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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF READING COMPREHENSION  
TO WRITING SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

Case study of second year students of English at Biskra University

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillments of The  
Requirements for the Master Degree in Science of the Language

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# The Contribution of Reading Comprehension to Writing Skill Development

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

The sun and the moon of my life; my mother and my father the most precious persons to my heart. May Allah bless them.

My step mother, my aunt Nasira, for her encouragement all of the time.

My grandparents for their precious prayers.

Dalila, for her unconditioned help and continuous support.

My sisters; Sarah, Asma, and Selma.

My brothers; Ayoub, Sallah, Assem, Ahmed, and Oussama.

*Elhadj* for whom I am waiting impatiently.

Rachida, Ismahen, and Mimi, I love you sincerely.

All my dearest friends and relatives.

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# The Contribution of Reading Comprehension to Writing Skill Development

## ABSTRACT

The present study aims at exploring the contribution of reading comprehension to enhance learners' writing skill. It investigates the nature of the relationship between reading and writing. Furthermore, it attempts to report the extent to which that relation is supported by both teachers and students. The basic hypothesis in this study sets out that second/foreign language learners can improve their writing skill by reading frequently on that language. We have opted for a descriptive method for describing two variables: reading comprehension as the independent variable and its contribution in developing learners' writing skill as the dependent variable. In order to gather the data needed we have made a classroom observation for two groups of second year students of English at Mohammed Khider University, Biskra. In addition, we have administered two questionnaires; one for the same sample of the observed students and the other for a group of written expression teachers of the same population. The results obtained demonstrate the role of reading comprehension in improving learners' writing skill. Based on these results, the research hypothesis was confirmed that students need to read frequently in order to improve their written productions.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL/EFL: English as a second or foreign language.

L1: First language.

N: Number of respondents.

SL: Second language.

SL/FL: Second or foreign language.

WE: Written Expression.

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### **Introduction**

Writing is among the most important skills that learners of English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) need to develop. For many years, teaching writing was merely for reinforcing the mastery of grammar rules, and vocabulary items. However, recent theories of language teaching and learning have come to realize the importance of such skill to achieve language proficiency.

As far as written language is concerned, reading is also an important skill that introduces a range of information that could not be taught in the course of teaching the writing skill. Besides, choosing the most appropriate approach for teaching writing Written Expression teachers need to consider the contributions that reading can offer to improve learners' writing skill. Learners as well need to recognize the importance of reading in ESL/EFL either to develop their abilities in both skills or to extend their knowledge. Many researches have investigated the reading-writing connection and the impact that reading has on learners' writing ability.

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

Algerian learners of English as a foreign language at Biskra University encounter difficulties in developing their writing skill. The limited use or need to write in English outside the classroom has lessened the opportunity to develop such skill. In trying to overcome this limited practice of writing, written expression teachers iterate the notion "*read more*" as a remedy to mistakes as they appear in students'written tests. Thus, they urge students to read in order to improve their writing ability. However, learners' poor writings may be caused by many factors mainly the lack of reading on the foreign

language. Consequently, we aim through this research to state: the contribution of reading comprehension to writing skill development.

## **2. Aims of the Study**

This study contributes to the development of learners' poor writings through introducing the impact of the reading comprehension on learners' written production. It aims to examine the relation between reading as a receptive skill and writing as a productive one.

Furthermore, the study aims at:

- Raising learners' awareness toward the reading-writing relationship.
- Improving learners' writing ability through frequent reading.
- Promoting the importance of reading instruction during the writing class.

## **3. Hypotheses**

Regarding what have been said before, this study **hypothesizes** that:

- Learners' constant reading may greatly affect their writing aptitudes and develop their potentials. So, constant reading contributes in improving learners' writing skill.
- Although reading provides helpful insights into language learning, it does not have a great effect on learners' writing skill development.

## **4. Research Questions**

The present study attempts to answer a number of related questions:

- Are both teachers and students aware of the reading-writing connection and its effects on learning the language?
- Do teachers support the reading-writing relationship during the written expression courses?

- Are both teachers and students aware of the impact that reading has on the writing skill?

## **5. Research Methodology**

### **5.1 Method of investigation**

To meet the research aforementioned aims, we have opted for qualitative and descriptive methods which are less time consuming. However, they provide reliable and comprehensible picture about the concerned problem. We will analyze the data gathered from the conducted classroom observation and the two administered questionnaires, students' and teachers' questionnaires, to obtain both views, besides describing the actual classroom situation regarding the research problem.

### **5.2 Research tools**

For gathering the data needed, we have depended upon two research tools:

**5.1.1 Classroom observation:** is a structured observation that rates the teachers' instruction which support the reading-writing relationship in a scale of frequency.

**5.2.2 Questionnaire:** is a data gathering tool that requires from the respondents to answer proposed questions related to the research problem. Two questionnaires have been submitted; one for students and the second for teachers for the sake of obtaining both opinions concerning the contribution of reading to enhance students' writing skill.

### **5.3 Limitation of the study**

The present study focuses on one side of the reading-writing relationship; the impact of reading on writing, however it neglects the impact of writing on reading. In addition, the written expression teachers have demonstrated the role of reading though they have argued

that such focus on reading during the writing course would be on the expense of practicing writing. Hence, our study would focus only on simple instructions that support reading-writing relationship during the writing class. Besides, it seeks to find out other opportunities for reading comprehension either inside or outside the classroom.

#### **5.4 Population and sampling**

**5.4.1 Population:** the population involved in this study is second year EFL students at Biskra University, during the academic year 2011/2012, in addition to, the written expression teachers of the same population. The population has been chosen on the basis that the written expression programme of second year students is best suit the observation's objectives rather than that of first year which deals with types of sentences, punctuation, and transitional signals or the third year programme that deals with writing a research paper. Moreover, second year students had already received both formal instruction and experienced writing in English last year.

#### **5.4.2 Sampling:**

**5.4.2.1 Students' sample:** the observation has been conducted with two out of ten groups of second year EFL students. The questionnaire has been delivered for the same sample. The sample size is around 50 students per group that is around 100 students during the observation sessions. However, for the questionnaire the sample size is about 25 students per group which constitute around 50 students. We have opted to deliver the questionnaires only for a half of each group in order to be sensitive for the differences of teaching' methods that each group encounter.

**5.4.2.2 Teachers' sample:** it consists of six teachers, the total number of teachers who teach written expression to second year students at the Department of English, Biskra

University. However, the two teachers with whom I have attended for the purpose of accomplishing my observation have been chosen randomly.

## **6. Structure of the Study**

The present study consists of four chapters. The first three chapters are devoted to the literature review while the last chapter is the practical part of the study.

The first chapter outlines theoretical background about the reading skill. It also deals with the reading process and its nature, besides the nature of second language reading.

The second chapter presents the nature of the writing skill. It also discusses ESL/EFL writing, in addition, to the major approaches to teaching writing.

The third chapter is an attempt to relate both skills; reading and writing. It presents this relation in both contexts; L1 and L2. Further, it proposes some instructions that support the reading-writing relation in the classroom. By the end of the chapter, major contributions of reading in developing the writing skill are presented.

The last chapter, chapter four, includes detailed analysis of the observation and the two questionnaires, students' and teachers' questionnaires, in addition to, the findings and recommendations of the research.

## **Chapter one**

# **READING SKILL**

## **Chapter one**

### **READING SKILL**

#### **Introduction**

When considering the acts of reading in our daily life, we nearly read as we speak; we read journals, manuals, schedules, TV programmes, and menus we read without even the feeling that we are reading. Such variety in the acts of reading contributes much to its complexity. Reading is a vital skill either in first (L1) or second/foreign language (SL/FL). It is until recently that reading has been recognized as an important skill to teach especially for SL/FL learners. This chapter briefly introduces the reading skill. It presents different views of the nature of reading. Besides, it states the dichotomy process/product of reading, and defines the process of reading comprehension. Further, this chapter illustrates different theories of the reading process.

#### **1.1. The nature of reading**

In fact it is "impossible" to adequately define the reading skill (Alderson, 2000) because each theory of reading is based upon different research's purpose(s). However, reading can be generally defined depending on three views. The linguistic view regards reading as "the process of getting linguistic information via print" (Widdowson, 1979, cited in Liu, 2010), which assumes that the only sort of information is that of lexis, morphology, and syntax. Therefore, the act of reading is considered as "an adjunct" (Carrell, 1988) to the teaching of oral skills. Restricting the reading process to the linguistic information provided by the text has neglected the core of reading, which is meaning. Therefore, a more comprehensible view of reading entails that it is a cognitive process of meaning-making via print.

Day and Bamford (1998, p. 12) claimed that "reading is the construction of meaning from a printed or written message." Besides emphasizing the importance of meaning, the

cognitive view does not neglect the role of the linguistic form of the language. More recently reading is viewed as an interactive, social, critical process (Wallace, 1992, 2001, 2003). She argued that the reading process is interactive since it involves the interaction between the text, the writer, and the reader. Moreover, Reading is a social process in terms of the reader and the writer as members of communities, also the act of reading develops in a social context. The process of reading is critical in that the reader may bring different text's interpretation other than the writer intended one especially those who read in a second or foreign language.

From the aforementioned definitions of reading, we realize the complexity of the process. Therefore, and for the purpose of the study we conclude that reading is a socially constrained process which involves meaning realization from a printed message.

### **1.2. The process of reading**

The process of reading simply refers to the activities that occur during the act of reading. Alderson (2000, p. 3) affirms that "the process is what we mean by 'reading' proper: the interaction between a reader and the text". As reading the text, the reader engages in different activities from decoding the printed symbols on the page to assigning meaning to those symbols and assuming the relationship between them. Furthermore, the reader is thinking about what he/she is reading, reflecting on his/ her own views. Alderson (ibid) has characterized the process [as being] dynamic, variable, and different for the same reader on the same text at different times or with different purposes in reading. Moreover, he views the process as normally silent, internal, and private.



### **1.3. The product of reading**

The product of reading is the outcome of the reading process that is comprehension or understanding which the reader has reached. Comprehending a text may vary from one reader to another. On one hand, because the text has no fixed meaning needs to be discovered rather meaning is created from the interaction between the reader and the text. On the other hand, the construction of the text meaning is affected by the readers' background knowledge or schema that the readers possess (Alderson, 2000). However, the question to be answered here is how different text interpretations judged to be acceptable or unacceptable.

### **1.4 Reading comprehension**

As pointed above, comprehension is the result of the reading process which entails "extracting the required information from it [the text] as efficiently as possible" (Grellet, 1981, p. 3). Although many definitions can be attributed to reading comprehension, attaining the text's meaning is what the reader aims at regardless of being a NL/SL/FL reader. The message encoded in a text by a writer is directed to particular readers to be decoded. If those readers fail to reconstruct the intended meaning neither the writer nor the reader will achieve their goals which means the writer will not be understood and the reader will not gain new information. Thus, understanding is the essence of the reading process as Nuttal (1982, p. 22) confirmed "understanding is central to the process of reading... [it] must be the focus of our teaching". Consequently, decoding what is written does not necessarily entail comprehending it, so that comprehension is the focus of the reading instruction.

Decoding the prints on the page cannot be adequate to comprehend the text and to achieve comprehension the reader tends to create meaning through linking what is written to what is already known. Thus, comprehension is resulted from the interaction between

the text input and the reader's preexisting knowledge (Smith, 1985) or schema that "is networks of information stored in the brain which act as filters of incoming information"(Alderson, 2000, p. 17). Moreover, reading comprehension is tied to the readers' purpose in reading that means different purposes involve different strategies in approaching texts (Hedge, 2000). Grabe and Stoller(2002, p. 7)have suggested seven main purposes of reading that may have many variations: reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from text, reading to integrate information, reading to write, reading to critique texts, and reading for general comprehension.

Understanding a given text differs from one reader to another and identical comprehension is impossible to be reached. Therefore, the meaning constructed by the reader is relative. In addition, there are three levels of understanding: comprehending, inferencing, and interpreting or as termed by Gays (1960, cited in Alderson, 2000) reading the "lines", reading "between the lines", and reading "beyond the lines" respectively. Comprehending refers to literal understanding of the text, inferencing involves the understanding of the non-literal meaning which means extracting the implicit meaning that is not stated, and interpreting which is the personal understanding of the text's author communicative intent. These three levels of comprehension are ordered hierarchically in terms of difficulty and acquisition which entails that the lower level, understanding the literal meaning, is easy than approaching the text critically. Furthermore, we learn to understand the text literally, then to infer the text's meaning, and later to reach critical understanding (Alderson, 2000).

## **1.5 Models of the reading process**

In an attempt to examine the process by which readers approach the text meaning, model builders have provided explicit models that tend to explain the process by which readers proceeds from prints on the page to meaning construction (Gough,1972;Goodman ,1976;Rumelhart,1977 inHudson, 2007).

These models are classified into three types; the bottom-up models that focus on the text as a point of departure to reach the text meaning, in contrast, the top-down models thattake the reader rather than the text as a point of departure. As a sort of compromise between the two aforementioned models, the interactive models suggest that both the bottom-up and top-down processes work together throughout the reading process in order to approach the meaning of the text. However, it is worth to mention that these models are metaphoricalmodels. That is these models are generalized assumptions about the meaning-making process which do not illustrate who the different components of the reading process interacted with each other (Grabe, 2009). Although, we are more interested in presenting an overview of the nature of the reading process, some special models will be briefly discussed.

Before, moving to the discussion of these models we should introduce the concept of a model. A model of the reading process as defined by Davies (1995, p.75) is “aformalized, usually visually represented theory of what goes on the eyes and mind when readers are comprehending or miscomprehending text”.

### ***1.5.1 The Bottom-Up Models***

The bottom-up models are serial models that were influenced by the behaviorism in 1940s and 1950s (Alderson, 2000, p.17), thus reading was merely regarded as “getting meaning from talk written down” (Bumpass, 1975, p.182). According to that view reading is a passive process which is only a matter of decoding the graphic symbols into the

corresponding language sounds in a linear manner to build up the text's meaning. Furthermore, this model refers to the view that reading is a process of building letters into words, words into phrases, and sentences then proceeds to the overall meaning.

The bottom-up models also known as text-driven models of comprehension which are based on issues of rapid processing of text and word identification ... and on the reader's ability to recognize words in isolation by mapping the input directly on to some independent representational form in the mental lexicon. In general, this mapping is seen to independent of context.(Hudson, 2007, p. 36)

Gough (1972) is one of the advocators of the bottom-up processing models of reading. His model was named *one second of reading* in which he described the reading process as a letter-by-letter series where the reader is supposed to treat all the letters in his/her visual field and decodes them into phonemic units before assigning meaning to any stretch of these letters, thus emphasizing word recognition rather than comprehension (in Hudson, 2007, p. 35). This model is a step-by step process through which the reader moves from a step to another starting from recognizing the letters till reaching the meaning of the text.

In fact, recognizing the letters of the language is a prerequisite to the reading process, of course without accurate identification of the letters, we cannot read a word. However, the bottom-up models fail to account for the different interpretations that the readers may come up with as stated by Grellet (1981, p. 7) "Reading is a constant process of guessing, and what one brings to the text is often more important than what one finds in it". This has resulted in a contradictory view of the reading process \_top-down models\_ that attempt to overcome the shortcoming of the bottom-up models.

### *1.5.2. The top-down models*

Like the bottom-up models, top-down models were serial models which were influenced by the psycholinguistic perspectives in the early seventies, thus reading was regarded as an active act in which the reader is the focal point of that act (Alderson, 2000).

Depending on the reader rather than the text, the top-down models assume that reading is rather an active process which involves the reader's prior knowledge and experiences to make sense of the reading act. Moreover, the reader is no more seen as a passive participant who depends heavily on the linguistic input on the page but rather as someone who is actively engaged while reading (Grabe and Stoller, 2002).

The top-down models suppose that the reader starts by predicting the meaning (the top) depending upon his/ her prior knowledge and moves down to the text in order to confirm his/ her predictions.

Kenneth Goodman (1976, p. 3) described reading as "*psycholinguistic guessing game* [that] involves an interaction between thought and language"; therefore, the reader's expectations and anticipations shape the meaning of the text depending on textual cues that confirm, refine or refute the text meaning. However, Goodman did not consider his theory as a top-down model and it is recently that has been characterized as a concept-driven, top-down model (Carrell, 1988, p. 3). According to this view "The reader makes guesses about the meaning of the text and samples the print to confirm or disconfirm the guess" (Hudson, 2007. 37). Goodman (1976) has distinguished between three textual cues or information that is used by the reader to attain the text's meaning: graphic, syntactic and semantic cues. However, Goodman's model has minimized the over reliance on the graphophonemicknowledge (the ability to relate letters to their corresponding sounds) by providing alternatives to that knowledge (the prior syntactic and semantic knowledge). Moreover, the term *decoding* in this model has referred to the translation of either a

graphemic (letters) or phonemic (sounds) input into meaning, whereas, the term *recoding* indicates the translation of graphemic (letters) input to phonemic input (Samuels and Kamil, 1988. 23).

Besides Goodman, Smith (1971, 1994) has supported the top-down nature of the reading process. He stressed the limitation of the visual system in accumulating the information during the process of reading. Instead he valued the use of the context and the readers' background knowledge (schemata) in the construction of meaning (in Hudson, 2007).

Although, the top-down model may succeed in accounting for beginner readers who fail to identify most of the text's words and tend to generate predictions to get the text meaning, the model cannot consider the reading behavior of skilled readers who may lack the knowledge of the text topic, so s/he fails or takes too much time to make predictions (Samuels and Kamil, 1998, p. 32). In addition, the top-down model failed to account for the reading instruction, so it is inapplicable in the second language context (Goodman, 1988, p. 21).

The top-down models refute the passivity of the reading process that was dominated and highlight the active processing of the text. However, being serial models in nature like the bottom-up models with the lack of interaction between the distinct stages of the process leads to the emergence of interactive models as an immediate remedy and to offer a compromise between the two preceding models.

### ***1.5.3 The interactive models***

Recognizing that the reading process is more than an active processing of information accumulated in the reader's schemata to construct meaning from texts, the interactive models claimed that reading is rather an interactive process between the reader and the text. These models argued that throughout the reading process the reader is engaged in

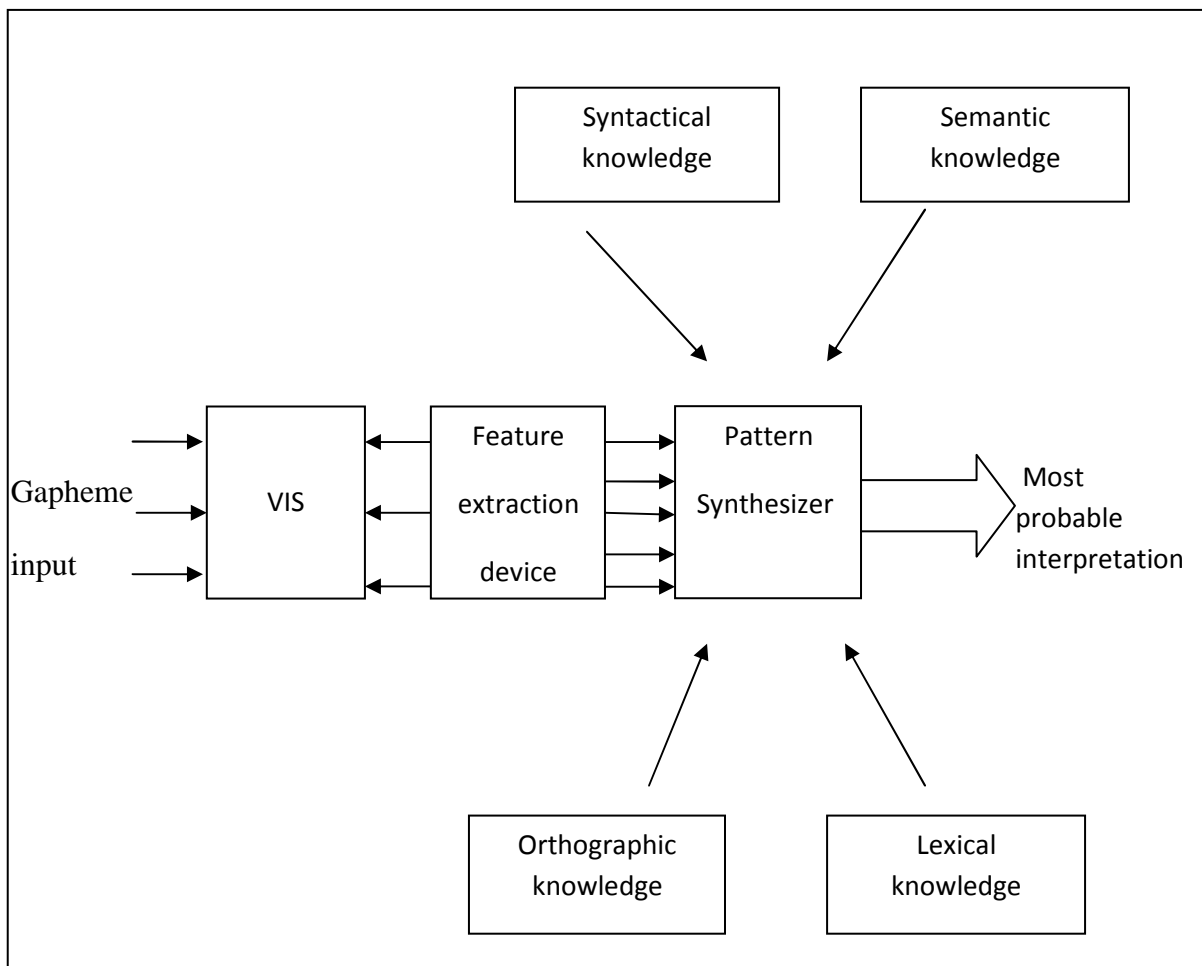
simultaneous use of both the bottom-up and top-down processes in trying to make sense of what is being read, in another words, neither the bottom-up nor the top-down processes can individually work out the meaning of the text (Carrell, 1988). These models described the reading process as cyclical rather than serial (linear) in nature which means that the information flow is bidirectional that “permits the information contained in higher stages of processing to influence the analysis which occurs at low stages of processing” (Samuels and Kamil, 1988, p. 27).

Rumelhart (1977) and Stanovich (1980) are the first reading theorists who weighted equally both the text and reader (Carrel, 1988). Extracting the text's meaning is likely to be achieved through a reciprocal action. That is meaning is resulted from the interaction between the print on a page and what the reader brings to it. The reader is stimulated by the text's cues to generate predictions and guesses from his prior knowledge, which in turn may help him to understand what is expressed at the bottom level of the written passage. The interactive models to reading represent a balance between concept-driven and text-driven models. Carrell (1988, p. 1) stated that “Interactive approaches to reading hold much promise for our understanding the complex nature of reading, especially as it occurs in a second or foreign language and culture”.

Rumelhart (1977) proposed that the sensory and non-sensory information come together in one place that he labeled *the pattern synthesizer* where all the pervious knowledge is integrated; orthographic knowledge, lexical knowledge, syntactic knowledge, and semantic knowledge, in addition to, the graphic cues that has been extracted in order to come up with the most probable interpretation (in Hudson, 2007, p. 42).

Stanovich (1980) added a new property to the Rumelhart's interactive model by suggesting that any weakness in one processing stage can be compensated by strength in another,

despite their level in the processing rank (in Hudson, 2007, p. 46). His model is named *interactive-compensatory model*. In fact, this model has accommodated the deficiencies of both the bottom-up and the top-down models. Moreover, it suits both poor readers who fail to identify the words and skilled reader who lack the knowledge of the text topic through the flexibility and interaction of its stages that permit the compensation in the two above cases (Samuel and Kamil, in *ibid*, p. 32).



**Figure 1:** Rumelhart's Interactive Model of the Reading Process, 1977 (From Carrell, Devine, & Eskey (eds.). 1988).



Figure 1 illustrates the model where the VIS refers to the visual information store in which the graphemic input is stored, before being processed by the feature extraction device, and then integrated with other knowledge in the pattern synthesizer for producing the possible meaning(s) to what is read. Reading, according to Rumelhart, is thus neither a bottom-up nor top-down process, but a synthesis of the two

The difference among the various interactive models, however, refers to the emphasis they put on the process or the product of reading. In other words, they focus either on the interaction between the different cognitive skills which are the identification skills and the interpretation skills or on the product of the interaction between the reader's prior knowledge and the knowledge that is derived from the text (Grabe, 1991). In addition, no model has clarified the way in which such prior knowledge will come to be applied.

### **1.6 Reading in a second language**

Until recently that second or foreign language reading is considered as an interactive process that involves the reader in interchangeable use of the bottom-up and top-down processes (Grabe, 1991). This shift of viewing the reading process in SL/FL as interactive is due to the influence of L1 research that used to be the ground of most researches conducted in SL/FL reading contexts (ibid).

The early view of SL/FL reading process described reading as a passive (bottom-up) process of decoding the symbol-sound relationship, and on the light of the audiolingual approach reading was taught as reinforcement activities to oral skills, moreover, proficiency development in reading begins by decoding the grapheme-phoneme relationship and mastering the oral dialogues. As L1 reading research claimed that reading is rather an active process, overwhelming articles in second language reading appear to the scene. However, until 1979 the actual SL reading model based on the psycholinguistic

view of reading was suggested by Coady who explained that comprehension is the result of an interaction between the reader's background knowledge and the conceptual activities and process strategies (in Carrel, 1988).

From that time, more elaborated top-down models in SL have been developed. Then, reading in SL was seen as an interactive process in which SL readers engaged in a constant interplay of their "systemic" (linguistic) knowledge and schematic knowledge. The SL reading process is purposeful which indicates that the purpose of reading determines the strategies used in approaching the text's meaning, in addition, in each stage of the reading process the reader may have different purposes, so she/he applies the appropriate strategies to fulfill her /his purpose in each stage. Furthermore, the process is critical in terms of the readers' recognition of the writer's view point that s/he would share with her/his readers depending on knowing how the language elements are employed. That is how certain sentences or structures come to perform specific function, how words are used to explicitly or implicitly convey the message. Thus, SL readers may confront with another cultures and values in texts they read where they have either to resist or to submit these cultural differences (Hedge, 2000).

In addition, "[SL] reading is influenced by factors which are normally not considered in [L1] reading research" (Grabe, 1991, p. 386). The main factor is that SL readers differ from L1 readers because they already possess their L1 (linguistic) knowledge as well as their L1 culture that make that process completely different. In addition, that L1 knowledge operates with imperfect SL knowledge which may help or handle the process (Bernhardt, 2011). For instance, SL readers unlike L1 readers begin reading with a limited amount of oral vocabulary language as well as incomplete grammar of that language. Bernhardt (2011) claimed that SL readers may not have an oral/aural SL vocabulary, but they often have a word's concept and the oral/aural L1 vocabulary of that

word, so that the process is likely to add a new oral/aural item to an existing concept. Furthermore, "[SL] readers begin to develop SL reading skills before SL language competency is fully developed..." (Grabe, 2006).

Other linguistic differences between languages like word order variation, relative clause formation, orthographic differences, punctuation, and so on may render the SL reading process more difficult. Moreover, sociocultural and contextual differences between L1 and SL may have some influence on the process; the reader's schema. The reader's psycholinguistic perspective also affects the SL process; purpose in reading, motivation and interest, skills and strategies (Grabe, 1991). For example the learner may hold negative attitude about SL, so that he is demotivated to read in that SL.

Considering all the above differences in SL reading, L1 research findings cannot directly fit the SL context and research in SL reading is needed.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter we have provided theoretical background concerning the reading process, reading comprehension. In addition, we have discussed the major approaches to reading. Though the aim of the study is to explore the contribution of reading comprehension in improving learners writing skill, it is worth to clarify the nature of reading process. As a synthesis of all what have been introduced before, reading is an interaction between the reader and the text being read, moreover, both of the reader's background knowledge and the printed text are important to reach comprehension. While SL reading may resemble L1 reading, there are considerable differences which need to be taken into account when developing theories of SL learning.

## **Chapter two**

# **TEACHING WRITING SKILL**

## **Chapter two**

### **TEACHING THE WRITING SKILL**

#### **Introduction**

The growing interest in second language teaching and learning has led to advancing researches in second language writing which acknowledge the importance and complexity of the writing skill. Hence, writing in a second language (SL) is viewed as the most challenging aspect of second language learning. This chapter is devoted to the writing skill; its nature. It also illustrates the relationship between spoken and written language. Besides it accounts for ESL/EFL writing and its differences from L1 writing. Further, approaches to teaching writing are briefly discussed in this chapter.

#### **2.1. The Nature of the Writing**

Writing, in general means a "form of human communication by means of a set of visible marks that are related, by convention, to some particular structural level of language" (Writing, 2012). However, the diversity of the writing acts that people may engage in it in their daily life, from the simpler activity of taking notes to the more elaborated one such as writing a letter, entails that there is no single definition of writing that would encompass all these acts (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). In addition to that writing also refers to the activity by which a piece of written language has been produced. Thus, writing is by no means a simple task of transcribing sounds into graphs rather it is a complex activity through which the writer develops an idea into a coherent piece of writing called a "*text*", where a text means "verbal record of communication" (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 24). In line of that Józef (2001, p. 5) claimed that " [Writing] involves the

development of a design idea, the capture of mental representation of knowledge and of experience with subjects".

A more reasonable way to identify writing is to consider its relation to:

- Speaking as two productive skills (mode).
- Reading as two visual skills (channel).

However, in this chapter we tackle only the relation between speaking and writing and in the following chapter we will see the relationship between reading and writing.

Traditionally, most linguists hold the view that speech is superior to writing and that written language is not more than a record of spoken language. While educational research argued the opposite; written language is more correct, thus it is more valued than the spoken form of the language. However, a recent view have claimed that both skills, speaking and writing, are forms of communication and neither of them is superior to the other, but they exhibit a number of differences. (Weigle, 2002, p. 15)

The following table (table 1) provides a summary of the differences between speaking and writing.

Speech	Writing
<p>1. Speech is naturally acquired; everybody learn to speak almost automatically.</p> <p>2. Spoken language has dialect variations that represent a region.</p> <p>3. Speakers use their voices (pitch, rhythm, stress) and their bodies to communicate their message.</p> <p>4. Speaking is transient; it is spoken sounds passing through the air which last for only few minutes.</p> <p>5. Speaking is often spontaneous and unplanned.</p> <p>6. Speakers have immediate audiences who nod, interrupt, question and comment.</p> <p>7. Speakers are tolerated to repeat.</p>	<p>-1. Writing is learned; it needs too much practice even for native language speakers.</p> <p>2. Written language is more restricted and generally follows a standardized form of grammar, structure, organization, and vocabulary.</p> <p>3. Writers rely on the words on the page to express meaning and their ideas, in addition to the use of punctuation.</p> <p>4. Writing is permanent; it is visible signs on page which last for years and centuries.</p> <p>5. Most writing is planned and can be changed through editing and revision before an audience reads it.</p> <p>6. Writers have a delayed response from audiences or none at all and have only one opportunity to convey their message, be interesting, informative, and accurate and hold their reader's attention.</p> <p>7. In Writing, repetition leads to redundancy.</p>

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

Although, such differences exist between speaking and writing, there are many cases where speech looks like writing, for instance, sermons, lectures, also writing can be alike speaking in e-mail communication, informal notes, or screenplays(Weigle, 2002).

Speaking and writing exhibit many differences, however, they are two productive skills used for communicating.

## **2.2. ESL/EFL Writing**

Writing cannot be developed in vacuum. It is a skill that needs a special care from both teachers and learners whether in a native or a foreign language context. Myles stated that

The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments. Writing skills must be practiced and learned through experience. Writing also involves composing, which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or to transform information into new texts, as in expository or argumentative writing(2002,para. 1).

According to Myles, writing is not acquired rather it is either learned or culturally transmitted in academic setting or other settings. He added that composing is the most difficult activity that learners may engage in it especially SL/FL learners Myles (2002).

In the context of the classroom, SL writing is by no means an activity that reinforces the learning of the other language skills; it is "a worthwhile enterprise in and of itself" as claimed by Weigle (2002, p. 1). However, Harmer(2004) argued that in some L2 teaching situation writing is treated on equal basis with other skills, it is still used in other context, if at all, for its "writing to learn" purposes where students write for the sake of enhancing other language skills such as reading, grammar, and vocabulary.



Writing in FL/SL has two dimensions; "writing to learn" and "learning to write". The latter entails learning how to write using a SL/FL while the former is the use of writing as mean of learning something else. However, that leaning is either learning of content area or learning of language (Manchón, 2011a). Writing to learn content aim to promote students' knowledge about other subjectcourses as argued by Weigle

At the university level in particular, writing is not just as a standardized system of communication but also as an essential tool for learning. At least in the English-speaking world, one of the main functions of writing at higher levels of education is to expand one's own knowledge through reflection rather than simply communicating information. (ibid, pp. 4-5)

Indeed the of view writing as "a mode of discovery and negotiation" is limited in FL contexts since FL learners have little if none use of FL writing outside FL courses (Hirvela, 2011).

Concerning the view that writing is a tool to learn the language; it improves students' language proficiency. William (2008, p. 11) stated that " It is increasingly apparent that the act of writing ... promote [sic] general proficiency in way that have not always been acknowledge"(as cited in Manchón,2011b, p. 62).

It is beyond the scope of this research to consider the first dimension of writing; writing to learn.We are mainly concerned with learning to write.

Learning to write in SL exhibits considerable differences from learning to write in L1. As a matter of fact,SL learners have different backgrounds, experience, needs and purposes for writing from L1 learners.

Nationindicated that "writing is easier if learners write from a strongknowledge base"(2009, p. 114).In line with what Nation said, Weigle (ibid, p. 35) claimed"... [SL] writers use many of the same writing processes in their [SL] as intheir in [L1] and

expertise in writing can transfer from the [L1] to [SL], given at least a certain level of proficiency". That is the ability to write entails a prerequisite knowledge on the part of the writer.

In L1 context, this knowledge is already in place, so that L1 learners would not face the difficulties that ESL/EFL learners encounter when developing their writing ability in English, for instance, lack of vocabulary or grammar knowledge. However, SL learners also possess a different L1 knowledge and a less elaborated SL knowledge. Hence, learners' L1 influence or interferes in learning to write in FL/SL. In addition to limited linguistic knowledge, SL learners may ignore the cultural and social uses of SL writing; writing functions, readers' expectations and others, besides the motivational factors; the desire to integrate into the SL/FL culture. Weigle (ibid)

A more account for the differences between L1 and SL/FL writing is demonstrated in the field of contrastive rhetoric; "[it] examine the differences and similarities in writing across cultures"(Connor, 2003, p. 218).

"Although SL writing is strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in many way from L1 writing"(Silva, 1993 as cited in Myles, ibid, para. 2), L1 theories have had a significant influence on SL writing instruction and the development of a theory of SL writing, and so has the latter considerably affected FL theory and research.( Manchón, 2009)

### **2.3. Approaches to Teaching Writing**

Developing the writing skill is not an easy task which imposes that teaching such a skill is not easy too. Consequently, many theorists, researchers, and teachers have been endeavoring to come up with the most effective theories, approaches, and models of teaching writing.

The existing approaches to teaching writing are considered to be successive; one emerging with the purpose to come over the other's deficiencies (Raimes, 1991). In contrast, another view suggests these approaches as being "complementary and overlapping perspectives, representing compatible means of understanding the complex reality of writing" (Hyland, 2003). Each approach has focused on particular aspect; focus on text, focus on writer, and focus on the reader. However, it is inadequate to adopt solely one approach in the classroom. Hence, teachers tend to use an eclectic method, the use of variety of approaches, with the possibility of the predominance of one approach over the others (ibid; Reid, 2001).

#### ***2.3.1 The product Approach***

On the light of the audiolingual method of language teaching, writing was considered as secondary to speech, thus writing skill was merely a reinforcement of learning oral language. Moreover, Hyland (2002) claimed that writing was textual products that can be analyzed either on the sentence or the discourse level. The focus of product approach to writing was on the final and tangible products of individuals. It emphasizes the accuracy and correctness of students' productions (Usó-Juan, Martínez-Flor, and Palmer-Silveira, 2006). Therefore, written text was as claimed by Silva (1990, p. 13) "a collection of sentences patterns and vocabulary – a linguistic artifact, a vehicle for language practice". However, teaching writing on the basis of this approach is a habit formation where error

should not be occurred and if so it needs correction or elimination where possible(Trrible,1996).

The common activities which students are supposed to perform in such a context are "sentences drills; fill-ins, substitutions,transformations, and completions"(Raimes, 1991, p.408). In addition to, coping and imitating the text presented by the teacher what is called "controlled composition" where a given model is studied considering the text features; punctuation, spelling, vocabulary and rhetorical conventions, then followed by exercises to check comprehension by completing sentences, reordering scrambled paragraphs, sorting out topic sentences and others, finally, learners produce or mimic the given text model (ibid).

This approach (also called the text-focused approach) emphasizes the accuracy and correctness of the text at the expense of the writer, his ideas and decisions (content), and the process through which texts are produced. The students are regarded as texts' producers while the teachers' role is limited to proof read students' products, spot outtheir mistakes, and correct them. Despite teachers' efforts to improve their students' writings over time, students' mistakes keep occurring which indicates the ineffectiveness of the product approach to writing (Tsui, 2003).

### ***2.3.2 The process Approach***

The process approach or writer-oriented approach to writing has adapted two theories; Cognitivism and Expressivism. On the basis of the cognitivism view, writing is a cognitive process where the main focus has been put on the actual mental processes that writers involved in as they write. Moreover, writing is a creative act by which students express

their ideas and feelings, this is writing in the expressivists' view (Reid, 2001). Hyland (2003: 10) stated that

Like the expressive orientation, the process approach to writing teaching emphasized the writer as an independent producer of texts, but it goes further to address the issue of what teachers should do to help learners perform a writing task.

Thus, teaching writing has moved away from emphasizing the final product itself to the different stages the writer engages in to create this product. As Zamel (1983, p. 165) claimed that writing is a "non-linear, exploratory and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning". Hence, the writer as the text generator and the process he goes through are the two foci of this approach.

Probably the most influential cognitive model of the writing process is the one proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981, as cited in Usó-Juan et al, *ibid*) which is recursive in nature and consists of three main stages each of them has sub-stages;

- *The planning stage* which includes generating ideas, organizing these ideas and determining goals for writing.
- *The translation stage* where the generated ideas are written down.
- *The reviewing stage* in which editing and revising strategies are implemented.

This approach has introduced new concepts to the writing process; pre-writing, drafting and editing. It highlights the active role of the writer who can loop backwards and move forwards throughout the stages of the writing process (Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1991; Harmer, 2001). Hence, the main role of the teacher is to promote students' creativity and to

guide them in the process of drafting, revising and editing by giving feedback on their writings (Silva, *ibid*).

The common practices which were applied in such approach were the use of journals, free writing, writing extended narratives, and peer collaboration (Raimes, *ibid*).

Although text form is delayed till later stages, the process approach to writing does not downplay the role of form in the students' productions. Moreover, this approach increases the classroom interaction (among the students, between teacher and students), however, it is a time consuming process; it takes too much time to go throughout its stages (Harmer, 2001). Furthermore, the process approach failed to incorporate any standards for evaluating good writing (Hyland, 2002). In addition Myles (2002, para. 2) argued that

the process approach to instruction, with its emphasis on the writing process, meaning making, invention and multiple drafts (Raimes, 1991), is only appropriate for second language learners if they are both able to get sufficient feedback with regard to their errors in writing, and are proficient enough in the language to implement strategies.

According to Myles, obtaining adequate feedback, besides being able to apply revision strategies on the part of the learners are prerequisites for the success of implementing the process approach in SL contexts. In addition to the aforementioned shortcomings, this process has neglected the influence of the sociocultural context on the writing process.

### ***2.2.3 The Genre Approach***

The genre approach to writing is influenced by the interactionist approach to language learning and the development of discourse analysis which assigns functions to the language in use (Usó-Juan et al. 2006). This approach is regarded in part as an extension

to the product approach (Silva, *ibid*), whereas, in another part is considered as a distinct view of teaching writing (Johns, 1990; Raimes 1991; Hyland, 2003).

Based on this approach writing is "attempts to communicate with readers"(Hyland, *ibid*; 18). That is writing is a social act where the written text is set to communicate something. Thus, central to the genre approach is the writer's purpose behind writing a text and the reader's expectations about the written text. In line of that Hyland (2002, p. 34) stated that "Writers thus make assumptions about readers and adapt their texts to suit a particular audience and its likely beliefs and understandings". The genre approach demonstrates that writing is socially constrained; writing differs according to the context in which it is produced (Badger and White, 2000).

Swales (1990, p. 53 as cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 49) defines a genre as follow

A genre comprises a class of communication events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert member of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre.

Swales' definition of genre entails that the social purpose of writing determines the language used in writing; the choice of words, expressions and structures according to agreed conventions. For example, book reviews analyze books for readers, job application letters look for jobs, and so on.

Teaching writing on the light of this approach recommends deconstructing dominant genres, analyzing them from the linguistic point of view, reproducing them from an analysis of their structural and linguistic features, and generating learners' own texts that conform to the conventions of each genre (Badger and White, *ibid*), thus, providing learners with the opportunity to experience different elements of writing; "the topic,

conventions, style of the genre, and the context in which their writing will be read and by whom" Harmer (2007, p. 295). He also said that "In a genre approach to writing learners study texts in the genre they are going to be writing before they embark on their own writing"(ibid, p. 258).

Parallel to the product approach, the genre approach considers writing as an act of production rather than a creative act. Hence, it downplays the role of the skills required to produce a text and demonstrates the passivity in learning to write.

### **Conclusion**

Writing is an essential but difficult skill for EFL students to accomplish. Throughout the years, different theories have offered direction on how to teach writing. After the product approach was mostly discredited, it was supplanted by the more interactive and dynamic process and genre approaches. Although they have advantages and disadvantages, these two approaches have made valuable contributions to the writing classroom. Their techniques become even more useful when combined to create the process genre approach, which helps students use their individual writing processes to construct a text in a familiar genre.



## **Chapter three**

# **READING-WRITING RELATIONSHIP**

## **Chapter three**

### **READING-WRITING RELATIONSHIP**

#### **Introduction**

Traditionally reading and writing were considered as separate language skills either in L1 or SL context. However, more recent works come to account for the relation between the two skills. Considerable researches have been conducted on the relationship between reading-writing in L1 compared to those conducted in SL. Thus, we have first introduced theories of reading-writing relationship in L1, and then we have presented this relation in SL context. Furthermore, we come to explore this relation in the classroom context and finally, we have presented some studies concerning the contribution of reading comprehension to the development of the writing skill.

#### **3.1 The nature of the reading-writing relationship**

##### ***3.1.1 In L1 context***

Based on the direction of transferring input from one modality to the other; from reading to writing or from writing to reading, Eisterhold (1990) presented three major hypotheses or models as he labeled them. He added that these three hypotheses are "somewhat interrelated" (ibid, p. 89).

##### ***3.1.1.1 The directional hypothesis***

This hypothesis claims that both reading and writing share the same structural components and that any learned structure in one modality can be implemented in the other. However this transfer of structures between modalities occurs only in one direction(Eisterhold, 1990). The directional models either proceed from reading-to-writing

or the preserve; from writing-to-reading. In a literature review done by Stotsky (1983 cited in Eisterhold, 1990) concerning reading-writing connection, revealed that "additional reading is more effective in improving writing either than grammar exercises or extra writing practice" (ibid). This model focused more on the role of reading in improving the writing skill. However, she reported that some studies showed that "writing activities can be useful in improving reading comprehension and retention of information" (ibid).

### ***3.1.1.2 The nondirectional hypothesis***

The second view hypothesizes that reading-writing connection is nondirectional; interactive relationship. Based on the view that both reading and writing are cognitive processes of meaning construction, it is claimed that they must be related. Contrary to the directional models, in nondirectional models transfer of skills can occur in either direction. Furthermore, improvements in one modality (reading or writing) lead to improvements in the other since the two modalities share "a single cognitive proficiency" Eisterhold (1990, p. 90).

### ***3.1.1.3 The bidirectional hypothesis***

Reading-writing relationship is bidirectional. This is the most complex model. It claims that reading and writing are not only interactive but also interdependent. Moreover, "reading-writing relationship can be qualitatively different at different stages of development" (ibid, p. 93). That is the nature of the reading-writing relationship changes in accordance with the language development. Thus, it is necessary to consider the various relations and interrelated processes which underlay the reading-writing relationship.

Parallel to this hypotheses, Hudson (2007) offered the following approaches to the reading-writing relation; read-to-write, write-to-read and reading and writing and knowing.

He summarized different research findings that claim the importance of reading in order to learn writing (Smith, 1983; Spivey and King, 1989; Kennedy, 1985 cited in, Hudson, 2007). Further, he stated that the ability to write is acquired through reading rather than formal instruction.

In the other hand, he claimed that little researches conducted on write-to-read relationship. This approach argued that writing is prior to reading as a possibility for activating background information to attain the text meaning. Hudson (2007, p. 276) stated that "reading may shape the writing products and writing may shape the form that the reading process may take".

Concerning reading and writing and knowing, Fitzgerald and Shanahan (2000 cited in Hudson, 2007, p. 277) argued that

reading and writing rely on analogous mental processes. Through these processes, learning takes place and the two skills reinforce themselves recursively. These processes are interactive and interrelated, not unidirectional.

These arguments support the notion that reading and writing are interdependent each reinforce the other.

Each of these hypotheses contributes to the view of the reading-writing relationship by focusing on different perspectives. However, these models do not consider the complexities of reading-writing connection for second language learners who are already literate in their L1.

### ***3.1.2 in SL context***

As mentioned above, L1 models of reading-writing relationship do not suit the L2 context because SL learners already possess their L1 knowledge. Further, L1 models require a developed speaking ability, which SL learners do not possess, prior to reading and writing.

Two hypotheses have addressed the reading-writing relationship in SL context depending on literacy transfer. While literacy is " a set of attitudes and beliefs about the way of using spoken and written language that are acquired in the course of a person's socialization into a specific culture context"( Mikulecky, 2008).

#### ***3.1.2.1 The interdependence hypothesis***

It hypothesizes that there is an underlining common proficiency across languages. It is first proposed by commins (1979, 1981 cited inGrabe, 2003).This theory proposed that reasonable SL proficiency is a prerequisite for the transfer of common literacy abilities from L1 to SL. These abilities are more related to reading rather than writing. Moreover, this transfer is regarded as automatic across languages and modalities whenever a threshold level of proficiency in SL is reached. However, Grabe (2003, p.247) argued that "...transfer is an important aspect of SL literacy development, but it is not always clear which aspect of literacy abilities transfer readily, nor do we know which abilities do not transfer readily."

#### ***3.1.2.2 The language threshold hypothesis***

Like the interdependence hypothesis, the threshold hypothesis claims a threshold level of SL proficiency is need for the transfer to occur. However, it argues that SL literacy development is not the ultimate result of the transfer of L1 literacy abilities. Moreover this

transfer is not automatic either across languages or modalities. Consequently, in SL reading-writing relationship teaching is an important factor that facilitates the transfer of L1 literacy abilities (Eisterhold, 1990).

Hence, the explicit support or teaching of the reading-writing relationship by the writing teacher is necessary. Furthermore, teacher's awareness regarding the important role played by L1 reading and writing abilities in developing SL literacy skills, in addition to, the role of SL reading ability in developing SL writing skill will help student to benefit from these relations to develop their writing proficiency in SL (ibid).

### **3.2 The reading-writing relationship in the classroom context**

Besides reinforcing learning, the combination of reading and writing in the classroom can improve the learning of both skills (Hudson, 2007). It is stated that "writing should not be isolated as a cognitive or academic activity because it is fundamentally depends on writers' purposeful interactions with print" (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005, p. 31). That is teaching writing should be grounded on the reading ability. In the same vein, Grabe (2003) has proposed ten guidelines for instruction that promote the reading-writing relation in the classroom context.

a- Reading and writing instruction should begin from task analyses. That is teachers and students need to collect various tasks then analyze the task expectations, plans for completing the task, and critically evaluate what would be considered as effective performance.

b- Practicing the writing of different genres and tasks (summarizing, literature reviews, reading responses, and research reports).

c- Developing rhetorical stances to tasks and texts that build reading-writing relationship

by analyzing texts in the following ways:

- Critically analyzing the text recourse.
- Considering the textual choices to convey the information.
- Considering the use of linguistic choices to present a position.

d- Developing an awareness of the text structure itself, through understanding the discourse organization, coherence in the text, the sequencing of ideas, and so on.

e- Promoting students awareness of the processes and strategies involved in both reading and writing skills.

f- Providing more feedback for students either from peers or teachers in both skills

g- Collecting and analyzing data for the purpose of presenting it allow for the practice of analyzing information, and critiquing content from texts, planning for presenting information in persuasive manner.

h- Improving the ability to effectively synthesize from texts.

i- Developing the ability to produce more effective summaries or paraphrases.

j- Incorporating effective assessment practices for reading and writing integration.

### **2.3 The contribution of reading in developing learners' writing skill**

The relationship between reading and writing is mostly discussed in terms of the impact of reading on writing (Grabe, 2007) which is the focus of this work. However, we are not assuming that the reverse position, writing impact reading, does not occur rather it is rarely discussed. One of the most influential views regarding the impact of writing on reading is that of Zamel (1992) in her article *Writing One's Way into Reading*. She claimed that

"Writing, because of its heuristic, generative, and recursive nature, allows students to write their way into reading and to discover that reading shares much in common with writing, that reading, too, is an act of composing"(ibid, p. 463).That is both reading and writing is meaning making processes through active engagement with print.

On the other hand, the impact of reading on writing has been addressed by different researches. Writing as a productive skill needs reading as a receptive skill as claimed by Harmer (2001, p. 251)" productive work need not always to be imitative. But students are greatly helped by being exposed to examples of writing and speaking which show certain conventions for them to draw upon".

Schafer (1985) reported that Krashen's work (1984) revealed that voluntary pleasurable reading contributes to the development of writing ability more than do frequent writing, and practicing writing leads to improvement of writing. In addition, good writers tend to plan, draft and revise more than poor writers. Further, he applies his theory of *comprehensible input* to the learning of writing. Therefore, writing is acquired rather than learned, by exposure to reading. However, reading is necessary but not adequate to the development of the writing ability. Hence, reading develops the students writing competence, the underlying knowledge of the written language, but it cannot improve the writing performance, the ability to put the acquired knowledge into practice. In order to develop the performance practicing writing is needed.

In line with these results, krashen (1993) claimed that writing style is acquired through reading, not through writing or instruction. Moreover, in certain level more reading does not result in better writing and the latter would depend on other factors to be developed.



Tierney and Leys (1984, p. 14) stated that "the type and amount of reading materials to which writers are exposed may influence their choice of topic, genre, writing style, and vocabulary". Similar to this results the one obtained by Stanovich et al (1996 cited in Grabe, 2003) on the effect of extensive reading on writing ability. The study showed that extensive reading promotes vocabulary knowledge, verbal fluency, syntactic and semantic knowledge, and broader knowledge of the world.

Reading and writing share much in common; however, they are quite different, though complementary ways of knowing the world. Morrow (p. 466) argued that "reading and writing become recursive, reciprocal, and mutually dependent acts...By reading, we enter into a social conversation that enables us to shape our own thoughts and give voice to our own readings of the world through writing".

### **Conclusion**

Reading and writing relationship is matter of consumption and production. One needs to consume in order to produce and vice versa, produce in order to consume. Hence this relation is cyclical in nature, and what comes first is not important. Moreover, instruction that support the reading-writing relationship leads to improvement in the overall literacy development and content learning, in addition to the improvement in both skills; reading and writing.

**Chapter four**  
**FIELDWORK**

## **Chapter four**

### **FIELDWORK**

#### **Introduction**

So far, we have presented theoretical background of both the reading and the writing skills, in addition to, the relationship between them. What follows is an attempt to test the research hypotheses. Thus we have opted for a descriptive method as the most appropriate one to achieve the aims of the research. However, we have used two data collection tools for gathering the data needed; a classroom observation and two questionnaires. The observation permits the researcher to know what actually happen in relation to his/her research as Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007: 396) claimed" ...it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather "live" data from naturally occurring situation". The questionnaires are among the most used tools for eliciting information from target respondents concerning their attitudes and backgrounds.

In this study, we have made a classroom observation and two questionnaires as acknowledged; one for students, and another for teachers because we believe that both views are valuable for our research. This chapter, then deals with the observation we have made; its description and results; including aims, administration, and description of the two questionnaires. Moreover, it contains the analysis of students' and teachers' questionnaire and the interpretation of questionnaires' results.

#### **4.1 The Classroom observation**

##### ***4.1.1 Description of the Observation***

The classroom observation had taken place on April 2012 with second year students of English at Mohammed Khider University- Biskra-. It lasted for two weeks that is the total of eight (8) hours with two different WE teachers; however, we have missed one session because of the correction of the students' test. The groups we have attended with

were group four (G04) with Mr. Smatti for four sessions and group two (G02) with Mrs. Benidir for only three sessions.

Throughout this classroom observation, we aim at pointing out the extent to which WE teachers support the reading-writing relationship during their courses that is how much interest is given to reading.

The observation that we have taken was overt and direct, we have not use any recording devices. However we have depended on structured observation which is guided through the use of a classroom observation form (see appendix 01) which includes a list of activities that support the reading-writing relationship. The occurrence of these activities was presented in a scale of frequency.

#### ***4.1.2. Results of the Observation***

Generally speaking, the two classes were overcrowded around (47-50) students per class, and the number of girls outnumbered that of boys in each class. Moreover no setting arrangement is maintained. Both teachers maintained a friendly atmosphere of learning, both of them used the process approach in teaching writing, however, one of them focused on implementing revision strategies and the other interested in providing feedback on students' writings.

The courses we have attended concern essay patterns mainly classification and comparison/contrast essays. The results of the observation reveal that only three out of ten activities (instructions) always occurred in one class (G02) while sometimes occurred in the other class (G04), those three activities are asking and responding to texts' comprehension questions during the writing class, providing students' with feedback either from the teacher or peers, and promoting the importance of the reader in constructing texts. Another two activities; urging students to read outside the classroom, and asking them to synthesize from texts; never occurred in both classes. One activity; summarizing or

paraphrasing the texts' main ideas during the class or at home; rarely occurred. The remaining four activities have the tendency of occurring sometimes in the two classes. Thus, most of the activities sometimes occurred and practiced.

Dictation is another classroom instruction that support the reading-writing relationship. It always occurs either in WE courses or in other courses. However, we have not planned for such activity since believing that is central to this activity is providing feedback on students' errors in writing which is rarely, if never noticed.

As a conclusion, the reading-writing relation is supported to a considerable extent during WE courses. However, it is worth mentioning that these activities are not explicitly intended to support the reading-writing relation at least on the part of students. Further, it is more beneficial for the process of learning if teachers state explicitly the purposes of such activities, so that students can depend more on them to improve their overall language proficiency, particularly writing.

## **4.2. The students' questionnaire**

### ***4.2.1. The aim of the questionnaire***

This questionnaire is designed to depict the students' beliefs and attitudes toward both reading and writing skills as well as their abilities in both skills. It mainly attempts to point out the students' awareness of the reading- writing relationship, besides it seeks to report the extent to which that relation is supported during the WE courses. Moreover, the questionnaire aims at sorting out the contributions of reading in developing students' abilities in writing.

### ***4.2.2. Administration of the questionnaire***

55 questionnaires were given to two groups out of ten groups that constitute the population of second year English students in the Department of English at Mohammed Khider University of Biskra. Out of 55, 49 questionnaires were handed back.

It is worth to mention that the questionnaire was administered on April 2012 by the end of the WE session and around 25 students were present in each group. It took around half an hour to be administered and all the questionnaires were rendered back on the same day.

#### ***4.2.3. Description of the questionnaire***

The questionnaire (see appendix 01) consists of thirty (30) questions grouped in four sections. Most questions are closed-ended questions; respondents had to answer with dichotomies (yes/no questions), tick the appropriate answer (s) from a series of options, or rank the options from 1 to 4 following a scale of decreasing order of priority. There are some open-ended questions where the respondents were asked to provide explanations or further alternatives.

##### ***4.2.3.1 Section one: background information (Q1-Q3)***

In this section the respondents are asked to indicate their sex in (Q1), (Q2) asks for the respondents' experience in learning English. In (Q3), the respondents were asked to rank the language skills from 1 to 4 in terms of their interest to develop each skill.

##### ***4.2.3.2 Section tow: reading skill (Q4-Q13)***

This section seeks information about some aspects of the reading skill. First students were asked about their reading experience in English (Q4), whether they are encouraged to read by their teacher or not, and if they are so, how they are encouraged? (Q5, Q6). This section also attempts to identify the nature of both of the reading process (Q7) and reading comprehension (Q8). In addition, Q9 seeks to sort out the most important aspect in reading comprehension; however Q10 identifies the kind of information students can draw from a text. Q11 elicits the extent to which respondents can work out the same meaning as their classmates by reading the same text, in Q12, respondents were asked to

compare their text interpretation with the ones of their classmates. The last question in this section, (Q13), focuses on the interference of L1 knowledge in interpreting FL/SL texts.

#### **4.2.3.3 Section three: writing skill (Q14- Q21)**

This section provides general information about the respondents' background in writing: their interest in the writing skill (Q14); whether they find it easy to learn (Q15, Q16); their level in writing (Q17), and if it is necessary skill to develop (Q18, Q19). It also identifies what is considered good writing in the respondents' view (Q20), and whether they implement the stages of the writing process or not (Q21).

#### **4.2.3.4 Section four: reading-writing relation (Q22-Q30)**

The last section seeks to report whether the relation between reading and writing is supported during the WE courses or not (Q22, Q23, Q24, Q25). Furthermore, it aims at assessing the respondents' awareness of the effects of reading on writing (Q26, Q27, and Q28). In addition, Q29 and Q30 seek to provide the contributions that reading offers to enhance students' writing skill.

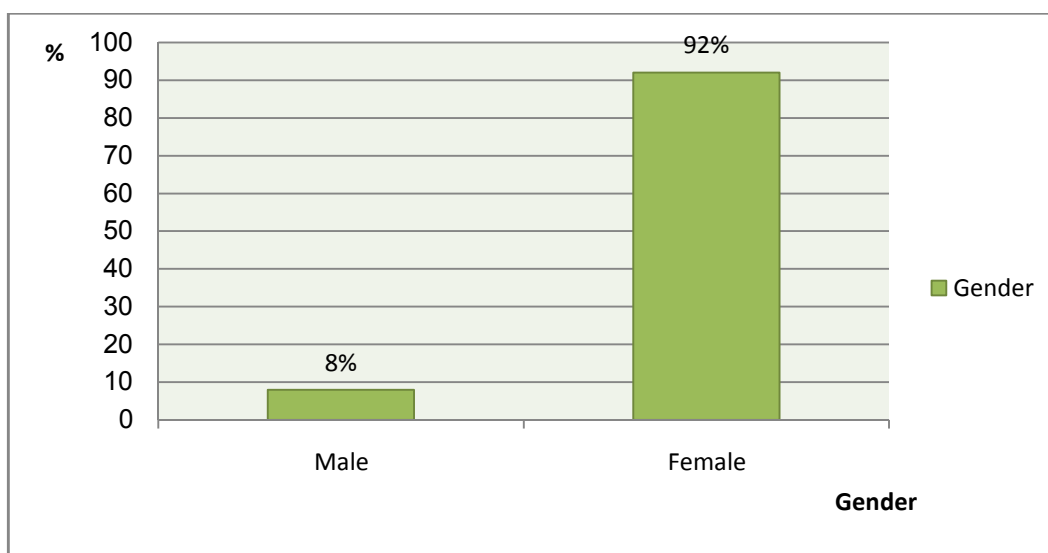
### **4.2.4. Results of the questionnaire**

#### **4.2.4.1. Section one: background information**

##### **Q1: Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N(Number of respondents)</b>	<b>% (Percentage)</b>
Male	4	8
Female	45	92
Total	49	100

**Table 2:** Students' Gender



**Figure 2:** The Students' Gender

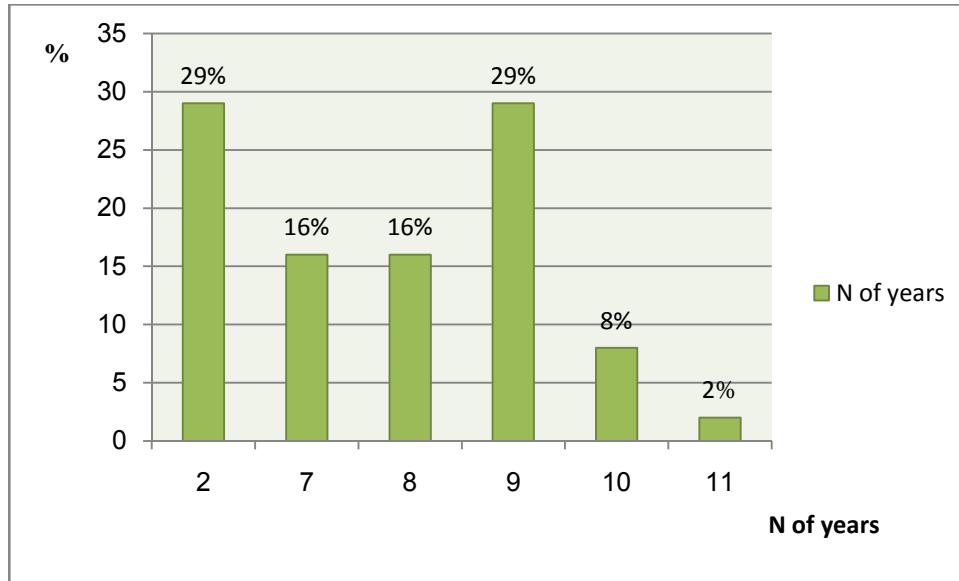
Table 2 reveals that female respondents are more than male. In fact, out of 49 only 4 are male, that is 8% of the sample are male respondents while the rest 92% of the sample are female; that is 45 female respondents. This indicates that males prefer to study in technical classes rather than literary ones.

**Q2: How many years have you been learning English?**

N of years	N	%
2	14	29
7	8	16
8	8	16
9	14	29
10	4	8
11	1	2
Total	49	100

**Table 3:** Students' Experience in Learning English





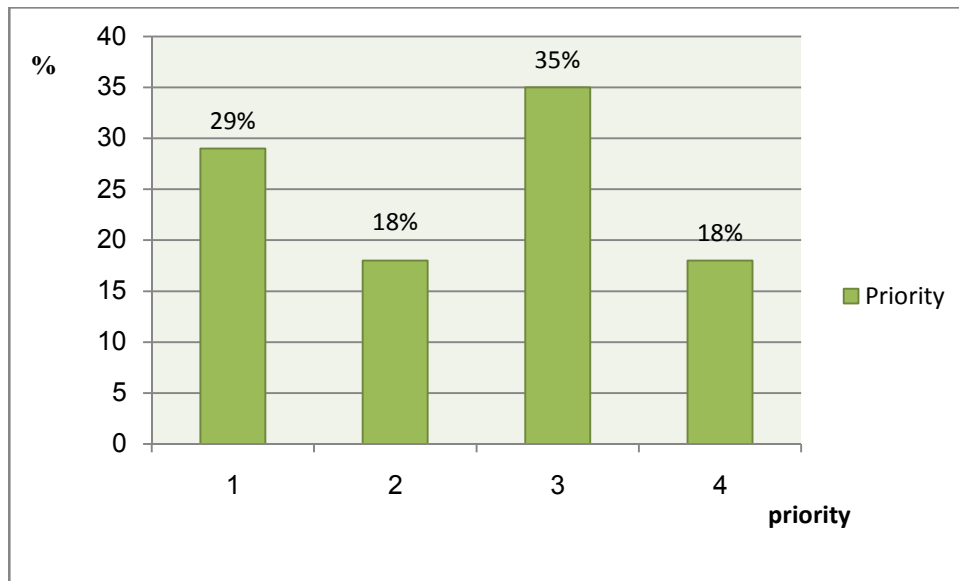
**Figure 3:** Students' Experience in Learning English

Table 3 illustrates that most respondents have been studying English for nine or two years. However, this result shows that some respondents have wrongly perceived this question consequently they have only counted the years of learning English at the university.

**Q3: Which of the following skills you are interested to develop? (Rank them in order from 1 to 4)**

Priority	N	%
1. Listening	14	29
2. Speaking	9	18
3. Reading	17	35
4. Writing	9	18
Total	49	100

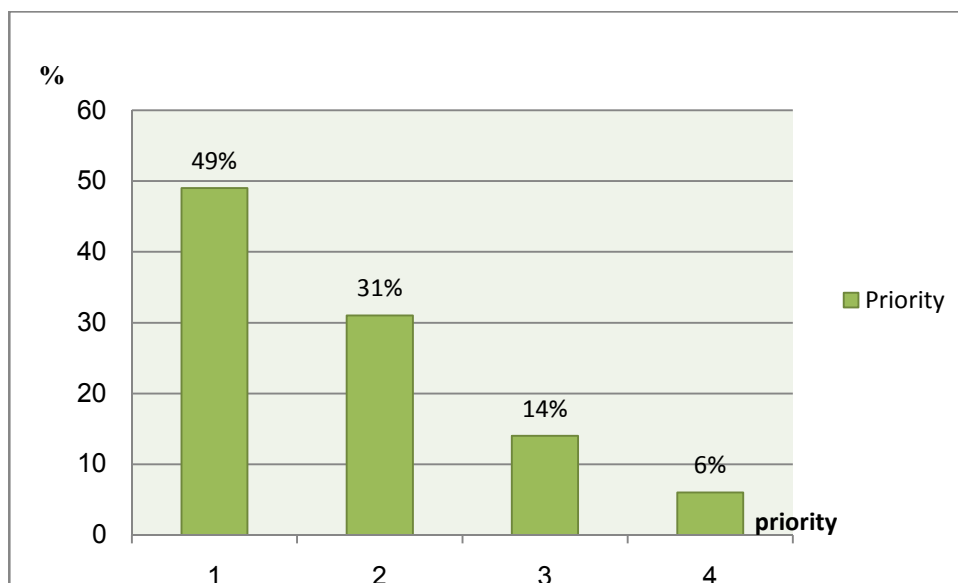
**Table 4:** Priority Given to Listening



**Figure 4:** Priority Given to Listening

Priority	N	%
1. Listening	24	49
2. Speaking	15	31
3. Reading	7	14
4. Writing	3	6
Total	49	100

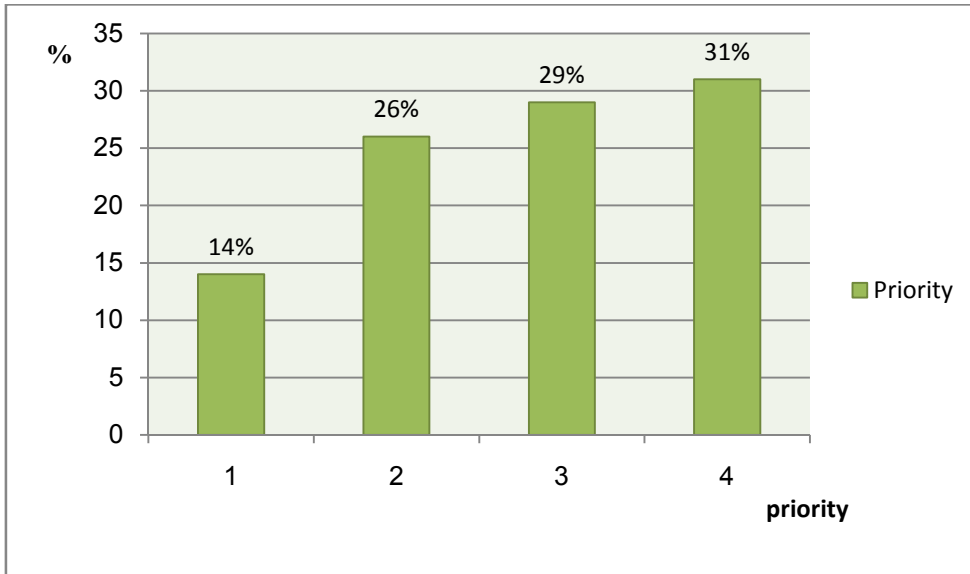
**Table 5:** Priority Given to Speaking



**Figure 5:** Priority Given to Speaking

Priority	N	%
1. Listening	7	14
2. Speaking	13	26
3. Reading	14	29
4. Writing	15	31
Total	49	100

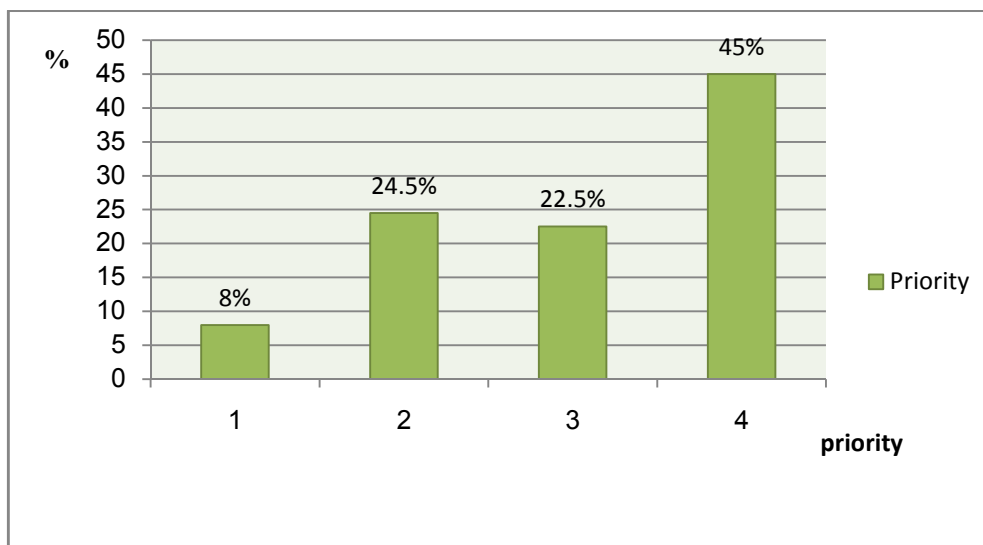
**Table 6:** Priority Given to Reading



**Figure 6:** Priority Given to Reading

Priority	N	%
1. Listening	4	8
2. Speaking	12	24.5
3. Reading	11	22.5
4. Writing	22	45
Total	49	100

**Table 7:** Priority Given to Writing



**Figure 7:** Priority Given to Writing

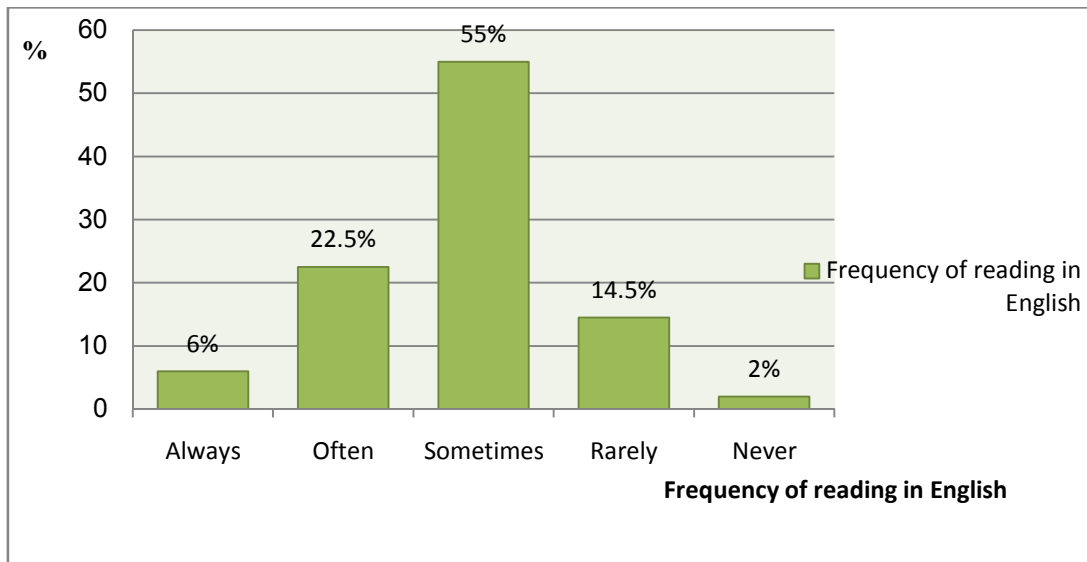
Table 4 and table 5 indicate that the respondents are more interested in developing their aural-oral skills in learning English (Listening 29%, speaking 49%). Whereas, writing skill holds the last position (8%) after reading 14% (table 6) in the respondents' classification of the skills they like most to develop (table 7). That is the respondents are less interested in developing the visual skills (that share the same channel) reading and writing. Probably, this is due to the overemphasis that speaking holds in language learning; mastering the language is to speak it and understand it when it is spoken.

#### 4.2.4.2. Section two: reading skill

##### Q4: How often do you read in English?

Options	N	%
Always	3	6
Often	11	22.5
Sometimes	27	55
Rarely	7	14.5
Never	1	2
Total	49	100

**Table 8:** Frequency of Reading in English



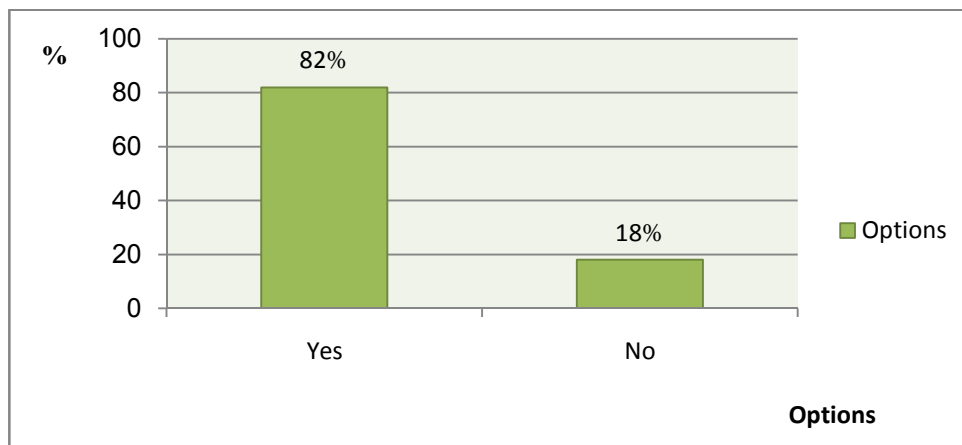
**Figure 8:** Frequency of Reading in English

Table 8 illustrates that most of the respondents said that they sometimes read in English. These results demonstrate the lack of reading habit among the learners.

**Q5: Does your teacher encourage you to read outside the classroom?**

Options	N	%
Yes	40	82
No	9	18
Total	49	100

**Table 9:** The Teacher Encouragement for Students to Read



**Figure 9:** Teacher's encouragement for Students to Read

From the result of table 9 we see that nearly all the respondents 82% reported that their teacher encourages them to read, only 18% claimed that their teacher does not. This truly shows teachers' awareness of the importance of reading in EFL instruction.

**Q6: If, yes, explain how (What kinds of reading)?**

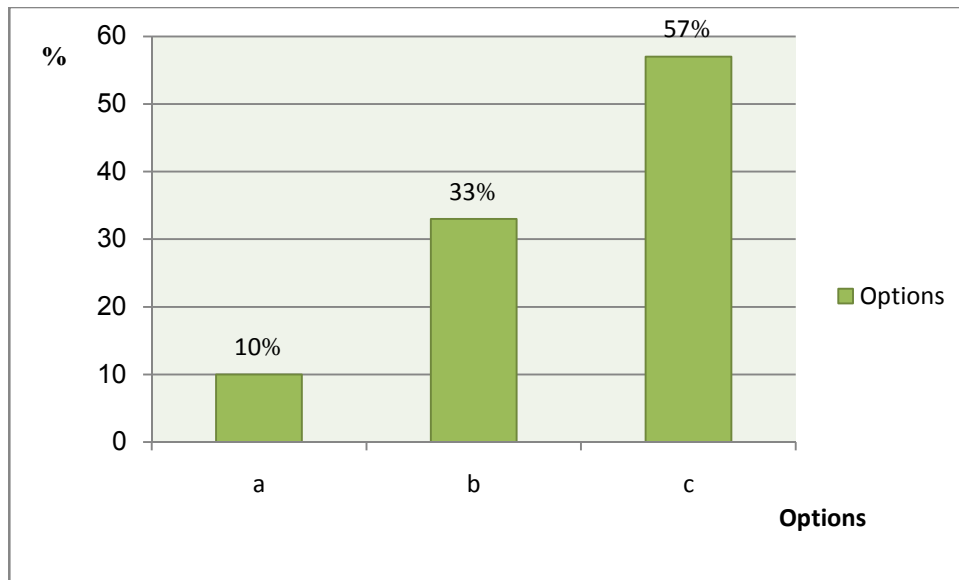
Out of 40 students who claimed that their teacher encourage them to read,

- 2.5% said that they are encouraged to read poems where they can feel the aesthetic phase of writing which is completely different from the range of texts they have already exposed to in the classroom.
- 5% of the students explained that they are asked to read for the purpose of developing their knowledge about the lessons which are already programmed for them to be learnt during the academic year.
- 20% of the students said that their teacher just advise them to read anything written in English, however, they are asked to vary their readings, so that they can be exposed to a different types of texts.
- 22.5% did not give any explanation.
- 50% of the students were more precise about what the teacher has suggested for them to read and they believe that good readers are good writers. They have mentioned for instance books, magazines, journals, articles, novels and short stories. However, that reading, they claimed, is for pleasure which means they read what they are interested in, so they are motivated to read.

**Q7: According to you, reading is matter of**

Options	N	%
a. Word recognition	5	10
b. Meaning construction	16	33
c. Both of them	28	57
Total	49	100

**Table 10:** The Students' View of Reading



**Figure 10:** The Students' View of Reading

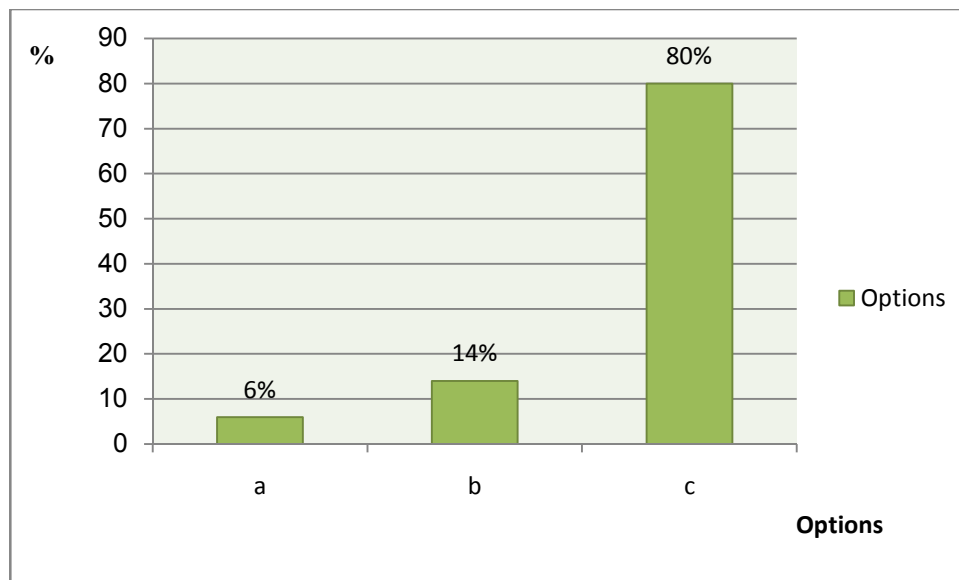
The result shown in table 10 demonstrates the fact that more than a half of the respondents 57% viewed the reading as a matter of both word recognition and meaning construction. However, only 10% of the respondents claimed that reading is merely recognition of words written down on a page. The rest that is 33%, of the respondents said that it is a matter of obtaining meaning from what is written. These results go along with the recent theories of reading that give equal importance for words identification and meaning construction.



**Q8: To reach the text meaning, do you proceed from?**

Options	N	%
a. The text	3	6
b. Background Knowledge	7	14
c. Both of them	39	80
Total	49	100

**Table 11:** The Reading Process



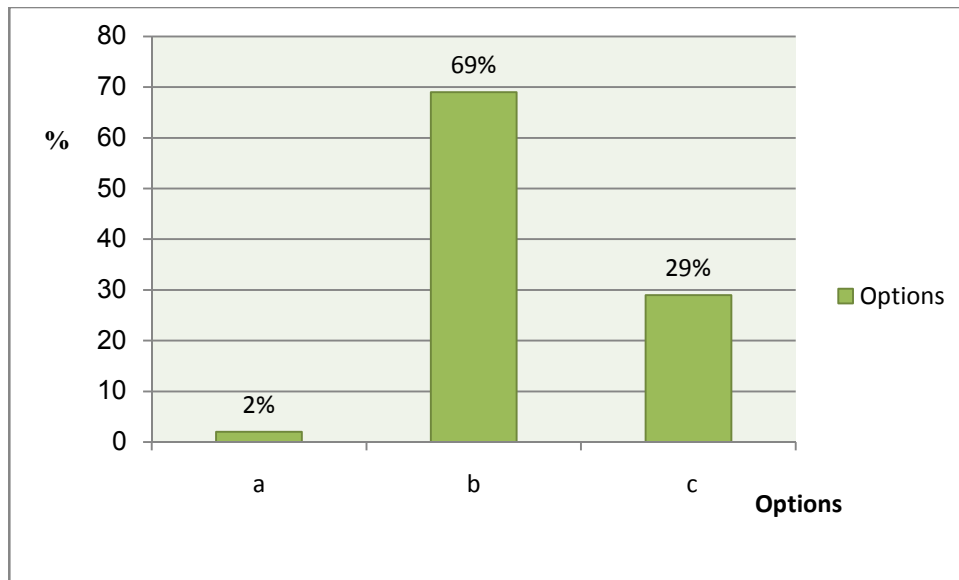
**Figure 11:** The Reading Process

According to the result obtained from table 11, most of the respondents, 39, indicate that the process of reading is an interaction between their own previous knowledge and the text they are reading. Thus, supporting the interactive models of the reading process; reading is an interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes.

**Q9: While reading, do you understand the text?**

Options	N	%
a. Word by word meaning	1	2
b. General meaning	34	69
c. Both of them	14	29
Total	49	100

**Table 12:** The Text Understanding

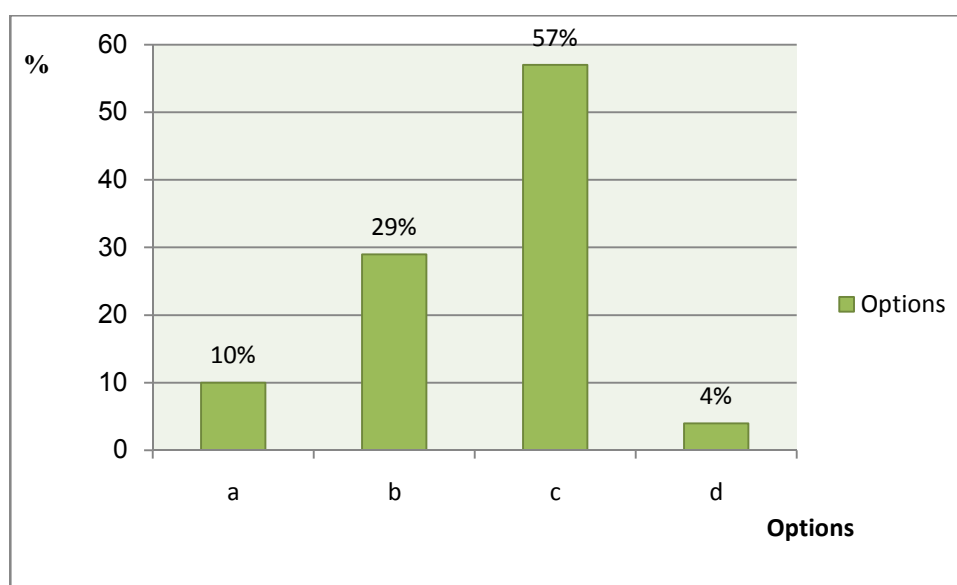


**Figure 12:** The Text Understanding

Table 12 illustrates that most of the respondents (69%) reach general understanding of what they read; these results emphasize the role of the readers' background knowledge in attaining the text meaning. In addition, it entails that the students hold less developed reading skills which do not permit them to reach more detailed understandings.

**Q10: What kind of information you can draw from the text**

Options	N	%
a-Linguistic information	5	10
b- Socio-cultural information	14	29
c- Both of them	28	57
d- Others	2	4
Total	49	100

**Table 13:** kinds of information obtained from texts**Figure 13:** The Kinds of Information Obtained from Texts

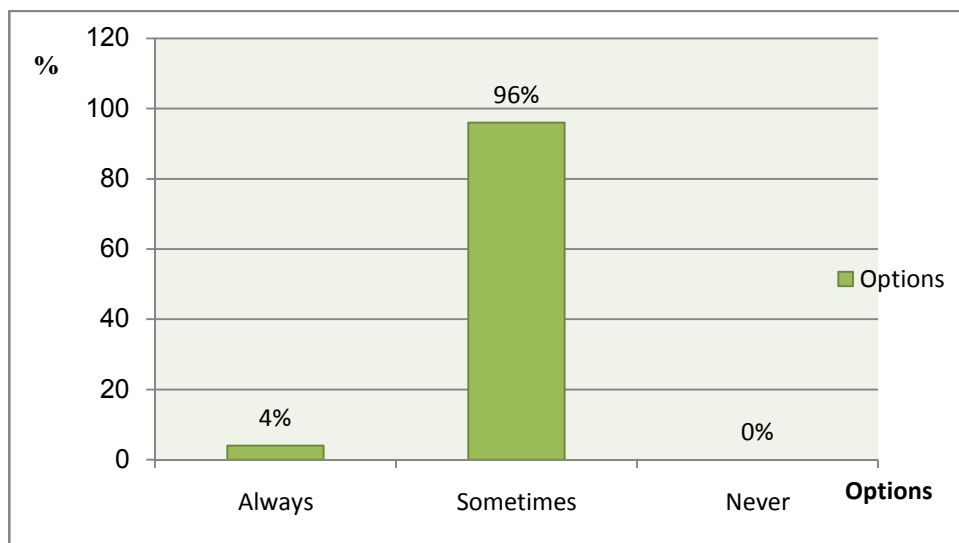
From table 13 we notice that 57% believe that the kind of information obtained from texts can be linguistic (vocabulary, grammar rule...) as well as Socio -cultural information related to the community of that language ( beliefs, traditions, ets). However, out of 49 students two have suggested general information including knowing about others' experiences; also they claimed that the information drawn from any text depends first on

the text itself (reading a journal not like reading a story), and second on the purpose of reading such text. For instance, reading for entertaining is unlike reading for preparing a research paper.

**Q11: When reading the same text as your classmates, do you reach the same interpretation?**

Options	N	%
Always	2	4
Sometimes	47	96
Never		
Total	49	100

**Table 14:** The students ' Interpretation

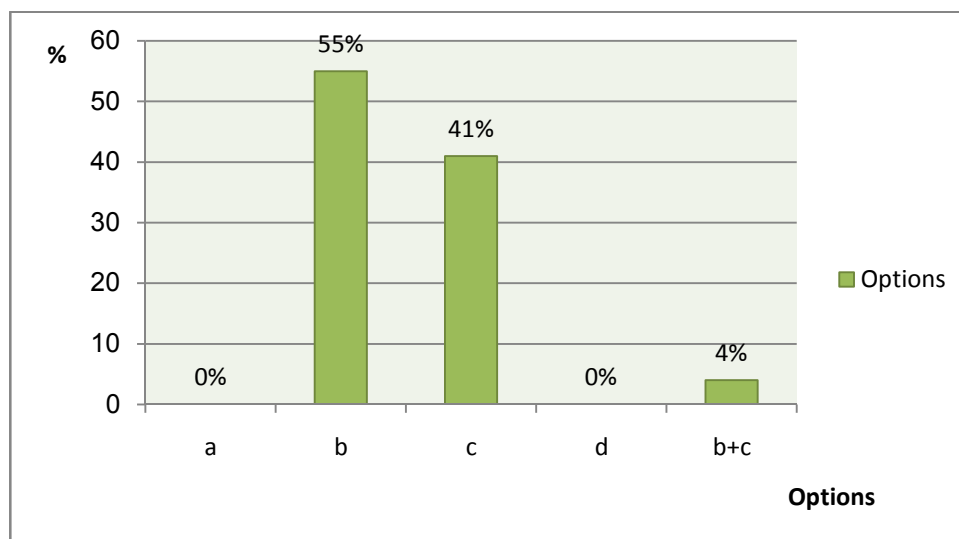


**Figure 14:** The students ' Interpretation

Table14 illustrates that nearly all the respondents 47 claimed that when they read the same text as their classmates they sometimes reach identical interpretation. The two remaining respondents said that they always reach the same interpretation as their classmates, but no one responded by "never".

**Q12: How do you consider your classmates' interpretation?**

Options	N	%
a-Very superficial		
b-Superficial	27	55
c- Deep	20	41
d-Very deep		
b+c	2	4
Total	49	100

**Table 15:** The Classification of Students' Interpretation**Figure 15:** The Classification of Students' Interpretation

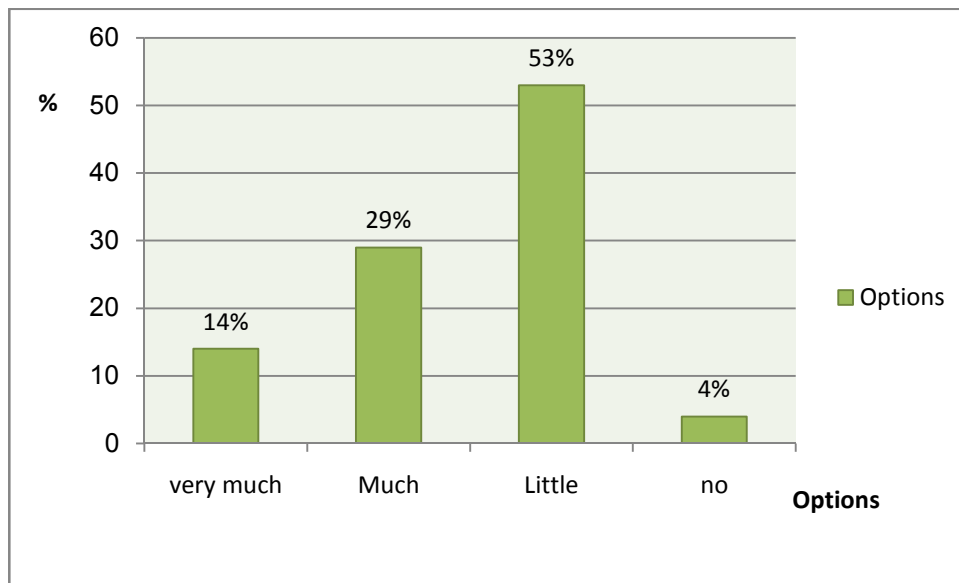
As shown in table 15 most of the respondents' replies are either superficial (55%) or deep (41%), and only two (4%) respondents said that their classmates' interpretation may be deep or superficial depending on the student's psychological state and his background knowledge about the text being read (they claimed that when the reader lack background information about the text his is reading, s/he would reach superficial

understanding). However, no one said that their classmates' interpretation is very superficial or very deep.

**Q13: As a foreign language reader, to what extent do you think that your first language knowledge interferes in interpreting the text meaning?**

Options	N	%
very much	7	14
Much	14	29
Little	26	53
no	2	4
Total	49	100

**Table 16:** L1 Interference in Interpreting FL Texts



**Figure 16:** L1 Interference in Interpreting FL Texts

Table 16 indicates that 53% of the respondents claimed that there is little interference of their first language knowledge in the interpretation of EFL text; 29% reported that their L1 knowledge interferes much in interpreting EFL texts; 14% described that interference as being very much and only 4% that is two respondents said there is no interference. These results reveal that the students are slightly aware of the L1 interference.

4.2.4.3. Section Three: The Writing Skill

Q14: Do you find the written expression module interesting?

Options	N	%
Yes	47	96
No	2	4
Total	49	100

Table 17: Students' Attitude toward Writing Expression Module

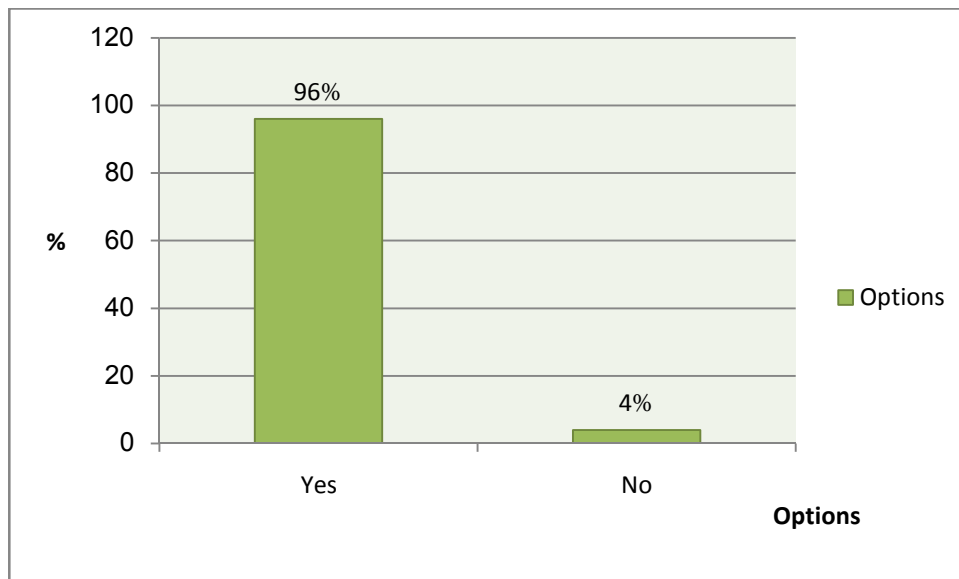


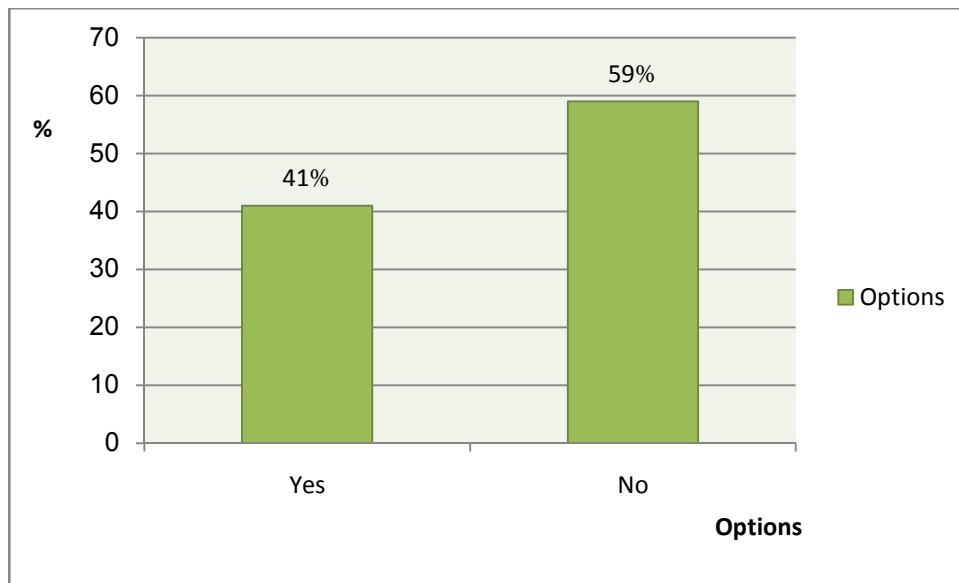
Figure 17: Students' Attitude toward Written Expression Module

From table 17 we notice that nearly all the respondents consider the WE module interesting except two respondents said that it is not interesting, this may be because they are not motivated to write or they do not need to learn how to write.

**Q15: Is writing an easy task to learn?**

Options	N	%
Yes	20	41
No	29	59
Total	49	100

**Table 18:** Students’ attitude toward the difficulty of writing



**Figure 18:** Students’ attitude toward the difficulty of writing

Table 18 shows that most of the respondents 59% consider learning to write as a difficult task; however, 41% stated that it is an easy task.

**Q16: If no, please explain why?**

Twenty (20) out of twenty-nine respondents who said "No" to Q15 gave the following explanations.

- "Writing requires too much practice"(5 respondents).
- "It has many rules" (5 respondents).
- "It needs a reach vocabulary" (3 respondents).
- "It is difficult" (1 respondent).
- "Speaking is the easy task not writing" (1 respondent).



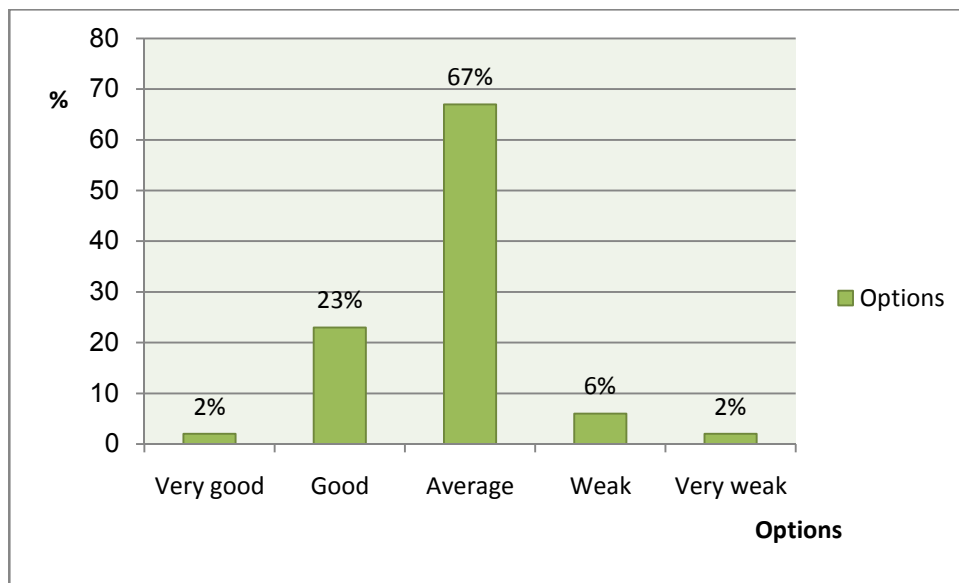
- "I have to know grammar" (5 respondents).

Nine out of 29 respondents who said "No" to Q15 did not give any explanation.

**Q17: Describe your level in writing (according to your mark)**

Options	N	%
Very good	1	2
Good	11	23
Average	33	67
Weak	3	6
Very weak	1	2
Total	49	100

**Table 19:** Students' Ability in Writing



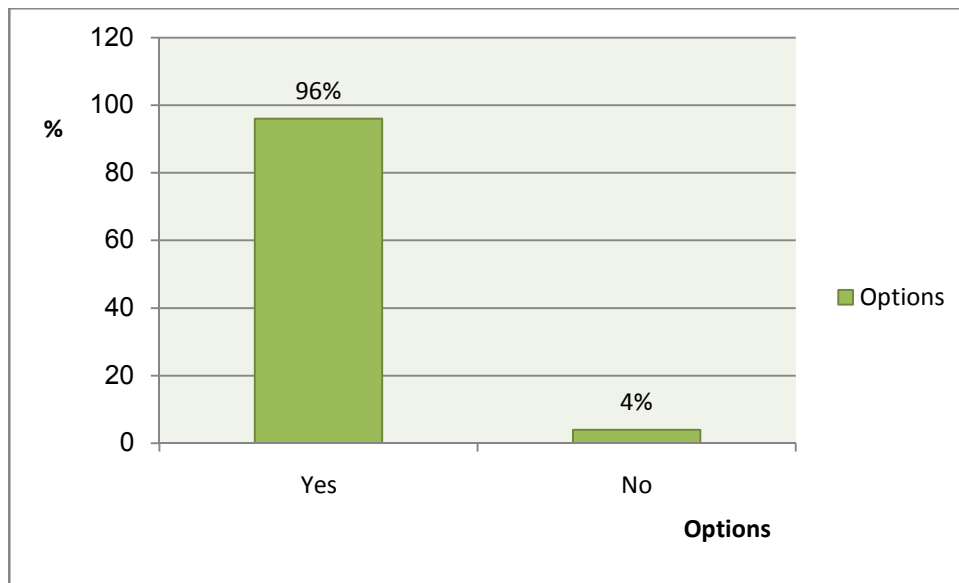
**Figure 19:** Students' Ability in Writing

From table 19 we conclude that more than a half of the respondents (67%) estimated that they have an average level in writing. This could imply that they are not satisfied with their performance level in writing. However, 23% considered their level in writing as being good; 6% said it is weak; 2% described their level as being very weak, and 2% claimed it is very good.

**Q18: is writing necessary skill for you to develop?**

Options	N	%
Yes	47	96
No	2	4
Total	49	100

**Table 20:** Students’ necessity to develop the writing skill



**Figure 20:** Students’ necessity to develop the writing skill

As shown in table 20 the vast majority of the respondents 96% believe that writing is a necessary skill for them to develop. This implies that they are aware of the necessity of the writing skill.

**Q19: Explain why, please?**

Out of 49 students 18 of them did not give any explanations, however, the 31 provided explanations that can classified as follow:

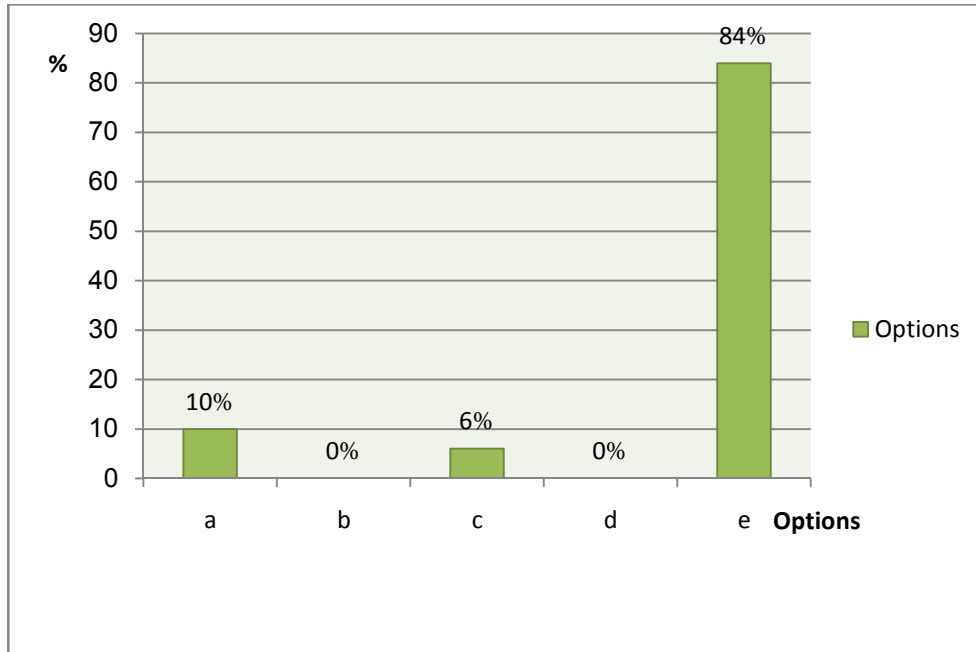
- 32.5% of the students claimed that proficiency entails the mastery of all the four language skills so they need to develop their writing skill in order to reach proficiency in English.
- 32.5% explained that developing the writing skill allows them to express their ideas and opinions effectively both inside and outside the classroom.

- 13% said that writing is an opportunity to practice and to develop the vocabulary, spelling, and grammar they have already learned.
- 10% said that they have to develop the writing skill for the sake of passing their examinations and succeeding in their study.
- 6 % claimed that by developing their writing skill, they are developing their speaking skill too; however, they have not explained how they do that.
- 6% said that writing in English is necessary for their professional life, so that they need to develop it.

**Q20: Good writing entails**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
a- Correct grammar	5	10
b-Appropriate vocabulary	/	/
c- Good ideas	3	6
d- Correct spelling	/	/
e- All of them	41	84
Total	49	100

**Table 21:** Components of good Writing



**Figure 21:** Components of good Writing

The results obtained from table 21 indicate that most of the respondents 41 believe that good writing entails; Correct grammar, appropriate vocabulary, Good ideas, and correct spelling. However, five respondents said it is merely good grammar and only three respondents said it entails only good ideas.

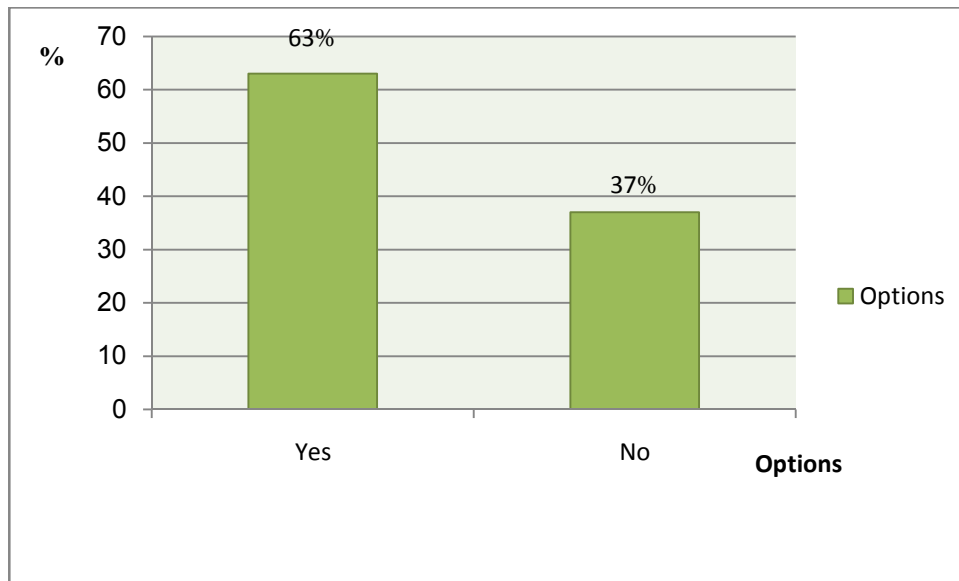
Seven respondents out of 49 added

- Style. (Four students)
- Coherent writing. (One student)
- Good handwriting and good organization; paragraph and essay pattern. (Two students)

**Q21: When writing, do you follow prewriting, drafting and revising stages to complete the writing assignment?**

Options	N	%
Yes	31	63
No	18	37
Total	49	100

**Table 22:** The Writing Process



**Figure 22:** The Writing Process

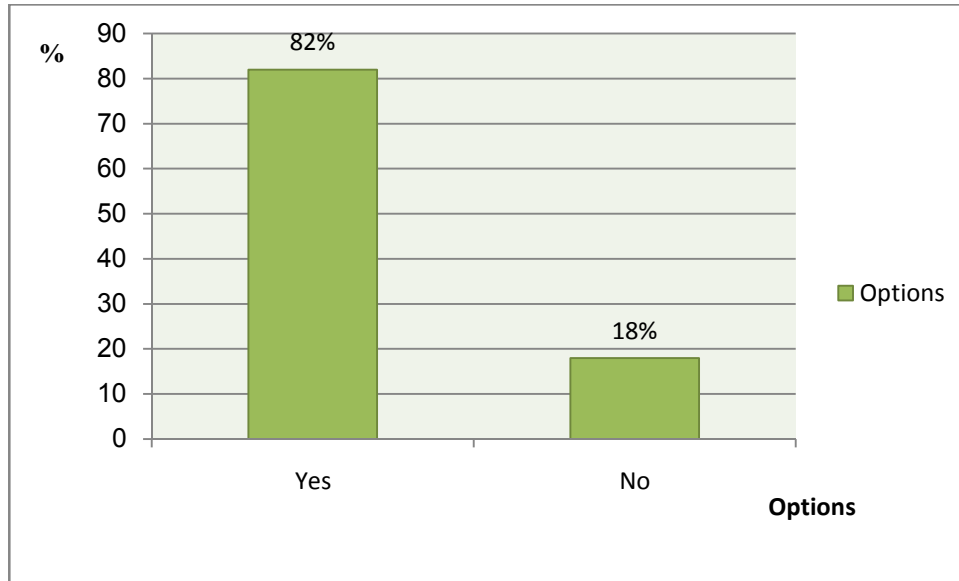
Table 22 illustrates that 63% of the respondents follow the writing process; whereas, 31% of them said that they do not follow any stages when writing. This indicates that those respondents do not apply what they have learned appropriately.

**4.2.4.4. Section Four: Reading-Writing Relation**

**Q22: Do you read texts during the written expression courses?**

Options	N	%
Yes	40	82
No	9	18
Total	49	100

**Table 23:** Reading Practice during WE Sessions



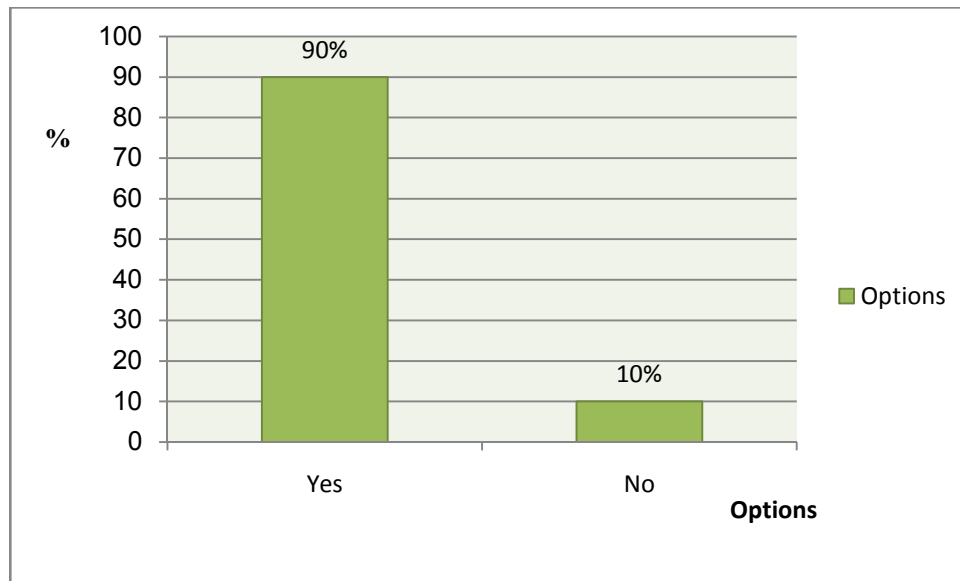
**Figure 23:** Reading Practice during WE Sessions

Table 23 illustrates that most of the respondents (82%) practice reading during WE courses while the rest (18%) of the respondents said that they do not read during WE courses.

**Q23: Do you respond to text’s comprehension questions?**

Options	N	%
Yes	44	90
No	5	10
Total	49	100

**Table 24:** Responding to Comprehension Questions



**Figure 24:** Responding to Comprehension Questions

This question acts as a support to the one just preceding (Do you read texts during the written expression session?). The results obtained from table 23 indicate that the vast majority of the respondents (90%) actually read in the class and respond to comprehension questions. However, only 10% said that they do not respond to any questions.

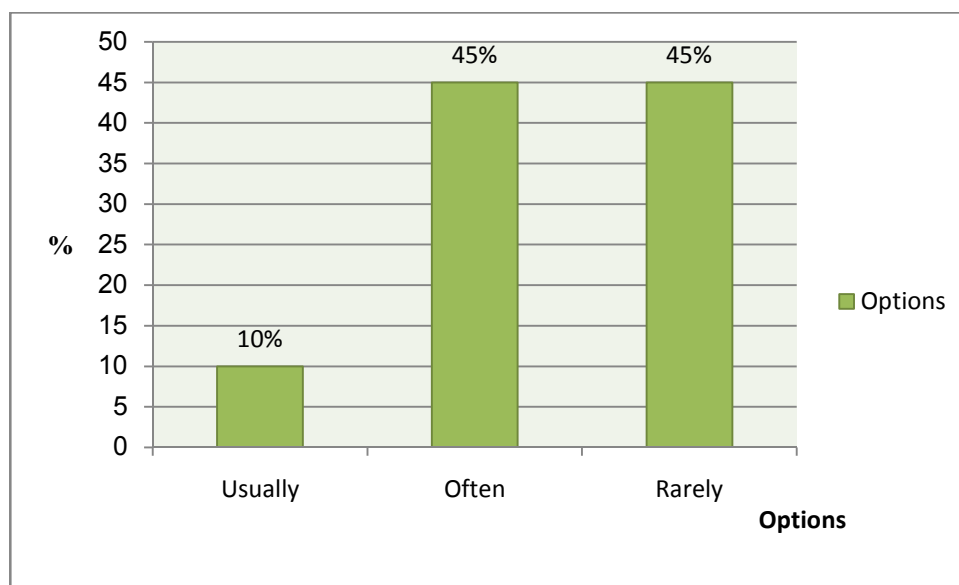
**Q24: If no, is that because**

- a- Time limitation
- b- No questions are provided

Out of five students who answered "NO" to Q23; three said that they do not answer to comprehension questions because the time of the session is insufficient. However, two students said that no questions are provided with the text.

**Q25: How often do you summarize or paraphrase the text's main ideas?**

Options	N	%
Usually	5	10
Often	22	45
Rarely	22	45
Total	49	100

**Table 25:** The Frequency of Summarizing or Paraphrasing**Figure 25:** The Frequency of Summarizing or Paraphrasing

Summarizing and paraphrasing are two activities that support the reading - writing relationship, besides reading texts and responding to comprehension questions. Thus, this question (Q25) aims at deducing to what extent those activities are applied during the WE courses.

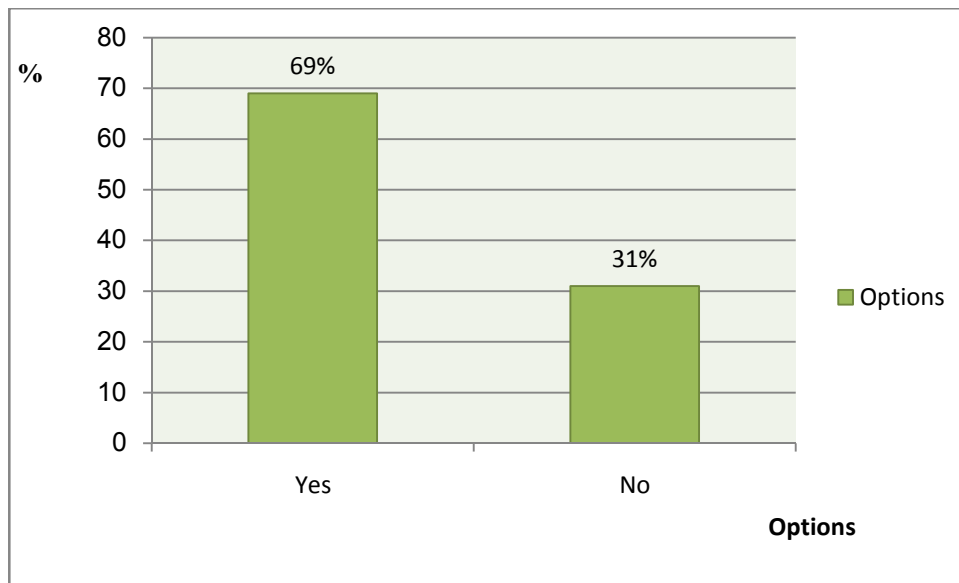
22 of the respondents claimed that they rarely paraphrase or summarize; the same number (22) of the respondents said that they often apply those two activities; whereas, only 10%, that is five respondents said that they usually do these activities during the WE courses. This entails that the reading-writing relationship is often supported in the classroom.



**Q26: Before writing your assignment do you read about that topic?**

Options	N	%
Yes	34	69
No	15	31
Total	49	100

**Table 26:** Reading for Writing an Assignment



**Figure 26:** Reading for Writing an Assignment

As shown in table 26 most of the respondents 69% reported that they read before writing their assignments while 31% said they do not. This means that the majority of the respondents are aware that reading would help them in writing.

**Q27: If yes, explain why? (State three reasons)**

This question completes Q26, where the respondents are asked to justify their need to read before writing. The results obtained were as follow:

Out of 34 respondents who answered "Yes" to Q26 only 22 gave the following explanations:

- "To develop our ideas about the topic we are going to write about it." (12 students)
- "To know the vocabulary related to the topic of writing." (Two students)

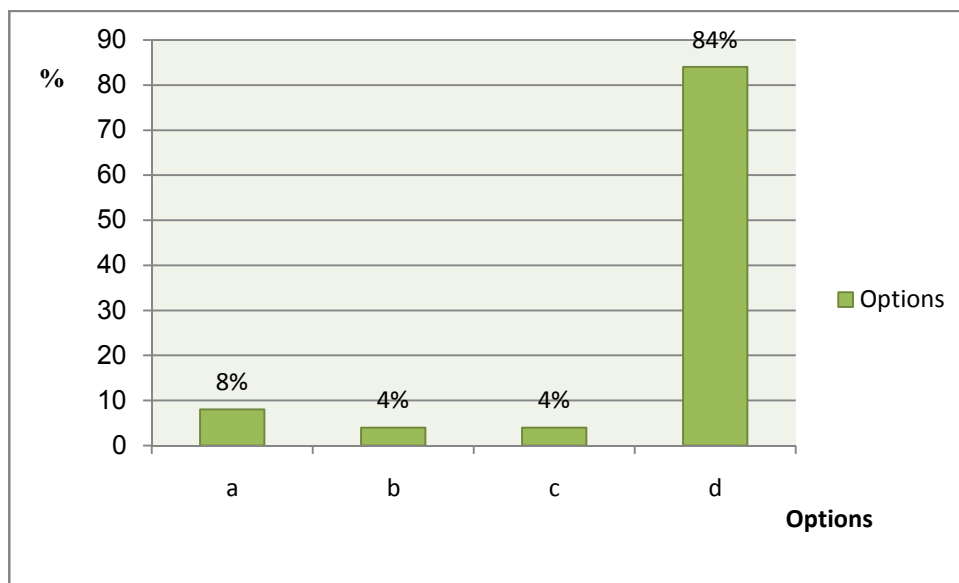
- "I read to facilitate my understanding of the topic that I have to write about it." (Four students)
- "We read before writing in order to specify what types of writing we are supposed to produce." (Three students)
- "Reading eliminates some mistakes that i used to do like misspelling some words." (One student)

However, the remaining 12 students did not give any explanations.

**Q28: Reading improves writing by new**

Options	N	%
a- Words	4	8
b- Structures	2	4
c- Ideas	2	4
d- All of them	41	84
Total	49	100

**Table 27:** How Reading improves writing



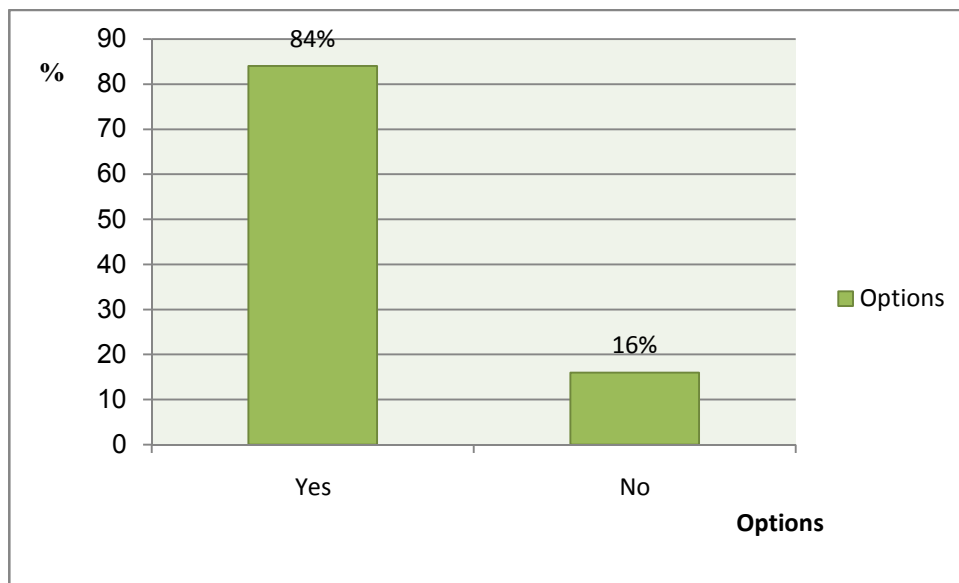
**Figure 27:** How Reading improves writing

The results shown in table 27 illustrates that nearly all the respondents 84% believe that reading provides new words, new structures, and new ideas to their writings. This results demonstrate what has been claimed by theories, reading offer new vocabulary, new information, however, reading provide more than that. It can develop even the writing processes.

**Q29: Do you think that reading contributes to the writing skill development?**

Options	N	%
Yes	41	84
No	8	16
Total	49	100

**Table 28:** The Contribution of Reading to the Writing Skill Development



**Figure 28:** The Contribution of Reading to the Writing Skill Development

The results obtained in table 28 confirm that the respondents are fully aware about the reading- writing relationship and they prove that the respondents really know the benefits of reading to their writing. As shown, 84% of the respondents claimed that

reading can develop their writing ability while 16% of the sample claimed that reading has no contribution in developing their writing ability.

**Q30: If yes, explain how? (State three arguments)**

This question complete the preceding question Q 29, it aims at sorting out the contributions of reading to the writing skill developments.

Only 25 out of 41 respondents who answered "Yes" to Q29 gave explanations.

- "Reading extends the learners' knowledge (ideas, expressions...), so that they can write about." (Seven students)
- "Reading can reduce my errors that have already appeared in my writings". (Two students)
- "Reading different texts provides us with different viewpoints that we may use when writing". (Two students)
- "Reading develops the students' understanding of the written system of that language". (Two students)
- "Imitating what we read when writing our own text". (Two students)
- "Exposing to new types or patterns of texts that we might write alike later". (One student)
- "Learning how to link sentences and keep unity throughout the text". (One student)
- "being able to choose more appropriate vocabulary that correspond to the topic of writing". (One student)
- "Refreshing our style in writing". (Four student)
- "Learning more about word order". (Three students)

16 out of 41 students who answered "Yes" to Q29 did not give any explanation.

#### ***4.2.5. Interpretation of the results***

The results of the questionnaire show that the number of girls studying at the Department of English is higher than the number of boys. In addition, most of the students have been studying English for a considerable period of time, which means that they are familiar with some English rules and functions as grammar as well as considerable vocabulary knowledge. This is shown in 29%, 16%, 16% of the respondents have studied English for nine (9) years, eight (8) years, seven (7) years respectively. Furthermore, the students are more interested in developing their speaking and listening abilities; as shown in 49%, 29% of the respondents interested in developing their speaking, and listening skills respectively.

Generally speaking, university students do not have good reading habits in neither English nor Arabic, despite their teacher encouragement to read in English outside the classroom. Moreover, the lack of this habit might be due to educational and cultural background and socio-economic environment that doesn't encourage people to read frequently.

Concerning the reading process in itself, the results obtained confirm what has been said in theory;

- Reading is process of meaning construction by means of words identification.
- Reading process is an interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes.
- Reading in L2 differs from reading in L1 and this mainly due to the already acquired L1 knowledge.

For the writing skill, most of the students find the WE module interesting, this entails that they are interested to learn how to write. However, leaning this skill has the last priority when compared to learning the other three skills (speaking, listening, and reading) and this is might be due to the difficulty of learning to write as claimed by most of the

students (59% of the respondents said that learning to write is difficult). Furthermore, the vast majority of students 67% estimated their level in writing as being average. Despite the fact that, nearly all the students (96%) believe that writing is a necessary skill to develop, 31% of them do not apply what they learn in the classroom.

Concerning the reading- writing relation is supported to some extent during the WE courses through:

- Reading texts during WE courses. (82% of the respondents said that they read during WE courses)
- Responding to text comprehension questions. (90% of the respondents said that they respond to comprehension questions during WE courses)
- Summarizing or paraphrasing the texts' ideas. (45% of the respondents said they often do so, 45% said that they rarely do these activities and only 10% said they always do these activities)

Unexpected result is the students' awareness of the reading-writing relationship and their support to that relation. In addition, they are fully aware that reading enhances their writing ability; moreover, they know what improvements reading could provide to their writing skill.

### **4.3. The Teachers' Questionnaire**

#### ***4.3.1 Aims of the Questionnaire***

The main purpose of the teachers' questionnaire is to point out the improvements that reading can provide for the students' writings. Furthermore, it aims at reporting the extent to which the reading-writing relationship is supported by the WE teachers and how actually that relation is supported during the courses. Besides, the questionnaire seeks to find out the teachers' attitudes towards both the reading and the writing skills.

### ***4.3.2 Administration of the Questionnaire***

Our target population consists of all the WE teachers in the Department of English at Biskra University. However, it is impossible to cover the whole population. We have opted for those who teach second year students. Thus, our sample consists of six (6) WE teachers.

The questionnaire was handed out for those six (6) teachers on April 2012 for a weekend, and all the teachers have handed back their questionnaires.

### ***4.3.3 Description of the Questionnaire***

The whole questionnaire consists of twenty-five (25) questions (see appendix 03) organized in four sections each focusing on particular aspect. It involves closed and open ended questions. The teachers are supposed to answer by "yes "or "no" or tick up the appropriate answers from a set of options, or fill in the blank for further explanations or personal opinions.

#### ***4.3.3.1 Section One: Background Information :( Q1- Q4)***

This section aims at collecting general information about the respondents; their sex: (Q1), their qualifications (Q2), their teaching career at the university (Q3), and the courses they have taught (Q4).

#### ***4.3.3.2 Section Two: Reading Skill***

The purpose of this section is to find out the respondents' attitudes towards the reading skill. In (Q5) the respondents are asked about the importance of the reading skill to their students, and whether they encourage their students to read and how they do so (Q6, Q7, Q8) respectively. In (Q9) they are required to qualify their students as being skilled or unskilled readers. The two last questions concern the reading process itself (Q10, Q11).

#### **4.3.3.3 Section Three: Writing Skill**

This section aims at sorting out the teachers' views about the writing skill: its importance for learners (Q12); the students' level in writing (Q13); the approach by which writing is taught (Q14, Q15). However, (Q16) and (Q17) seek to find out the differences between writing in L1 and writing in a L2 and (Q18) provides some methods that can develop the students' writing ability.

#### **4.3.3.4 Section four: Writing-Writing Relation**

This section investigates the relation between reading and writing and how can reading improves the students' writing skill. (Q19) and (Q20) aim at pointing out the teachers' viewpoints about the reading-writing relationship; (Q21) states the extent to which that relation is supported by the respondents. In (Q22) the respondents are asked to identify some activities which support this relation. Moreover, (Q23) and (Q24) elicit whether the teachers believe that reading can improve learners' writing skill and how it can do so. The last question (Q25) is the teachers' comments about the absence of reading instructions in their students' program.

### **4.3.4 Results of the Questionnaire**

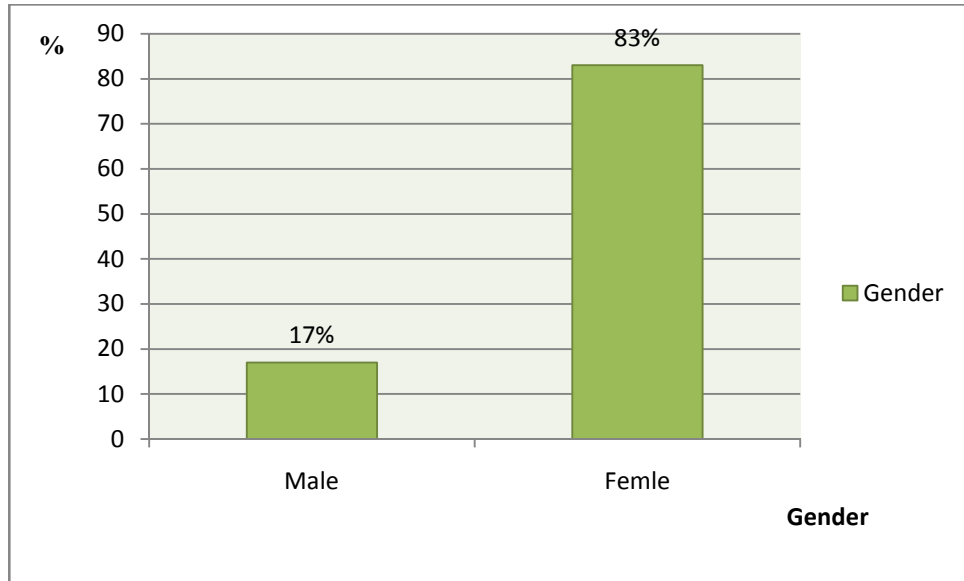
#### **4.3.4.1. Section One: Background Information**

##### **Q1: Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	1	17
Female	5	83
Total	6	100

**Table 29:** Teachers' Gender





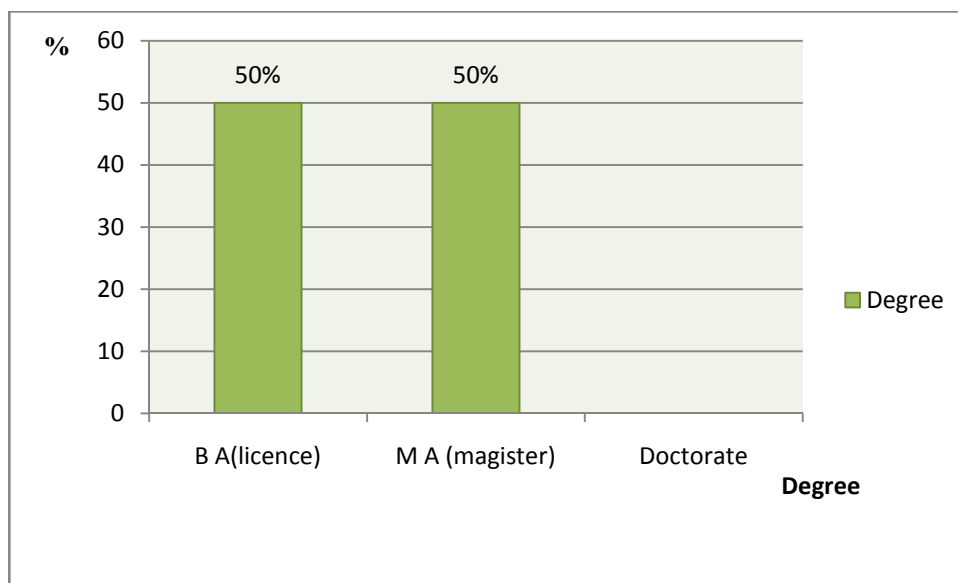
**Figure 29:** Teachers' Gender

Table 29 illustrates that our sample consists of five females and one male respondent. This mean an overrepresentation of female teaches in the department of English.

**Q2: Degree (s) held**

Degree	N	%
B A (license)	3	50
M A (magister)	3	50
Doctorate		
Total	6	100

**Table 30:** Teachers' Graduation



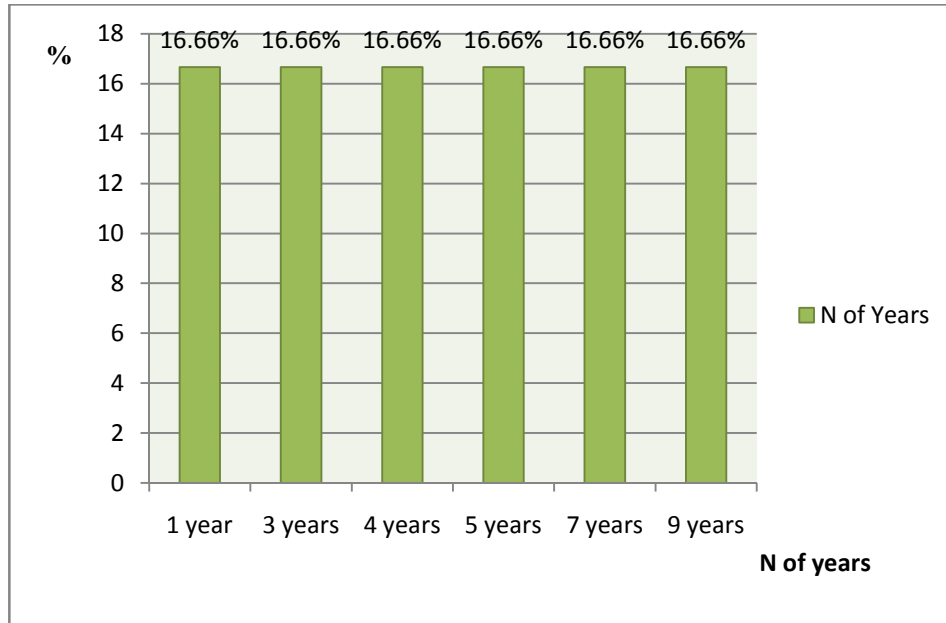
**Figure 30:** Teachers' Graduation

From table 30 we notice that 50% of the respondents hold a magister degree and the other 50% hold a license degree. We believe that our sample actually represents the population from which it is designed. This means that the sample consists of full-time and part-time teachers who are in charge of WE module.

**Q3: Teaching career at the university**

N of Years	N	%
1	1	16.66
3	1	16.66
4	1	16.66
5	1	16.66
7	1	16.66
9	1	16.66
Total	6	99.96

**Table 31:** Teaching Experience



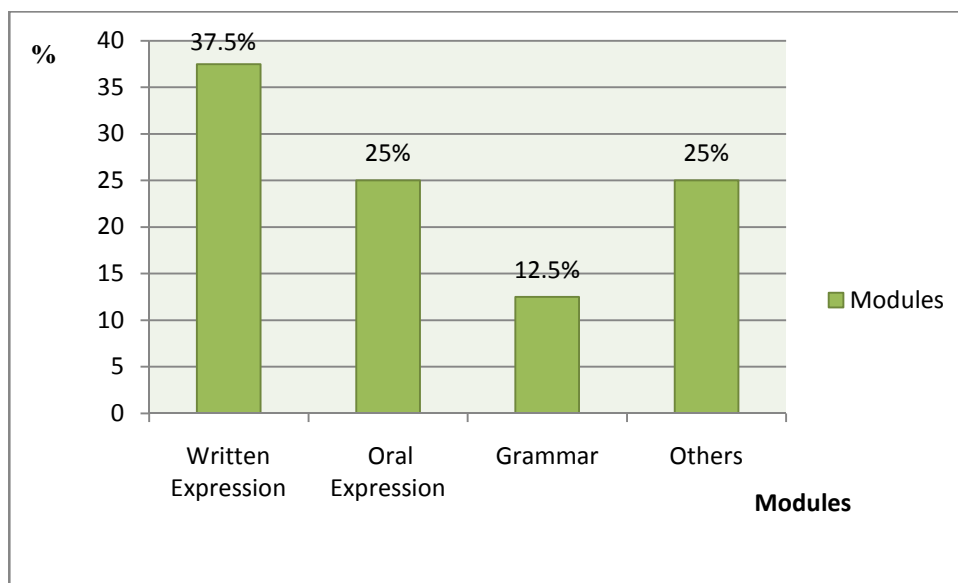
**Figure 31:** Teaching Experience

The results obtained show that the respondents' career at the university is between one to nine years. Thus, all of the teachers have not a long experience in teaching English at the university.

**Q4: Course(s) you have taught**

Modules	N	%
Written Expression	6	37.5
Oral Expression	4	25
Grammar	2	12.5
Others	4	25
Total	16	100

**Table 32:** The Modules Taught by Respondents



**Figure 32:** The Modules Taught by Respondents

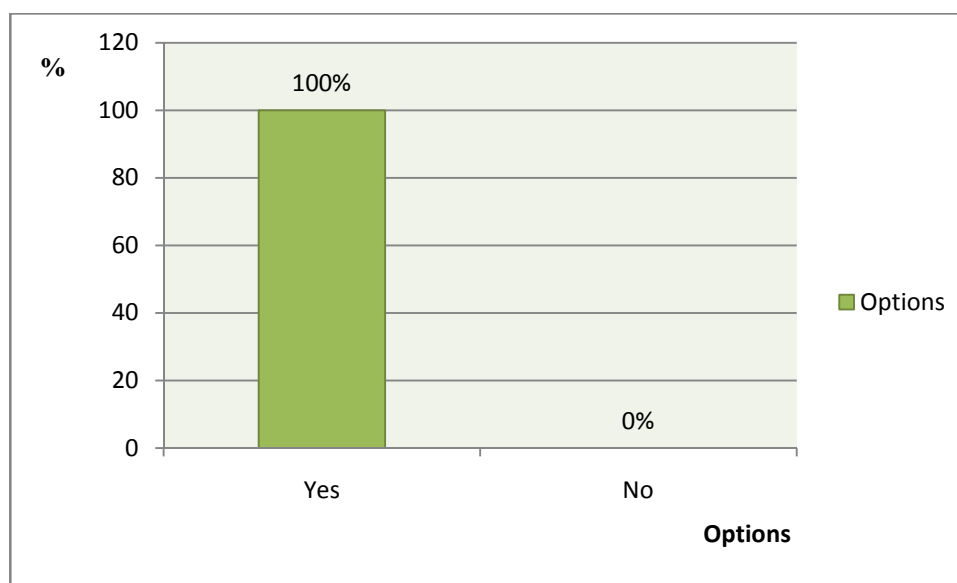
According to the results obtained, the teachers involved in teaching Written Expression (37.5%) are more than those involved in teaching Oral Expression (25%), and (12.5%) of them are teachers of Grammar. The other (25%) involved in teaching other modules: Linguistics, literature, British Civilisation, and Research Methodology.

**4.3.4.2. Section Two: Reading Skill**

**Q5. Do you consider reading an important skill for EFL learners?**

Options	N	%
Yes	6	100
No	/	/
Total	6	100

**Table 33:** The importance of the writing skill



**Figure 33:** The importance of the writing skill

All the respondents (100%) stated that reading is an important skill for EFL learners. This means that teachers are greatly aware of the importance of the writing for their students.

**Q6. If, yes, explain why?**

This question completes the preceding one; it provides teachers' justifications to answers (Q5). Those justifications were as follow:

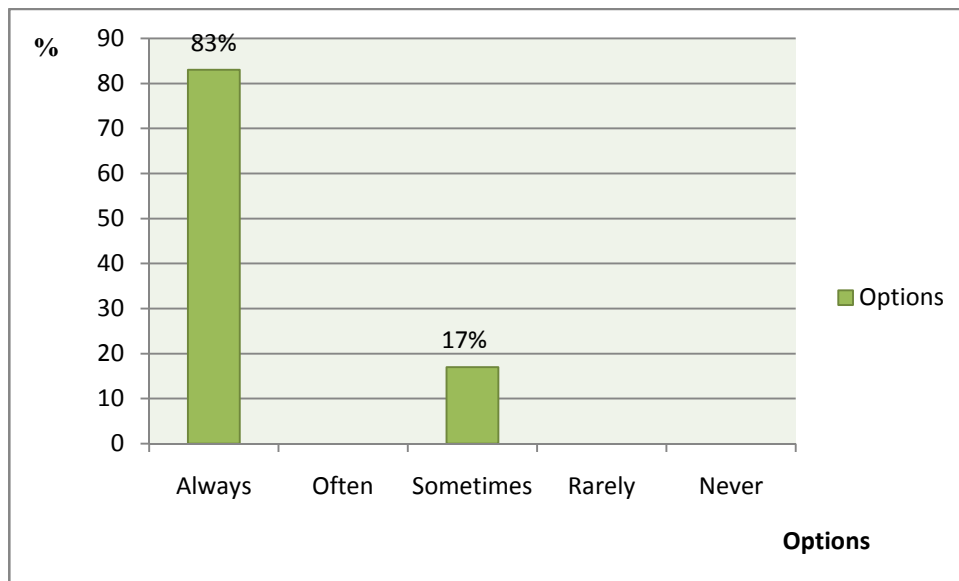
- "Reading is important not just for comprehension, but to be able to discuss verbally the passage being read".
- "It helps students to get new vocabulary, new ideas and expressions; hence it fosters the learners' language improvements."
- "Reading plays a great role in enhancing the rest of the language competencies".
- "Reading is important for learners to absorb information and to get knowledge".
- "It is a source of information and knowledge. It can also enrich their vocabulary with new words to improve their writing style"
- "Reading improves students' writing skill (spelling, word order, vocabulary, punctuation)".

Generally speaking, we conclude that reading in the teachers' viewpoints can develop the other language skills, it also develops their knowledge. In addition, it enriches the students' vocabulary.

**Q7. How often do you encourage your students to read?**

Options	N	%
Always	5	83
Often		
Sometimes	1	17
Rarely		
Never		
Total	6	100

**Table 34:** The Frequency of Teachers' Encouragements



**Figure 34:** The Frequency of Teachers' Encouragements

As shown in table 4.34 only one teacher stated that she sometimes encourages her students to read, however, the other five teachers said that they always encourage them to read. These results compared to the results obtained in the students' questionnaire entail that there is a paradox between the two results when the same question was asked,

however, the answers were likely to be "Yes" or "No". 82% of the students said that their teacher encourages them to read and only 18% that is nine (9) stated the opposite. This means that those students have opted for "No" may perceive the idea of encouragement differently from the teacher. What the teacher may think as encouragement is not necessary the same for some learners i.e. some teachers explicitly encourage their learners and others implicitly do as well.

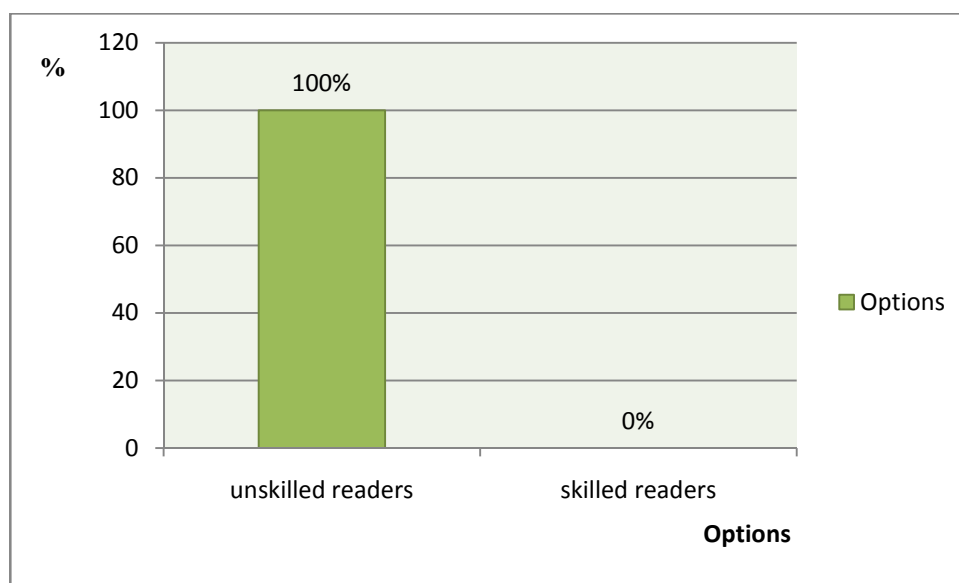
**Q8. Whatever your answer is, explain how?**

One out of six respondents did not give any explanation. The other five respondents stated that they advise and motivate their students to read. However they did not give any clear instructions that encourage reading on the part of students.

**Q9. Do you consider your students as?**

<b>Options</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Unskilled readers	6	100
skilled readers		
Total	6	100

**Table 35:** Skilled or Unskilled readers



**Figure 35:** Skilled or Unskilled readers

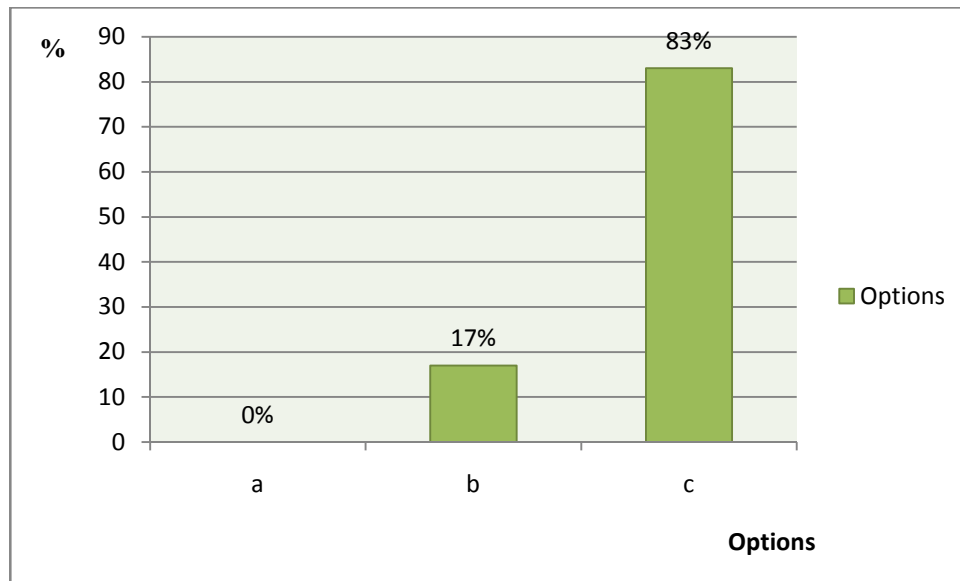
All the respondents 100% claimed that their students are unskilled readers. This is due to the lack of the reading habit among the students as demonstrated by the results of (Q4) in the students' questionnaire; 55% of the students sometimes read and 22.5% of them often read.

**Q10. According to you the process of reading is a:**

Options	N	%
a. Bottom-up process		
b. Top-down process	1	17
c. An interaction between the two	5	83
Total	6	100

**Table 36:** Teachers' Viewpoints of the Reading Process





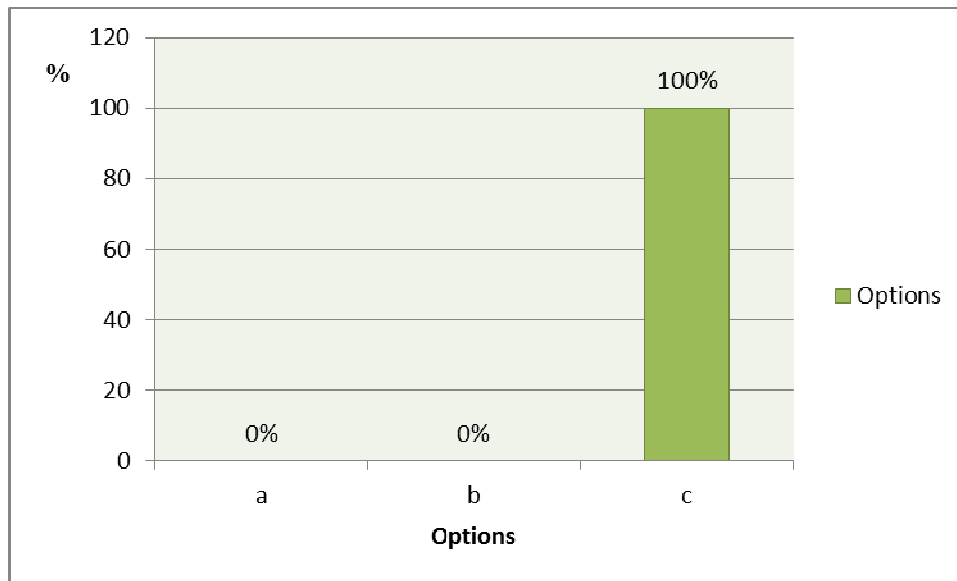
**Figure 36:** Teachers' Viewpoints of the Reading Process

We have recorded one out of six respondents stated that the process of reading is merely a top-down process, however, five respondents said that it is an interaction between top-down and bottom-up processes. These results support what has been mentioned so far in theory about the reading process, that the process of reading is an interaction between text and the reader' preexisting knowledge.

**Q11. In your view, what is most important in the reading process?**

Options	N	%
a- Word identification		
b- Comprehension		
c- Both of them	6	100
total	6	100

**Table 37:** Components of the reading process



**Figure 37:** Components of the reading process

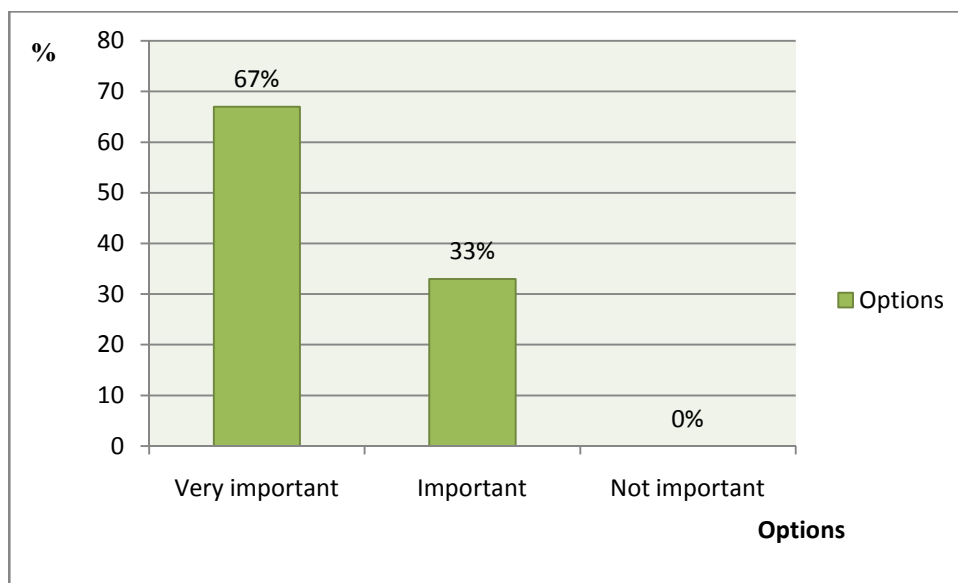
The result obtained here, that all the respondents 100% claimed the importance of both word identification and comprehension in the process of reading. Thus confirming the recent theories which claim reading is a matter of building up comprehension from what is written.

**4.3.4.3. Section Three: Writing Skill**

**Q12. How much do you consider writing as an important skill for EFL learners?**

Options	N	%
Very important	4	67
Important	2	33
Not important		
Total	6	100

**Table 38:** The Importance of the Writing Skill



**Figure 38:** The Importance of the Writing Skill

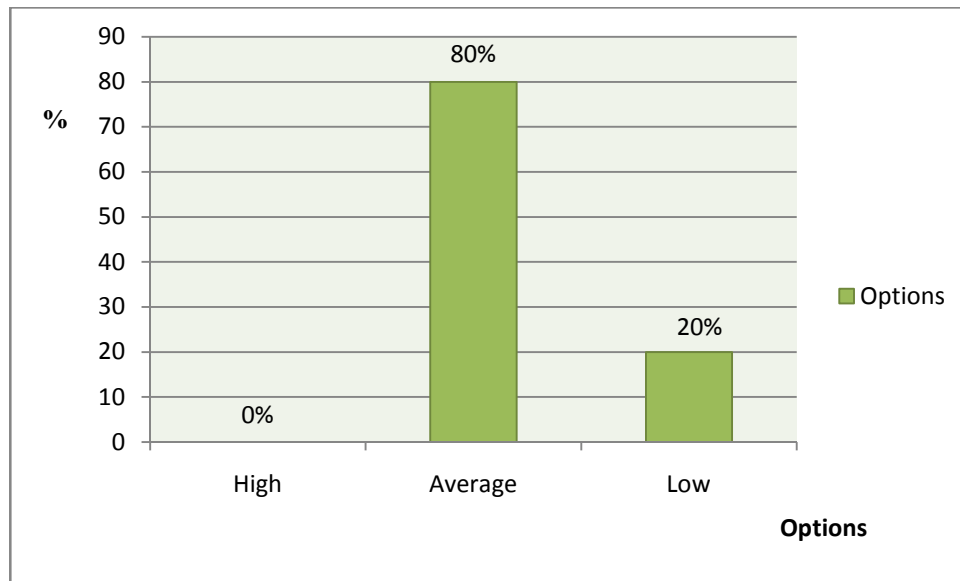
Among the six teachers questioned, four stated that the writing skill is a very important skill for EFL learners and only two said that it is an important skill.

**Q13. How do you estimate your students' level in writing?**

out of six respondents, one did not answer this question.

Options	N	%
High		
Average	4	80
Low	1	20
Total	5	100

**Table 39:** Teachers' Estimation of the Students' Level in Writing



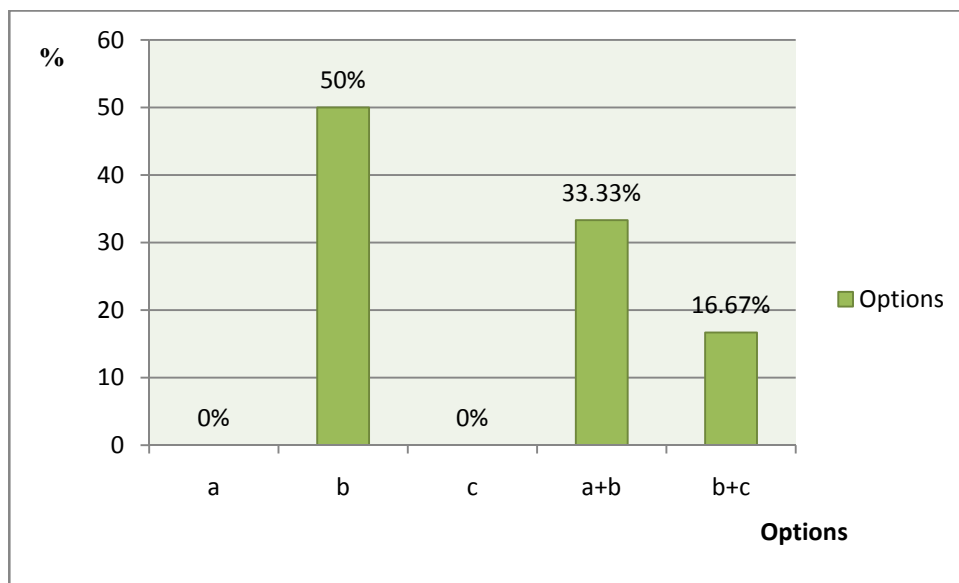
**Figure 39:** Teachers' Estimation of the Students' Level in Writing

Table 39 reveals that most of the teachers (80%) view that the level is average, while (20%) of them said it is low, and none of them considered that the level of students in writing is good. When we compare these results to the results of the same question in the students' questionnaire we notice that most of the students 67% reported that they have an average level in writing, which is not far from the portion that teachers have given, 80% of the students have an average level in writing. In contrast, 23% of the students said they have a good level in writing while no teacher stated that his/her students have a high level in writing. This means that students have overvalued their writing level and the teachers' evaluation is more reliable; it is easy for them to consider their students progression because they have taught these students for a whole academic year.

**Q14. Do you teach writing through?**

Options	N	%
a- The product approach		
b- The process approach	3	50
c- The genre approach		
a+b	2	33.33
b+c	1	16.67
Total	6	100

**Table40:** Approaches to Teaching Writing



**Figure 40:** Approaches to Teaching Writing

According to table 4.38, 50% of the respondents opted to the process approach for teaching the writing skill, 33.33% of them stated that they teach writing through both the product and process approaches, and only 16.67% claimed that they use the process and genre approaches to writing. The over emphasis putted on the process approach to writing

because it provides insights into the mental activities by which we write. However, the underuse of Genre approach is because it is still a new approach to teaching.

**Q15. Would you explain the reasons behind your choice of the approach?**

The provided explanations were as follow:

- 50% of the respondents who use the process approach stated that writing is a process that consists of different steps and students need to be aware of these steps to write successfully. Moreover, the process approach allows time for students to write and provide positive feedback from the teacher during writing.

- 33.33% who opted for the product and process approaches claimed that they use these two approaches depending on certain circumstances. In addition, the product approach is used to get the students background knowledge while the process approach is used to elicit the way by which writing is done.

- 16.67%, that is one respondent stated that process and genre approaches permit to identify the writing genre and the way that this genre supposed to be written.

**Q16. Do you think that first language writing differs from foreign language writing?**

All of the respondents 100% state that there are differences between writing in L1 and writing in SL/FL.

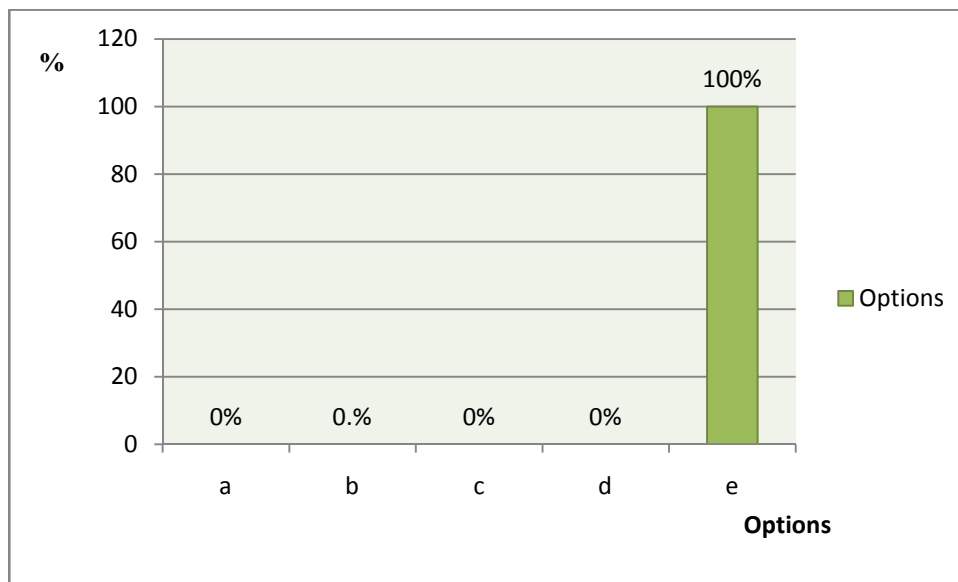
**Q17. If yes, would you state the differences?**

The most noticeable difference is the writing style of each language. Besides most of the respondents focused on the fact that L1 writer is a native producer who faces no obstacles with the language system; whereas, SL/FL writer needs an academic elaborated knowledge of the language.

**Q18. In your view, how can your students develop their writing skill?**

Options	N	%
a- Practicing writing		
b- Getting constant feedback on their writings		
c- Reading in the foreign language		
d- All of them	6	100
e- None of them		
Total	6	100

**Table 41:** How to develop the writing skill



**Figure 41:** How to develop the writing skill

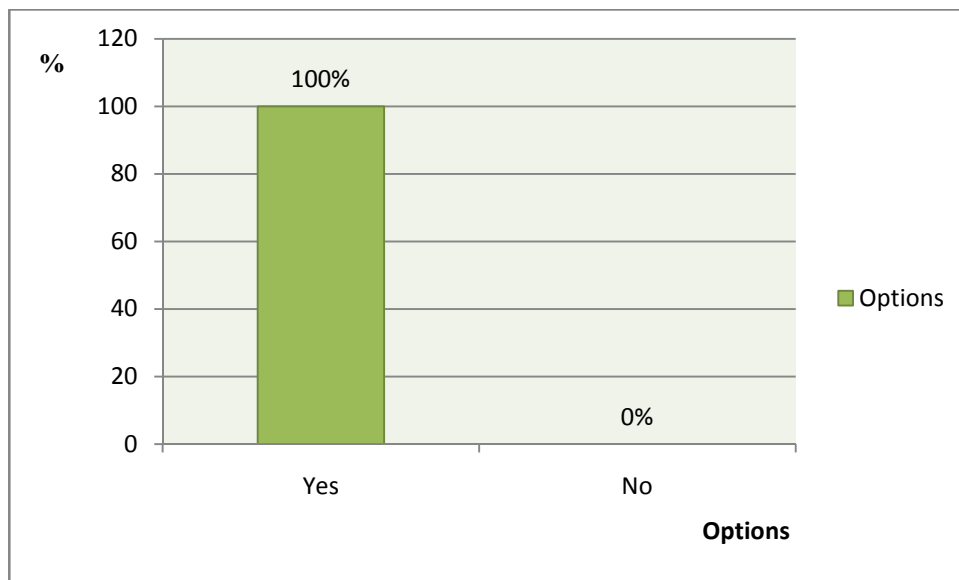
All the respondents 100% claimed that students can develop their writing skill through practicing writing, and getting constantly feedback on their writing. In addition to, reading in the foreign language.

4.3.4.4. Section four: Writing-Writing Relation

**Q19. Do you think that reading and writing are related?**

Options	N	%
Yes	6	100
No	/	/
Total	6	100

**Table 42:** Reading-Writing Relation



**Figure 42:** Reading-Writing Relation

We have recorded that all the respondents' answers to (Q15) were "yes", that is the teachers believe that reading and writing are related.

**Q20. In both cases, explain how?**

The respondents explained that both skills are complementary to each other, writing as a productive skill needs reading as a receptive skill. They added that all the language skills, speaking listening, reading, and writing, are related together for the mastery of the language. Moreover they claimed that reading develops the writing skill through new



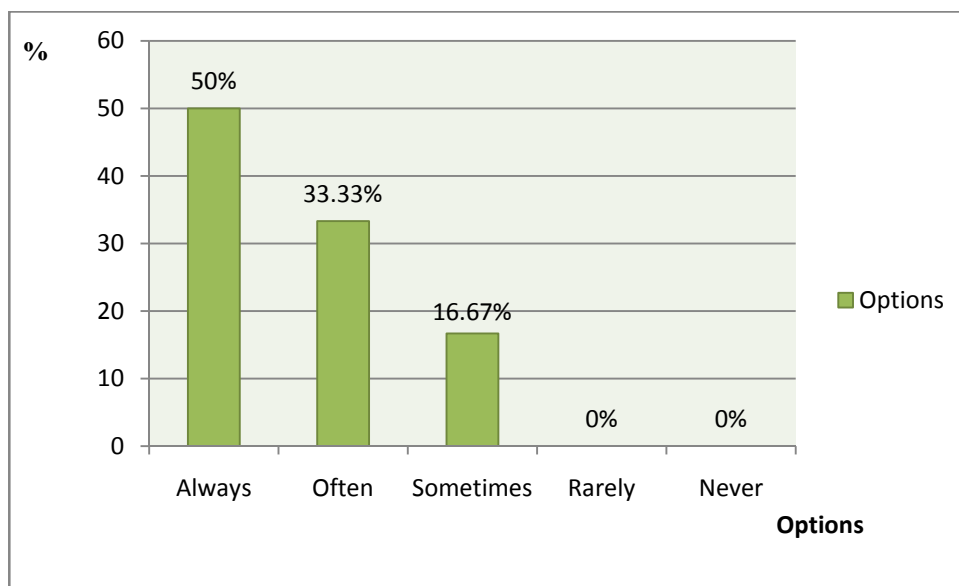
words, constructions, expressions, also learners may imitate and reflect upon what they read. Hence, good readers are good writers.

Throughout the provided explanations we conclude that the respondents are more interested in reading to develop writing and not the opposite, writing to develop reading. This reveals the importance that writing occupies in language teaching.

**Q23. How often do you support the relation between reading and writing during the writing class?**

Options	N	%
Always	3	50
Often	2	33.33
Sometimes	1	16.67
Rarely	0	0
Never	0	0
Total	6	100

**Table 43:** Frequency of Supporting the Reading-Writing Relationship



**Figure 43:** Frequency of Supporting the Reading-Writing Relationship

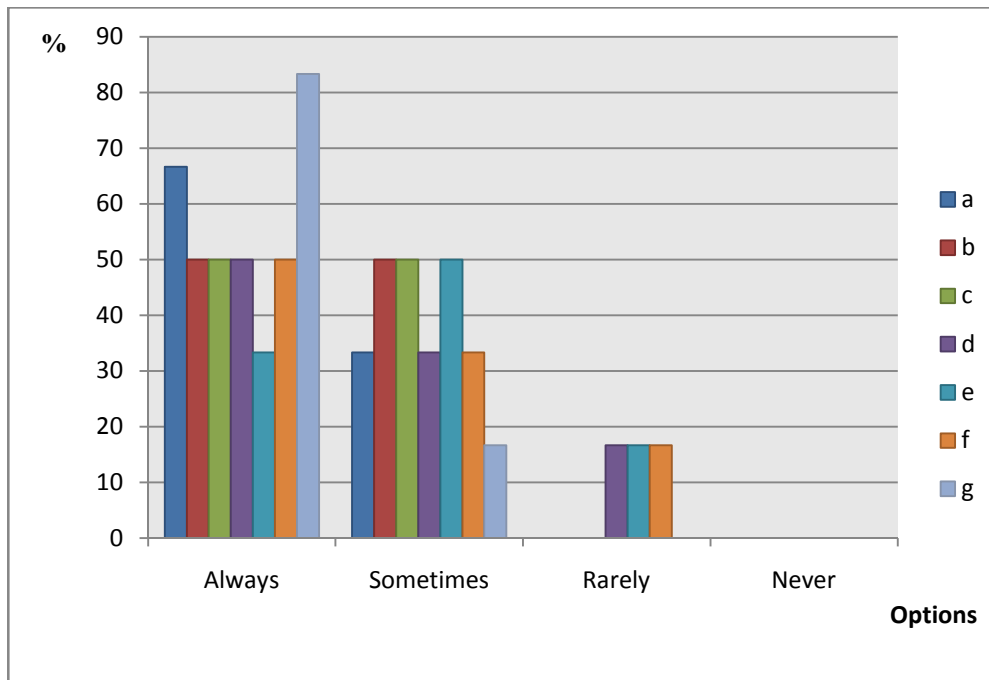
Three teachers among six (50%) elicit that they always support the reading-writing relation during WE courses. However, 33.33% reported that they often support that relation, and 16.67%, that is only one teacher stated she sometimes supports that relation during her courses; whereas, no teacher opted for "Never" and "Rarely" alternatives.

**Q24. How do you support that relation?**

Options	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a- Providing students with authentic texts	4	66.67	2	33.33	0	0	0	0
b- Asking them to read silently or aloud	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
c- Asking them to respond to the text's comprehension questions	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
d- Summarizing or paraphrasing the text's main ideas	3	50	2	33.33	1	16.67	0	0

<b>e-</b> Asking about the students' view point of the text	2	33.33	3	50	1	16.67	0	0
<b>f-</b> Relating the text's structure and genre	3	50	2	33.33	1	16.67	0	0
<b>g-</b> Asking the students to consider the reader when they write	5	83.33	1	16.67	0	0	0	0

**Table 44:** Supporting Instructions for the Reading-Writing Relation



**Figure 44:** Supporting Instructions for the Reading-Writing Relation

This question is designed to complete the preceding one (Q23), and these proposed activities in the table 4.39 are the common activities / instructions that support the reading-writing relation during the course though there are other activities that we believe cannot be applied unless another course has been designed for the reading skill itself.

The first activity, that is providing students with authentic texts; 66.67% reported that they always do, and only 33.33% of them claimed that it sometimes done. Concerning asking students to read silently or aloud and responding to text’s comprehension questions, 50% opted for always and 50% said that they sometimes ask for these activities. For the next activity, summarizing or paraphrasing the text’s main ideas, half of the respondents (50%) stated that they sometimes include this instruction in the course, 33.33% said they always apply such instruction and 16.67%, that is only one teacher said it is rarely applied. The results obtained indicate that most of the teachers (50%) sometimes ask about the students’ view point of the text; 33.33% of them said that they always do that, and only one teacher said never. Three among six respondents claimed that they always relate the text’s structure and genre; two of them said they sometimes do; and one teacher stated that

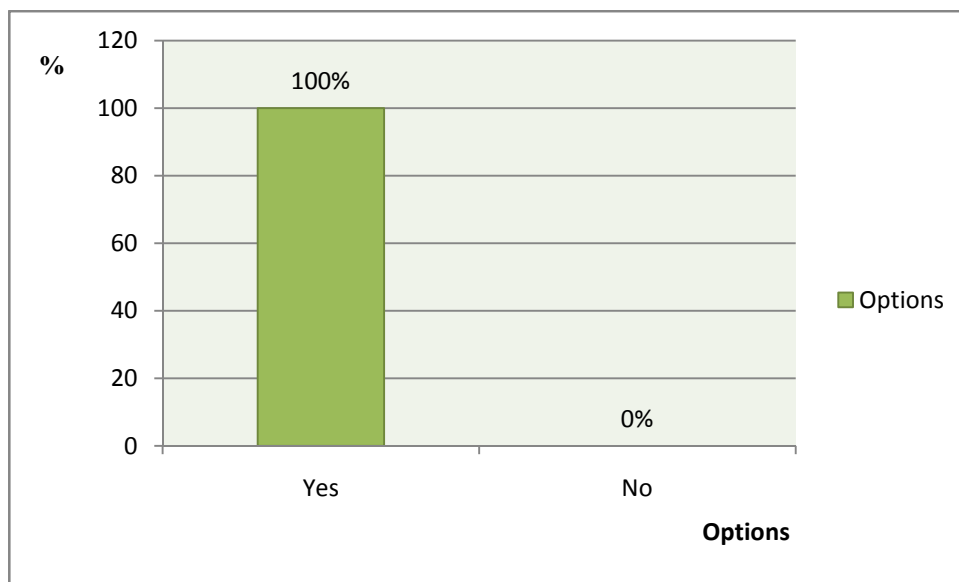
he rarely does such instruction. For the last activity in the table, we have recorded that most of the respondents (83.33%) elicit that they always ask the students to consider the reader when they write, and only one teacher (16.67%) stated that he sometimes does so.

The results obtained reveals that respondents' answers were likely to be either "always" or "sometimes" and we have recoded "rarely" only three times while no one answered by "never". That it is to say the reading-writing relation is considerably supported during the WE courses.

**Q25. Do you think that reading can improve the learners' writing skill?**

Options	N	%
Yes	6	100
No	0	0
Total	6	100

**Table 45:** Reading improves writing



**Figure 45:** Reading improves writing

All the respondents (100%) believe that reading improves the learners' writing skill. These results are nearly the same to those obtained from the students' questionnaire; 84% stated that reading improves the writing skill. While only 16% said the opposite.

**Q24. If, yes, explain how?**

The explanations that have been provided by the respondents can be summed up in the following points:

- Students who read frequently will have a nice style and refined written productions.
- Practicing writing is not enough and a great deal of reading is needed to enhance students' writing skill.
- Reading would expose students to new vocabulary, sentence structure, word order, punctuation, and transitions.
- Reading develops the students' knowledge and ideas so that they can tackle any subject in their writings.

**Q25. Would you comment on the absence of reading instruction in your students' program?**

All the comments that teachers have given emphasized the importance of the reading skill which needs to be taken into consideration in language teaching since the mastery of the language entails the mastery of all the four skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Furthermore, such instruction is actually needed because our students do not possess a good reading habit. Thus, reading should be integrated on the students' programme which intensifies that skill in the class.

#### ***4.3.5 Interpretation of the Results***

The analysis of the teachers' questionnaire has revealed many facts about both of the skills, reading and writing, in addition to the reading-writing relation and how can reading contributes to the developments of the writing skill.

As mentioned before the sample consists of six teachers, one male and five females, have different experiences in teaching English at the university (from 1 to 9 years), however their views were actually for a great help to the study. In addition, they have taught different modules during, if we can say their considerably short career.

The results obtained elicit that despite the fact that both reading and writing are important skills in language learning, EFL learners are unskilled readers and they have an average level in writing as estimated by their teachers. The lack of the reading habit among students results in such circumstances even though they are encouraged to read by their teachers. Furthermore, most of the teachers have opted for the process approach to teach writing believing in its effectiveness for developing students' writings in which students need to practice writing as a process and constantly get feedback during their writings.

The focal point in this discussion is the improvements that reading provides for the writing skill and for that purpose knowing about the reading-writing relationship is necessary. From the analysis of the results we have concluded that teachers are aware of the reading-writing relation also it is supported to some extent during WE courses. However that support would not have great effects on students' language improvement if it has not been intensified in other courses like oral expression. Concerning the contributions of reading to the developments of the writing skill as it was expected reading is the way to succeed in writing. Moreover, all the teachers argued for the absence of reading instruction in students' current program; if students have such opportunity they could develop their writing abilities. It is worthwhile to consider the possibility of designing a module of

"Reading Comprehension" that permits students to experience the act of reading at least in its courses.

#### **4.4 Findings**

The results obtained from the classroom observation revealed that the reading-writing relationship is given a considerable support on the part of teachers, however, such support is not explicitly acknowledged. In other words, students may engage in most of these activities without knowing the purposes behind them, although, stating the activities' objectives have some effects on the students' perception of such activities.

Even though, many theories have demonstrated the benefits of relating reading and writing in the language classroom, teachers still implicitly support this relation, and if, they tend to be explicitly supporting in their instructions, it would be a range of advices that students may not give enough attention to them. They argued that such support for the reading writing relationship, regardless of its effects, would be on the expense of teaching the writing process; planning, drafting, and revising.

The analysis of the two questionnaires, teachers' and students' questionnaires, has given some insights on the process of both reading and writing. Central to the problem of the study, the questionnaires' results elicit the awareness of both teachers and students toward the reading-writing relationship. Moreover, the results of the teachers' questionnaire report a considerable support to that relation in the WE classes as concluded from the observation that have been made. Furthermore, both teachers and students acknowledged the effect of reading comprehension in developing students' writing skill. Besides, they offered some contributions of reading, for example, reading improves learners' writing style; reading offers an access to different viewpoints; through reading we learn about word order, vocabulary, and writing genre ...etc. These results confirm that



constant reading develop students' writing skill, that is if students read frequently on the FL/SL, good writing will be produced.

#### **4.5 Recommendations**

Considering the important contributions that reading offers to improve learners writing skill, we came to propose some recommendations depending on the obtained results.

- Supporting the reading-writing relationship intensively; during other courses rather than WE courses.
- Urging students to read rather than advising them; requiring them to present a report about their assigned readings in terms of groups, for example.
- Considering the possibility of designing a reading comprehension module.
- Promoting the importance of pleasurable reading rather than assigning specific types or genres for reading in order to maintain motivation on the part of the students.

#### **Conclusion**

The classroom observation has revealed that reading is supported during WE courses, but this support was not the one desired. However, we should take into consideration that the time devoted to this observation was not adequate to fully describe the situation as mentioned before. Concerning the analysis of the two questionnaires, the positive results that we have obtained in relation to the contribution of reading comprehension to improve students' written productions have confirmed our hypotheses. This means that there is a positive relation between frequent readings and good written productions.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Writing is a recent interest in language teaching and learning as compared to speaking, especially in ESL/EFL contexts. For university students, it is considered as an important skill that need be developed. Many researches have proposed different ways for improving students' ability in writing. As far as writing is concerned, reading is one way for developing the writing skill. The present study aims at exploring the contributions of reading comprehension to develop students' writing skill. In addition, it seeks to elicit the students' and teachers' awareness of the reading-writing relationship, and to report the extent to which that relation is supported by teachers during WE courses. Hence, the study hypothesizes;

- Learners' constant reading may greatly affect their writing aptitudes and develop their potentials. So that, constant reading contributes in improving students' writing skill.
- Although reading provides helpful insights into language learning, it does not have a great effect on learners' writing skill development.

The first chapter introduces theoretical background about the reading skill. It begins by identifying the nature of reading from three perspectives; linguistic, cognitive, and social. Then, it illustrates the reading comprehension process. The chapter also discusses three different theories regarding the reading process; bottom-up, top-down, and interactive theories. By the end of the chapter, SL reading is discussed.

The second chapter of this research is concerned with teaching the writing skill. It consists of three major topics; nature of writing, ESL/EFL writing, and approaches to teaching writing. The last major topic is divided into three subtopics each one discusses particular approach; product, process, and genre approaches.

The third chapter is the relation between reading and writing. It combines the two variables of the study. It starts by introducing the reading-writing relationship in L1 context and then in SL context. Some instructions regarding the reading-writing relationship are proposed. Finally, this chapter identifies some researches that discussed the contribution of reading to develop students' writing skill.

The fourth chapter is practical part of this study. Its ultimate goal is to test the research two hypotheses. It investigates the contribution of reading comprehension to improve learners' writing skill through an analysis of two questionnaires; students' and teachers' questionnaires, besides the results of the observation. The classroom observation aims at sorting out the extent to the reading-writing relationship is supported during the WE courses. Whereas, the two questionnaires aims at finding out both views, students' and teachers' views, towards the contribution of reading comprehension to improve learners' writing skill.

The results of the study reveal that both teachers and students are aware of reading-writing relationship, moreover, the teachers give considerable support for that relation during WE course. However, that support is implicitly done. Moreover, the results demonstrate the effect of frequent reading on learners' writing skill.

The result obtained have confirmed our first hypothesis; constant reading contributes to the improvement of learners' writing skill while it refutes the second hypothesis that states that reading has no effect in developing learners' writing skill. Thus, we come to realize the important role that reading play in developing learners' ability in writing.



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## Appendix one

### STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear student,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information about the reading skill, the writing skill, and how can reading improves the learners' writing skill.

Please,tick (✓) the appropriate box (es) or give full answer(s) whenever it is necessary.

May I thank you for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answer the questionnaire.

#### Section one: Background Information

##### Q1. Gender

Male

Female

##### Q2. How many years have you been learning English?

..... years.

##### Q3. Which of the following skills you are interested to develop?

(Rank them in order from 1 to 4)

a- Listening

b- Speaking

c- Reading

d- Writing

#### Section Two: Reading Skill

##### Q4. How often do you read in English?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

**Q5. Does your teacher encourage you to read outside the classroom?**

Yes

No

**Q6. If, yes, explain how (What kind of reading)?**

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

**Q7. According to you, reading is a matter of**

a- Word recognition

b- Meaning construction

c- Both of them

**Q8. To reach the text meaning, do you proceed from?**

a- The text

b- Your background knowledge

c- Bothe of them

**Q9. While reading, do you understand the text?**

a- Word by word meaning

b- General meaning

c- Both of them

**Q10. What kind of information you can draw from the text?**

a- Linguistic information

b- Socio -cultural information

c- Both of them

d- Others, please specify?.....

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

**Q11. When reading the same text as your classmates, do you reach the same interpretation?**

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

**Q12. How do you consider your classmates' interpretation?**

- a- Very superficial
- b- Superficial
- c- Deep
- d- Very deep

**Q13. As a foreign language reader, to what extent do you think that your first language knowledge interferes in interpreting the text meaning?**

- a- Very much
- b- Much
- c- Little
- d- No interference

**Section Three: Writing Skill**

**Q14. Do you find the written expression module interesting?**

- Yes
- No

**Q15. Is writing an easy task to learn?**

- Yes
- No

**Q16. If no, please explain why?**

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

**Q17. Describe your level in writing (according to your mark)**

- a- Very good
- b- Good
- c- Average
- d- Weak
- e- Veryweak

**Q18. Writing is necessary skill for you to develop?**

- Yes
- No

**Q19.Explain why?**

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

**Q20. Good writing entails**

- a. Correct grammar
- b. Appropriate vocabulary
- c. Good ideas
- d. Correct spelling
- e. All of them

Others, please, specify?

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

**Q21. When writing, do you follow prewriting, drafting and revising stages to complete the writing assignment?**

Yes

No

**Section Four: Reading-Writing Relation**

**Q22. Do you read texts during the written expression session?**

Yes

No

**Q23. Do you respond to text's comprehension questions?**

Yes

No

**Q24. If no, is that because**

a- Time limitation

b- No questions are provided

**Q25. How often do you summarize or paraphrase the text's main ideas?**

Usually

Often

Rarely

**Q26. Before writing your assignment do you read about that topic?**

Yes

No

**Q27. If yes, explain why? (state three reasons).....**  
.....  
.....  
.....



**Q28. Reading improves writing by new**

- a- Words
- b- Structures
- c- Ideas
- d- All of them

**Q29. Do you think that reading contributes to the writing skill development?**

- Yes
- No

**Q30. If yes, explain how? (State three arguments)**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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**Biskra 2012**

**Appendix two**

**TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information about the reading skill, the writing skill, and how reading can improve the learners' writing skill.

Please, tick (✓) the appropriate box (es) or give full answer(s) whenever it is necessary.

May I thank you for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answer the questionnaire.

**Section One: Background Information**

**Q1. Gender:**

Male

Female

**Q2. Degree held:**

License

Master/Magister

Doctorate

**Q3. Teaching career at the university:.....years**

**Q4. Course(s) you have taught:**

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

**Section Two: Reading Skill**

**Q5. Do you consider reading an important skill for EFL learners?**

Yes

No

**Q6. If, yes, explain why?**

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

**Q7. How often do you encourage your students to read?**

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

**Q8. Whatever your answer is, explain how?**

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

**Q9. Do you consider your students as?**

- Skilled readers
- Unskilled readers

**Q10. According to you the process of reading is a:**

- a- Bottom-up process
- b- Top-down process
- c- An interaction between the two

**Q11. In your view, what is most important in the reading process?**

- a- Word identification
- b- Comprehension
- c- Both of them

Others, please,  
specify?.....  
.....

.....  
.....

**Section Three: Writing Skill**

**Q12. How much do you consider writing as an important skill for EFL learners?**

Very important

Important

Not important

**Q13. How do you estimate your students' level in writing?**

High

Average

Low

**Q14. Do you teach writing through?**

a- The product approach

b- The process approach

c- The genre approach

**Q15. Would you explain the reasons behind your choice of the approach?**.....

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

**Q16. Do you think that first language writing differs from foreign language writing?**

Yes

No

**Q17. If yes, would you state the differences?**

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

**Q18. In your view, how can your students develop their writing skill?**

- a- Practicing writing
- b- Getting constant feedback on their writings
- c- Reading in the foreign language
- d- All of them
- e- None of them

Others, please, specify?

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

**Section Four: Reading –Writing Relation**

**Q19. Do you think that reading and writing are related?**

Yes

No

**Q20. In both cases, explain how?**

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

**Q21. How often do you support the relation between reading and writing during the writing class?**

Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

**Q22. How do you support that relation?**

Options	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<b>a-</b> Providing students with authentic texts				
<b>b-</b> Asking them to read silently or aloud				
<b>c-</b> Asking them to respond to the text's comprehension questions				
<b>d-</b> Summarizing or paraphrasing the text's main ideas				
<b>e-</b> Asking about the students' view point of the text				
<b>f-</b> Relating the text's structure and genre				
<b>g-</b> Asking the students to consider the reader when they write				

Others, please, specify?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Q23. Do you think that reading can improve the learners' writing skill?**

Yes

No

**Q24. If, yes, explain how?**

.....

.....

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

**Q25. Would you comment on the absence of reading instruction in your students' programme?**

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

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**Biskra 2012**

**Appendix three**

**The contribution of reading comprehension in writing skill development  
classroom observation form**

Instructor:

Grade:

Observer:

Date and Time:

Lesson observed:

Group:

Students' Number:

Students' Gender: Boys:

Girls:

	always	sometimes	rarely	Never
Urging students to read outside the classroom.				
Presenting authentic texts to be read in the writing class.				
Reading aloud or silently the texts before discussing how it would be written.				
Asking and responding to texts' comprehension questions during the writing class.				
Summarizing or paraphrasing the texts' main ideas during the class or at home.				



## The Contribution of Reading Comprehension to Writing Skill Development

Promoting students' point of view about the text being read.				
Relating the texts' structure and genre.				
Providing students' with feedback either from the teacher or peers.				
Promoting the importance of the reader in constructing texts.				
Asking students to synthesize from texts.				
Comment				