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***THE IMPACT OF SUMMARIZING STRATEGY ON STUDENTS'
READING AND WRITING SKILLS
The Case of Third Year LMD EFL Students at Biskra University***

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirement of the degree of
Master in English (Sciences of Languages).

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Academic Year 2012-13

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear **parents**, brothers and sisters.

To my friends and my colleagues in the CEIL (Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues) especially my director and my instructional coordinator, University of Biskra

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To reach the end of this particular journey would not have been possible without a divine intervention, we thank ALLAH.

My gratitude goes to:

Mr. MEDDOUR Mostafa, for the support and guidance he provided me throughout my
dissertation and studies.

My dissertation committee, for their encouragement and insightful comments.

ABSTRACT

Achieving an acceptable average in the exams, with acquiring an acceptable style of writing and intelligent way of reading in English are some needs of the students at the department of Foreign Languages, university of Biskra. Revision is the most important subject which students worry about, and how to memorize what they have revised to use it in the appropriate situation. The present study of research is an attempt to show the role that summarizing strategy as an organized way for revision might have on improving students' achievement in the reading and writing skills. The results obtained from a questionnaire administered to 40 students of 3rd year LMD in the department of English at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra, in addition to a classroom observation accompanied by an interview for teachers, shown that using summarizing strategy leads learners to improve their reading and writing skills in order to have a good preparation for exams revealed to be very successful.

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Résumé

General Introduction

Learners' achievement and success need a hard work, for better understanding and recalling they need to design a plan for their revision. Summarizing is one of the effective strategies which facilitate the revising process, and helps learners organize their ideas, in addition to improve their reading and writing skills.

This study investigates students' use of summarizing strategy during their preparation for the exams and the impact of this strategy on their reading and writing skills. It also examines if the use of this strategy has an impact on learners' outcome. Writing a summary is very different from other kinds of writing, and that is why learners need special instruction in using summarizing. It is not just reducing the length of the documents or texts but in fact the summary writer must decide what to include, what to eliminate, in addition to the ability to revise the summary and ensure that it is true to the originals' meaning (Brown, Day, and Jane, 1983). Summarizing teaches students how to discern the most important ideas in a text, how to take a large selection of the text and reduce it to the main points for more concise understanding, It also enables students to focus on key words and phrases of an assigned text that are worth noting and remembering, how to ignore irrelevant information and how to integrate the central ideas in a meaningful way. It improves their memory for what is read. Summarization strategies can be used in almost every content area.

The role of effective summarizing is leading to help students recognize how information is structured. For example, summarizing of a reading assignment can be more effective when done within summary frames, which typically include a series of questions the teacher provides to direct student's attention to specific content (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Students who can effectively summarize learn to synthesize information, a

higher-order thinking skill which includes analyzing information, identifying key concepts, and defining extraneous information. Students also benefit from using their notes and summarize them as a document of their learning. Teachers can prompt students to review and refine their notes, particularly when it is time to prepare for an exam.

Writing summaries for notes demonstrates increases in students' comprehension and assessment, especially when students are explicitly instructed in how to write summaries (Nist & Simpson, 2000). It is confusing to students, however, when strategies for summarization are taught at the same time as strategies for main idea, sequence of events, or theme. Summarizing any genre of text needs to be taught explicitly, and students should be able to clearly describe how to create a summary, what a good summary is, and how summary is different from main idea.

1. Statement of the Purpose

Summarizing lectures and documents (handouts) can be challenging task. Some students attempt to organize their ideas by simplifying lessons, others fail to extract the most important ideas or even get the general idea of the topic and they learn everything by heart, in a disorganized manner. In both situations, learners should realize the best outcome, and this latter happens by having beneficial strategy during their revision.

This study investigates the effect of summarizing strategy, on third year LMD students' reading and writing skills, which leads to the positive influence on their outcome, and how this skill enables the learners to analyze information at a deep level. It also provides processes and procedures of the summarizing strategy, which leads to differentiate between the learners' achievement.

This paper aims to investigate the extent of the impact of summarizing technique on students' memorizing and recalling, especially for the exams. Furthermore, it aims to find

out whether students who use summarizing strategy perform and accomplish better than those who grasp everything. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to check out the effectiveness of using summarizing strategy on learners' outcome.

2. Research Questions

Three research questions are addressed in this study:

- 1- To what extent is important summarizing and using summaries? And how it should be done?
- 2- Does summarizing strategy affect learners' reading and writing skills?

3. Research Hypotheses

H01- If learners use summarizing strategy, the learners would be able to understand, recall and revise the lectures correctly, and improve their writing and reading skills, therefore they perform better in exams.

4. Literature Review

In the literature, while there are many definitions of summarizing strategy, it can be broadly defined as the ability to produce a condensed version of information. The summary includes only important elements and retains the order of the original information (Brown.1983).

In the scope of summarizing strategy, Graner and Hahn (1983) wanted to determine at what age level the learners are able to construct a summary, in addition to their investigation about the role of the teacher for helping the learners to improve this skill.

A paper of Murrell and Suber (1987) which consolidated this idea besides the importance of teacher's role in helping students how to select important ideas and condense a text.

Summary writing is one of the important academic skills for students to show their reading comprehension. It can be said that if students can summarize appropriately they

improve their reading ability (Budi, 2009; Palmer, 2003). It is a valuable practice for students in developing reading and writing skills (Sotiriou, 2002).

Brown, Day and Jones (cited in Moghaddam, 2007) declared that summarization involves additional and deliberate processing strategies than what are required in comprehension; summarizing helps learners in comprehension because in order to summarize they have to reread for a lot of times to get the core of the subject. Palmer (2003) stated that summarizing is based on a learning process, and the perfect comprehension of a text will be a necessary step in order to teach students to condense information in a new piece of discourse. Therefore, he used Kintsch and van Dijk Summarization Model to develop fifteen rules to summary writing. Those are: 1) writing a short version including maintaining the gist of the information, the ideas of the authors of the original texts with different written structure, 2) including all the important information appealing in the source text and irrelevant information should be deleted, 3) should not have repeated information, 4) starting by finding the main topic of the summary, the main purpose of the author then start selecting information, 5) reading the text once and see what the main topic is then reading it again and starting to underline all the important information, 6) using planning techniques to select important information, 7) keeping texts as short as possible by deletion, combination, and generalization, 8) doing not copy sentences from the original text, 9) an average of 15-20% of the total length of the source text is advisable, 10) only use examples when it is really necessary, 11) avoiding personal comments and opinion, 12) getting rid of extra-textual information, 13) maintaining coherence and cohesion in your summaries, 14) combining clauses and 15) after understanding the text completely, you can comprehend the different lexical, semantic, and grammar choices.

Making students good at summary writing seems difficult for many reasons especially when dealing with foreign language. The use of summarizing techniques in

education system (university level) is not strictly emphasized. When students were asked to read and summarize a text, they usually struggle to write by themselves without the knowledge in summarizing technique (Laosooksri, 2006). Many researches in the field of summary writing found that students' summary writing showed many problems such as distortion of the contents of the texts, copying the same words as the original text, identifying the key points of a text, lack of coherence, and lack of ability to paraphrase (Laosooksri, 2006 and el).

5. Research Methodology

5.1. Method

The mode of inquiry used in this study is quantitative and qualitative which used a questionnaire for students and an interview with teachers in addition to a classroom observation through which data will be collected. The questionnaire for students will be intended for students of third year in the department of English at Mohammad Kheidar University of Biskra. To find out whether the learners give importance and value to the use of summarizing strategy and whether it develops their reading and writing skills and its impact on revision. The interview with teachers will be intended for five teachers of English to investigate teachers' opinion about using summarizing strategy to develop the learners' reading and writing skills.

5.2. Population and Sampling

The population of the present study will be third year students of English at Mohammad Kheidar University of Biskra. A sample of 40 students belonging to the branch of science of languages in the Department of English will be chosen randomly from the whole section.

5.3. Data Gathering Tools

To answer the research questions, we use the following research tool

5.3.1. The Questionnaire for Students.

The questionnaire is designed for the purpose of gaining further insights into the studied situation. The questionnaire might be the only instrument that can serve as means of collecting a considerable amount of data with a minimum of time and effort. It is not only easy to administer, but it also provides a general view of the investigated problem which is difficult to obtain by other means of investigation. Questionnaires allow the gathering of reliable and valid data, relatively, in a short time. In the present study it will be administered to students.

5.3.2. The Classroom Observation and Interview with Teachers.

The check list classroom observation is done for more gathering data, and for being more close the situation and observe directly, with the unstructured interview with teachers for supporting our data because the interview allows for personal explanations of questions, in points need to be clarified. For these reasons, the interview may be regarded as a more reliable instrument, especially when dealing with a small group of teachers.

6. Procedures

The questionnaire will be given to students from different English classes (third year LMD) at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. It is administered to them to investigate the impact of effective summaries on their reading and writing skills with its impact on revision for exams . It is concerned with students' background information, the General use of summarizing strategy, and whether it is beneficial for their memorization and achievement and if it is a good way to progress their level in reading and writing. Finally, we ask them about the impact of using summarizing in the learning process and if teachers should

encourage and teach students effective strategies of summarizing. Both open questions and closed ones are included in our questionnaire so as to get as valid information as possible.

Furthermore, we will use it to observe the positive impact of revising through students' summaries. We will take forty students from third year.

7. Limitation of the Research

The study will be limited to the impact of using summarizing strategy in EFL classes for third year LMD students. Due to time constraints, the subjects of the study are limited only to forty students. However, there are some constraints that may limit our investigation because: we think that students of first and second year LMD are beginners and not used to deal with summarizing during their revision, and they are depending on the help of their teachers, in addition to their disability of reading deeply to extract the intended meaning of the handouts besides their poor level in producing good piece of writing. While students of third year LMD are advanced and experienced which make them looking for efficient strategies to help them.

8. Significance of the Study

The study is significant in many ways, Firstly the study provided relevant information about learners' ability for designing effective and meaningful summaries by following strategies, which lead them to better revision and better recall and as a result better outcome, besides evolve two important skills which are reading and writing. Moreover, the study would provide information about whether this strategy should be taught during their previous studies to strengthen and emphasis on its importance.

The findings from the study would also be an eye-opener to the problem militating against the importance of using summarizing strategy for well understanding and learning in general. Finally, findings from the study would have a strong impact, and give

implications for learners to pay more attention for possessing this ability, and also for teachers to recommend their students to learn this strategy and use it in and outside the classroom.

Part I

An Overview on the Related Literature

Chapter One: Introducing Summarizing Strategy

Introduction

For better achievement during lesson revision; learners should look for the important information from the whole lecture, or from their handouts, because it is impossible to learn by heart all what the teacher dealt with during the lecture, or even recall all what is mentioned in their handouts, especially the details. So they should use a formula strategy; Who? , What? , When? , Where? , Why? , How? It is a kind of extracting information from a piece of text, and condensing that information in some type of summary form. That is why; a large body of literature on summarizing has shown it to be an effective educational activity which improves learning with positive outcomes.

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the positive impact of summarizing strategy on students' learning. It also shows several specific strategies of summarizing to support students' learning and makes their revision before exams easier.

1.1. General Overview on Summarizing

“Effective Summarizing leads to an increase in student learning. Helps in students recognize how information is structured will help them summarize what they read or hear. Summarizing is a real world skill.” (Rick Wormeli, 2003.)

Students see the “write a summary” command on assignments, worksheets, and in testing situations. Sometimes the language varies; sometimes we ask students to paraphrase; other times we ask them for the main idea. Bottom line, we want our students to extract the important elements from a piece of text. i.e. we want them to get at the heart of the matter, and we want them to do it in as few words as possible. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget that they need to be taught “how” to break down a larger piece of text into a short, concise summary. It's not easy; writing summaries requires students to apply higher-level thinking

skills. For example, students must analyze the information and synthesize it before they condense it.

Revising for exams are not memory tests which require you to write everything you know about a given topic. Instead, they require you to organize your knowledge for revision, recall the information that you have learnt and studied, and restructure your knowledge in an organized and coherent manner. Summarizing is one of the most important strategies to organize the revision process. It has been defined by a number of researchers and educationalists from different points of view. Generally speaking, Summarizing is a learning strategy that requires the learner to consolidate information by restating key points or the essential idea of the lesson in few words or in a new way. It is an active key thinking strategy for processing information and constructs meaning. Moreover, it stimulates thought, provides inquiry and creates transfer and greater retention. Summarizing is also seen as an evaluative tool that allows students to self-evaluate what they know and what they do not know. (Garner et al. 1989).

According to Kissner.(2006), summarizing is to take the main ideas and important details, while reflecting the structure and order of the original. A summary is a shortened version of an original text. Also Fountas and Pinnell(2001),remind us that as readers, we are constantly extracting information from a piece of text and condensing that information in some type of summary form. To summarize a piece of text, a reader needs not just recap the text after reading, though that is indeed a needed skill. Readers must design their own texts according to what they read, by following their own style. A reader must have the ability to analyse and understand information while reading, get the intention of the writer to form his special piece of writing. Producing a good summary means covering all what is meant in a concise form which is belonging to the new reader which depends on the style of each reader.

The National Reading Panel (2000) defined summarization as an attempt “to identify and write the main or most important ideas that integrate or unite the other ideas or meanings of the text

into a coherent whole” (p. 4-6). According to Raymond (2006) when we summarize, we take larger selections of text and reduce them to their bare essentials, which refer to the gist, the key ideas, and the main points worth remembering. He suggests that students begin to develop strong summarization skills when they are able to consistently complete the following tasks:

- Strip away the redundant and extraneous examples;i.e: no need to put the examples which you find in the original text.
- Focus on the heart of the matter.
- Seek key words and phrases that manage to capture the gist.
- Save the main ideas and crucial details that support them.

1.2. The Importance of Summarizing Strategy

It is important to remember that summarizing is an in-the-head strategy whose sole purpose is to help the reader comprehend a text. Even though students are required to write or select a good summary on proficiency tests, they are able to select the important ideas and carry them forward as tools of thought, research has shown that summarizing yields some of the greatest leaps in comprehension and long-term retention of information and provides the opportunity to practice using new vocabulary in the intended context with Increasing student achievement (Marzano,). Summarizing is a real-world skill that (Wormeli, Summarization in Any Subject).

Involves the understanding of texts. Discourse comprehension necessarily involves the recognition of text structures and the ability to summarize.(Kintsch and Van Dijk 1978, Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983) There is now a considerable measure of agreement about the essential aspects of text structure, although there are many differences in the details of analysis.

In addition, Summarizing efficiently helps students make meaning out of information and store it in his long term memory. It causes students to read for

comprehension, discriminate the important ideas and put the information in his/her own words (Senemoğlu, 2001, p. 569). Which allow them to make meaning of the text. Obtaining the meaning of words in a simple way is inadequate to the task of summarizing a text. In order to summarize a text, one of the prerequisites is to read it carefully; this requires a student to employ various mental skills efficiently. Moreover, a student must be able to relate new ideas with old ones and put unique ideas forward (Friend, 2001, p. 320). So we can find that Summarizing is important because it benefits both teacher and student.

For the student;

- It provides an opportunity to communicate what is important
- It serves as a way to check understanding
- It provides practice in decision making and sequencing

For the teacher;

- It provides evidence of the student's ability to select important information
- It is an informal indicator of comprehension
- It reveals a student's ability to prioritize and sequence.

(<http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.8f136d86e0aa2b9cdeb...>)

Summarizing not only provides practice in extended expository writing, but also teaches important study skills, such as identifying important content and separating main ideas from details. The fact that students at this age tend to highlight everything in a text, especially when students are dealing with content that is completely new to them. Summarizing for a given purpose (e.g., to write a report about religious beliefs) requires even deeper thinking and analysis to select the relevant information.

Summarizing is a way to develop solid understanding of complex material and also represents one understands so that it can be shared with others. Researchers noted clear

differences in depth of understanding of topics that students have summarized as opposed to those they have only read about.

Students should be aware of the need to learn summarization strategies that go beyond just adding and deleting single words, phrases or sentences. This awareness becomes a starting point for introducing students to higher-level strategies, such as how to reformulate text content by combining several ideas in a single sentence and generalizing across details.

Summarizing requires active meaning construction to a much greater degree than choosing a response on a multiple-choice recognition test, or even than writing short answers to isolated questions. Thus, not only is summary writing an effective means to construct and integrate new knowledge, it is also a more authentic method for assessing what students do and do not understand than traditional comprehension tests.(Lehnert, V.G.1982).

1.3. Strategies of Summarizing

Summarizing is a difficult skill for students as it requires that; a) a summary must be short, b) a summary must include the writer's most important ideas, c) a summary must be written in students' own words, and d) a summary must include the information that students need to study (Friend, 2001, p. 320). Teachers may need to be given training on summary writing in order to teach students how to summarize a text as well as to improve the quality of students' summaries. When learning how to write a summary, a student must follow these steps; to spot the major idea and the supporting ideas of each paragraph in the text, then to spot the most important paragraph in the text and to spot the main idea of the text in general, using his own words by referring to the concepts and ideas in the text while writing a summary (Wormeli 2004; Garcia & Michaelis, 2001).

Students need certain thinking processes which aim to help students answer on questions to achieve focused improvement in order to understand a text. Constructivism emphasizes the importance of learners' assuming responsibility of their own learning as well

as their active participation in their learning process. For example, determining the main idea and supporting ideas of a text, putting the whole text into new words (paraphrasing), connecting new ideas with the old ones and putting original ideas forward are some of them. This is a constructive process which requires the employment of meta cognitive strategies. Thus summarizing is a strategy that activates the thinking process. Furthermore, the proper employment of summarizing strategies is known to enhance the quality of education, such as practicing more reading and writing skills.

Writing summaries for notes demonstrates increases in student comprehension and assessment, especially when students are explicitly instructed in how to write summaries (Nist & Simpson, 2000). According to Joyce Melton to summarize a text the learner should follow steps:

a. Read the material (or engage in the learning) with the intent of writing a summary.

S/he should attend to the main ideas and notice how the writing is organized--time order or some other strategy. Headings, subheadings, and topic sentences can help the student recognize the main ideas and may help him/her recognize how the selection is organized

b. Put his/her ideas in their own words as they read.

Maybe every paragraph or two, s/he should retell to him/herself the information that s/he just read.

c. Collapse examples and details into categories.

Use clear, concise, general statements to describe these grouped ideas or categories together.

d. Use the same organizational strategy as the original author.

In other words, if the original information is presented in chronological order, the student should use time order to summarize the information.

e. Should remember that a good summary isn't a string of facts; it is a miniature version of the original text.

S/he should include no unnecessary details by deleting trivial and repetitious information.

f. Integrate the information.

into a coherent piece of writing.

g. Polish the summary.

Rethinking and revising the product.

Another suggestion of summarizing strategies by Raymond in order to build a good summary which is;

a-Erase things that don't matter: delete trivial material that is unnecessary to understanding. Only write down important points. If it is not something that will help you understand or remember, then don't write it down.

b-Erase things that repeat: delete redundant material. In note taking, time and space are precious. If a word or phrase says basically the same thing you have already written down, and then don't write it again

c-Trade, general terms for specific names: substitute super ordinate terms for lists. Focus on the big picture. Long, technical lists are hard to remember. If one word will give you the meaning, then less is more.

d-Select a topic sentence, or invent one if it is missing: topic sentences state the main idea. Select or write down a topic sentence to focus your study on the main idea. (2006).

1.4. Summary Writing Guide

In summary writing, the student asked to condense a selected area of a text, these are some steps for guiding the writer to produce his/her summary easily and correctly.

1.4.1. Identify and Organize the Main Idea and Important Information

Step 1

Think to yourself-"What was the main idea?" Write it down.

Step 2

Think to yourself-"What important things did the writer say about the main idea?"

Write down the important things that the writer said.

Step 3

Go back and check to make sure you understood what the main idea was and the important things the writer said about this.

Step 4

Think to yourself-"What is the main idea or topic that I am going to write about?" Write a topic sentence for your summary.

Step 5

Think to yourself-"How should I group my ideas?" Put a 1 next to the idea you want to be first, put a 2 next to the idea you want to be second, and so on.

Step 6

Think to yourself-"(1) Is there any important information that I left out or (2) is there any unimportant information that I can take out?"

Step 7

Write a summary about what you read.

Step 8

Read your summary and think to yourself-"Is there anything that is not clear?" rewrite your summary (if necessary).

1.4.2. Clarifying and Revising the Summary

Step 9

Ask your classmate to read your summary and ask him to tell you if there is anything that is not clear. Rewrite your summary (if necessary).

1.5. The Teachability of Summarizing

According to Goodman (1994) to teach students how to summarize, they can follow several simple precepts; teachers can help their students learn to select the important ideas and to condense text, and they need special help to develop their ability to summarize. Teaching summarizing is no small undertaking; it's one of the hardest strategies for students to grasp, and one of the hardest strategies for teacher to teach. He/she has to repeatedly model it and give students ample time and opportunities to practice it. But it is such a valuable strategy and competency. Can we imagine the students succeeding in school without being able to break down content into manageable small succinct pieces? We ask students to summarize all the time, but we're terrible about teaching them good ways to do this. Here are a few ideas. This strategy is truly about equipping your students to be lifelong learners.

- After students have used selective undertaking on a selection, have them turn the sheet over or close the handout packet and attempt to create a summary paragraph of what they can remember of the key ideas in the piece. They should only look back at their underlining when they reach a point of being stumped. They can go back and forth between writing the summary and checking their underlining several times until they have captured the important ideas in the article in the single paragraph.

- Have students write successively shorter summaries, constantly refining and reducing their written piece until only the most essential and relevant information remains. They can start off with half a page; then try to get it down to two paragraphs; then one paragraph; then two or three sentences; and ultimately a single sentence.
- Teach students to go with the newspaper mantra: have they used the key words or phrases to identify only Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.
- Take articles from the newspaper, and cut off their headlines. Have students practice writing headlines for (or matching the severed headlines to) the "headless" stories.
- Sum It Up: Widdowson of Surry County Schools in North Carolina shared this strategy. How's it work? You have students imagine they are placing a classified ad or sending a telegram, where every word used costs them money. Tell them each word costs 10 cents, and then tell them they can spend "so much." For instance, if you say they have \$2.00 to spend, then that means they have to write a summary that has no more than 20 words. You can adjust the amount they have to spend, and therefore the length of the summary, according to the text they are summarizing. Consider setting this up as a learning station, with articles in a folder that they can practice on whenever they finish their work early or have time when other students are still working.(Dulin, 2011).

Students need special instruction in summarization, because it is very different from other kinds of writing. Most writing requires the generation of main ideas and details and the careful planning of content and structure summarizing, however, summarizing based on material that has already been written. The summary writer must know about and learn how we summarize. Teaching students to summarize is well worth the effort because it can help students to understand texts and even to recognize when the meaning is unclear. In addition,

the effort to identify main ideas while summarizing can help students remember those ideas (Murrell and Suber, 1987).

Summarizing can be influenced by many factors; at least there are two types of thinking which are needed for summarizing. Starting by **selection process**; judgments must be made about what text information should be included or rejected. The second is a **reduction process**; ideas must be condensed by substituting general ideas for lower level and more detailed ones (Johnson 1983). The characteristics of the text are important; it is easier to select important ideas from certain types of text, such as narratives, than from others, such as expositions. Also, the longer of the text the more selection and condensation are required, and the more complex the text, the more judgments are needed to decide which ideas are important. Second, the presence or absence of the text while summarizing can influence the thinking. If students are allowed to look at the text while summarizing, they will have more “mental space”; they will have a clear image on the text for the selection and condensation processes; (Hidi and Anderson 1987).

Research shows three trends in the teaching of summarizing. One is teaching a set of summarization rules to be applied to texts (Brown and Day 1983). Another is the use of summarizing as a way of monitoring and ensuring comprehension (Palinscar 1985, Palinscar and Brown 1985, Roehler and Duffy 1984). A third, increasingly popular approach is to teach textbook content with the use of summarizing techniques to ensure that the content is understood. Graphic organizers such as charts and matrices have been particularly effective (Chicago Board of Education 1984. Jones et al 1985).

1.5.1. Teachers' Role

The interest about summarizing has been influenced the classroom. Teachers' guides are just beginning to provide guidelines for teaching students to produce summaries (Bereiter et al 1989).

- **Choose the right text**

Text characteristics greatly influence how well student's summarize. To ensure that a text is simple enough for beginning summarizers.

- **Choose a short excerpt**

Students can begin summarizing quite early if they work with short text segments identifying topic sentences and determining main ideas are easier when students work with short excerpts. As students improve, they can practice on increasingly longer texts.

- **Choose an easy type of text**

Students should first summarize narratives because they are less difficult summarization sessions should always be followed by discussions about how the students summarized and what information they considered important and why. Such reflection is richer when students are dealing with a text they understood. Once students can summarize narratives, they can move on to more difficult genres.

- **Choose a less complex text**

Students should first summarize texts that have familiar concepts and ideas. These texts should also be well organized so that important text elements are obvious (Armbruster1984). Once students have a sense of what a well organized text is like, they can more easily learn to summarize difficulties texts. It is very important to let

the students see the text while summarizing to remember it and practice the summarizing technique at the same time, so they can more easily check their understanding later. After this practice, they are going to be able to summarize without the text in view.

1.5.2. How Summarizing Skill Develops

The major difference between adults' and childrens' summarizing skills is the ability to select the important ideas in a text, the ability to summarize develops so slowly (Brown and Day, 1983; Garner 1882; Hare and Borchardt, 1984).

The strategy of selecting topic sentences in order to summarize is not within the repertoire of young children create such sentences, when they are not explicitly stated in the text, only expert writers have shown great skill in inventing topic sentences around which they build their summaries (Brown and day 1983. Graner and McCaleb, 1985).

Explain for the students that the purpose of summarizing is to restate information in a way that includes all the important information, is brief, and is in the same order with the original text structure. The summary of a story will be different than the summary of expository material. Expository material may have one of the following predominant organizational patterns: descriptive, problem/solution, compare/contrast, sequential, main idea/detail, cause/effect.in addition to Identify a short selection for modeling. Choose a selection that is a clear example of a particular text structure (Day, J.D. 1980).

1.6. Summarizing and Note Taking

Note taking is the practice of recording information captured from a transient source, such as an oral discussion at a meeting, or a lecture (Cary and Calson, 1999). In addition, note taking is an important skill for students, especially at the university level.

Furthermore, it is writing down pieces of information in a systematic way to control the amount of information that is delivered which can be daunting and confusing.

Note taking is a related strategy that teachers use to support student learning. Without explicit instruction in note taking, however, many students simply write down words or phrases word for word, without analysis (or good effect). Successful note-takers summarize to arrive at a nugget of meaning, which they are much more likely to retain. Students also benefit from using their notes as a document of their learning. Teachers can prompt students to review and refine their notes, particularly when it is time to prepare for an exam, write a research students write notes during lectures, either on handouts produced by a lecturer or separately. They also take notes in tutorials and seminars and when reading independently. But why do students write notes? A number of writers and commentators like Cottrell (2003); Sinfield and Burns (2003); and Lowes, Peters and Turner (2004) offer similar reasons and explanations for writing and keeping notes:

- 1) Notes act as a summary or reinforcement of the main points of what you read, heard or saw; they are also an essential record of where information came from (for referencing purposes). They also remind you of other things you should do to continue learning, e.g. sources to check out; action to take.
- 2) They are an aid to memory. If you summarize in your own words, this can help you to remember the subject better, particularly in exams.
- 3) Notes are, therefore, useful for future revision purposes, particularly in preparation for exams or writing assignments.
- 4) Notes also can help you to concentrate on the lecture or reading; the note writing process can help you overcome distraction and can encourage you to become a more active, rather than passive, learner.

Conclusion

Using summarizing at the end of the lesson is also an active strategy, but it needs organization such as the learner should choose a summarizing strategy that encourages him to be cognitively active in summarizing. In addition, students must do summarizing themselves for constructing meaning and based on their needs, the content and/or the circumstances choose thoughtful and purposeful summarizing strategies. Putting into consideration that the student should know when planning the summarizing strategy like; which strategy should he/she uses for this lesson? Will this strategy evaluate the quality of what students have learned? Will the strategy enable students to condense important information into their own words? Will the strategy help to solidify understanding? Will the strategy provide students with the opportunity to communicate and identify key elements of the lesson or text and condense the important information into their own words? Can students use this strategy to summarize a variety of texts for a variety of purposes?

Summarizing is “procedural knowledge.” If students are expected to become proficient in procedural knowledge, they need to be able to “practice.” Mastering a skill or process requires a fair amount of focused practice. Practice sessions initially should be spaced very closely together. Over time, the intervals between sessions can be increased. Students also need feedback on their efforts and while practicing, students should adapt and shape what they have learned. After all those steps of summarizing technique the student can evaluate his summary production by asking some important questions; does it convey the information accurately? Is it too narrow or too broad? Does it convey all of the important elements? Does it convey too much? Are the ideas in the right sequence? Would someone else using this summary gain all he needed to know to understand the subject? Did the student leaves out his opinion and just report an undistorted essence of the original content? Did he use his own words and style?

Chapter Two: Reading and Writing Skills

Introduction

Reading and summary writing skills are tools which learners use to explore the realm of knowledge as they are required to read more English content and write in English at university level. Hence, there should be a teaching method which helps them understand what they read and summarize what they have read. The present chapter deals with the importance of reading and writing skills in student's revision and preparations for the exams.

2.1. An Overview on Reading and Summary Writing

One of the most important techniques is reading and memorizing, then writing summaries of notes in order to have short version of main notes (Richard 1999). Learners without good English reading and summary writing skills will experience difficulties in their learning process. They will not be able to make notes in class, understand what they are reading, summarize in writing what they have read or produce the required piece of work as assigned by the instructor from course materials and the various online sources (Charoenwongsak 2005). Recognizing the importance of reading and summary writing skills, Language Institute incorporated them as a core content of all English courses. Nevertheless, it appears that a sizable number of students remain without good summary writing skill. Their summary would usually be a repetition of sections of the read article without thorough understanding of it. Given this lack of ability to write summaries, students would feel dejected to read and develop negative attitude towards writing. As such, it is necessary to find a useful teaching method which can help students develop their reading and summary writing skills (Kitchakarm, 2010).

Summarizing technique would appear to be useful especially in the area of reading because many students identified as learning disabled have been found to be less able to

identify main ideas (Wong, 1979), have more difficulty in summarizing text (Winograd, 1984), and have more difficulty monitoring their learning (Pressley, Johnson, & Symons, 1987) than normally achieving students. Training programs in these areas are based on the use of a cognitive task analysis that identifies the processes engaged in by successful readers. Furthermore, a typical training sequence proceeds from modeling the teacher's instructions to overt rehearsal, and finally to covert rehearsal. This instructional sequence is designed to help the learner acquire the skills necessary to guide and control performance on the target reading task. Summary skills strategies were developed because the summarization of text is particularly useful for those readers who cannot spontaneously use comprehension strategies (Dee-Lucas & DiVesta, 1980; Hidi & Anderson, 1986).

2.2. Reading Skill

Giving a clear, straightforward definition of reading is not an easy matter. Many writers and researchers in the field of psychology, linguistics and language teaching gave different definitions about what reading is, how it takes place.

2.2.1. Definition of Reading

Gough and Hoover (1996, p.3) define 'reading' as a twofold process: decoding and comprehension. They see, "Decoding and comprehension[...] are the two halves of reading [...] for neither decoding in the absence of comprehension, nor comprehension in the absence of decoding, leads to any amount of reading.[....] Literacy - reading ability- can be found only in the presence of both decoding and comprehension". 'Decoding' is "the word recognition process that transforms print to words" (Kamhi and Catts, 2002, p.45), and 'comprehension' means "understanding the message that the print conveys" (Nation, 2005, p.41).

Reading is a complex activity that involves both word recognition, the processor perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language; and comprehension,

the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected paragraphs Goodman (1994). The reading process starts with a visual activity being performed by the reader. First, the reader recognizes the language s/he is reading in .Then, the brain processes the information and gives it logical significance. Some other approaches to reading exaggerate the importance of word recognition over Comprehension. Adams (1990, p.102) asserts that “decoding the words of the text separately is important to build an overall understanding of the text”. Goodman (1973) on the other hand contends that successful reading is not based on simple decoding of the script symbols, but it is established on more solid grounds constructed of a number of reading comprehension strategies for extracting meaning from any type of text, including also context cues and linguistic forms. Furthermore, Alderson (1984) states that “reading is a matter of making sense of written language rather than decoding print to sound “,he then describes understanding as a basis rather than an outcome of successful reading ,and claims that readers will not be able to comprehend any passage without their own understanding of the world, experience and prior knowledge.

Goodman(1973) agree that reading cannot be simply a word –by- word deciphering until meaning is reached ,they emphasis upon text comprehension through using knowledge of the world during the process of reading .

Another definition of reading is that of Nuttal (1982) who states that in reading, the main purpose is the extraction of meaning from writing; our business is with the way the reader gets message from a text. In her opinion, the main important matter is the reader’s ability to decode the message transmitted by the writer. This is related more importantly, to the understanding of how he gets and grasps messages.

Reading is viewed as a complex activity. It is an interactive process between the readers interacting dynamically and the text. Huey (1968, p.6) asserts that to analyze reading is to describe “very many of the most intricate workings of the human mind.” Gates (1949,

p.3) expresses a similar view, stating that reading is “a complex organization of patterns of higher mental processes...[that]...can and should embrace all types of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning, and problem-solving.” Even in this century, the complex view of reading continues to be advanced, as evidenced in a landmark report commissioned by the US National Academy of Education (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson, 1985, p.7) that likens reading to “the performance of a symphony orchestra.”

In contrast, while acknowledging the complexity of its components, reading can be viewed as quite simple in its gross anatomy. Voicing this view, Fries (1963, p.118) argues that while reading certainly does involve the host of higher mental processes, “every one of the abilities listed may be developed and has been achieved by persons who could not read...[as] they are all matters of the uses of language and are not limited to the uses of reading.” In this simple view, what distinguishes reading is that the reader exercises such abilities in response to graphic rather than acoustic signals. Stated simply, this view holds that reading consists of only two components, one that allows language to be recognized through a graphic representation, and another that allows language to be comprehended.

In addition to Fries (1963), there are others who propose such a simple view of reading. To cite a few, Calfee and Venezky (1970, p.273) hold: Competency in reading is defined by two factors: overall reading ability as measured by a general reading test which, we will assume, taps basic reading skills, and the w-o ratio - the ratio of comprehension of written materials to that of oral materials. Commenting on the proposed ratio of written to oral comprehension, Carroll (1977, p.5) notes: [...] if the ratio is high, the youngster is able to read up to the level of his language comprehension, but if the ratio is low, one may infer that the youngster is having trouble with decoding or some other aspect of his behavior in the presence of printed language.

2.2.2. Models of Reading

There are various theories and models surrounding the process of reading. Relying on the decomposition of reading, theorists argue over bottom-up (letter to semantic) versus top-down (semantic to letter) approaches to reading. Some of their theories are concerned primarily with decoding of print (Adams, 1990; Goodman, 1967; and Laberge and Samuels, 1974). Other theories are more involved with comprehension (Rummelhart, 1985) or reader-text interaction (Rosenblatt, 1985).

2.2.2.1. Bottom-up Models.

It is a traditional view which holds that novice readers acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub skills that sequentially build toward comprehension ability. Reading in this view is basically a matter of decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents in the quest for making sense of the text. It is a model which takes in stimuli from the outside world letters and words, for reading and deal with that information with little recourse to higher level knowledge.

It is easy to remark that the proponents of this model emphasize on the importance of decoding in the reading process. Allington clearly states it by arguing that “All readers must acquire automatic and proficient strategies for the integrative use of the multiple cue sources available in written text” (1991, p.372). That is, when a reader is unable to decode, creating meaning from print becomes a daunting task.

2.2.2.2. Top-down Models.

The top-down reading model suggests that processing of a text begins in the mind of a reader, with the meaning of a text based on one’s prior-knowledge. This model is based on cues readers use to make predictions of meaning, the cues are graph aponic, semantic syntactic, and pragmatic (Davies, 1995, p.175). Theories that stress top-down processing hold that readers form hypotheses about which words they will encounter and take in only just

enough visual information to test their hypotheses (e.g., Goodman 1967, Smith 1971). Carrell and Eisterhold (1983, p.557) argue that top-down processing helps the listeners/readers to resolve ambiguities or to select between alternative possible interpretations of the incoming data.

Researchers, however, are still investigating the ways through which these two kinds of knowledge interact with each other during the process of reading. Chall, an advocate of the phonics approach, is known for her continued struggle with the war between “those advocating phonics instruction [bottom-up processing] and those advocating whole language [top-down processing], which relies in part on instruction using sight words” (Abraham, 2002 1). Chall (1967) argues that a “systematic direct teaching of decoding should be part of initial reading instruction” (Orasanu, 1986, p.114). Carrell and Eisterhold (1983, p.562) state that readers can improve reading comprehension by expanding their vocabularies and gaining greater control over complex syntactic structures. Contemporary insights believe that grammar facilitates learning and its presentations to learners should be through “contextualization of linguistic forms in situations of natural use” (Hedge, 2003, p.159).

2.2.2.3. Interactive Models.

These are models of reading where bottom-up and top-down processes work together to ensure the accurate and rapid processing of information. It is proposed by Rumelhart(1985). He examines reading as an interactive process which includes various components from letter-level knowledge, letter-cluster knowledge, lexical-level knowledge, syntactic-level knowledge, and semantic-level knowledge. Decoding skills are generally thought of as mainly involving the initial components while comprehension involves the higher level components. In other words, this model of reading involves aspects of automaticity- that is, a reader becomes more proficient in decoding, and less attention is devoted to this skill so that more attention is freed to examine comprehension issues.

2.2.2.4. Transactional Models.

The transactional theory of reading is a model developed by Louise Rosenblatt. Some of the advantages of this approach are summed up by explaining that the transactional model represents the meaning influences interaction between the text, the reader, and the author, with the impact of one on the other studied in a vacuum, we need to see the reading act as an event involving a particular individual and a particular text, happening at a particular time, under particular circumstances. We can still distinguish the elements, not as separate entities but as aspects of phases of a dynamic process (Rosenblatt, 1985, p.100).

Reading is treated as an event (Rosenblatt 1994, p.16). Furthermore, the transactional approach links her theory to broader theories of behavior and scientific method that emphasize the inter-connectedness of human activity.

2.2.3. Types of Reading

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

2.2.3.1. Extensive Reading.

Pointed out to by Brumfit (1977, quoted in Nuttal, 1982, p.23) as ‘reading for fluency extensive reading brings about many conflicting definitions. Some use it to refer to “skimming and scanning activities,” others associate it to quantity of material. Hafiz and Tudor (1989, p.5), in considering extensive reading, assume that this type of reading, being of a great pedagogical value, emphasizes the importance of the learners’ exposure to large quantities of meaningful and interesting L2 material. In the long run, this would produce a beneficial effect on the learners’ command of the L2. Hedge (2003) believes that extensive

reading varies according to learners' motivation and school resources. He also states that it enables them to achieve their independency by reading either in class or at home, through sustained silent reading (SSR). Carrell and Eisterhold (1983, p.567) argue that SSR activity can be effective in helping learners become self-directed agents seeking meaning, provided a SSR program is "based on student-selected texts so that the students will be interested in what they are reading. Students select their own reading texts with respect to content, level of difficulty, and length."

2.2.3.2. Intensive Reading.

In intensive (or reflected) reading, learners usually read a page to explore the meaning and to be acquainted with writing mechanisms. During this type of reading, the learner gains text comprehension to, then, be able to form a critical view and is, thus, able to state well founded opinion about the content, the arguments, the language used, the message, the intention and the form of a text Thririan (1996). Intensive reading focuses on details and analysis. For Nuttal (1982, p.23), it requires "the student to pay great attention to the text. The aim of intensive reading is to arrive at a profound and detailed understanding of the text." Hafiz and Tudor (1989, p.5) differentiate between extensive and intensive reading, asserting that in intensive reading activities, learners are in the main exposed to relatively short texts which are used either to exemplify specific aspects of the lexical, syntactic or discorsal system of the L2, or to provide the basis for targeted reading strategy practice; the goal of extensive, on the other hand, is to "flood" learners with large quantities of L2 input with few or possibly no specific tasks to perform on this material.

2.2.3.3. Skimming.

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

2.2.3.4. Scanning.

Scanning is a quick unfocused reading where the reader searches for a particular detail such as a name, a date, a number ...etc (Wallace, 1980, p.27). Baudoin et. al., (1997, p.22) advise to follow some steps when scanning a text for a specific bit of information:

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

2.2.4. Reading Means Getting Meaning From Text

Reading, from this perspective, implies making meaning through activating relevant background knowledge, asking questions about the material at hand and setting potential answers (Smith, 2004, p.215). According to Smith (1985, p.103), the reader's prior experiences, intentions and expectations (non-visual information in the brain) are more critical in reading than letters, words and sentences (visual-information) on the page. Schema theory is what Smith is referring to here. Schemata are mental frames of all one's past life experiences stored in memory. These can be retrieved and called into play to comprehend new events comprising reading. In their turn, new experiences are framed into schemata to be activated and used to make sense of further situations and readings (Chandler, p.1995).

Grellet (1981, p.7) emphasizes the role of schematic knowledge in “guessing” the content of a text. She points out that if a reader uses all that he knows to predict the sense of a passage, he will capture it successfully Davies (1995, p.1). On her part, affirms that reading is a private mental activity requiring from the text processor to comprehend as well as to respond to the writer’s message. Responding to print, as stated by Alexander and Jelton (in Mokhtari and Reichard, 2002, p.251), is displayed mainly through the adoption and monitoring of suitable strategies. Learning from print, thus, appeals comprehenders to be “strategically engaged in the construction of meaning” (ibid.). These operations range from using phonics, to syntax, to semantics, to discourse to meet cognition (Carrell and Grabe, 2002, p.342).

Gromer and Weiss (1990, p.7) confirm that constructing meaning is at the heart of reading. They add that to be successful in this construction, the reader has to interact with the text elements using his past knowledge along with a sense of decision making; i.e., the reader has to gain awareness of when he succeeds or fails to understand, and how he can repair comprehension breakdowns. It can be noticed that each definition above deals with one aspect or another of the reading process. However, there is a ‘spongy’ description that absorbs the good out of them all. It is Marinak, *et. al.*,’s (1997, p.2):

Reading is a dynamic process in which the reader interacts with the text to construct meaning. Inherent in constructing meaning is the reader’s ability to activate prior knowledge, use reading strategies and adapt to the reading situation.

This conception of reading seems to be impressive and sound. That is the fact because it encompasses all the perspectives from which reading has been seen. It accounts for Gromer and Weiss’s interaction with text to construct meaning and monitor comprehension relying on Smith’s import of background knowledge, Davies’s responses to the reading event in Alexander and Jelton’s strategic way, utilising Carrell and Grabe’s diverse operations

including Grellet's guessing strategy. Based on these interpretations, theorists have investigated how a person learns to read, reads and understand print. Consequently, numerous reading models have emerged.

2.3. Writing Skill

Writing is an essential skill for effective communication. Learning to write well takes time and practice and steps to follow, it is the major means of communication within an organization.

2.3.1. Definition of Writing

According to Smith (1994), writing consists of words and these words are put together in a particular order to make sentences; these sentences are then grouped together into paragraphs in a coherent way which means that the relationships between sentences is clear, and the transition from one sentence to the other is easy and the reader should follow the thought without difficulty in a text. In short, it should be there a fundamental logic and a consistency in a text. Galko (2001) acknowledged that in order to match this coherence, and this easy flow from sentence to sentence the writer should rely on the arrangement of the sentences in a clear order. One way to create this agreement is to be cohesive.

Baugh (1993) stated that cohesion refers to the well organization of the grammatical features in a text that enable the parts to fit together. According to Creme and Lea (2008), cohesion is concerned with the way in which parts of written texts fit together to make a whole rather than a series of incoherent spots. This is mainly essential when writers write an assignment and they have to focus on the linking pieces they use. These devices attach the thoughts in one sentence to the previous and to the following one. They also connect the smaller components of the sentence together, the phrases and clauses. Likewise, they join items to each other. The connecting devices assist to hold the argument along and provide

arrangement to writing. According to Crystal (1998, p.13); “Grammar is what gives sense to language. . . Sentences make words yield up their meanings. Sentences actively create the study of grammar”. This means that writing clear and informative sentences is as much art as it is the skilled use of grammatical rules which convey the intended meaning and capture the reader’s interest (Baugh, 1993). According to Radford (2004) the incorporation of grammar in the writing process should be emphasized because of the importance it brings to students. However, some writers generally fail when applying the grammatical essentials such as parts of speech, punctuation and punctuation style, sentence and sentence patterns, spelling, and capitalization on one hand, and the use of style consideration like composing and combining sentences, brevity, clarity accuracy, and parallel structure on the other hand. Parallel structure or parallelism is one of the major problems that writers confront (Creme & Mary 2008).

Writing is a way of communication that uses graphic symbols; that is, we combine letters that represent our sounds when we speak. These letters are combined to form words, and words are also combined to form sentences and so on. Byrne (1991, p.1); Whereas, Crystal (2006, p.257) specifies that: “writing is a way of communicating which uses a system of visual marks made on some kind of surface. It is one kind of graphic expression.” For Bloomfield, “Writing is not language, but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks.” (Bloomfield; cited in Crystal 1994, p.178).

The meaning of writing does not stop on the boundaries of graphic symbols or visual marks, nevertheless, these symbols have to be arranged according to certain conventions and rules to form words, and from these words we form sentences until we produce what we call a text that really communicates a message and expresses our thoughts. Writing is not an easy task, but it is not so difficult. Writing needs desire and pressing from the writer, so that he can express his thoughts, feelings or points of view towards a given topic. Moreover, writing is one of the macro skills which need to be learned. “Writing is not a

natural activity” (White, 1981; cited in Nunan 1996, p.36). This means that, writing is not a spontaneous activity or a skill which the child born with; i.e., we have to be taught how to write; otherwise, we will never be good writers. In addition, writing needs conscious and mental effort because it is a process where we have to consider various aspects such as: punctuation, structure of sentences and choice of words simultaneously. Rivers and Temperley (1979, p.263) point out: “to write so that one is really communicating a message isolated in place and time, is an art that requires consciously directed effort and deliberate choice in language”.

Another thing which is very important in the nature of writing is that we write for a reader. So, there is another actor implicated in the whole process. That is we translate our thoughts into written language as a channel of communication with a reader who is absent and in sometimes not known. To this end, we are obliged to be clearer when we write than when we speak. Moreover, we have to make sure that what has been written will be understood by the reader without any further help from us. In addition, in writing there are no interchanging participants, and it is almost impossible to measure the effect of the message or the text on the reader because no interaction and no immediate feedback are possible.

2.3.2. Stages of Writing Process

Probably the model of writing widely accepted by EFL learners is the original planning writing-reviewing framework established by Flower and Hayes (1981). According to Zamel (1983; in Hyland, 2003, p.11); this model sees writing as a “non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning.” Hyland (2003, p.11); explains that these stages do not occur in a linear sequence; they are recursive, interactive, and potentially simultaneous; i.e. all the work can be reviewed, evaluated and revised, even before any text has been produced at all.

2.3.2.1. Prewriting.

The writer gathers, generates information and plays with ideas during the prewriting stage. Prewriting techniques may include brainstorming, free writing, clustering, mapping or listing. The writer can also use graphic organizers like charts, story maps, diagrams or clusters. Prewriting is an important phase in the writing process because as stated by Parson (1985, p.105): "...students who are encouraged to engage in an array of prewriting experiences have a greater chance for writing achievement than those enjoined to 'get to work' on their writing without this kind of preparation."

According to Murray (1988, p.16), prewriting exercises do not only help students to find something to say about a specific topic, they also help them improve their writing skills in that they provide them with opportunities to generate ideas and write with confidence. He states: "practice in writing, no matter how short the exercise is to make yourself confident about your writing and to improve your skills" (ibid).

Usually, the activity of generating ideas ends up by making a plan or an outline. Planning a piece of writing is generally made by reading, organizing and classifying the prewriting notes. An effective plan could guarantee organization, clarity and coherence for the written form since it gives direction to the work by following a logical order in dealing with ideas and information. In emphasizing the importance of planning, Zemach and Rumisek (2003) match the importance of an outline in writing to the importance of skeleton in body. They say that just as the skeleton supports your body without being able to see it, the outline will support your writing by providing its structure.

In the writing class, it is crucial to make students aware of the importance of the prewriting stage. Before getting started to write, it is always helpful that the learner takes a moment and thinks about what he knows about a given topic. The prewriting activity could be practiced in groups or with the whole class participation when it is a group work or

individually when the writing assignment is individual. Here, teachers are advised to encourage students spend much more time in the prewriting stage because, we believe, it is the activity that reinforces the different steps of the process and ensures a more acceptable product.

2.3.2.2. Drafting.

Drafting is the ‘physical act of writing’ as referred to by Lindermann (1987, p.26). It is the real writing stage where the writer develops his topic on paper. Hedge (1988, p.89) defines drafting as the stage where the writer “puts together the pieces of the text through developing ideas into sentences and paragraphs within an overall structure.”

When writing the first draft, the student writer should focus on content only and forget about language and mechanical aspects such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. He must write freely and try to find the best way to communicate his ideas. Concerning the drafting stage Galko (2002, p.49) states:

Drafting means writing a rough, or scratch, form of your paper. It is a time to really focus on the main ideas you want to get across in your paper. When drafting, you might skip sections or make notes to yourself to come back and add more examples in certain spots or to check your facts later. As you draft, you do not need to worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. You will have time to refine these mechanical parts of your paper at a later stage.

It is worth noting here that drafting should be repeated as many times as necessary until reaching a good draft in the view of the teacher who plays an essential role by taking part in the writing process. While drafting, students are helped to use right words and ideas and they are encouraged to work individually on a composition; however, group composition is a very important technique that helps them to overcome the difficulties of writing through collaborative work where they might discuss structures and language uses.

2.3.2.3. Reviewing.

Reviewing is the stage that always follows the drafting stage and comes before the final stage in the writing process which is editing. The reviewing stage is the process of looking again and discovering a new vision of the writing produced in drafting. It is the stage during which the writer corrects mechanical errors and realizes substantial changes in his writing Wallace, G., & Bott, D. (1989).

Reviewing may involve additions and deletions; changes in word use, sentence structure, and organization as it is stated by Grenville (2001, p.153): “[as you revise], you will be looking for changes that will help readers understand the information better or be more convinced by your argument. Once you have found the places that need fixing, you have to decide whether to cut, add or move.”

Brown and Hood (1989) see that reviewing is the stage where writers check that they have said what they wanted to say and they have said it in a clear and appropriate way. Moreover, they stress that reviewing includes more than only checking spelling, grammar and punctuation, it also includes checking that content and purpose are clear and appropriate for the reader in the particular writing situation (ibid: 20). According to Johnson (2008), reviewing is the heart of the writing, and it could be more productive of advanced final products if it includes input from teachers and/or peers. Indeed, peer review is a key classroom activity that enhances the students’ ability to organize texts and increases their awareness of the importance of readership and that of purpose.

2.3.2.4. Editing.

Editing is the stage where the draft is polished; it is the final step before handing out the final draft. The writer gives attention to mechanics such as punctuation, spelling and grammar. Editing involves the careful checking of the text to ensure that there are no errors of

spelling, punctuation, word choice and word order. To shed more light on the drafting phase Johnson (2008, p.167) states:

Basically 'editing' means making your piece as reader-friendly as possible by making the sentences flow in a clear, easy-to-read way. It also means bringing your piece of writing into line with accepted ways of using English: using the appropriate grammar for the purposes of the piece, appropriate punctuation and spelling, and appropriate paragraphing.

2.4. Reasons for Teaching Writing

Almost all human beings grow up speaking their first language (and sometimes second or third). Spoken language, for a child/learner is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned. Harmer (2004, p.3) agrees that writing should be learned because it could not be naturally acquired like speaking, though, he provides more reasons to teach writing for EFL learners which include reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right. Harmer (1998, p.79) illustrates the reasons for teaching writing as follows:

- Reinforcement: Some learners acquire languages in a purely oral/aural way, but most of them benefit greatly from seeing the language written down.
- Language development: The mental activity learners go through in order to construct proper written texts is all part of the ongoing learning experience.
- Learning style: For many learners, producing language in a slower way is something they appreciate. Writing provides time and ease for learners more than face-to-face communication does.
- Writing as a skill: Learners need to know how to write essays, how to put written reports together and how the writing system operates (for example, in terms of conventions such as punctuation, paragraph construction) just as they need to know how to pronounce language appropriately.

2.4.1. Effective Writing

Writing in English within an academic context requires some criteria of acceptability relative to different aspects of writing which include organization, vocabulary, language use, punctuation, accurate capitalization and paragraphing. According to Starkey (2004), an effective piece of writing is the one that is organized, clear, and coherent, with accurate language and effective word choice.

2.4.2. Organization

In the process of writing, information should be presented to readers in a structured format; even short pieces of writing have regular, predictable patterns of organization. The striking advantage of organization is to help the reader to believe what you are saying, and to willingly follow your lead. Starkey (2004, p.2) states: by following [an organized method of writing], you will guide your reader from your first to last sentence. He or she will be able to see how the various points you make in your [piece of writing] work together and how they support your thesis.

Organization is usually decided upon through certain techniques that precede the actual act of writing. In other words, the writer decides about the organization of his written work before engaging into the physical act of writing through some prewriting techniques including mainly free-writing and brainstorming. The use of the prewriting techniques helps at making an effective plan that guarantees the organization of the written work because a plan is usually made after reading and classifying the notes gathered from the prewriting activity.

According to Chelsa (2006), Creme and Lea (2008), and Galko (2002), free-writing and brainstorming are effective for shaping the learner's thoughts allowing some time to make connection with the assigned subject noting everything and anything that comes to mind. The

two preceding techniques are similar in that they are timed, and flowing exercises meant to elicit many thoughts and ideas on a given topic. However, free-writing requires putting whole sentences or phrases on paper whereas brainstorming involves creating a list that might contain various individual thoughts that make sense in a particular order.

2.4.3. Clarity

The learner's goal when writing in an academic context is to convey information, including the fact that he can write well (Starkey, 2004, p.11). Clarity is an essential element of writing the learner should become skilled at in order to make his writing readable, and guarantee that those who read it understand exactly what he means to say. Murray and Hughes (2008, p.86) emphasize the importance of clarity as a fundamental element in making one's writing easy to be read and accessible. According to them, the key to achieve clarity is to make sentences short and to the point, the learner/writer should be relevant, make every word count, and try not to express more than one idea in each sentence.

In order to achieve clarity in writing, according to Starkey (2004, 12-9). The learner should:

- Eliminate ambiguity by avoiding words or phrases that have more than one possible interpretation. The learner should focus on what he means and keep away from any language structure that could mislead the reader.
- Use powerful, precise adjectives and adverbs. One way to accomplish clarity is to use powerful and specific adjectives and adverbs. The right modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) help out the learner to convey his message across in fewer, more accurate words. For example, Chihuahua can take the place of little dog; exhausted can take the place of really tired; and, late can take the place of somewhat behind schedule.

- Be concise, this means getting right to the point without unnecessary spinning around, worthless repetition or wordiness. Starkey (2004, p.15) sees that: “wordiness is boring, and it takes up valuable time and space... there are two equally important approaches to more concise writing: eliminating unnecessary words and phrases, and using active (as opposed to passive) voice whenever possible.” Moreover, he provides two reasons for avoiding repetition of ideas and information in one’s writing:

The first is that unnecessary repetition is a sign of sloppy writing. It is easy to say the same thing a number of times, varying it slightly each time. It is harder to say something well once, and continue writing about your next idea or example. Second, wordiness wastes valuable time and space. If you are writing while the clock is ticking, or are limited to a number of words or pages, say it right the first time and move on. Starkey (2004, p.17).

2.4.4. Coherence

Coherence is an important element in any kind of writing. It is particularly crucial in academic writing, where success or failure may depend upon how clearly the learner has managed to communicate his ideas and points of argument to his reader. No matter how insightful or original those ideas may be, if he is not able to present them in a clear and logical way, their meaning and value is lost. Kane (2000) and Creme and Lea (2008) among others, agree that coherence has a great role in making a good piece of writing. According to them, coherence has to do with arranging and linking one’s ideas in a way that makes them most easily understood by the reader.

Murray and Hughes (2008, p.45) notice that a good writer is the one “who sticks his ideas together as links in a chain, each link connecting the one before it with the one after. If any links are missing, the connections become unclear and the argument structure breaks down.”

2.4.5. Word Choice

The best way for the learner to accurately convey his ideas in writing is to choose the right words. Doing so ensures that the reader understands what the writer is really writing. According to Starkey (2004) and Kane (2000), there are two aspects the learner should consider while choosing the words to be used: denotation and connotation.

Denotation is the basic or literal meaning of a word. Learners should make sure of the correctness of their words, because sometimes some confusion may stem from words that sound or look similar (but have very different meaning), words and usages that sound correct (but in fact are not considered standard English), or words that are misused so often that their usage is thought to be correct. Connotation "is a word's implied meaning which involves emotions, cultural assumptions, and suggestions" (Starkey, 2004, p.21). The learner should confirm that each used word denotes exactly what he intends to it, considering connotation requires the learner thinking beyond the dictionary, to what might be implied or inferred by his writing; for example the following words and phrases all refer to "a young person," but their connotations may be quite different depending, in part, on the context in which they appear: youngster, child, kid, little one, small fry, brat, urchin, juvenile, minor. Some of these words tend to carry favorable connotations (little one), others unfavorable (brat), and still others fairly neutral connotations (child).

According to what has been said before, both denotative and connotative meanings must be considered when making word choice. However, this is not all, the learner should also consider whether the used words might confuse or possibly offend his audience. This means avoiding informal language, clichés and slang words.

2.4.6. Mechanics

In composition, ‘mechanics’ refers to the appearance of words, to how they are spelled or arranged on paper. The fact that the first word of a paragraph is usually indented, for example, is a matter of mechanics (Kane, 2000, p.15). Conventions of writing require that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with full-stop punctuation (period, question mark, or exclamation point). These types of conventions or mechanics are very significant in putting together a good quality piece of writing because no matter how original are the learner’s ideas, if he cannot express them in a clear and accurate manner. Starkey (2004) addressed writing mechanics in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Grammar is a key element not only in writing, but in language as a system of communication in general. Having a good knowledge of the parts speech, the structures of the language and its rhetorical devices and knowing how to manipulate them in order to write comprehensively is what writing requires. Brooks and Penn (1970, p.20) state:

... For one thing, in writing, we must understand the structure of the language, what the parts of speech do, how the words relate to one another, what individual words mean, the rules of grammar and punctuation.

Capitalization and punctuation marks are integral parts of written English. Among other things, “they indicate pauses and sentence boundaries and also eliminate ambiguity. A well punctuated and capitalized piece of writing should make your work easier to read and

understand and will therefore help it make a more favourable impression on your readers” (Murray and Hughes 2008, p.185). Similarly, *spelling* is one of the factors which need to be taken into account by students when dealing with writing, because it is an aspect many teachers in an EFL context focus on when evaluating students work. Correct spelling gives one’s work credibility. Not only will the reader know that one is educated, but also that he is careful about his work.

2. 5. The Connection Between Writing and Reading

Writing and reading are two of the most essential academic and life skills which have a very close relationship. When students read extensively, they become better writers, in that reading provides prior knowledge, ideas and information that help students reach their language, deepen and widen their ideas and conten. At a deeper level, reading helps writers assimilate stylistic choices, tones, structures, norms, grammatical features, rhetorical strategies, markers of cohesion and coherence and so on, which help students improve their style of writing. Thomas (1976) claims that: “a significant relationship existed between writing achievement and the amount and variety of reading experiences.” (Thomas: 1976; cited in Flippo and Caverly 2000, p.15) In addition, Celce-Muria (2001, 224-5) argues:

At the very least, readings provide models of what English language texts look like, and even if not used for the purpose of imitation, they provide input that helps students develop awareness of English language prose style.

Writing-reading relationship is mainly based on communication in that when a writer writes, he is communicating his thoughts, ideas and opinions through this medium. So, the writer needs to make sure that his message is clear and understood by the reader. So, to develop the communicative skill, one needs both writing and reading abilities.

Reading and writing affect how people communicate, what they think is involved in communicating, and what they think is involved in thinking (Farrell, 1977; cited in Flippo and Caverly 2000, p.166). Moreover, both reading and writing are essential tools to build the forms and functions of language. That is, students need to clearly understand the functions of the two modes, to develop their level in the learned language.

Writing and reading are two complementary and similar processes, in that they include similar cognitive processes that are involved in making meaning. Both writing and reading involve generating ideas, planning, drafting, and revising and so on. In their composing reading model Tierney and Pearson (1983) claims that: reading and writing involve similar, shared, linguistic, and cognitive elements. As readers read and writers compose, both plan, draft, align, revise, and monitor as they read and write. (Tierney and Pearson, 1983; in Flippo and Caverly 2000, p.151).

Let's consider revising which is a cognitive process that has an important role in both the writing and the reading skills just as the other cognitive processes have. Revising helps the reader understand the author's text by pausing, thinking, reflecting...etc on what he is reading. For the writer revising helps detect mistakes, clarifies meaning, re-evaluates choices of words and structures...etc. During the revising process, readers should reexamine the text. Similarly, the writer reread, reexamine, revise and reflect on the text by carefully selecting words that convey meaning. (Flippo, F. R and Caverly, C. D 2000, p.152).

From another perspective, reading is an important tool to evaluate the written production. In this type of reading, the writer reads his text critically, so that he detects his problems in grammar, vocabulary choices, and structures and so on. In his model of the process approach Hayes (1996) proposed some essential types of reading in the composing process. One of these types is reading to evaluate, this type is a crucial stage in the composing process in that it enables the writer to produce a good written production, since it helps detect

the different problems in his writing. Weigle (2002, p.27) argues that reading for evaluation purposes is the first type of the Hayes reading types, in which the writer reads his text critically to discover his mistakes and improve his language. Reading for evaluation needs concentration and expertise in the reading skill so that the writer can revise and evaluate errors of content, organization, relevance...etc and not only concentrated on detecting surface errors. So, the writer here needs to be skilled in reading.

Conclusion

Mastering skills like reading and writing needs serious steps to follow and a lot of practice. Over the last ten years researchers have shown that reading and writing are more interdependent than we taught, the relation between these two important skills is very important; which come first is not important as the fact that without one the other cannot exist. Producing summaries leads the learner to improve both reading and writing skills and being more professional.

Part II

Fieldwork

Chapter Three

Analysis of the Results

Introduction:

The present study aims at investigating the impact of using summarizing strategy on students' reading and writing skills. We used the following data gathering tools: questionnaire for students and a classroom observation during the lectures, in addition to an interview with teachers. The results are presented with the discussion and the analysis of the data collected from each one of these instruments.

3.1. Description of the questionnaire

This study investigates the impact of summarizing strategy on students' reading and writing skills, and the benefit of this strategy on revision. The questionnaire of students contains twenty-one items, it is divided into four sections: the students' background information, the students' attitudes towards revision, the students' attitudes towards summarizing technique and students' attitudes toward reading and writing skills. The format selected of items or questions in this questionnaire is "multiple-choice", with more freedom in answering in some questions to express their opinions. The basic aim of the questionnaire is to get students' attitudes, views and opinions especially about summarizing, how they would

evaluate their level in producing from summarizing, and how it will be beneficial for their reading and writing skills, and how they would react if summarizing is going to be used as a learning strategy for facilitating their revision process.

3.2. Study Participants

The data for this study was collected from Third Year LMD students of English at Mohammed kheidar University, Biskra. It has been decided to work particularly with Third Year students because students at this level are supposed to possess a good command of general English language proficiency mainly writing and reading; since they have studied English at university for six semesters. They have some basics about writing, and reading comprehension in addition to some knowledge about summarizing, besides the difficulties of revision according to their number of modules.

The questionnaire was given to a small group of forty students; it was self-administered to the sample in order to save time and effort. The students took twenty minutes to answer all the questions.

I/Section one: Students' background information

Item. 01: Gender

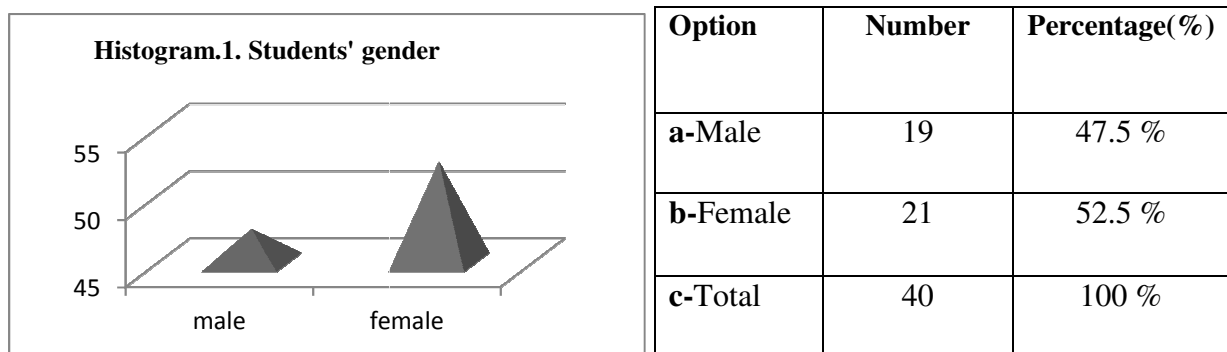
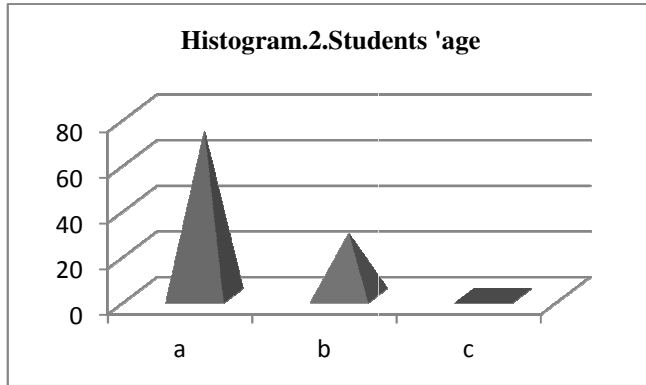


Table.1. Students' gender

We asked this first question to know about the students' gender. It is clearly seen from (Table01) that females overpopulate males. The overrepresentation of females would be

a considerable fact to the study, as it would show whether gender has an impact on students' utility of summarizing

Item.02 : Age

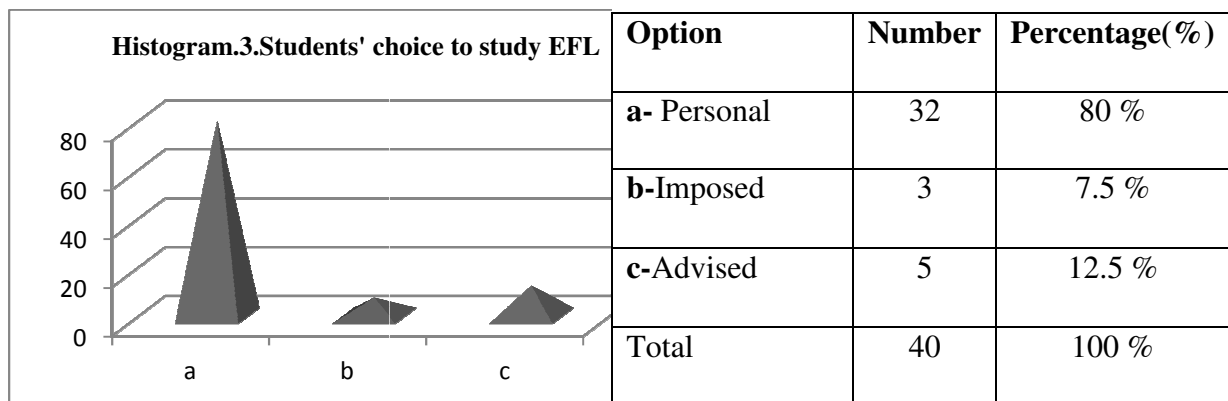


Option	N	%
a-20-25	29	72.5 %
b-26-30	11	27.5 %
c-More than30	0	00 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.2: Students' age

The results show diversity in ages, ranging from 20-30 years. The highest percentage is from twenty to twenty five with 72,5 % of the whole sample, in the second position came those who are aged between twenty six to thirty. This fact demonstrates the tendency of young learners to study foreign languages and this may convey the needed motivation to learn English.

Item.03: Your choice to study EFL is:



Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a- Personal	32	80 %
b-Imposed	3	7.5 %
c-Advised	5	12.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.3.Students' choice to study EFL

The choice of the majority of students is for studying English as personal option while the rest said that being in the English classes was rather a piece of advice or an obligation. Having a high rate of students, who are studying English because of a personal

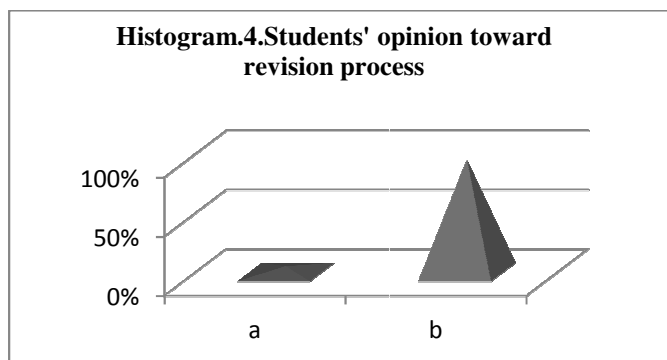
preference, can be advantageous since it would be a source of motivation to learn English and interest to know anything that relates to the language.

*** If personal, why is it so?**

Students, who came to English classes by their own choice, affirmed that they did so because of some main reasons; one is their love and admiration of English language, second is the fact of the position of English language as a world language. So, we can affirm that having reasons are really important to learn English.

II/Section two: Student’s attitudes towards revision:

Item.04: Do you think that the revision process is an easy task?



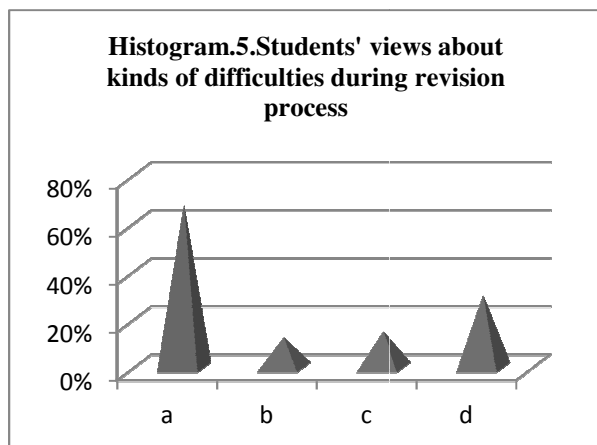
option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Yes	2	05 %
b-No	38	95 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.4.Students' opinion toward revision process

This question was asked in order to know whether or not the revision process for exams is an easy task. The answers reveal that great majority of students with 95 % believe that the revision process for exams is a difficult task.

Item.05: Which kind of difficulties do you face during revising for exams?

Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a- Memorizing	27	67.5 %
b-Lack of	5	12.5 %



understanding		
c-Timing	6	15 %
d-The overloaded program	12	30 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.5.Students' views about kinds of difficulties during revision process

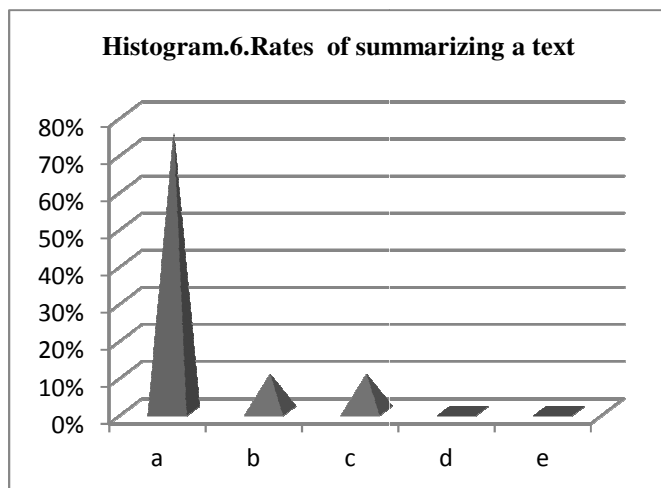
The collected answers confirmed that the students' revision difficulties are mainly due to the lack of memorizing the information (67.5 %), which is probably due to the wrong teaching strategies adopted by their former English teachers who only focused on giving information for covering the syllabus, i.e. the overloaded program which is the second reason stated by our respondents (30 %). The other results about timing and the lack of understanding have marked nearly the same percentage (15 % and 12.5 %), we can relate the lack of understanding to the lack of attending regularly the sessions and the problem of timing related to the students' disability of organize their revision program.

Some students stated that their difficulties in the revision for the exams lie inside the classroom, during the teacher's explanation or dictation; they miss some parts of the lesson in addition to the lack of concentration, and the huge number of students; so the teacher cannot effectively manage the class.

III/Section Three: Students' attitudes towards summarizing technique

Item.06: How often do you summarize a text (handout, lecture, book, etc)

Option	Number	Percentage(%)
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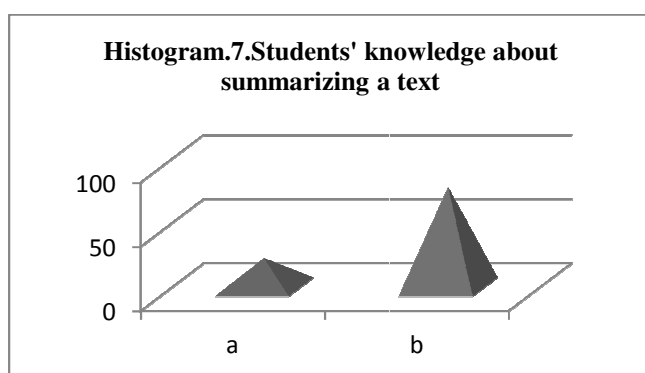


a-Always	30	75 %
b-Often	4	10 %
c-Sometimes	4	10 %
d-Rarely	1	0.25 %
e-Never	1	0.25 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.6.Rates of summarizing a text

The table shows that a great number of students (75%) reported that they always summarize their texts (handout, lecture, book, etc), the ones who sometimes and often summarize are estimated by (10 %). From the results we can affirm that a great majority use summarizing strategy which gives us the impression that it is useful strategy.

Item.07: Do you know how to summarize a text?

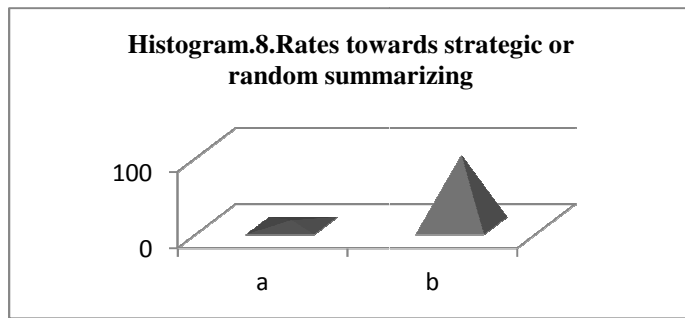


Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Yes	9	22.5 %
b-No	31	77.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.7.Students' knowledge about summarizing a text

Most of the students we questioned (77.5 %) asserted that they do not know how to summarize a text, while the rest (22.5 %) said the opposite.

***If yes, is it:**

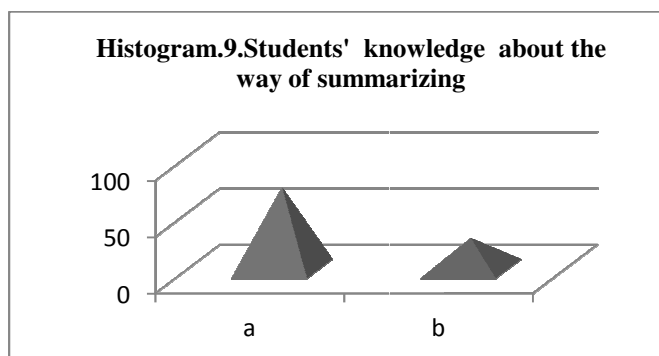


Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a- Strategic	3	07.5 %
b- Random	37	92.5 %
Total	100	100 %

Table.8.rates towards strategic or random summarizing

A great majority of students (92.5 %) stated that they use summarizing in random way without following strategies; however the rest (07.5 %) stated the opposite.

Item.08: Have you been taught how to summarize?



Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Yes	29	72.5 %
b-No	11	27.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.9.Students' knowledge about the way of summarizing

The results of this item show that the majority of students (72, 5%) said that they received summarizing courses during their English classes; however the rest of students

(27.5 %) mentioned that they did not learn how to summarize. This question was asked to know whether the teachers give importance to this strategy and emphasize it, and to see if the syllabuses give importance to the summarizing especially with the written courses.

***If yes, in which level?**

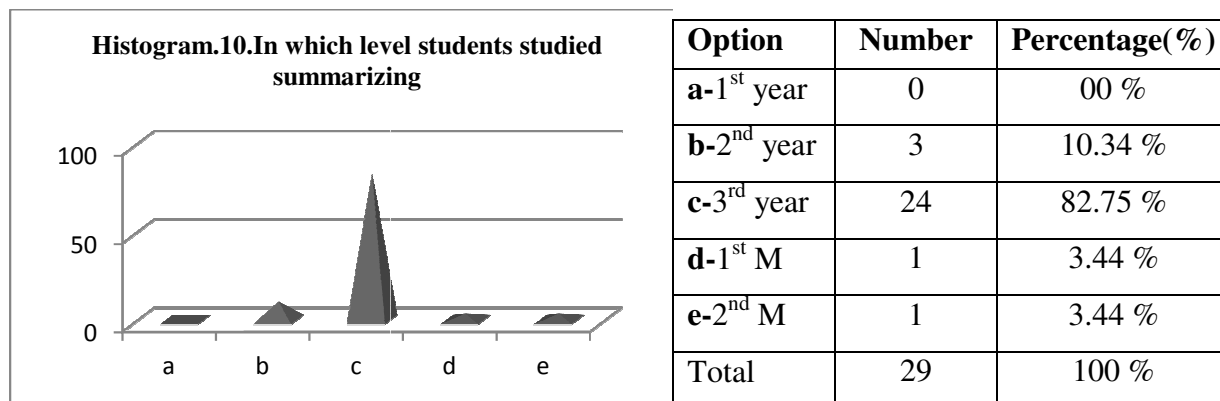


Table.10. In which level students studied summarizing

The results obtained in this item clearly show that a great number of students (82.75 %) stated that they get summarizing courses during the third year; others (10.34 %) said that they received it in second year. From these results we can notice that students' problem in using summarizing is from the absence of getting summarizing courses in early stages because it is a bit late to teach summarizing in third year; however, students' should be exposed to the strategies of summarizing a bit earlier in second year for example.

*** Is it sufficient?**

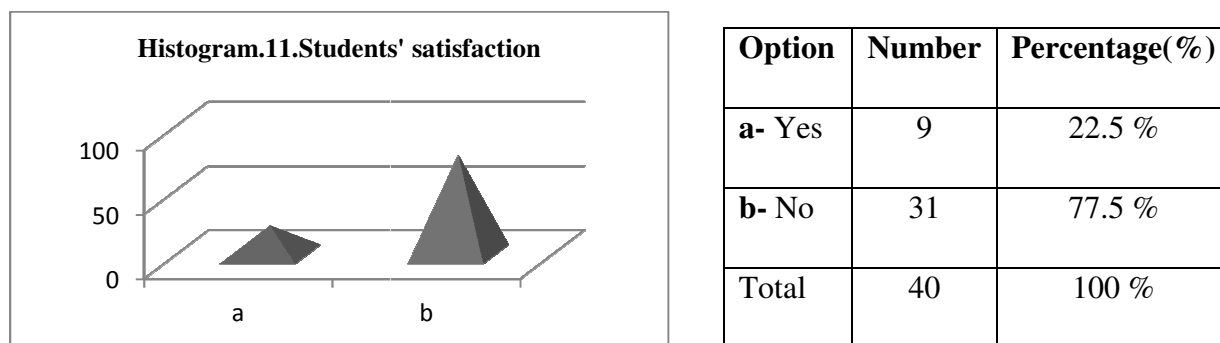
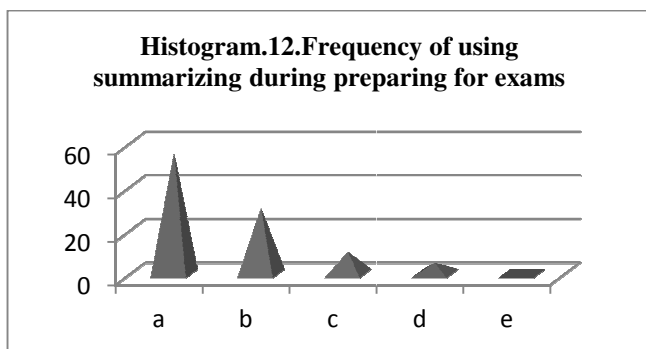


Table.11. Students' satisfaction

From the results shown in the table (10) we notice that a great majority of students (77.5 %) are not satisfied, they find that studying summarizing strategy in the 3rd year level at university do not give them a sufficient knowledge about this technique, it should be taught earlier because of its importance in improving students' reading and writing skills.

Item.09: How often do you use summarizing technique during preparing for exams?

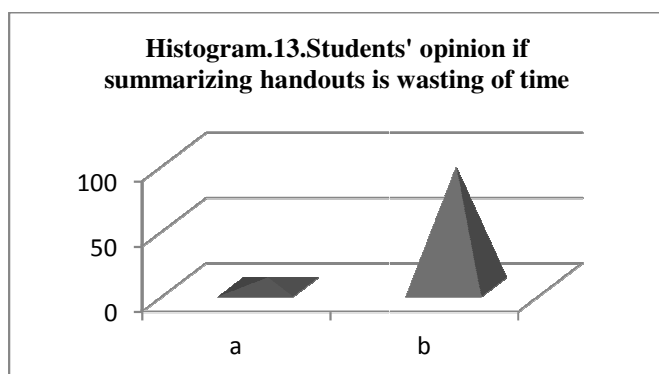


Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Always	22	55 %
b-Often	12	30 %
c-Sometimes	4	10 %
d-Rarely	2	05%
e-Never	0	00 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.12.Frequency of using summarizing during preparing for exams

From the above table, we can easily notice that the majority of students always use summarizing. Some often use it and very few numbers sometimes or rarely use summarizing for their preparation to the exams. What is noticeable is that no one of respondents declared that he/she never uses summarizing. This leads us to declare that summarizing technique is useful and beneficial for revision.

Item.10: Do you think that summarizing handouts is a wasting of time?

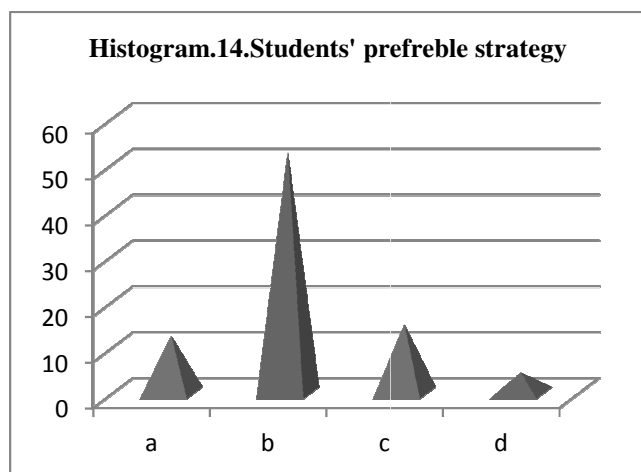


Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Yes	3	07.5 %
b-No	37	92.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.13.Students' opinion if summarizing handouts is wasting of time

The views expressed that the majority of students claimed that summarizing their handouts in not a waste of time. This means that this is a quite interesting strategy that they really need for better understanding.

Item.11: Which strategy is better for preparing for exams?



Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Revising every thing	5	12.5 %
b-Revising what you have summarized before	21	52.5 %
c-Scanning	6	15 %
d-Skimming	8	20 %
Total	40	100 %

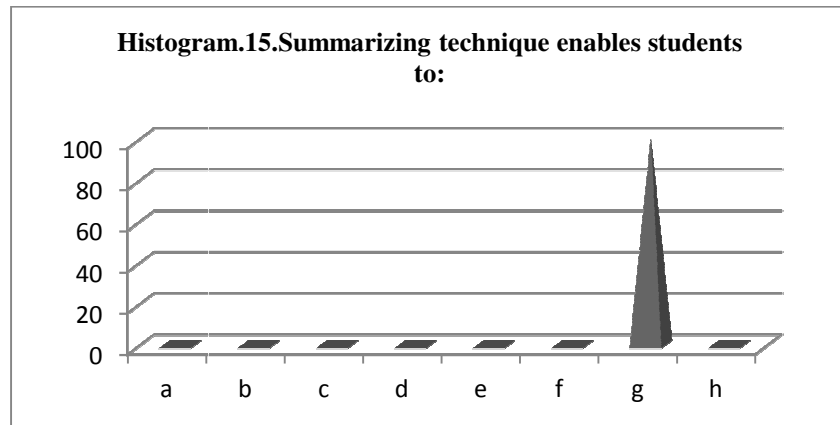
Table.14.Prefreble strategy

From the results embodied in this table, we notice that the majority of students (52.5 %) prefer preparing for exams by revising what they have summarized before because it is easier to them. The other percentages are nearly the same

Item.12: Summarizing technique enables you to:

Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Remember well	0	00 %
b-Facilitate learning	0	00 %
c-Organized learning	0	00 %
d-Get the important ideas	0	00 %
e-Better and deep reading	0	00 %
f-Improve writing skill	0	00 %
g-All of them	40	100 %
h-None of them	0	00 %
Total	40	100 %

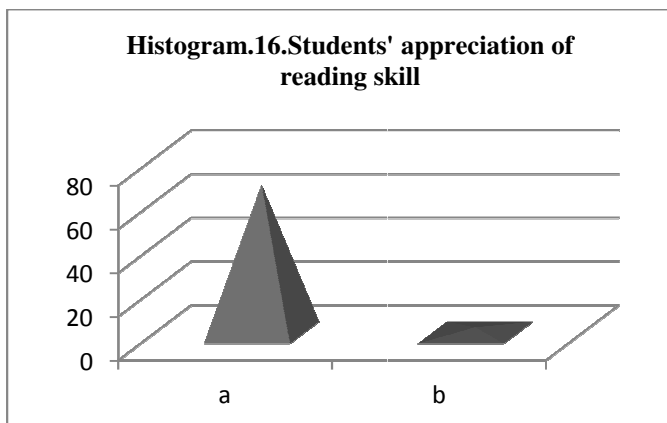
Table.15.Summarizing technique enables students to:



The results show that all the students stated that summarizing technique enables them to remember well, facilitate and organize learning, get the important ideas, better and deep reading and improve writing skills. This means that summarizing strategy has an important value in students' achievements, in addition to improving their reading and writing skills.

IV/Section Four: Student's attitudes toward reading and writing skills

Item.13: Do you like reading?



Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Yes	27	67.5 %
b-No	13	32.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.16.Students' appreciation of reading skill

The answers obtained from this question clearly show that a huge number of students answered positively (67.5 %). In contrast the rest (32.5 %) answered negatively. This leads to recommend teachers and students to think of a strategy to encourage the reading process.

Item.14: How often does your teacher encourage you to read?

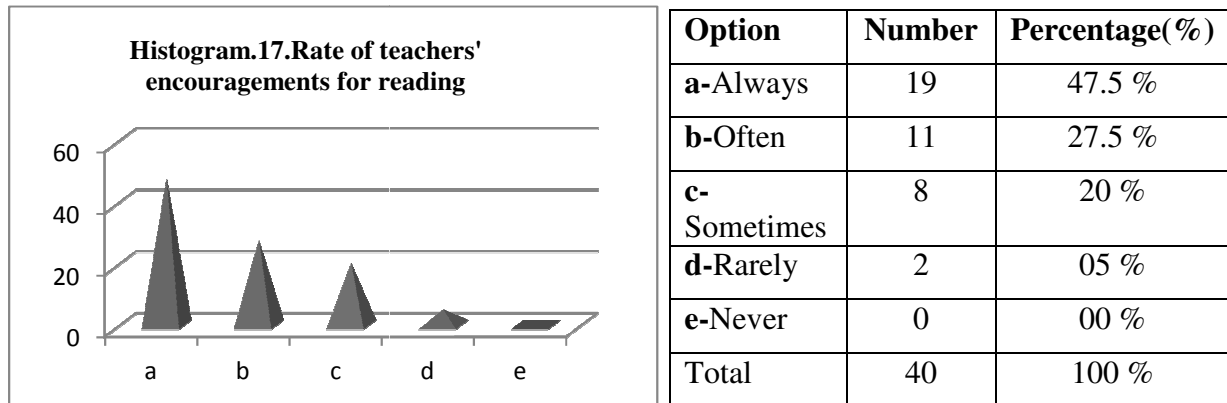


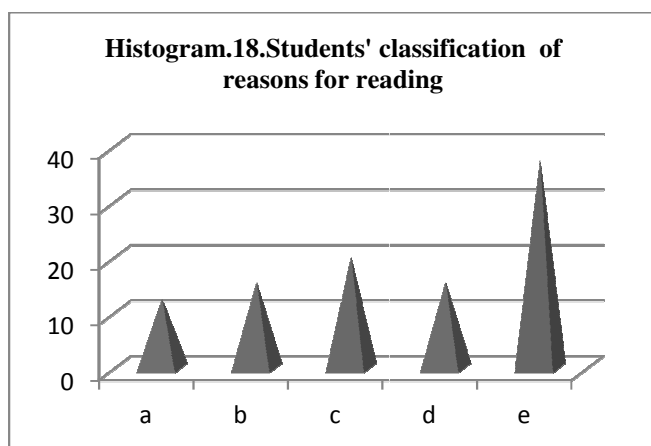
Table.17. Rate of teachers' encouragements for reading

From the results above, we find that the teacher always encourages students to read (47, 5%) and it is a good indicator to improve reading. 27.5 % of participants stated that their teachers often encourage them to read; however, 20 % said that their teachers sometimes do. The most important Remark is that there is no teacher who never advises his students to read, so we can consider it as a kind of motivation.

Item.15: How would you classify the following reasons for reading outside the class?

Order them according to their importance for you (from 01 to 05).

Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Class requirement	5	12.5 %
b-I want to learn new words	6	15.5 %
c-I want to acquire knowledge	8	20 %
d-For pleasure	6	15.5 %
e-For preparing to	15	37.5 %



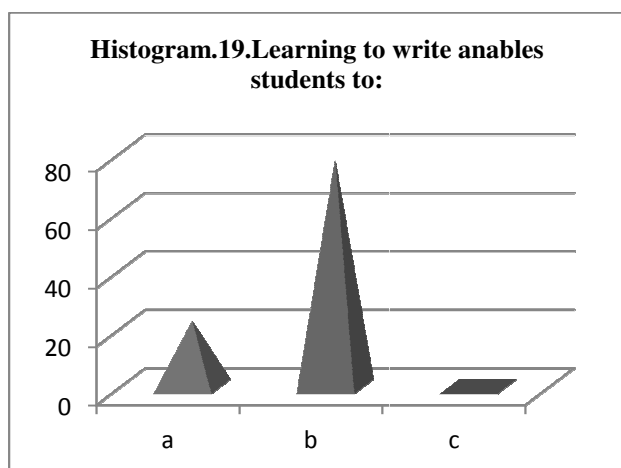
the exams		
Total	40	100 %

Table.18.Students' classification of reasons for reading

We asked this question to know the real reason which makes the students read outside the classroom. We found at that (37.5 %) of our respondents put reading for preparing for exams in the first rank, in the second rank (20 %) they put reading to acquire knowledge, recognizing their necessity and importance. Reading for learning new words and for pleasure in the same rank with (15.5 %). In the forth rank, they put reading for class requirements. Revision for exams stimulates reading process, this results might be due to students' negative attitudes towards reading.

Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Write different	9	22.5 %

Item.16: Learning to write enables you to:



types of texts.		
b -Have good marks in examination essays.	31	77.5 %
c -No benefit	0	00 %
Total	40	100 %

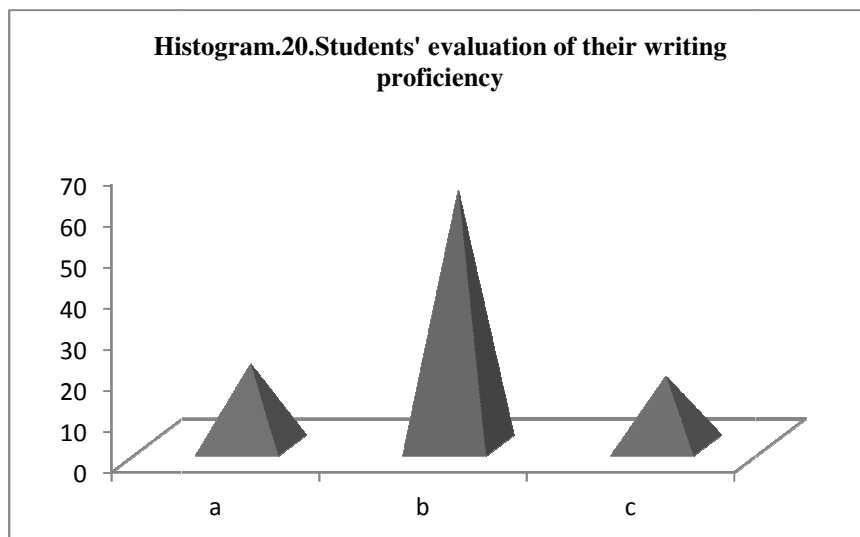
Table.19. Learning to write enables students to:

The results show that (77.5%) of the answers affirm that learning to write enables students to have good marks in examination essays, because the teachers during their corrections students' papers take into consideration the style of writing with the grammatical and spelling mistakes; so the learners should write carefully. The rest (22.5 %) mentioned that learning to write enables them to write different types of texts, which leads them to have the ability to vary their writing style according the subject.

Item.17: How do you evaluate your writing proficiency?

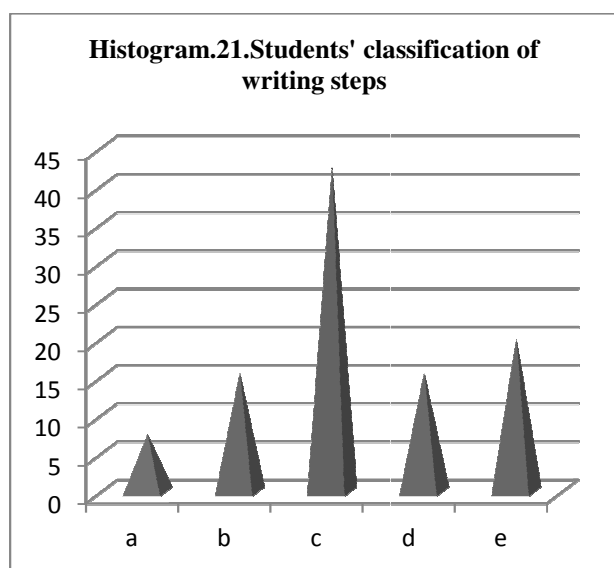
Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a -Beginner: still at the level of the sentence	8	20 %
b -Intermediate: able to write beyond the sentence-level but not extended pieces of writing, like essays.	25	62.5 %
c -Advanced: able to write beyond the sentence-level and extended pieces of writing like essays.	7	17.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.20. Students' evaluation of their writing proficiency



The majority of students (82.5%) have reported unsatisfactory English writing proficiency and their writing less than the desired expectation less than the desired expectation. These results also denote that written expression course contents are either insufficient or deficient in matching the needs and interests of the students to their objectives. This leads us to argue that there should be some adjustments in the course and the way it is taught like using summarizing in order to deal with writing skill indirectly.

Item.18: After reading the topic you are supposed to write about, what do you do?

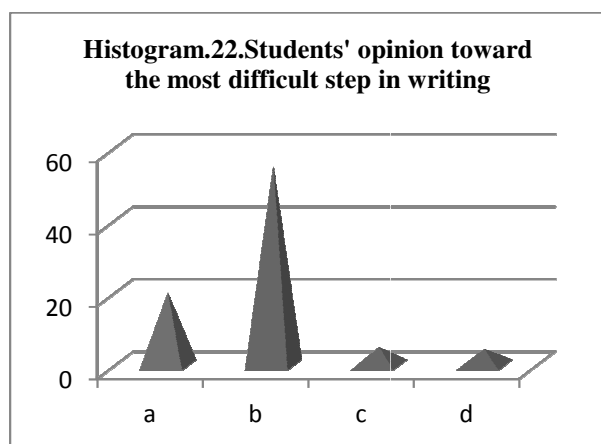


Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a -Start immediately to write	3	07.5 %
b -Take a moment and think of ideas to include	6	15.5 %
c -Make an outline	17	42.5 %
d -Write down your ideas into sentences or phrases	6	15.5 %
e -Drafting, editing, final product	8	20 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.21. Students' classification of writing steps

The answers obtained in this item clearly show that (42.5 %) of students stated that they start making an outline after reading the topic that they are supposed to write about. The second classification (20 %) was for drafting, editing, final product. In the third place with the same percentage (15.5 %) students mentioned that taking a moment and think of ideas to include, in addition to writing down their ideas into sentences or phrases. The last classification was for starting immediately to write (07.5 %). These results lead us to understand that the students have a different knowledge about how to start writing; each step has an importance according to their own style of writing.

Item.19: What is the most difficult step in writing according to you?

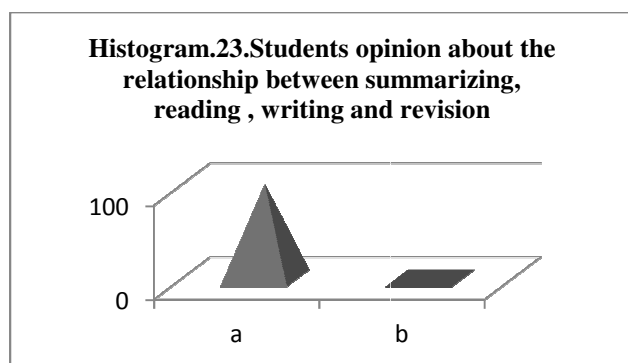


Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Generating ideas	22	55 %
b-Writing initial drafts	8	20 %
c-Revising	2	05 %
d-Editing	8	20 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.22.Students' opinion toward the most difficult step in writing

This question was asked to know which step is difficult for students during their writing. From the results above, generating ideas is the most difficult step, how the student starts his/her first idea is not easy especially when she/he doesn't process rich vocabulary knowledge to express freely. Writing the first drafts and editing are mentioned as the second difficult step in writing process (20 %). The last rank was given to the revision step.

Item.20: Do you see any relationship between summarizing, reading and writing processes and revision?



Option	Number	Percentage(%)
a-Yes	40	100 %
b-No	0	00 %
Total	40	100 %

Table.23.Students’ opinion about the relationship between summarizing, reading, writing and revision.

All students (100 %) state that there is a relationship between summarizing, reading and writing processes and revision for exams. Because during making summaries they should read well to be able to write them by their own words, so the relationship is very strong.

Item.21: What do you suggest to improve your revision through summaries?

Concerning this last item, students said that using summarizing is very important strategy to facilitate the revision process and it is an organized way, and they can gain time during the examination period because they are going to deal just with their summaries which contain the most important points from the whole. They suggested taking notes in every session which facilitates writing summaries. Another suggestion which is at the end of each lesson they should summarize it, in order not to forget and the summarization process will be step by step because if the learner start his summaries as a block it will be very complicated process and it takes very long time, which is a very important component during the preparation for exams.

3.3. Analysis of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation had taken place during a month. This required an observation grid for seven sessions of different modules; we have attended two sessions of Pragmatics, two sessions of Linguistics, two sessions of Acquisition process and one session of Didactics. Some of them occurred in the classroom and others in the amphitheater, each session took one hour and half. We followed the frequency of the statements that we mentioned in the check list with recording the scores each time. We obtained three results:

For the first statement which is the use of summarizing technique in the classroom. It is sometimes used for the four modules; which leads us to understand that using summarizing strategy is a process happens at home, so it is related to the students efforts, and when it is used during the lesson means that the teacher tries to help his learners for better understanding.

The second statement which deals with reading the handouts in the classroom and it is related to another statement which is about highlighting the key words on their handouts, we found that they are always and often used with the whole modules, this means that it is very important to read for the students and explain simultaneously. This process stimulates taking notes with highlighting the key words in order to discover new words according to the context, this leads us to understand that reading handouts in the classroom improves students' reading and better pronunciation, however neglecting some parts of the handouts (without reading) does not mean that they are not important, but it depends on the purpose that serves the target lesson.

For the idea that students summarize by following certain strategies during the classroom, we get that it is rarely followed, which makes us figure at the lack of teaching summarizing strategy in a deep or detailed way, without forgetting that summarizing with a random way leads students to miss some important parts they should include.

The next statement deals with the frequency of taking notes during the teacher's explanation, we observed that it is often happened, which means that learners look for deep understanding and try to get information that are not mentioned in their handouts, with the important points.

These two points discussed summarizing text by using writing activities and encourage students to write successfully shorter summaries, constantly refining their written piece until only the most essential and relevant information remains. From the results obtained we found that both practices are always used, so it is noticed that summarizing linked to writing skill because after reading the text they should write to produce the summary, so this kind of activities with more practice promotes the writing skill mastery.

The following statements deal with asking students to write a summary of the target text and asking them to present their summaries in front of their classmates, based on the following framework questions:

What are the main ideas? And what are the crucial details for supporting the ideas? The other statement is what information is irrelevant or unnecessary? Are sometimes used, they have a relationship with the workshops where the teacher organizes them in the classroom, so each group tries to make its summary by following these questions (all the groups follow the same framework). By the end the students are going to present their work and the teacher can evaluate their amount of grasping the target subject and can check their amount of understanding from their correct answers on the given questions, and meeting the students' needs.

The last statement was about asking students to summarize the lesson at home, as a home work with giving additional marks to motivate them. The obtained result was that the teachers always give their students this kind of tasks, which makes us understand that the teachers try to help their learners to work on this strategy because it is beneficial for them,

especially in terms of revision; during their preparation for exams they will find themselves ready with less time consuming.

3.4. Analysis of the Interview With Teachers

In addition to the questionnaire for students and the classroom observation in this study, we have dealt with an interview with five teachers of different modules (Pragmatics, Didactics, Acquisition Process, Linguistics, and Psycho Pedagogy) some of them were in the classrooms and others in the amphitheatre it occurred at the end of each lecture, it consists of seven questions. This interview aims to collect more data about our subject and the main purpose was to get teachers' attitudes, opinions and views about summarizing technique and its impact on students' reading and writing skills and its benefits on their revision process during the exams, the choice of the modules is done by purpose because the nature of these modules makes the teachers provide their students with handouts.

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

Teaching is a profession where "experience" has a great importance. This question aims at checking the respondents' experience; we found that most of teachers have an experience of teaching between five to fifteen years. This question is also very important it differentiates the experienced teachers' attitudes from the less experienced ones.

Question Two: How do you explain your course?

a- Handouts

b- Dictation

c- Lecturing

d- Writing on the blackboard

e- All of them

We have asked them about their way of their explanation of lessons which aims to find out the different methods that the teachers use while lecturing. The majority of teachers answered by using handouts as main teaching method, the same thing for the method of writing on blackboard, whereas, one respondent prefers lecturing while the other one asserts that dictation is the best method. This data implies that every teacher has his way of teaching (method). The teachers, who use all the methods, justified that all these methods contribute in the achievement of the objectives assigned to the lecture and it depends on the topic. While the teachers who prefer handouts, dictation, writing on blackboards justified that it is due to the time they use those methods to facilitate the course and to gain time.

Question Three: Do you think that summarizing is beneficial while preparing for exams in terms of information? How?

This question aims to know the teachers' opinion toward the benefits of summarizing strategy during students preparation for exams, in terms of the amount of information that they grasp from the organized way of their revision. The majority of teachers' opinion about summarizing is beneficial while preparing for exams in terms of information, the students emphasize the main ideas of the subject and during revising they focus on just what they have summarized; so they save effort and time during the exams with an organized way.

Question Four: Does summarizing technique develop reading and writing skills? How?

This question aims show the impact of summarizing strategy on students' reading and writing skills; how the learner improves his reading and writing skills through dealing with summaries. And most of them reported that summarizing technique develops reading and writing skills; because when the student makes his summary he is going to read deeply first to understand and extract the main ideas, then he is going to start writing these ideas but with his

own style. Another point that most teachers agreed on is that summarizing strategy develops the cognitive process in terms of memorization, their explanation of this point was that when the learner revises from his summaries he is going to memorize it well especially when he makes his summary as diagram, so it will be shorter and organized.

Question Five: How do you think that teachers should encourage students to make summaries?

The last question was about their opinion on how the teacher can encourage his learners to use summaries; the aim of this question is the teachers' role in helping students to use summarizing strategy in structured way. Some of them said that they give the summaries as a home work to encourage and reinforce students work at home; others said that they ask them to do summaries in the classroom by making small groups and try to exchange ideas and help each other.

Conclusion

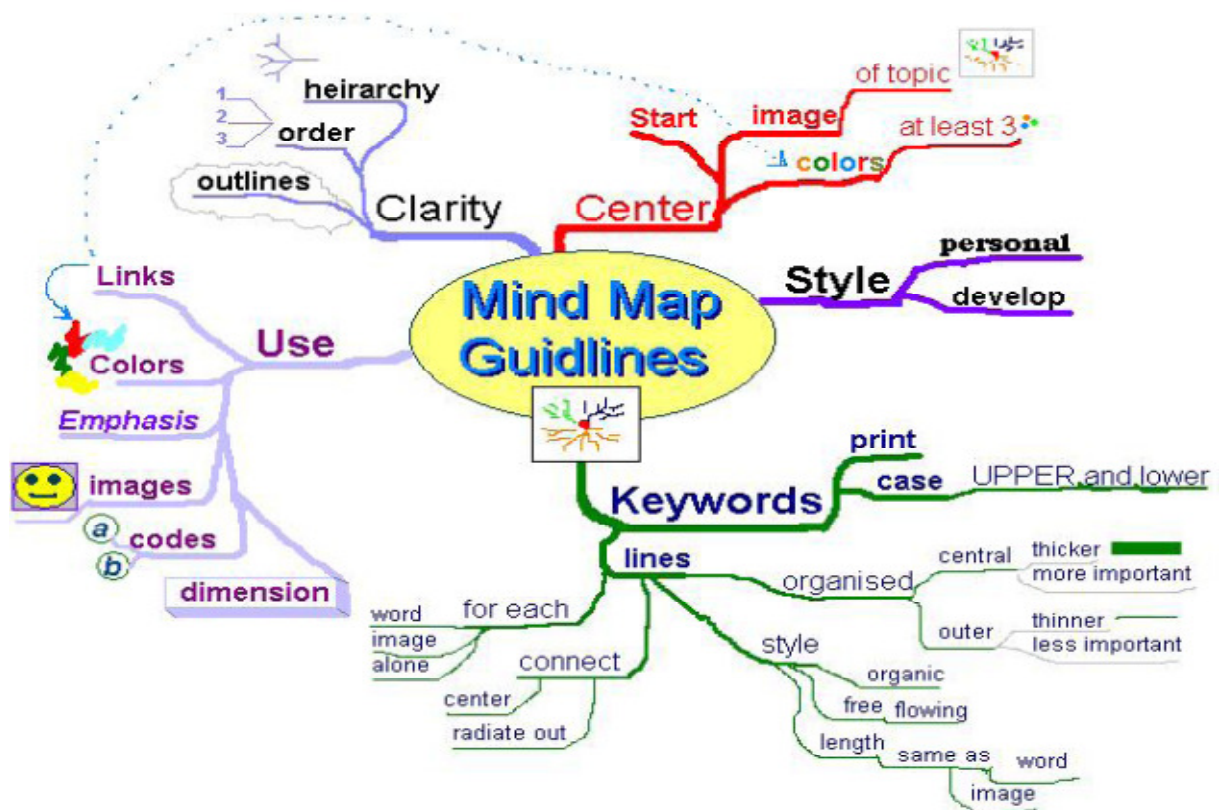
The results, in general, supported a clear link between summarizing strategies and the students' reading and writing skills which influence their performance. The important finding of this study was that students who use summaries showed that they can organize their revision process with higher progression in their reading and writing performance than those who do not use summaries. Besides, the teachers' role in teaching this strategy and encouraging their students to use it.

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Given the findings and the limitations of the present study, several recommendations can be made for future research to further investigate the effectiveness of using summarizing strategy during preparation for exams, especially in university classes in EFL contexts. Those recommendations are listed as follows:

- Lectures should take clear and regular structure for better comprehension.
- Teachers should provide their students with clear handouts for easy and effective note taking.
- Background knowledge by asking for giving what they have seen in the previous session (when lecturers start with reviews of relevant content covered in previous lectures) sounds a good basis for more successful lecture comprehension.
- Instructors should use visual aids, maps, drawings, slides, photographs to help keep the students' attention and hence favor better recall.
- Teachers should enhance students to summarize lectures because they help students' lecture comprehension.
- Good summaries production should be taught, particularly in the early stages of students' studying because it greatly contributes to excellent test results.
- Teachers should motivate students to make effective summaries by providing them with the best and easiest methods, and promote them with additional marks (the students who make a good summary as homework, he will get an additional mark).
- Lecturers should evaluate students' summaries after each lecture in order to check and correct errors and this will make students' summaries more effective.
- In order to respect students' learning style, Instructors should show different strategies and methods of summarizing to meet the different styles.

- It is very important to train EFL students to develop their reading and writing skills before entering university in order to facilitate summarizing process.
- The students can use the mind maps as strategy to facilitate revising, it involves a combination of words and images and Buzan encourages the use of at least three colors, symbols, and codes to highlight or represent ideas. The basic approach to produce a mind map is to start in the centre of the page with a key word representing a concept. From this key word a central line radiates out, linked to another word associated with the starting concept word. From this central line, thinner lines send out radial shoots. Each radial is connected to an off-shoot idea. You can then build up a root-system picture of your thoughts and responses linked to the central idea or concept. The picture below shows how the mind map functions.



Un Example of Mind Map Technique (Wikipedia 2006)

General Conclusion

The present research is centrally motivated by the desire to understand the impact of summarizing strategy on the students' reading and writing skills. The results reported here to reinforce the importance of summarizing on students' revision for the exams.

Summarizing is an important academic task that helps students remember what they have learnt and helps them review materials for re-use in revision and assignments. In addition, the process of summarizing involves improving two important skills (reading and writing) and interactions between instructors and their students. In this dissertation we included something that is crucial to our topic and has been underestimated before that is teaching summarizing.

Summarily, effective summaries increase students' marks in exams. Considering that summarizing smoothes the progress of comprehension and organized way for revision may pave the way for teachers to integrate this strategy into their courses and to encourage their students to summarize in a strategic way not in a random manner.

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Web Sites

<http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.8f136d86e0aa2b9cdeb/>

Appendices

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Students

Dear students this questionnaire investigates the effect of summarizing technique on coping with revision problems, and the impact of this technique on improving your reading and writing skills. We can assure you of a total confidentiality. Thanks for collaboration.

*Please, tick in the right box or make full answers whenever necessary.

I/Section one: students' background information:

Item: 01

1-Gender:

-Male

-Female

Item: 02

2- Age:

- 20_25

-26_30

- More than 30

Item: 03

3-Your choice to study EFL is:

-Personal

- Imposed

-Advised

* If personal, why is it so?

.....

II/Section two: Student's attitudes towards revision:

Item: 04

1-Do you think that the revision process is an easy task?

-Yes

-No

Item: 05

2-Which kind of difficulties you face during revising for exams?

-Memorizing

-Luck of understanding

-Timing

- Timing

-others, please specify

.....

III/Section Three: Students' attitudes towards summarizing technique

Item: 06

1-How often do you summarize a text (handout, lecture, book, etc)

-Always

-Often

-Sometimes

-Rarely

-Never

Item: 07

2-Do you know how to summarize a text?

-Yes

-No

*If yes, is it:

-Strategic

-Random

Item: 08

3-Have you been taught how to summarize?

-Yes

-No

*If yes, in which level?

-1st year

-2nd year

-3rd year

-1st M

-2nd M

* Is it sufficient?

-Yes

-No

Item: 09

4-How often do you use summarizing technique during preparing for exams?

-Always

-Often

-Sometimes

-Rarely

-Never

Item: 10

5-Do you think that summarizing handouts is a wasting of time?

-Yes

-No

Item: 11

5-Which strategy is better for preparing for exams?

-Revising every thing

-Revising what you have summarized before

-Scanning

-Skimming

Item: 12

6-Summarizing technique enables you to:

-Remember well

-Facilitate learning

-Organized learning

-Get the important ideas

-Better and deep reading

-Improve writing skill

-All often

-None often

IV/Section Four: Student's attitudes toward reading and writing skills

Item: 13

1-Do you like reading?

-Yes

-No

Item: 14

2-How often does your teacher encourage you to read?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Item: 15

3-How would you classify the following reasons for reading outside the class? Order them according to their importance for you (from 01 to 05).

- Class requirement
- I want to learn new words
- I want to acquire knowledge
- For pleasure
- For preparing to the exams

Item: 16

4-Learning to write enables you to:

- Write different types of texts.
- Have good marks in examination essays.
- No benefit
- Other: Please, specify:.....
.....

Item: 17

5-How do you evaluate your writing proficiency?

- Beginner: still at the level of the sentence.
- Intermediate: able to write beyond the sentence-level but not extended pieces of writing, like essays.
- Advanced: able to write beyond the sentence-level and extended pieces of writing like essays.

Item: 18

6-After reading the topic you are supposed to write about, what do you do?

- Start immediately to write
- Take a moment and think of ideas to include
- Make an outline
- Write down your ideas into sentences or phrases
- Drafting, editing, final product

Item: 19

7-What is the most difficult step in writing according to you?

- Generating ideas
- Writing initial drafts
- Revising
- Editing

Item: 20

8-Do you see any relationship between summarizing, reading and writing processes and revision?

- Yes
- No

Item: 21

9-What do you suggest to improve your revision through summaries?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you

Appendix 2

Interview With Teachers

Questions:

1- How long have you been teaching at the university?

2- How do you explain your course?

a- Handouts

b- Dictation

c- Lecturing

d- Writing on the blackboard

e- All of them

3- Do you think that summarizing is beneficial while preparing for exams in terms of information? How?

4- Does summarizing technique develop reading and writing skills? How?

5- How do you think that teachers should encourage students to make summaries?

Appendix 3

Check list of classroom observation

Statements	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Use summarizing technique in the classroom					
Read the handouts in the classroom					
Students summarize by following strategies					
When the teacher explains students take notes					
Summarizing text by using writing activities					
Ask students to write a summary of the target text based on the following framework questions: -What are the main ideas? -What are the crucial details necessary for supporting the ideas? -What information is irrelevant or unnecessary?					
Encourage students to write successively shorter summaries, constantly refining their written piece until only the most essential and relevant information remains.					
Ask students to present their summaries in front of their classmates					
Teachers discover what students understand and remember.					
Is the teacher asks the students to summarize the lesson at home(as home work)					
The teacher give marks on the summaries(encourage them)					
Use summarization techniques—at the beginning, middle, or end of a unit or lesson					
Students highlight the key words on their handouts					

Appendix 4

Samples of students' summaries

3) Rewards.

Positives

They are positive reinforcements that are a powerful way of managing ^{child's} behaviour.

Used to establish a pleasant relationship between the teacher and the student.

* All children are rewarded for positive behaviours.

They may develop intrinsic motivation.

Criticism.

A) Other children may find it unjust if a difficult child gets extra treats. Whereas, they are working and get nothing.

B) It damages intrinsic motivation.

C) Children perceive themselves working only for rewards, so their work becomes superficial & geared towards the rewards.

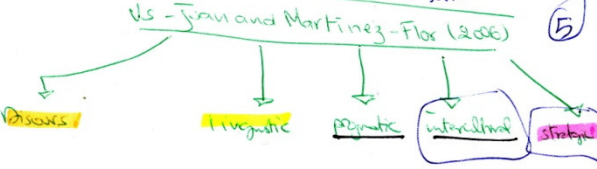
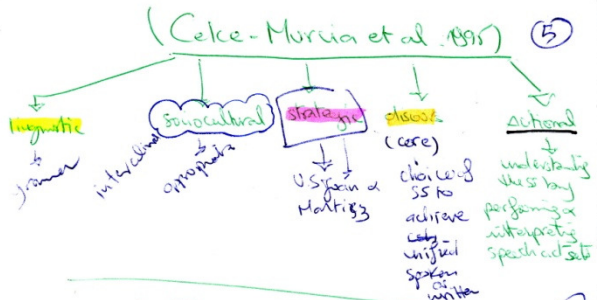
D) It impacts negatively on a student's attainment by lowering their academic self-concept (too much praise is seen as patronising).

Learning principles:

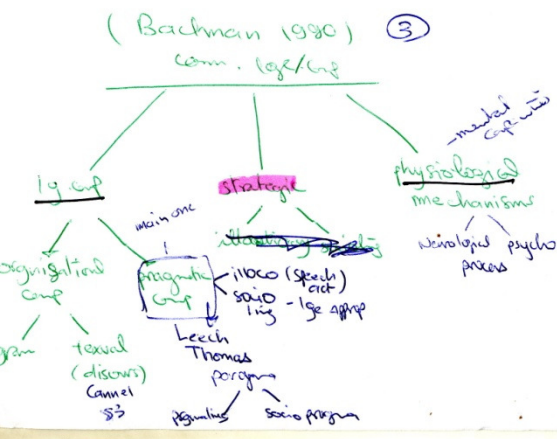
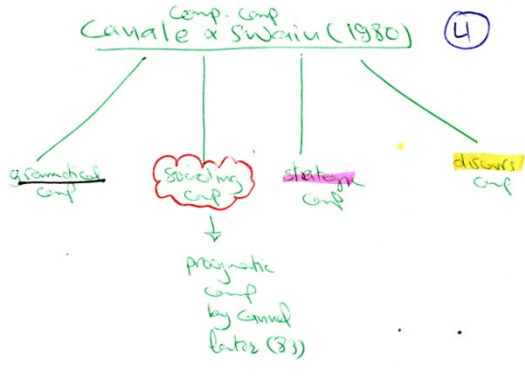
Skinner: to generate effective learning, there must be an appropriate set of outcomes which are dependent upon some form of behaviour.

* Reinforcements or punishers are effective when they happen just after the behaviour; according to this, waiting until the end of the lesson to praise them.

- Outcomes can vary in frequency and timing.
- Responses are very dependent on the reinforcer.
- If the student is working & the teacher praises him, if he stops he will stop.



To show how the four skills serve to build discourse comp for communicative purposes, it gives importance to the intercultural component which is associated to cultural aspects.



Résumé

Atteindre de bons résultats aux examens, avec l'acquisition d'un modèle acceptable de l'écriture et d'une meilleure compréhension de l'écrit en anglais, ce sont les besoins des étudiants du département d'anglais de l'université de Biskra. La révision est un sujet qui préoccupe les étudiants et aussi comment mémoriser ce qu'ils ont appris pour l'utiliser dans le moment approprié. Ce présent travail de recherche est une tentative de montrer le rôle de la stratégie du résumé comme une forme d'organisation de la révision qui permet d'installer les deux compétences : lecture et écriture. Les résultats obtenus du questionnaire qu'on a proposé aux 40 étudiants de la troisième année LMD (science du langage), en plus de l'observation de classe suivit d'une interview des enseignants, tout cela a montré que la stratégie du résumé conduit à une bonne préparation pour les examens qui a prouvé que c'est un véritable succès.