapter, we intend to define learning and its style in general. Then, we will try to enligh our selves with how other scholar defined writing, Taking into cosideration how it began and its importance. After that, we will compare between the several studies and results about the relation between writing and other skills, how they can reinforce each other. Finally, it can be important to understand its process.

## **Definition of Learning**

According to Physics catalist, (n.d), Learning is a broad term. Learning includes all activities which affect children. Along with the growing process, the mental development of the child occurs. As a result, changes take place in his behavior continuously. The child goes on learning through experiences. Learning: Definition, Characteristics and Types of Learning in Psychology. (n.d) defined it as it is a continuous behavioral act that is done by every human to develop his skills in several fields. Good, T, L & Brophy, J, E (1986, p125) defined learning as it is different from thinking; it is a development of knowledge, skills, the

interaction with the environment. Malamed, C (n.d.) described the process of learning as it is a permanent change of the human's behaviour and knowledge through the experience in life. She stated that this change has three components. First, duration, she said that usually, the learning process takes a long time. Second, the locus. It is the content of the knowledge or the modified behavior. Finally, the cause of learning, which is the learner's experience in the environment.

Accordingly, learning is the process of developing and shaping knowledge, behavior, and skills during a period of time through experiences in daily life and the interaction with the environment.

### **Learning Styles**

Learning style is the preferred way to use the learning abilities (Sternberg 1994). Learners have different learning styles that differ according to the learner's abilities, habits, and the preferred way of learning to grasp, understand, and process the information (Reid, 1987). The interest of the different learning styles began with Carl Jung's theory that is called the "Psychological types" (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 1997). According to Sternberg and Grigorenko, There were three reasons that motivated those theorists to be interested in that field: finding the nature of the link between the cognition and the personality, understanding and improving the educational achievement, and improving the teaching methods according to that. Subsequently, many dimensions have been created in that field. Many learning styles have been investigated and many theories have been proposed at that period. According to Pritchard (2008), there are three main types of learners: Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.

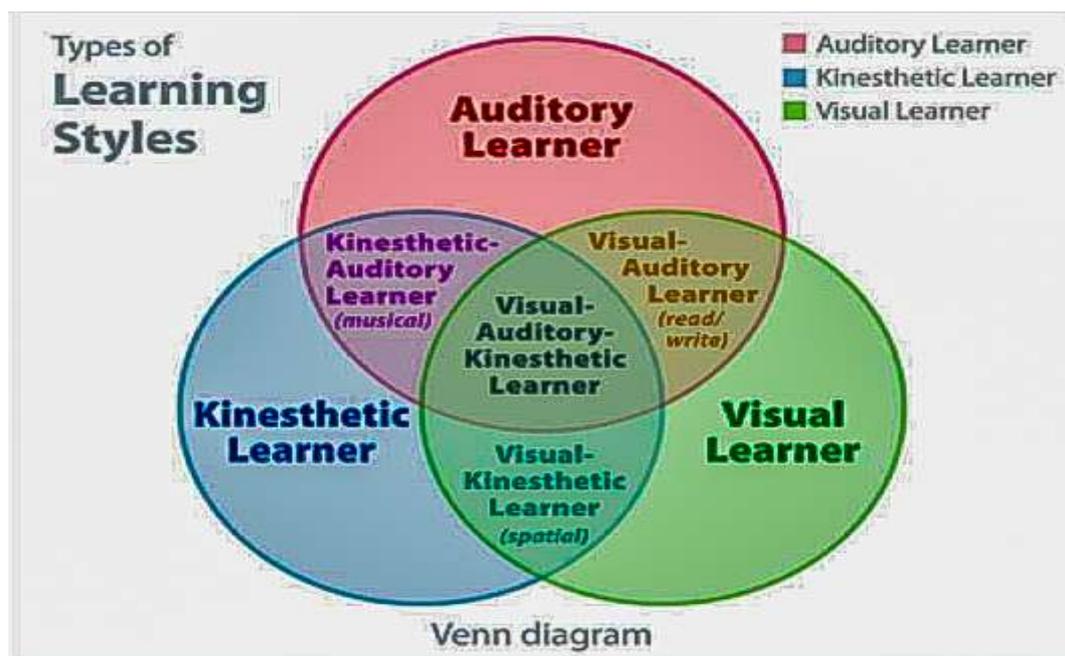


Figure3. Types of learning styles (Jarrett, 2014)

### Visual Learners

This type of learners prefers learning by seeing. Those learners have good visual recall. They prefer to see the information. For instance, they prefer learning by looking at images, seeing graphs, maps, diagrams...etc. So, they are good observers (Pritchard, 2008).

### Auditory Learners

Auditory learners prefer learning by listening. They have good auditory memory. They like learning by listening to records, discussions, repetition, and summaries. So, auditory learners are good listeners (Pritchard, 2008).

## **Kinesthetic Learners**

Kinesthetic learners prefer to act more than talk, hear or see. They memorize events and what they experiences before. This type of learners prefers learning by physical experiences (Pritchard, 2008).

## **Definition of Writing**

According to Benwell, T. (n.d.), Writing is the process of using symbols (letters of the alphabet, punctuation and spaces) to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readable form.

According to Collins Dictionary, (2019), writing is a group of letters or symbols written or marked on a surface as a means of communicating ideas by making each symbol stand for an idea, concept, or thing, by using each symbol to represent a set of sounds grouped into syllables (syllabic writing), or by regarding each symbol as corresponding roughly or exactly to each of the sounds in the language (alphabetic writing)

According to Harmer, J. (1988, p. 4) “Writing is used for a wide variety of purposes it is produced in many different form.”

I. S. P. Nation (2009.p.126) defined Writing as it is an activity that can usefully be prepared for by work in the other skills of listening, speaking and reading. This preparation can make it possible for words that have been used receptively to come into productive use.

To sum up what already has been said, writing is the act of translating ideas and thoughts to letters and symbols, and it can be process or product.

## **Creating Writing**

The need for keeping and saving spoken form of words was between 3400—3100 BC (Harmer 2004), using to first pre-historic forms of written communication such as signs and drawings, and script after that .People at that time created this type of communication because of the change in their societies. Their knowledge began expanding, therefore they needed to record and save this knowledge by writing it (Nunan1999.p275). Beside those needs to creating writing forms, people also used writing to communicate with each other (readers and writers), express ideas, and even record their stories through signs at beginning of that area( Lindsay & Knight 2006).

## **Reasons for writing**

Written communication in general can include many types with different types of formality such as letters, reports, articles, notes, memos...etc. All of these types of texts can be important because they convey several types of information (Nunan, 1999). Inside the classroom, writing is demanded by teachers to get several benefits that help students not only for developing their writing skills, but also for other several reasons

Writing is needed for different purposes inside the classroom. Hedge, T (2005) asked many teachers around the world about the purpose beyond asking their students to write, she got different answers. Teachers ask their student to write for: First, pedagogic purpose. It is for letting the students know the system of the language. Second, educational purpose represents the need for developing the writing skills. Third, real purpose is needed in the field of syllabus design. Simply for knowing the students needs. Fourth, creative purpose is for letting the students gain the self confidence and reach the creativeness in their written works. Fifth, humanistic purpose, which is for letting the introvert students, shows their abilities.

Sixth, acquisitional purposes simply for guiding the students to mastering the language. Finally, for classroom management purpose. Writing is a calm activity that needs concentration and individuality. Teachers ask their students to write for making them calm and to avoid making noise inside the class.

Writing can be a beneficial activity inside the classroom that helps students not only for develop their skills in it, but also for shape their writing style, to let them know their strengths and weaknesses, and it can be a motivating activity for some kinds of students.

### **Importance of Writing**

Writing is a way to share thoughts feelings, and ideas. It is essential in the communication process. This skill needs practice and time to be developed (Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. 1997). Writing can be important for two several reasons.

Writing shapes the skill of using several strategies such as planning, revising, editing, and evaluating text. So it leads the learner to use many different ways to gain the well-planned written work. (Steve & Dolores, 2007)

Writing as a process needs concentration and calling the learner's ideas and knowledge to be used as text content. So, writing is a beneficial activity for the human brain. (Steve & Dolores, 2007)

It is considered as tool of learning. It is used to gather and share information. It makes the content evaluated (Applebee, 1984). It is also beneficial in enhancing the students learning skills (Bangert-Drowns, Hurley, & Wilkinson, 2004). It also has an impact on other skills. Writing affects positively on the development of the learning skills such as reading and speaking (Graham & Hebert, 2010)

Writing considered an important skill and activity to the process of learning and enhancing the other skills of language learning.

### **Writing and Other Skills**

Due to the great demand of English language learning as EFL or ESL for academic purposes, learning skills becomes very attractive to scholars and linguists to study. Developing the English language learning skills rapidly means mastering the language as soon as possible. Therefore, linguists, scholars, and even teachers considered the relation between the learning skills as a key element to facilitate the process of the language learning. Writing skill development considered as a result of the development of the other skills due to its nature as it is learned skill and not acquired like the other skills.

### **Writing and Reading**

The connection between reading and writing attracts the attention of scholars, linguists, theorists, and teachers. All of the mentioned argue that there is a relation between the two skills. Some of them defined that there is correlation between the skills. Others say that reading affects on writing. The last part of them says that writing affects on reading. They generated a point of view in which one affect on the other depending on their studies and experiences.

Some of them suggest that there is a strong relation between the two skills. Loban (1963) made a study on 211 pupils, he measured their writing and reading skills to find out that those good readers are also good writers, and those who are weak readers are weak writers, to get at the end his correlational theory of reading and writing skills. In another study that was done by Schonell (1942) on 119 middle school pupils. He found that there is a high correlation between spelling and reading comprehension. Woodfin (1968) made another

study on 95 pupils to find out that there is a strong relation between being creative in writing and reading comprehension. All of them brought these theories and relation according to their researches and studies.

Reading can affect on writing. Bosson & Troyka (1976) made an experiment on more than 70 teachers and 2000 pupils by giving them pre and post tests for both of the experimental and the control group during a whole course which involved instructions in reading comprehension. They found that more than 80% of the experimental group developed their writing skills, while only around 40% of the control group did. Heys (1962) made an experiment on middle and high school pupils during a whole year which attempted to see to the influence of additional reading on the students' writing skills. He found that students who made an additional reading made an improvement in writing essays. Accordingly, reading can be a positive effect on the students' writing skill.

Another part of them said that writing can affect on reading. Nagle (1972) made a study on 14- 15 years old students that attempted to know the influence of writing activities on the students' reading comprehension during a course. He found that the experimental group made an improvement in reading comprehension because of the implementation of the writing activities. Writing activities such as spelling, sentence structure, Grammar... etc can be an effective way to improve the learner's reading abilities in general (Biancarosa & Snow 2004).

To sum up what was already experimented and said, those studies and evidences showed that there is a correlation between reading and writing. Other studies found out that additional reading can be beneficial for writing skill improving. The last part found that writing activities can be beneficial for reading comprehension development (Stotsky 1983).

## **Writing and Speaking**

Writing and speaking correlation and connections caught the attention of the language scientists. They tried to find to secret of how one of them can develop the other.

Writing and speaking are related to each other because of their purpose which represented the need of the speaker and the writer to the social interaction and communication. Making a course model that considered both of the skills as social practice by letting ESL or EFL learners interact with each other by making conversations and dialogues as a way to provide themselves with ideas to write can be a beneficial strategy to develop both of the skills (Weissberg 2006). So, speaking skill can enhance the writing development especially in a social interaction context.

Writing can be an effective practice to enhance the EFL or ESL students' speaking skills. The degree of formality is different between spoken and written forms. Written forms are more formal than the spoken ones. Therefore, writing can enhance the learner's formality in speaking (Sánchez & Ballester 2014).

Both of the skills can affect positively on each other, with taking in consideration that it can be a wrong decision to include the writing activities as individuals.

## **Writing Process**

Learning to write is just like learning any other language skills. Teachers teach writing through a several steps to give the student the opportunity to explore the learning experience. Writing process is developed according to the student's writing skills (Spivey, 2006).



Figure4. The process wheel of writing according to Harmer. (Harmer, 2004, p. 6)

Gardner (2005) has another point of view about the writing process. He thinks that it includes an issential stage which is assessing the writing situation (figure 05).

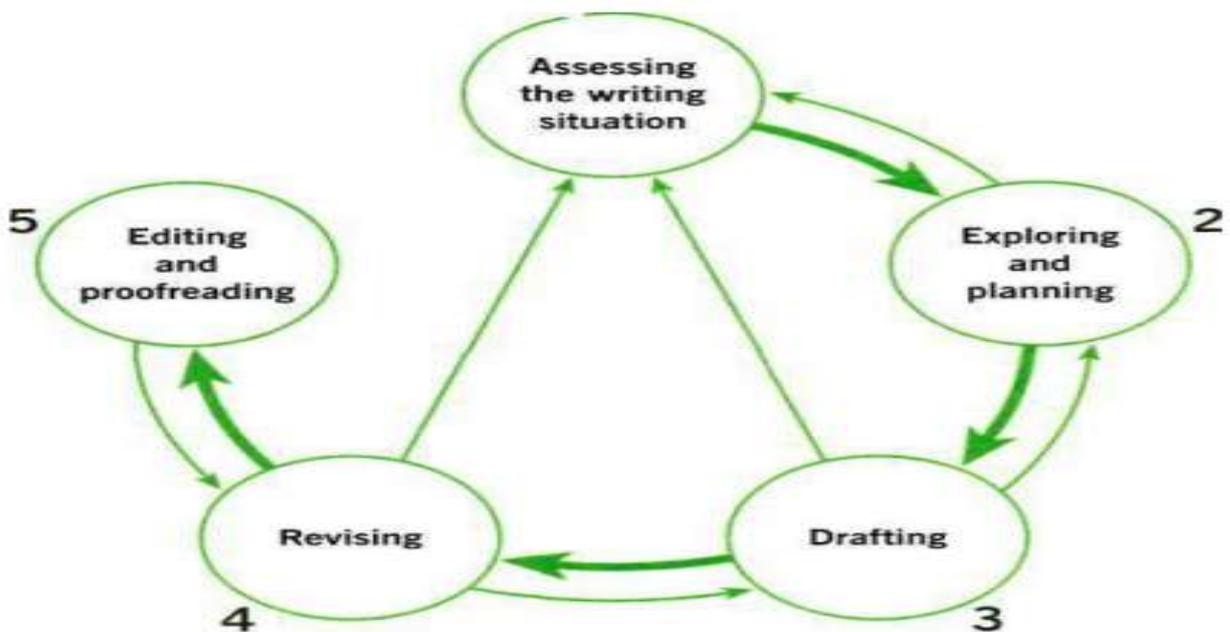


Figure5. The writing process according to Gardner. (Gardner, 2005, p. 111)

### **Assessing the Writing Situation**

This stage is for exploring and answering the following WHQ: why, for whom, for what, and how. Before, writing down any word on the paper on any other device, it could be important for them to know the answers of the following questions:

- 1- What is the subject? : The subject of the essay or the research paper and its importance according to the writer and to the field of study.
- 2- What is the attitude? : It could be essential to know if the writer is agree, disagree, curious, negative, or positive to the subject. And that is for avoiding being subjective.
- 3- What is the purpose? : Knowing the purpose of writing whether for informing, telling a story, convincing, or even for business purposes like for marketing and selling.
- 4- For whom? : Simply knowing the audience and their attitude toward the subject

Answering these questions will clarify the next supposed steps and facilitate everything for him (Gardner, 2005).

### **Prewriting**

As any other daily activity, writing process begins with thinking and planning. At this stage, students generate ideas, communicate with each others, take note, and recognize the type of required written work. All of that happens before writing any draft. It is considered as a psychological motivator for the student to let them ready for writing. After that, students choose the suitable method of writing and required formality for that. This stage can include some strategies like planning, brainstorming, and outlining (Harmer, 2004).

### **Drafting**

This stage represents the implementation of ideas and plans on the paper or any other type of technology writing such as computer, or phone writing. According to Williams

(2003), this stage includes three related steps. Drafting represents the production of words and writing down on the paper or on any other technology device such as computer or phone. Pausing represents the moments when the writer takes a break for few second to reproduce new ideas that have relation to what he has already wrote. Reading is a comparison between the written words and the suggested plan for that work. At this step, the writer reads what he already wrote and compares it with what he planned for.

### **Revising and Editing**

After finishing Writing down, this stage includes two steps. Reading the written piece could be helpful to recognize the gaps and know the required modification. Writers reread for making modification on both of the content and the structure. Editing includes any required modification. It could be required to change a sentence in a paragraph, to reorder the structure of the text, and maybe to change the thesis statement or the whole structure of the introduction. Less skilled writers check and correct only the spelling and Grammar mistakes. Good writers can make a modification on the order of structure. They also check the coherence, and if any sentence is irrelevant and needs omitting. Sometimes it could be required to change the meaning of a whole the thesis statement or the whole introduction (Hyland, 2003). It is possible to reread the work and remodify it more than one time; it is a repetitive process (Harmer, 2004).

### **Final Version**

The final version of the work can be different from the both of the draft and the original work (Harmer, 2004). The final version is also supposed to be modified after getting a feedback from the audience or a colleague (William, 2003).

## Writing Techniques

According to Gardner, (2005), William, (2003), Harmer, (2004), and Hyland, (2003)

There are several writing techniques that could be helpful to organize and plan a well-formed piece of writing. The following table concludes these techniques according to their stages.

Table2.

### *Writing techniques*

		Stages		
		Pre writing stage	While writing stage	Post writing stage
Writing Techniques	Brainstorming			
	Planning		Drafting	Proof reading
	Mind mapping			
	Taking stock with the 5 WHS		Pausing	Editing
	Outlining			
	Listing		Reading	Publishing
	Pyramid charts			

## Components of Writing a Piece

Writing is like any other skill. It needs effort and a lot of well-planned and organized practice. To develop this skill, EFL and ESL learners go through several stages to be able to call themselves "good writers". Rivers, (1968) suggests five stages that the learner goes

throughout to develop his writing skill: copying, reproduction, reproduction with minor adaptation, guided writing, and composition.

### **Copying**

Some scholars and teachers see that it is an unnecessary stage that the learners should not go through. On the other hand, Harmer, (2004) insists that it is a required stage especially when the learner has a different L1 articulation. This stage will reinforce the learner's ability to form the letters and words, and it will let him be able to develop his handwriting skill. He suggests some copying strategies in the classroom: Disguised copying, making notes, whisper copying, and copying from the board.

### **Reproduction**

This stage is quite different from the copying stage. The difference is that the learner will be asked to write words and sentences without using his vision to look at them because they are not written on the board or anywhere. For instance, writing words and sentences that are said by the teacher. This stage will reinforce the listening skill because of the need to hear every single word to write it down (Rivers, 1968)

### **Reproduction with Minor Adaptation**

Learners at this stage are able to correct words and sentences. They are required now to make an adaptation on those sentences like transforming active form to passive, replacing nouns with pronouns, reordering the sentences to make a dialogue, correcting the verbs' tenses according to the sentence context...etc. All of what is mentioned before are examples of how this stage can be implemented (Rivers, 1968).

### **Guided Writing**

At this stage, The learners are required to rewrite a piece of written work with their own vocabulary, structure, and Grammar. For instance, the teacher gives the students a short story, an essay, a paragraph...etc, and asks them to summarize it, paraphrase it, or to rewrite it with their own words and way (Rivers, 1968).

### **Composition**

The learners at this stage are able to write with their own words and style without being controlled or guided by the teacher. They are able to generate ideas and write it with their own style until they get the final version of a piece of a written work (Rivers, 1968).

## **The Features of the Effective Writing**

Writing is considered the most used way of communication in academia and many other fields. Good and effective written work has specific features that could be absent or ignored by the writer or the student if he is not an expert or a good writer (Starkey, 2004).

### **Organization**

To begin a piece of writing with organization means the straight way to a well-planned work. Organization is the plan of the work and the order of the several steps, stages, and techniques of the writing process. At this stage, it can be important to order the writer's ideas on the paper. It includes several techniques and methods such as free writing, brainstorming, concept mapping, webbing, taking stock with the five WHQ, and reading good writing (Starkey, 2004).

**Clarity**

Usually, the readers do not read pieces of paper with full attention, especially in case of assessment and evaluation. S/he will have a lot of pieces to read which makes him so fast and unattended with the writer's message behind the sentences. Writing a clear and simple piece of writing will attract the attention of the reader. While reading, s/he will be curious about the writer's next idea and paragraph. Avoiding ambiguity and repetition, and using powerful and precise adjectives and adverbs could be important techniques for achieving clarity (Starkey, 2004).

**Word Choice**

Choosing the suitable words for conveying the message could be an essential strategy for convincing the reader with the writer's attitude or the mentioned arguments. It could be essential to choose every single word and its denotative and connotative meaning. Both of the denotative and the connotative meanings of the word play an important role in the influence of the idea on the reader. If the word is misused, the conveyed meaning can be changed or misunderstood by the reader (Starkey, 2004).

**Mechanics**

Mechanics is the applied part of the ideas and words generation. Grammar, spelling, Capitalization, active/passive voice, prepositions, nouns, and pronouns are all important to show the writer's proficiency. It is important to know what tense should be used in every type of writing. For instance, for narrative essay, the past simple and progressive is required. It is important that the written work has no spelling mistake. Making spelling mistakes is expected from any writer regardless of his/her proficiency level. For that issue, proof reading is helpful to fix it. The writer also is supposed to know when to capitalize, and when to use the noun

and to replace it with a pronoun. He is also supposed to know how to connect between sentences with propositions. It is also important to know when to use active and passive voice (Starkey, 2004). To sum up what is already said. Mechanics is included under the umbrella of Grammar.

### **Conclusion**

The chapter concluded data about learning and writing in general, and about the writing skills in particular. This issue catch the interest of many scholars along many years. This skill is complex for many learners that they are facing difficulties to master their writing skills in all the aspects. It is even complex for many instructors to teach, difficult to master even for the native speakers. Therefore, many scholars, teachers, linguists, and psychologists have been researching to find solution for that issue which concluded in this question: what is the suitable easy method to master the student's writing skill?

To answer this question, it was mandatory for the scholars to go deep within all the aspect of writing. Accordingly, this chapter tried to investigate the results of the previous researches of the scholars. We tried to investigate how did the scholars defined learning and writing, the learning styles, the history of writing, its beginning, and importance.

Additionally, this chapter tried to understand the complexity of this skill by investigating its relation with other skills and how they can reinforce each other, its process, techniques, and the features of a good piece of writing.

# **Chapter3:**

# **The Field Work**

## **Introduction**

As we already said, this study aims to find out the used teaching writing approaches that enhance the students' writing skills. Therefore, this chapter is supposed to discuss the analysis of both of the teachers' and the students' questionnaire. The first part of the chapter deals with the students' questionnaire. We will analyze the gathered data from the students' responses and try to discuss them. The second part deals with the teachers' questionnaire where we will analyze and discuss the teachers' answers. According to the responses of both of the questionnaires, we will find the answers of the research questions that are mentioned in the general introduction.

## **The Students' Questionnaire**

### **Description of the Students' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire included sixteen closed-ended questions such as multiple choice and yes / no questions. Sometimes, the students are required to justify or explain their answers.

#### **Section one: The level of the students' writing skills**

The aim of this section is to evaluate the students' writing skills and to find out their writing difficulties.

#### **Section two: The students' opinions toward their teachers' methods and approaches**

This section aims to collect data about the used teaching writing approaches. It tends to find out how teachers deal with students in teaching writing.

### The Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

#### Section one: The level of the students' writing skills

##### Question one:

Do you agree/ disagree with the statement?

A good writing skill is a talent and a gift

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

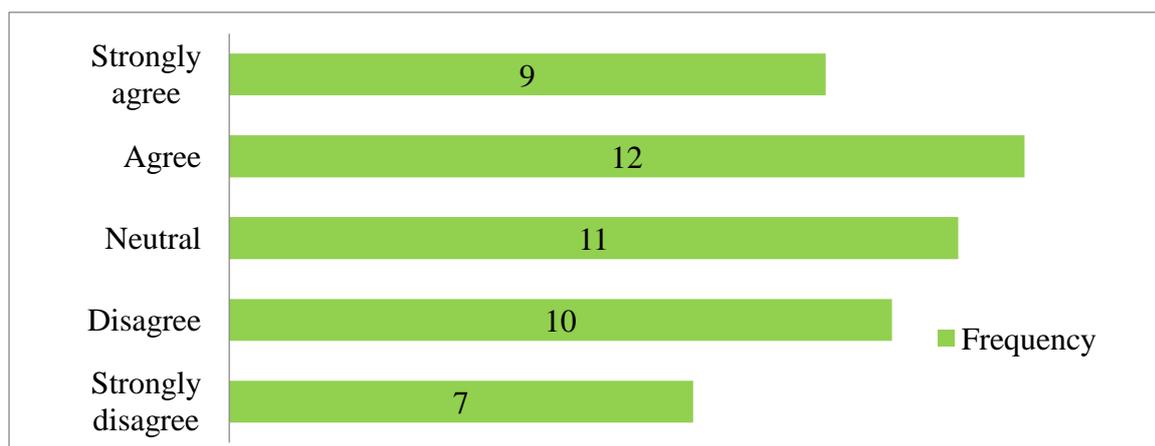
agree

strongly agree

Table3.

*The students' agreement with the nature of writing as a talent*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	07	14.28%
Disagree	10	20.4%
Neutral	11	22.44%
agree	12	24.48%
Strongly agree	09	18.36%
Total	49	100%



*Figure6.* The students' agreement with the nature of writing as a talent

The question aims to know the opinions of students about the nature of writing as a skill that does not need effort and practice, and every good writer is talented. The result shows that those who were agree with the statement (21 students) were more than who were disagree (17 students), and the rest of them (11 students) stayed neutral.

#### **Question two:**

How do you evaluate your writing skill?

Poor                       Average                       Good

Table4.

*The students' agreement with the nature of writing as a talent*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Poor	03	06.12%
Average	12	24.48%
Good	34	69.38%
Total	49	100%

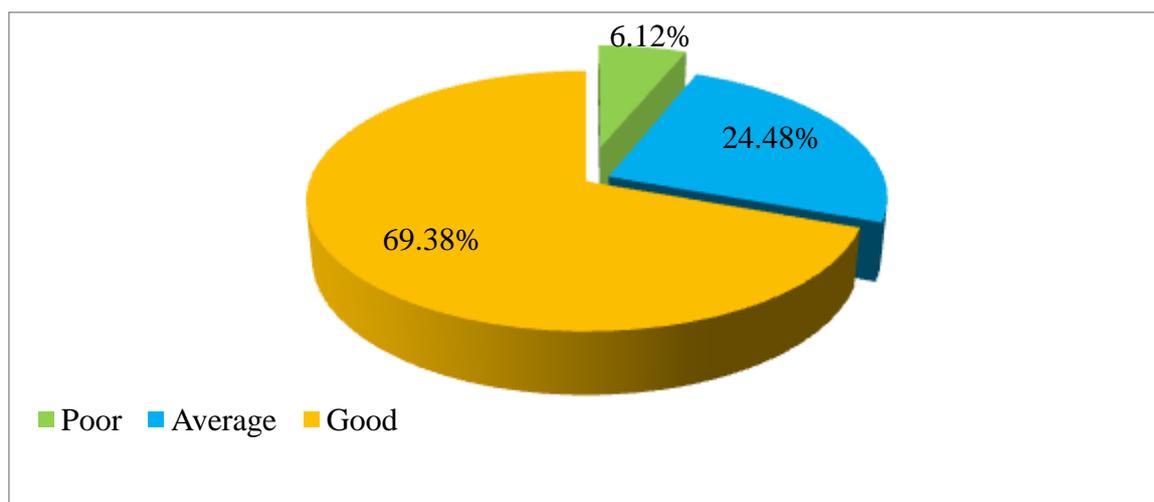


Figure7. The students' evaluations of their writing skills

The question tends to find out the students' evaluation of their own writing skills. The results were as it was expected and they stated the following. Only 03 students selected "poor" option which means that they consider themselves as weak writers (06.12%). 12 students consider their writing skills as average or accepted (24.48%). More than 69% of them consider themselves as good writers (34 students). The results shows that most of the asked students are good writers as they stated.

### Question three:

Are you satisfied with your writing skill?

Yes

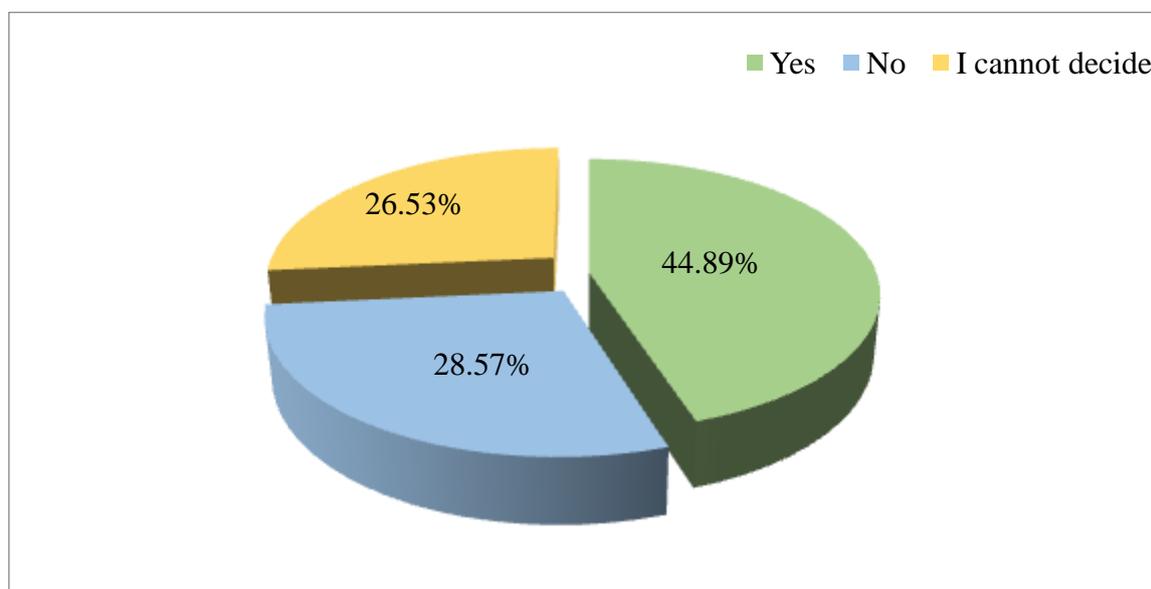
No

I cannot decide

Table5.

*The students' satisfactions with their writing skills*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	22	44.89%
No	14	28.57%
I cannot decide	13	26.53%
Total	49	100%



*Figure8.* The students' satisfactions with their writing skills

After asking them to evaluate their writing skills, we tended to know whether they are satisfied with their writing skills. The results show that Almost of them were satisfied (22 students), 14 of them were not satisfied, and 13 of them could not decide whether they are satisfied enough or not.

#### **Question four:**

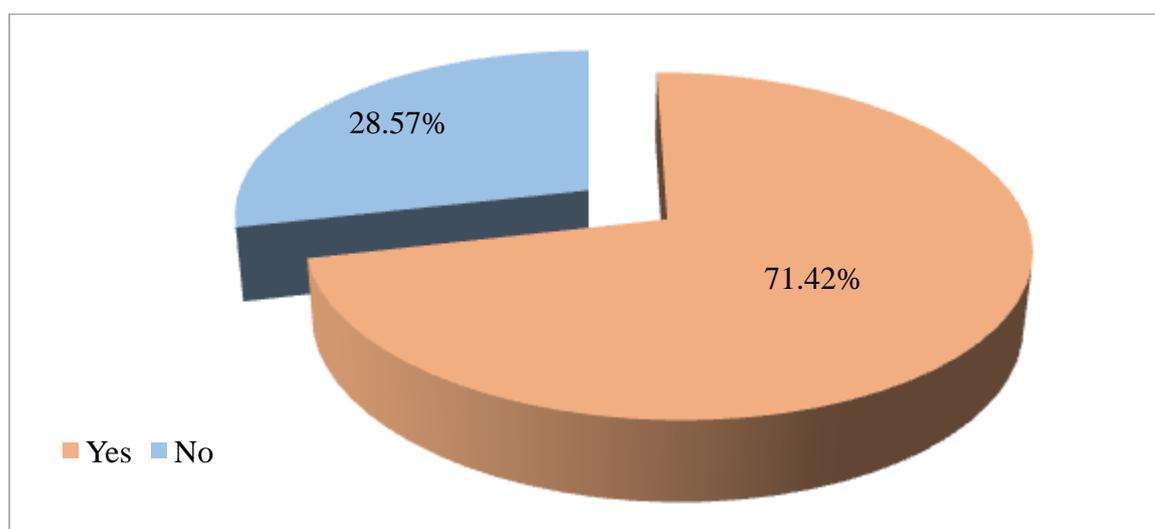
**A-** Are you motivated to write?

Yes No 

Table6.

*The students' motivation to write*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	71.42%
No	14	28.57%
Total	49	100%

*Figure9.* The students' motivation to write

The question seems to be psychological. We tended to know whether the students are motivated to write or they are not. The results were positive enough. 35 of them stated that they are motivated and they do not have any problem with writing in the psychological side. On the other hand, 14 students stated that they have problems and they are not motivated enough or not motivated at all.

**B-** If not, please explain why:

The question tends to find out the reasons that led the students to do not be motivated. The 14 students who said “No” claimed that they find it difficult to write, they face difficulties with the topics of the compositions, they do not like to write, and they feel that they do not have enough abilities to write. Their explanations were as follow:

- 1- I can't choose the appropriate topic , the lack of ideas , sometime the topic is challenging for the student
- 2- I am a big procrastinator
- 3- I am poor in vocabulary which impacts my writing style
- 4- Writing is my least favorite skill among the four.
- 5- I do not have ideas worth to write for
- 6- We are in a social context where there is nothing important than the mother tongue, we are not encouraged to write either to use the target language, however in my first language yes I do write.
- 7- I don't like written
- 8- I don't really like it
- 9- I'm trying to get more acknowledgement about the language
- 10- I am into short statement not long one (specific and simple)
- 11- Lack of assignment that given by the teacher
- 12- I don't have topics to write about them
- 13- Because I don't have enough vocabularies to explain myself to be honest.
- 14- I don't think that I can write as good as required

**Question five:**

How do you usually train your writing skill?

Always

Often

Sometimes



himself to shape his writing skill. From this question we can infer the first problem which is the lack of practice.

**Question six:**

When it comes to writing, do you think in:

Arabic

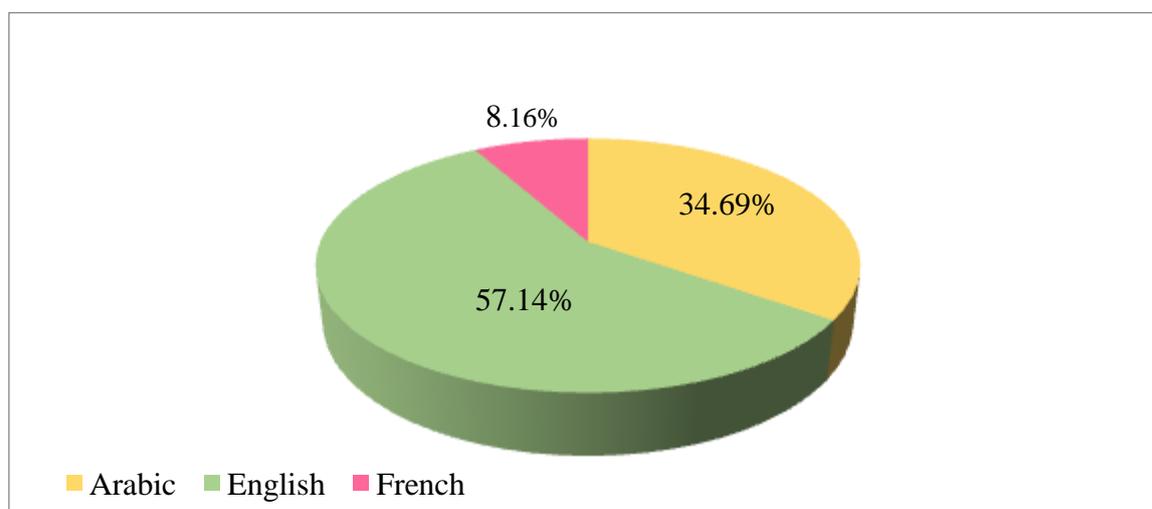
French

English

Table8.

*The students' languages use while composing*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Arabic	17	34.69%
French	04	08.16%
English	28	57.14%
Total	49	100%



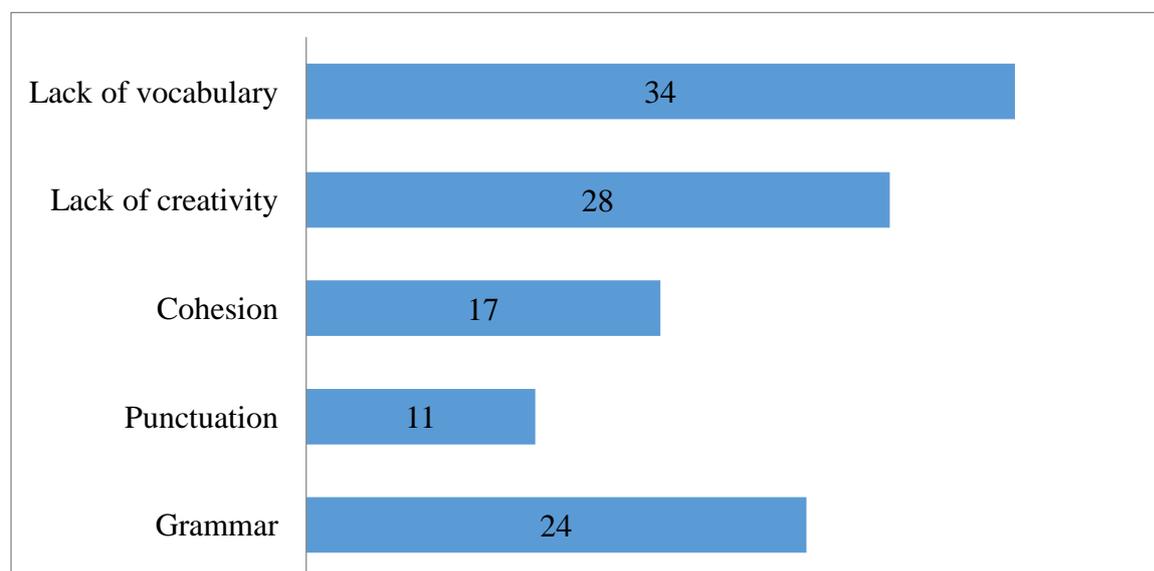
*Figure11.* The students' languages use while composing

The question aims to know the used language by students while composing and producing a piece of writing. More than 50% of them (28 students) stated that they think in English, 17 students stated that they use their first language which is the Arabic language, and only 04 students who selected French which is their second language to use it while composing.

**Question seven:**

You usually face difficulties in writing with the following (you can choose more than one):

Grammar                       Punctuation                       Cohesion   
 Lack of creativity                       Lack of vocabulary



*Figure12.* The difficulties that students face in writing

The question aims to find out the aspects that represent difficulties to the students in writing. Grammar (24), Lack of creativity (28), and Lack of vocabulary (34) were the most

selected choices. Punctuation (11) and cohesion (17) were also selected by students as problems in writing. So, all what is mentioned above is considered as serious problems for the students.

### Question eight:

After reading the topic of the composition, what do you generally do?

- 1- Start writing immediately (drafting)
- 2- Think about ideas (brainstorming)
- 3- Make an outline and follow it (planning)
- 4- Write down sentences and phrases that related to the topic

Table9.

*The prewriting strategies that used by students*

Options	Frequency	Percent
1	13	26.53%
2	24	48.97%
3	08	16.32%
4	04	08.16%
Total	49	100%

The question aims to find out the first reaction of students after reading the topic of the composition. In addition to that it this question could be beneficial to know the used prewriting strategies, and also to know whether students are respecting the steps of the writing process or they are not. The results show that brainstorming and generating ideas is the most used prewriting strategy that is used by students (24 students). Drafting

was selected by 13 students which means that they begin writing directly. Planning or outlining got chosen by 08 students, and writing down the related sentences and phrases does not represent a common prewriting strategy to the students (04 students).

### Section two: The students' opinions toward their teachers' methods and approaches

#### Question one:

A- Are you satisfied of your teacher's way of teaching?

Yes

No

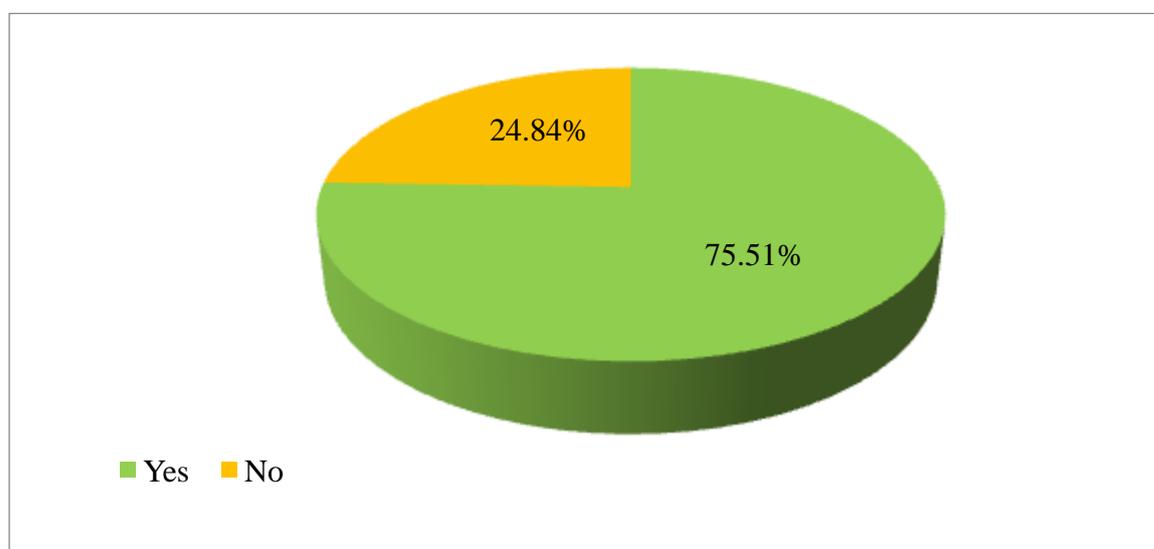


Figure13. The students' satisfaction toward their teachers' teaching methods

The students were asked to state whether they are satisfied with their teacher's method of teaching or not. 3/4 of them stated that they are satisfied with it (37 students). On the other hand, the rest fourth of them were not satisfied with it (12 students).

B- if not, please explain why:

The 12 students who were not satisfied with their teaching methods justified that their teachers do not give them enough assignments, do not motivate them, tend to finish their required curriculum with ignorance to the development of their students skills, and they

use old methods that do not exist anymore. The students' justifications toward their dissatisfaction were as follow:

- 1- Mainly they focus on other writings, they do not encourage you to write your own ideas, but they force other ideas down your throat.
- 2- They use very old methods of teaching + Don't allow creativity and new ideas by students
- 3- We lack assignments and more practice in class
- 4- They fail to make the salient points of lessons appear or transparent!
- 5- Nowadays, teaching has been is a matter of memorizing to get the average and gain better grades, this barrier prevents the student from creativity and decreases his communication skills, whether in writing or expression (speaking, teacher should encourage students to do more writing skills and more role play and presentation to increase their interest and motivation thus enhancing writing skills and other communicative competences.
- 6- They use old style of teaching, while they can use modern tools in order to make the student more comfortable and also to be well understood
- 7- Teachers are doing a great effort in teaching however, they are only interested in finishing the required curriculum ignoring the development of students' skills, whether speaking, writing, or any other language
- 8- They don't give us enough assignments to practice
- 9- I found out that practice is the only way to improve my writing, teachers don not make us practice our writing
- 10- Lack of experience and training
- 11- Our teachers don't even motivate us to write and they don't teach us the right ways to write and most of the time they just read PDFs for us (what they've shared on Facebook group) without even explain much for us besides to that we don't practice writing in class.

Teachers of written expression are just horrible and not doing much with us and no one of us is satisfied actually with their method of teaching.

12- We are always required to write about topics with their own choice, that's not good for us

### Question two:

When you make a piece of writing, you teacher notifies you to pay attention to the following:

(you can choose more than one)

- Type of writing (argumentative, narrative, informative, descriptive...)
- The purpose of the written product (to convince, to inform, to describe, to claim...)
- The supposed audience or readers (students, teachers, costumers...)

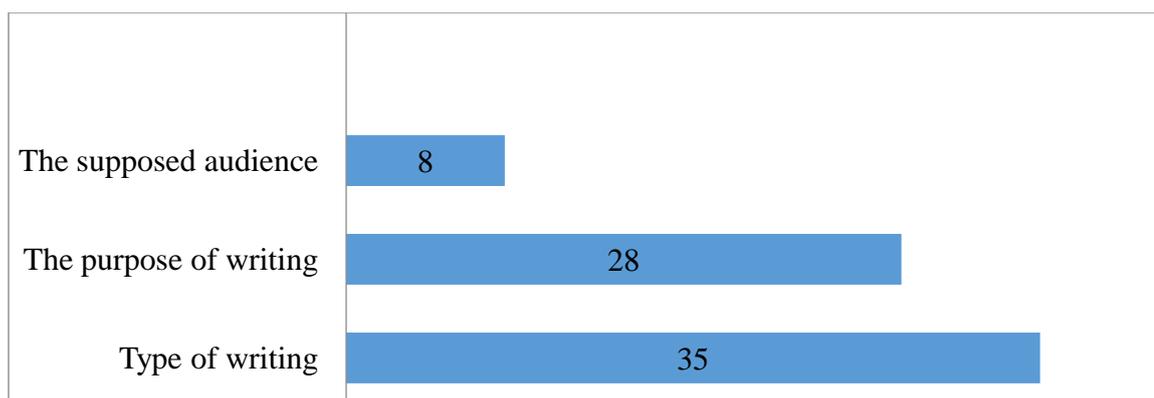


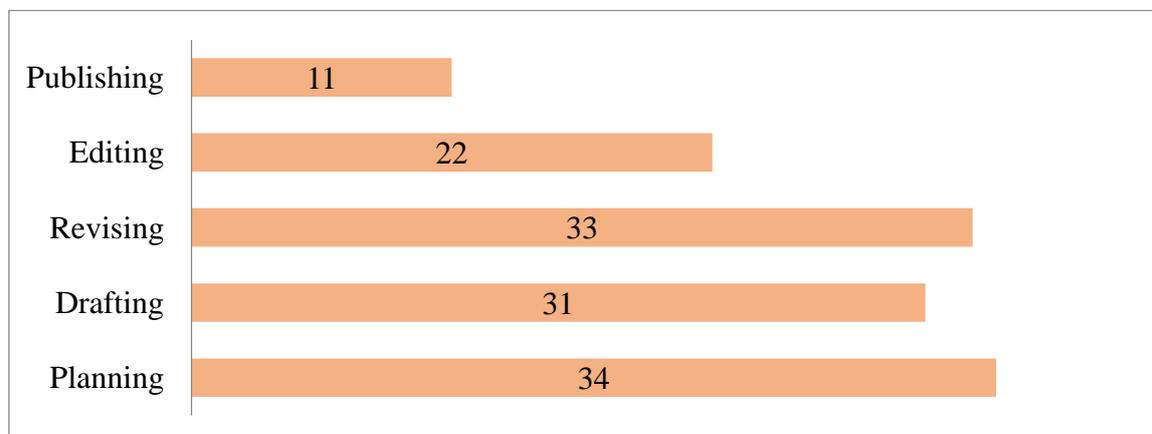
Figure14. The students' awareness to the using of writing in context (the genre approach)

The major aim of the question is to infer whether the genre approach is used by teachers or not, and to what extent students are aware of its techniques. The results show that teachers let students pay attention to the type of the writing product and the purpose of writing, but they ignore the supposed audience or the expected readers.

### Question three:

Does your teacher provide you with the required steps of the writing process? (You can select more than one)

Planning                       Drafting                       Revising   
 Editing                       Publishing



*Figure 15.* The students' use of the writing process (the process approach)

The question aims to find out to which extent the teachers are using the process approach, and if they make their students aware of all of its stages. The results show that both of teachers and students pay attention to Planning, drafting, and revising as essential stages in the writing process. On the other hand, editing and especially publishing do not considered as essential stages in the process.

**Question four:**

Does your teacher give you samples of written products and tells you to modify its structure?

Yes

No

Table 10.

*The teachers' use of the samples of written products*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	71.42%
No	14	28.57%
Total	49	100%

The question aims to know if the teachers are giving their students written products as samples and ask them to make modification on it. It is also to infer if they use the controlled to free method and the product approach as teaching writing approaches or not. Results show that 35 students stated that their teachers give them passages and ask them to make modifications on it. 14 students stated that they do not receive such kind of practice from their teachers.

**Question five:**

Do you write freely (a topic of your choice) at home or in the classroom?

- 1- With the guidness of the teacher. Sometimes s/he give me instructions and feedback
- 2- Without any instructions or feedback from anyone. I keep my pieces of writing for myself
- 3- I do not do that neither at home nor in classroom

Table 11.

*The students' use of the free writing approach*

<b>Option</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1	12	24.5%
2	25	51%
3	12	24.5%
<b>Total</b>	49	100%

The students were asked if they write freely without a topic suggestion from the teacher or anyone. 12 students stated that they write freely and give their works to their teachers to get feedback and evaluation. 25 students stated that they write freely but they keep their products for themselves. 12 students stated that they do not write at all.

**Question six:**

A- Do you know the teaching writing approach that is used by your teacher?

Yes

No

Table12.

*The students' awareness toward the used teaching writing approach*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	05	10.2%
No	44	89.8%
Total	49	100%

The 49 students got asked if they know the used teaching writing approach. Only 05 of say that they know it, the rest 44 students selected “No” which means that they do not have any idea about it.

**B-** If yes, please name it:

The 05 students who said that they know the approach stated that there are main three approaches are used by their teachers: process, product, and genre. It is essential to declare that not all of them could give the correct name of the used approach. Their answers were as follow:

There are three approaches: product based, process based and genre but, If I can specify my teacher used to teach process based approach to writing however this method is based on brainstorming and rewriting within a group discussion and it's useful it makes you think out the box , use as much as you can expressions on the subject of research and then claim the main ideas to produce an organized piece of writing

1- Pre-written

2- Controlled approach

- 3- Process writing
- 4- Mix between all the approaches

**Question seven:**

Who explained the approach for you?

The teacher  I search about it by myself

This question submitted for the students who know the used approach (the 04 students). It is to know whether the teachers are explaining their teaching writing approaches for their students or not. Four students stated that they search about it by themselves, and only one who stated that used approach has been explained by the teacher.

**Discussion of Results of the Students' Questionnaire**

According to the results of the questionnaire that is submitted to the students, we found out pieces of information that could be beneficial .The questionnaire measured the students' writing skills levels. It is also found out the main problems that face students in writing and those which impede and decelerate the development of this skill. In addition to that, it led us to know the used teaching writing approach through inferring the results of specific questions in this it.

The students' responses show that they have a miss understanding of the nature of writing. The most part of them consider good writers as gifted persons who did not make an effort to develop and shape their writing skills. That appears when they got asked to state how usual they train themselves to shape their writing skills; generally, they do not train themselves enough to shape this essential skill.

According to the students' evaluation of their writing skills and in comparison to their satisfaction about them, it is obvious that they consider themselves as good writers, and it appears in their answers when almost 7/10 of them stated that they have good writing skills. In comparison to the next question which measures their satisfaction about their writing skills, almost the half of them were satisfied with their writing skills, the fourth of them were not satisfied, and the rest  $\frac{1}{4}$  of them could not decide. The question that leads us to know that they could not evaluate their writing skills correctly is as follow: If 70% of them are good writers, is it logical to find only 44% of them who are satisfied with their writing skills?

It is not common between that students have psychological difficulties that lead him to do not be motivated to write, but even this minor part will represents almost 3/10 of total number of the sample is considered a problem that need a look to it reasons. The students who are not motivated to write stated that their first reason beyond that is their berfunctoriness toward this skill and its practices which appears in the responses who said that they do not like writing. The second reason is represented by the students' fear of making bad written product or their feeling of that they do not have enough abilities to write a good passage. Finally, students think that their teachers are not giving them enough assignments that can make them write more and more.

To find out the students' problems in writing, they were asked to answer several question which result the following. Their first problem begin with their thinking, a considerable number of them stated that they think in their first and second language while composing a piece of writing. The second problem is that there a measurable number of them who face difficulties in several aspects of language which included in: Grammar, creativity, and vocabulary. Finally, the last reason is that they do not respect the stages of the writing

process. They do not give attention to last essential stages in the writing process which are editing and publishing.

In another question's result, they showed their considerable dissatisfaction toward their teachers' methods of teaching. Students commented on their choices that their teachers do not give them enough assignment as writing is a matter of practice. Others stated that their teachers do not allow them to be creative. And the rest of them claimed that the only object of their teachers is to finish the curriculum with a total ignorance toward the results and the objects that normally represented by the students' development in writing.

To infer the used teaching writing approaches, students were asked to answer four questions which contain the main principles of each approach. The result show that teachers use a combination of the four common approaches which are: the product approach, the process approach, the genre approach, and the controlled to free method.

In another directed question, students were asked to say whether they know the used teaching writing approach or not. Almost 90% of them could not answer the question. Not all of the five students who stated that they know the approach could name the approach correctly and they stated that their teachers do not tell them about such things. As a case study of the third year, they are considered to hold the license diploma which gives them the permission to teach English, it is considered a problem that they do not have any idea about teaching writing approach.

To sum up, the level of students is not good enough; they have several difficulties in different aspects begging from their understanding to writing as a skill to their ability to practice it, until their ability to follow the teachers' instruction and their ability to produce a good written product.

## **The Teachers' Questionnaire**

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

The questionnaire includes nineteen open-ended and closed-ended questions that were given to the teachers to find out some pieces of information about this issue.

#### **Section one: General information**

This section aims to collect general information about the asked teachers. To test the reliability of the given answers, teachers asked to give general information about teaching experience.

#### **Section two: The teachers' opinions and evaluations of the students' writing skills**

This section tends to find out the teachers' opinion about their students writing skills. They were asked to answer several questions to gather data about the teachers' evaluation of the students' writing skills.

#### **Section three: Writing and other skills**

This section tends to find out the teachers' points of view about the contribution of other skills to the development of the writing skill.

#### **Section four: The teachers' methods and approach in teaching writing**

This section aims to find out how teachers teach and are the used teaching writing approach in the class. It aims also to find out the possibility to make a combination of more than one approach and the awareness of the students of the used teaching writing approach.

**Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire****Section one: General information****Question one:**

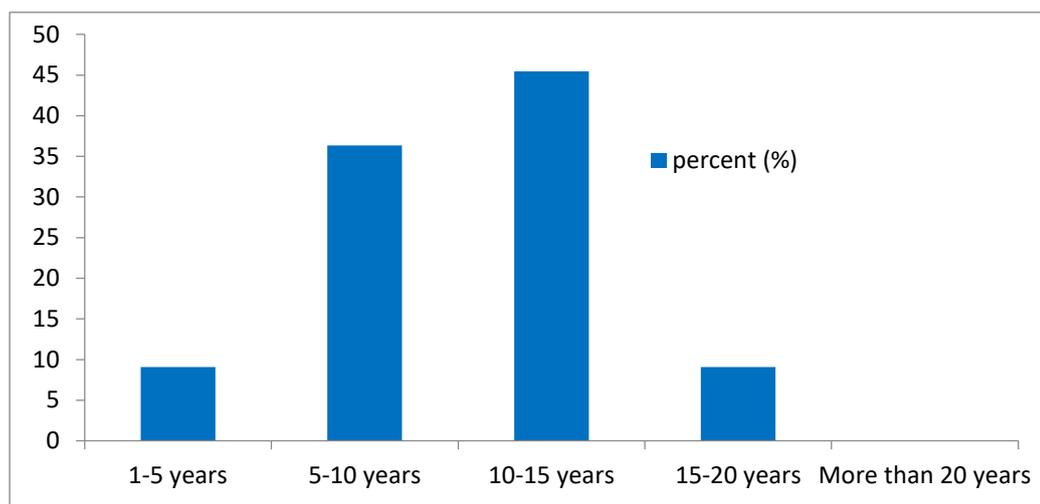
How long have you been teaching at the university?

- 1- 01 – 05 years       2- 05 – 10 years       3- 10 – 15 years   
 4- 15- 20 years       5- more than 20years

Table13.

*Teaching experience at the university level*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
01 - 05 years	01	09.09 %
05 - 10 years	04	36.36 %
10 - 15 years	05	45.45 %
15 - 20 years	01	09.09 %
More than 20 years	00	00.00 %
<b>Total</b>	11	100.00 %



*Figure 16.* Teaching experience at the university level

As it is shown in table 03 and the graph (figure 05), most of the asked teachers are expert in the field of ELT. Only one teacher has an experience that is less than five years (09.09%), four teachers have between five to ten years experience in ELT (36.36%), five teachers have between ten to fifteen year experience (45.45%), and only one teacher who has an experience of more than fifteen years (09.09%). That means that the asked teachers are expert enough to give us a reliable data.

### **Section two: The teachers' opinions and evaluations of the students' writing skills**

#### **Question one:**

How significant would you rate the writing level of the students in general?

Poor

Accepted

Good

Table14

. The level of the students in writing according to their teachers

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Poor	06	45.50%
Accepted	05	54.50%
Good	00	00.00%
<b>Total</b>	11	100%

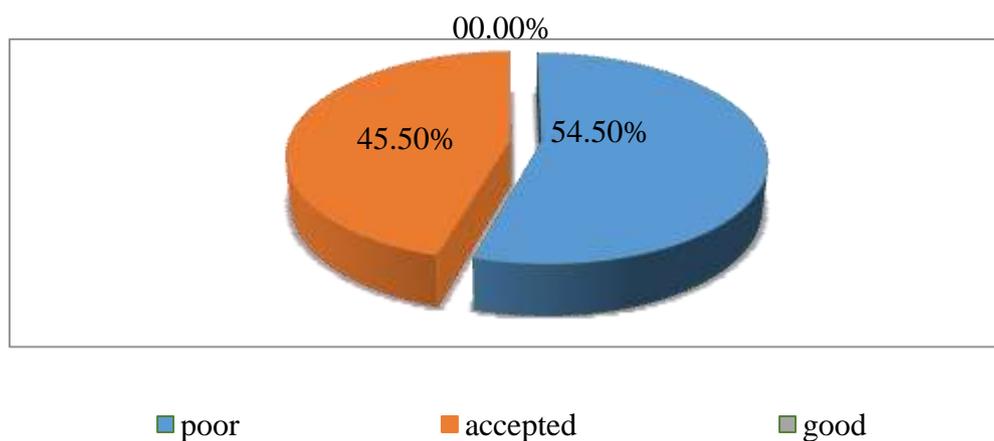


Figure17. Level of the students in writing according to their teachers

The exact aim of this question is to find out the teachers' points of view about their students' writing levels. The results show that 06 teachers indicate that their students level is poor and weak (54.50%), 05 teachers indicate that the level of the students is accepted or in the average (45.50%), and no one of them considered it as good. So, 54.54% of the asked teachers consider the level of the students as weak due to many reasons that will be shown in the next questions.

**Question two:**

Do you agree/ disagree with the statement?

Writing is a challenging task and it needs time and effort.

Strongly disagree

agree

Neutral

Disagree

strongly agree

Table15.

*The teachers' agreement about the nature of writing*

options	Frequency	percentage
Strongly disagree	00	00.00%
disagree	00	00.00%
neutral	01	09.09%
agree	03	27.27%
Strongly agree	07	63.63%
Total	11	100%

The major aim of this question is to find the teachers' exact degree of agreement of the nature of writing as a challenging skill that can be shaped only with practice. Seven teachers were strongly agree with the statement (63.63%), Three of them were agree (27.27%), One teacher stayed neutral, and no one of them was disagree with it.

**Question three:**

When you ask students to write an assignment, they are usually:

Highly interested

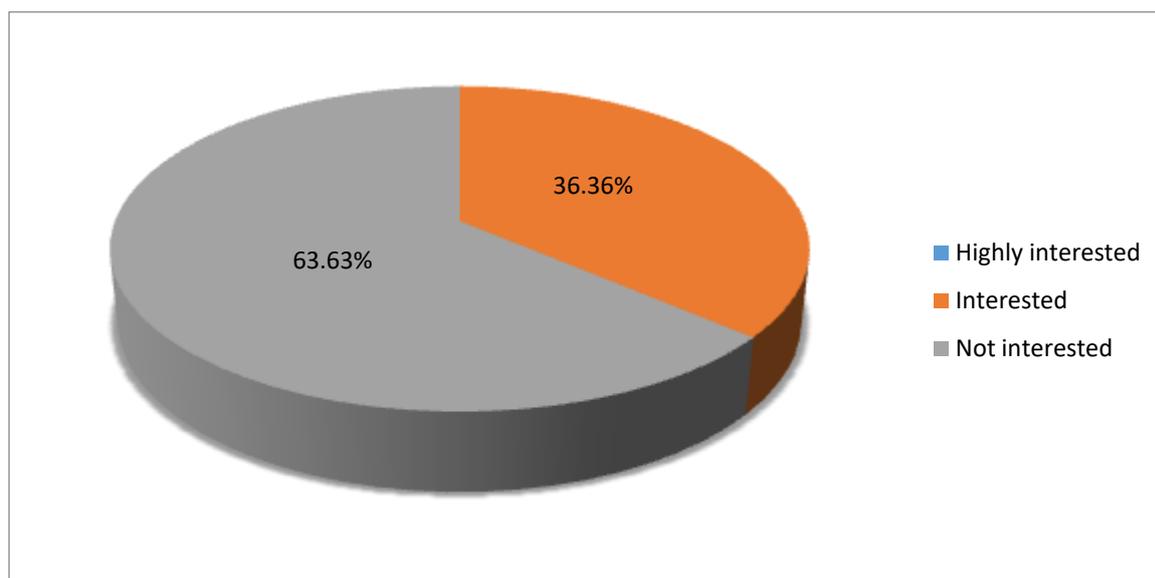
interested

not interested

Table16.

*The students' interest about writing assignments*

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Highly interested	00	00.00%
Interested	04	36.36 %
Not interested	07	63.63 %
<b>Total</b>	11	100.00 %



*Figure18. The students' interest about writing assignments*

This question aims to know the interest of the students to the writing tasks and assignment in the classroom. Seven teachers stated that their students are not interested (63.63%); the others stated that their students are interested (27.27%), and no one of them

indicated that the students are highly interested. So, the results of this question show the first reason of the weak level of the students' writing skills.

**Question four:**

Do your students face these difficulties in writing (you can choose more than one)?

Grammar

Spelling

Coherence

Punctuation

Lack of creativity

Table17.

*Teachers' perceptions about the difficulties that students face in writing*

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Grammar	08	72.72%
Spelling	09	81.81%
Coherence	08	72.72%
Punctuation	09	81.81%
Lack of creativity	08	72.72%

The question aims to find out the most faced difficulties that face EFL students. The teacher asked to pick the most aspects that students face difficulties with. They had the choice to choose more than one answer. We gave them five choices which were Grammar, Spelling,

Coherence, Punctuation and the Lack of creativity. We measured each choice separately according to the total number of the teachers (11 teachers) that is to know how many teachers selected it.

The results indicate that all of the given choices represent considerable problems to the students. Each of Grammar, Coherence, and the lack of creativity got chosen 08 times (72.72% for each). Each of Spelling and punctuation selected 09 times (81.81%). So, all of the given aspects considered a serious problems to the students as their teachers said.

**Question five:**

Which part of the writing process is difficult for your students? (You can choose more than one):

Assessing the writing situation

Generating idea

Drafting

Revising and editing

Table 18.

*Teachers' perceptions about the difficulties that students face during the writing process*

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Assessing the writing situation	03	27.27%
Generating ideas	07	63.63%
Drafting	10	90.90%
Revising and editing	07	63.63%

The same method as the previous question was used, that is to find out the major difficulties that students face during the writing process. Teachers have the ability to tick more than one choice between the following: Assessing the writing situation, Generating ideas, Drafting, and revising and editing.

The results show that students find it more difficult to write down the ideas. Assessing the writing situation selected only 03 times (27.27%), generating ideas selected 07 times (63.63%), drafting selected 10 times (90.90%), revising and editing selected 07 times (63.63%).

**Question six:**

Do your students translate from?

L1 to EFL

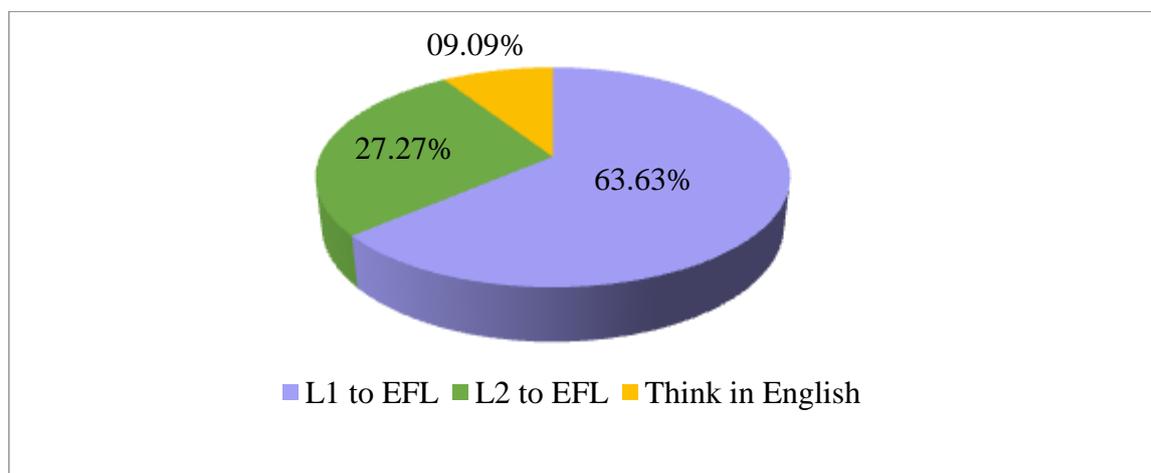
L2 to EFL

Think in English

Table19.

*Students' language use while composing*

Options	Frequency	Percent
L1 to EFL	07	63.63%
L2 to EFL	03	27.27%
Think in English	01	09.09%
Total	11	100%

*Figure19.* Students' language use while composing

The question aims to know if the students are using their mother tongue or their second language in their writing products, or they are aware of the importance of the cultural awareness and they try to think in English.

64% of the teachers (07) indicate that students use their mother tongue (Arabic) to produce a piece of writing. On the other hand, 27.27% of them stated that their students use their second

language which is the French in their written products. Finally, only one teacher stated that their students think in English.

### Section three: Writing and other skills

#### Question one:

A- Does speaking contribute to the development of writing?

Yes  No

Table20.

*The contribution of speaking to the development of writing according to the teachers*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	05	45.50%
No	06	54.50%
Total	11	100%

The question aims to know if there is a relation between speaking and writing. 05 teachers indicate that speaking contributes to the development of writing (45.45%). On the other hand, 06 teachers said that there is no relation between them (54.54%).

B- If yes, please explain how:

According to the teachers' answers and as it is mentioned in the table, the five teachers who selected yes gave the following explanations:

- 1- It helps students think out loud to generate ideas for their drafts.
- 2- In terms of fluency and vocabulary

- 3- Oral fluency may affect the writing tendency of students who may project their speaking skills on their writing performance. This is how speaking can serve writing progress, but still students need to develop other writing-specific techniques as a separate language skill
- 4- The style of speaking is usually informal, whereas the style of writing tends to be more formal. Thus, if speaking influences writing, the result will be a sort of informal style
- 5- Somehow

**Question two:**

A- Does reading contribute to the development of the writing skill?

Yes

No

Table21.

*The contribution of reading to the development of writing according to the teachers*

Options	Frequency	percent
Yes	11	100%
No	00	00.00%
Total	11	100%

The exact aim of this question is to know the role of reading in the development of writing. As it was expected, all of the teachers were agree that reading can contribute to the development of writing

**B-** If yes, please explain how:

They justify their answers as follow:

- 1- It helps being familiarized with patterns
- 2- The only way to improve the vocabulary choice, the spelling mistakes, the poor grammar punctuation misuse
- 3- It exposes learners to a wide range of written texts that demonstrate the various aspects of language use in terms of spelling, grammar and style. Reading also extends their knowledge of different topics.
- 4- Reading is very important in building students' knowledge, in enhancing their awareness of the different writing styles as well enriching their vocabulary.
- 5- Good readers are good writers. Through reading, learners gather information about ideas, writing style and mechanics.
- 6- It is the source of vocabulary, ideas, structures ...etc
- 7- I believe yes, very much. Its contribution is stronger than that of speaking. Writing is for Reading and Reading is for understanding writing. Reading gives you the chance to unveil a variety of rhetorical structures and interactional patterns in writing different genres and this, in turn, would essentially help you produce more elaborate and well structured pieces of writing.
- 8- Reading is crucial to develop wrinkles. Good writers should be good readers.

9- The learner who read develops all the aspects of the language including their own styles.

10- Reading substantially contributes to the development of the writing skill in the sense that students become exposed to a variety of styles and registers.

11- When people read they become more acquainted the language mechanics (writing) and they gain vocabulary.

#### **Section four: The teachers' methods and approach in teaching writing**

##### **Question one:**

A- Do you think the written expression syllabus you are following is efficient to enhance the students' writing skills?

Yes

No

Table22.

*The teachers' satisfaction about their written expression syllabuses*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	03	27.27%
No	08	72.73%
Total	11	100%

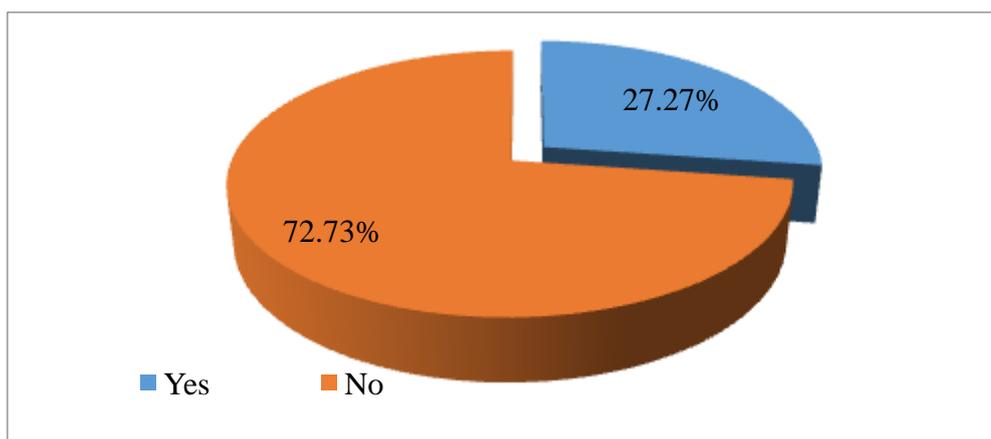


Figure20. The teachers' satisfaction about their written expression syllabuses

This question aims to know the satisfaction of the teachers about their written expression syllabuses. 03 of them were satisfied (27.27%), and the most of them which represent 08 teachers were not (08 teachers).

**B-** If not, please explain why:

According to their answers on the question above, 08 teachers gave explanations why they were not satisfied with their written expression syllabuses. They are mentioned as follow:

- 1- They need practice
- 2- I do not teach this module. Actually, I never did.
- 3- Learners in Algerian setting need to be trained in writing paragraphs earlier in middle and secondary school where they spend three years in learning English. However, most of them are unable to write a simple sentence.
- 4- It requires remedial work at home
- 5- I think that the written expression syllabus contains all the necessary ingredients that contribute to the promotion of undergraduate students' level and proficiency. The

problem lies with the fact that students do not put what they learn into practice in other contexts of writing

- 6- The students' needs are not met; their errors are taken into consideration.
- 7- It doesn't include all the required aspects of language
- 8- However the syllabus is designed, it should take all the students' need into consideration. Our syllabus combines the writing development to two categories. The first one which is the teacher's input, the second one is the students' output. Students are facing difficulties in writing that can be solved only by practicing outside the classroom.

**Question two:**

A- During the writing assignments in the classroom, do you walk around your students and help them?

Yes

No

Table 23.

*The teachers' opinion about walking around their students and helping them during the writing assignments in the classroom*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	100%
No	00	00%
Total	11	100%

The question aims to find out if the teachers help their students during the writing assignments. All of them indicated that they walk around their students and give them help.

**B-** If yes, do you assist them in? (you can choose more than one)

Generating ideas

Vocabulary

Grammar

Spelling

Content and ordering ideas

Table24.

*Aspects where teachers assist and help students*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Generating ideas	06	54.54%
Vocabulary	03	27.27%
Grammar	04	36.36%
Spelling	04	36.36%
Content and ordering ideas	11	100%

This question aims to find out in which aspect can teachers give help to the students. Teachers had the ability to tick more than one choice between 05 choices. The results represent the following. Generating ideas got selected 06 times from 11 (54.54%). Vocabulary was selected 03 times (27.27%). Each of Grammar and spelling got ticked 04 times (36.36% for each). Finally, Content and ordering ideas got selected by all of the teachers (100%).

**Question three:**

Which of the following strategies are you teaching to your students to help them compose coherently? (You can choose more than one)

- 1- Metacognitive strategies (Prewriting the main ideas- organizing ideas, revising- evaluating the final product)
- 2- Cognitive strategies (Using translation to find a missing word or expression- jotting down and use visual memory to remember its spelling- rereading in order to be able to carry on drafting)
- 3- Social/ affective strategies (Working with peers- ask the teacher for help)

Table25.

*Strategies that are taught by teachers*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Metacognitive strategies	10	90.90%
Cognitive strategies	03	27.27%
Social/ Affective strategies	07	63.63%

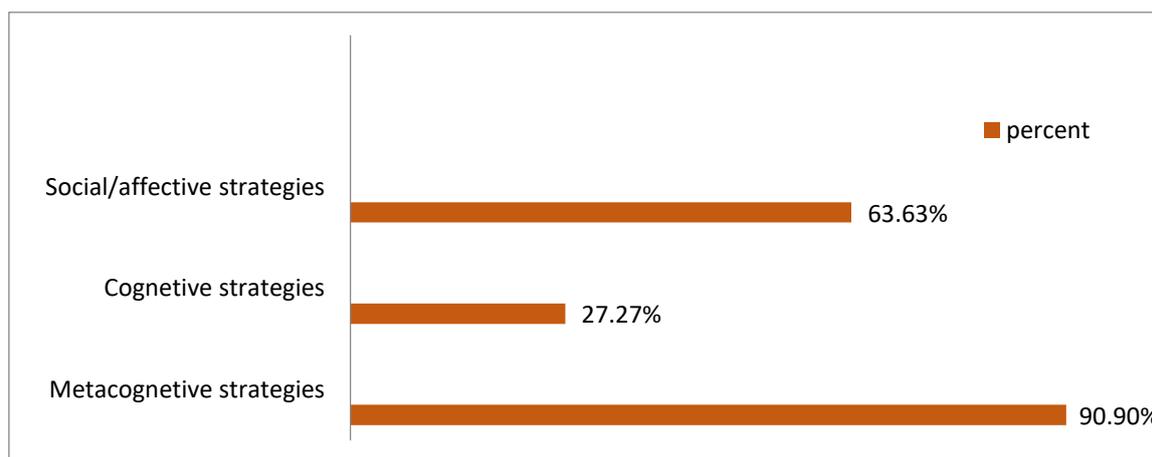


Figure 21. Strategies that are taught by teachers

This question aims to know the strategies that are used by teachers to help their students to develop their writing skills. Teachers have the choice to tick more than one choice. Metacognitive strategies got selected by almost all of the teachers (10/11. 90.90%), cognitive strategies were ticked only by 27.27% of the teachers (only 03 teachers), and social/affective strategies were chosen 07 times (63.63%). So, the most used strategies are metacognitive and social/affective strategies.

#### Question four:

According to you, what is the suitable teaching writing approach for EFL students at the university level?

This question aims to find out the used teaching writing approaches that are used by EFL teachers at the university level. The answers were surrounding between three approaches: Product, process, and genre. Some of them stated that they use more than an approach at the same time. The teachers' answers were as follow:

- 1- The product/ process approach
- 2- Eclectic approach
- 3- Combination of the three approaches; Product- Process- genre approach

- 4- Genre Approach
- 5- Genre or process approach
- 6- the process approach
- 7- All are suitable.
- 8- Process-genre approach
- 9- The eclectic method (combination of all approaches).
- 10- It has to be eclectic
- 11- Process Writing.

**Question five:**

What do(es) motivate your choice?

Teachers were asked about the reasons behind their choosing these approaches. The aim of the question is find out what is special in these approaches. Some teachers mentioned the benefits of the used approaches, and others stated that they made a search about it. The explanations of the teachers were as follow:

- 1- It helps them go through different steps of writing with reference to an authentic model.
- 2- It includes all approaches.
- 3- A research which I made in my doctorate research.
- 4- This approach enhances students' level in writing with reference to the various specifics of genres.
- 5- its practicality
- 6- my experience as a student and as a teacher
- 7- Because it depends on the purpose for teaching writing.
- 8- I adopted it in my PhD research
- 9- the fact that all methods/approaches have advantages and disadvantages

10- Every student has a different need and lack

11- Unclear question.

**Question six:**

If a specific approach doesn't work well, how can you deal with that?

Teachers were asked about their reaction if a specific approach does not work anymore or it does not give any positive results on the students' level. Some teachers stated that they will change it; others said that they will make modifications on it, and the other part of them adhere on the point that making a combination of more than one approach does not cause any problem. The answers of the teachers were as follow:

- 1- Make adjustments (necessary modifications) according to the pitfalls I have noticed.
- 2- I do not use it
- 3- Being eclectic as I said previously.
- 4- I use have recourse to another approach
- 5- its alternative
- 6- I change the approach according to my students' needs. Sometimes I mix more than one approach
- 7- Exactly, teaching one single approach would create certain deficiencies in the teaching program as students need to know about all approaches of writing to use them properly in the appropriate situation.
- 8- We should be eclectic; we should diagnose students' needs
- 9- I try to adapt it to the classroom situation.
- 10- Reflection
- 11- Be eclectically.

**Question seven:**

Is it possible to make a combination of more than one approach?

Yes

No

Table 26.

*The teachers' opinions about the possibility to make a combination of more than an approach*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	100%
No	00	00%
Total	11	100%

This question aims to know if it is possible to make a combination of more than one approach. All teachers stated that it is possible to do that. If we see the results of question four above, we can easily infer that it is possible to make a combination of more than two approaches (see question 04, answers 2,3,9, and 10).

**Question eight:**

Do you think that your students are aware of the approach/approaches that you use?

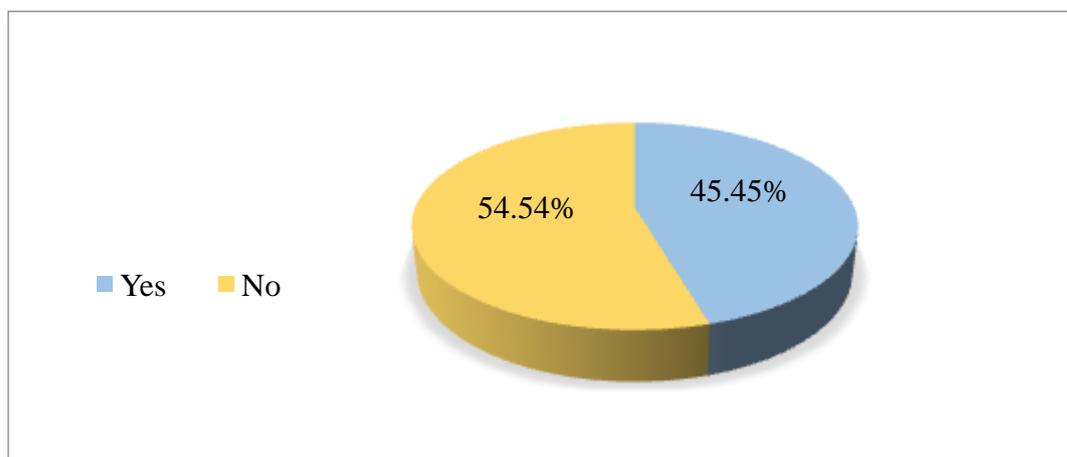
Yes

No

Table27.

*The teachers' points of view about the awareness of their students of the used teaching writing approaches*

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	05	45.45%
No	06	54.54%
Total	11	100%



*Figure22.* The teachers' points of view about the awareness of their students of the used teaching writing approaches

The aim of this question is to get the opinion of the teachers about the teaching writing approaches that are used. 06 teachers stated that their students do not know about it (54.54%) and 05 of them think that their students know about the used approach (45.45%).

#### **Question nine:**

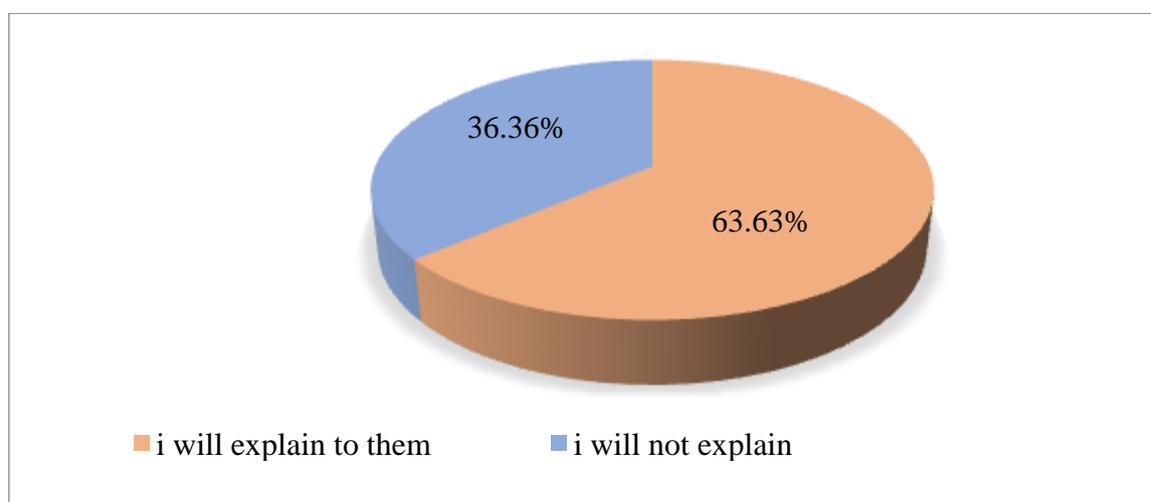
If you find out that some of your students do not know the used approach, how can you deal with that?

- 1- I will explain the used approach for them to follow its steps and strategies
- 2- I will not tell them, they are not concerned to know about it

Table28.

*The teachers' acceptance to the explanation of the used teaching writing approaches to their students*

Options	Frequency	Percent
I will explain	07	63.63%
I will not explain	04	36.36%
Total	11	100%



*Figure23.*The teachers' acceptance to the explanation of the used teaching writing approaches to their students

The aim of this question is to know the possibility of the teachers to let their students know the used approaches. Most of them selected the choice of possibility (07 teachers), the others selected that it is needless to explain it for the students (04teachers). In

comparison to the previous question, we can find out that should have more than 60% of the students who know the used approaches that is because most of teachers will explain it to them.

### **Question ten:**

Any further suggestions?

Nine teachers answered this question. 05 of them were out of the topic (thanking, wishing a good luck), the others criticized the Algerian educational system, claimed that practice is the way to develop the writing skill, and considered writing as a learner-centered skill. Their answers were as follow:

- 1- Writing is learnt not taught. Learners should have more practice to be effective writers.
- 2- All the Algerian syllabuses must be reviewed by experienced teachers as well as the middle and secondary school inspectors. Workshops should be organized to train teachers in all levels.
- 3- Practice makes progress!
- 4- Writing is the most used and the most difficult, yet important skill to promote. It needs much time and needs students' awareness to develop their skill; otherwise, the writing course will be time consuming.

### **Discussion of Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire which was submitted to the English teachers led us to gather interesting data that could be beneficial to shape the results of this study. Its results gave us background information about the teachers who answered the questionnaire and their opinions about the nature of writing. They also gave us their opinions and evaluations of their students' writing skills levels. They gave us the expected reasons that impede the

development of their students' writing skills and the relation between writing and other skills.

In addition to that, they provide us with the approaches that they use to teach writing.

The results of this questionnaire were extracted from the responses that were given by 11 teachers who are experienced enough to let us say that the results are reliable enough to provide us with beneficial information. These teachers showed the agreement with the nature of writing as a skill that needs time, and practice to be shaped.

Concerning their students' writing skills, their answers were between poor and average, which means that it is considerable information to put in mind that the students responses are not reliable enough even when some of them stated that they have good writing skills.

About the reasons beyond the low level of students, most of the teachers declared that their students do not show their interest toward writing in general. This is an effective reason that could bring a chain of other reasons to make students struggle to make a positive change in their writing skills.

When starting every action whatever is its difficulty, we have to think how to do it. In their answers about the students' thinking while composing, the teachers provided us with the students' writing problem which thinking with the mother tongue or with their second language. It is essential to say every language in the world has its culture. When writing in English and thinking in Arabic, it is possible to produce a piece of writing, but not qualified enough if it is compared with someone else's written product that he thinks in the target language.

About the problem while composing, the teachers showed their students do not follow the stages of the writing process, they have difficulties with some of its stages, and they struggle with some aspects of the language. According to the teachers, the students

struggle in the prewriting and while writing level exactly with generating ideas and drafting. They struggle also with some aspects of language like grammar; spelling, and vocabulary.

To find out other expected elements to raise the speed of the student's writing development, we tried to find out how other skills can be helpful to writing. Teachers' answers did not all agree about the contribution of speaking to the development of writing. Those who claimed this contribution justified that speaking helps to facilitate the language fluency and the acquisition of vocabulary. On the other hand, all the teachers without exception, claimed that reading contributes to the development of writing justifying that it makes the learner familiarized with all patterns of language; other stated that it helps the students to be familiarized with the experts' written products.

Not all teachers were satisfied with the writing syllabus that they teach.

Almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them showed their dissatisfaction toward the planned syllabus to teach writing justifying that it does not include all the language patterns and that it needs more practices. Practice was the most repeated word in the teachers' justifications.

Concerning the teaching writing approaches, the most used approaches were the product, the process and the genre or a combination of them. Most of teachers stated that they use those three approaches or a combination of them justifying that it is the suitable method to get each approach's benefits and raise the students' writing skills. This gave us an answer about the question that asks about the possibility of making a combination of more than one approach. Even when they got asked if this approach do not work well in the classroom, they claimed that the combination of these approaches always works. In addition to that, not all of them agree with explaining these approaches to their students and this concerns only teachers.

At the end, some teachers provided us with precious information in this field. Others stated that writing is a matter of practice and it is not that simple skill that can be developed in a short time. The other part of them stated that to make good and qualified enough EFL learners, the university level should be the of students' mastering level in English, and they also stated that they teach students who do not have the ability to make a correct sentence.

To sum up, these were the teachers' opinions about writing and their students' level in writing and all what concerns this issue. If we try to find to repeated key words in the teachers' answers, we will find that "practice" is the key to develop the writing skill.

### **Conclusion**

The analyses of the questionnaires show that most of the students face writing difficulties and they still not good writers. These writing problems represent the low writing level of the students. On the other hand, most of the teacher agree that they are not satisfied of their students writing skills and that they need to make an effort to solve this problem. This chapter found out the used teaching writing approaches and the awareness of the students to these approaches.

## **General Conclusion**

The interest of this research came from the complexity of the writing act and the different methods and approaches that had been conducted by researchers to draw the line of the writing development. These lines were not taking the same direction.

The first part of this research discussed writing according to teachers and instructors. It shows an overview on writing and how it can be taught according to teachers and scholars. In addition to that it takes a period of time that witnessed the activity of most of the present times approaches. Furthermore, it concentrates on the four teaching writing approaches that are widely used in FEL classrooms.

The other part of this research discusses writing from the view of learners. It takes the definition of writing and learning in general. Moreover, it discusses the importance of writing and its relation with other skills. In addition to that, it tends to understand its process and techniques. It tries to find out the characteristics of a good piece of writing.

Another part tries to answer the research questions by analyzing the students' answers of the submitted questionnaire. The last part tries to answer those questions and tests the hypotheses by analyzing the teachers' answers of the questionnaire. In the discussion of results of both of the questionnaires, considerable results have been found that could be beneficial to shape the quality of the conducted research.

This research was conducted to answer a several question about the nature of writing and how it can be taught. In addition to that, it tries to provide both of the learners and the teachers about each other's writing skills and teaching writing skills. Understanding the nature of writing and its complexity can be the key term to develop the EFL students' writing skills.

## **Pedagogical Implications**

The complexity of writing and teaching it are considered as long and tiring process for both of teachers and students. Therefore, several opinions and different points of view have been reported by scholars and teachers to raise their levels and their students as well. According to that and what has been discussed and tested in the previous chapters, students and teachers have to take many instructions and recommendation into their accounts.

Students have to be interested in all what considers writing. The interest is the key to understand and make a development in all fields and not just in writing. They also should be motivated whatever is the reason that makes them struggling with making a development. No one can make a progress without being motivated; thus, students should be motivated even they do not find who motivates them. The key word and the straight path to be a good writer is practice. Students should train their writing skills and try to shape their writing style as much as they can. The last point is what is considered with writing approaches. It is recommended to have an idea about the used teaching writing approach. To conclude what is mentioned previously, interest, motivation, and practice are the important key points that help the learner to raise and develop his writing skill.

Teachers have modified their teaching writing methodology according to the students' needs. They should motivate their students to make them interested in their session. Many students lose the passion to study a module because of the teacher style and personality. They also have to tell their students about the used teaching writing approach, this can make a difference in the students' interest and concentration during the session in class. The last thing which is the important recommendation for the teacher, they have to give their students assignments as much as they can. According to the results of the students' questionnaire, students are not interested in free writing and they do not train themselves as much as

required; therefore, teachers should take this into their accounts and give them assignment and motivate them to train their writing skills. To sum up, teachers should always think that they are responsible about their students' levels.

In other words, both of students and teachers are required to make adjustments on their habits, methods, and behavior for making progress in their learning and teaching as well.

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**Question four:**

C- Are you motivated to write?

Yes

No

D- If not, please explain why:

.....

**Question five:** How do you usually train your writing skill?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

**Question six:** When it comes to writing, do you think in:

Arabic

French

English

**Question seven:** You usually face difficulties in writing with the following (you can choose more than one):

Grammar

Punctuation

Cohesion

Lack of creativity

Lack of vocabulary

**Question eight:** After reading the topic of the composition, what do you generally do?

- 5- Start writing immediately (drafting)
- 6- Think about ideas (brainstorming)
- 7- Make an outline and follow it (planning)
- 8- Write down sentences and phrases that related to the topic

**Section two: The students' opinions toward their teachers' methods and approaches**

**Question one:**

C- Are you satisfied of your teacher's way of teaching?

Yes

No

D- if not, please explain why:

.....

**Question two:** When you make a piece of writing, you teacher notifies you to pay attention to the following: (you can choose more than one)

- Type of writing (argumentative, narrative, informative, descriptive...)
- The purpose of the written product (to convince, to inform, to describe, to claim...)
- The supposed audience or readers (students, teachers, costumers...)

**Question three:** Does your teacher provide you with the required steps of the writing process? (You can select more than one)

Planning

Drafting

Revising

Editing

Publishing

**Question four:** Does your teacher give you samples of written products and tells you to modify its structure?

Yes

No

**Question five:**

Do you write freely (a topic of your choice) at home or in the classroom?

4- With the guidness of the teacher. Sometimes s/he give me instructions and feedback

5- Without any instructions or feedback from anyone. I keep my pieces of writing for myself

6- I do not do that neither at home nor in classroom

**Question six:**

C- Do you know the teaching writing approach that is used by your teacher?

Yes

No

D- If yes, please name it:

.....

E- If yes, who explained the approach for you?

The teacher

I search about it by myself

*Thank you so much, you Effort and*

*Collaboration are highly appreciated*

## Appendix 02: The Teachers' Questionnaire

Writing has always been a challenging task for students of English as a foreign language. This questionnaire aims to collect useful information from English language teachers. The principal aim of the research is to single out the suitable teaching writing approaches that can enhance the students' writing skills at the level of the university.

Dear teachers, you are kindly recommended to fill in this questionnaire to express your opinion and attitudes about teaching writing approaches

**Instructions:** In questions that contain circles to tick () , you have the chance only to select one choice. On the other hand, questions that contain squares to  (  ) allow you to tick more than one choice.

### Section one: General information

**Question one:** How long have you been teaching at the university?

- 2- 01 – 05 years       2- 05 – 10 years       3- 10 – 15 years   
 4- 15- 20 years       5- more than 20years

### Section two: The teachers' opinions and evaluations of the students' writing skills

**Question one:** How significant would you rate the writing level of the students in general?

Poor

Accepted

Good

**Question two:** Do you agree/ disagree with the statement?

Writing is a challenging task and it needs time and effort.

Strongly disagree       Neutral       Disagree       agree       strongly agree

**Question three:** When you ask students to write an assignment, they are usually:

Highly interested       interested       not interested

**Question four:** Do your students face these difficulties in writing (you can choose more than one)?

Grammar       Spelling       Coherence   
 Punctuation       Lack of creativity

**Question five:** Which part of the writing process is difficult for your students? (You can choose more than one):

Assessing the writing situation       Generating idea   
 Drafting       Revising and editing

**Question six:** Do your students translate from?

L1 to EFL

L2 to EFL

Think in English

### Section three: Writing and other skills

**Question one:**

**C-** Does speaking contribute to the development of writing?

Yes

No

**D-** If yes, please explain how:

.....

**Question two:**

**C-** Does reading contribute to the development of the writing skill?

Yes

No

**D-** If yes, please explain how:

.....

**Section four: The teachers' methods and approach in teaching writing**

**Question one:**

**C-** Do you think the written expression syllabus you are following is efficient to enhance the students' writing skills?

Yes

No

**D-** If not, please explain why:

.....

**Question two:**

**C-** During the writing assignments in the classroom, do you walk around your students and help them?

Yes

No

**D-** If yes, do you assist them in? (you can choose more than one)

Generating ideas

Vocabulary

Grammar

Spelling

Content and ordering ideas

**Question three:** Which of the following strategies are you teaching to your students to help them compose coherently? (You can choose more than one)

4- Metacognitive strategies (Prewriting the main ideas- organizing ideas, revising- evaluating the final product)

5- Cognitive strategies (Using translation to find a missing word or expression- jotting down and use visual memory to remember its spelling- rereading in order to be able to carry on drafting)

6- Social/ affective strategies (Working with peers- ask the teacher for help)

**Question four:** According to you, what is the suitable teaching writing approach for EFL students at the university level?

.....

**Question five:** What do (es) motivate your choice?

.....

**Question six:** If a specific approach doesn't work well, how can you deal with that?

.....

**Question seven:** Is it possible to make a combination of more than one approach?

Yes

No

**Question eight:** Do you think that your students are aware of the approach/approaches that you use?

Yes

No

**Question nine:**

If you find out that some of your students do not know the used approach, how can you deal with that?

3- I will explain the used approach for them to follow its steps and strategies

4- I will not tell them, they are not concerned to know about it

**Question ten:** Any further suggestions?

.....

*Thank you so much, your effort and*

*Collaboration are highly appreciated*

### ملخص

تعد الكتابة من المشاكل و الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية. من شبه المستحيل و من أصعب ما قد يكون أن يوضع خط مستقيم يحدد الطريق الصحيح لتعليم الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية. إعتقادا على ذلك, يهدف هذا البحث إلى معرفة المناهج المتبعة من طرف الأساتذة من أجل رفع المهارات الكتابية لطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية. كما يهدف أيضا إلى معرفة إمكانية استعمال أكثر من منهاج في نفس الوقت و معرفة مدى انتباه الطلبة و علمهم بالمنهج المتبع من طرف الأستاذ. من أجل اختبار صحة الفرضيات التي تقول أنه يمكن استعمال أكثر من منهاج في تدريس الكتابة, و أن البعض من الطلبة فقط من لديهم علم بالمناهج المتبعة من طرف الأساتذة, أجريت دراسة وصفية بنشر استبيان على طلبة و أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. نتائج الدراسة أثبتت أنه يمكن المزج بين أكثر من منهاج واحد في تعليم الكتابة, كما أثبتت أن أغلب الطلبة ليس لديهم علم بالمنهاج المتبع من طرف الأستاذ, و أن الطلبة يواجهون مشاكل و صعوبات في تعلم الكتابة لا يمكن حلها إلا بالممارسة

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الكتابة, تدريس الكتابة, مناهج تدريس الكتابة.