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Department of Foreign Languages

English Division

The Effectiveness of Using the Computer in Improving

EFL Students' Writing

A Case Study of Second Year Students of English at

Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Master Degree in
Sciences of Languages.

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Declaration

I, LALLALI Houria, deherby solemnly declare that the work I am going to present in this thesis is our own, and has not been submitted before to any other institution or university for a degree.

This work is to be carried out and completed at Mohamed KHEIDER University of BISKRA, ALGERIA.

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I

Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My dear parents, for their love, help, and patience

My lovely sister

My dear brothers, their wives, and their children

My cousins

My friends

Acknowledgement

*First of all, we have to think **ALLAH** for his assistance and guidance.*

*I acknowledge with deeply gratitude my supervisor, Teacher **Mehiri Ramdane**. I am*

Thankful for your valuable time, experience, and useful comments.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the board of examiners.

*Very special thank to the head of English department Mrs. **Naima Boudiaf**.*

I thank the second year English students for their participation and corporation.

Last, I would like to thank everyone who shows me his or her support.

THANK YOU ALL

Abstract

In this present research we are going to discuss the effectiveness of using the computer in improving EFL students' writing. Our dissertation is divided into three chapters. Each chapter looks for a special and different issue. The first two chapters are theoretical. In the first chapter, we talked about the writing skill, its development, its nature, its meaning, the writing process and its steps, the various approaches used in order to teach writing at classes. We also did not forget the purposes behind writing and the different types of writing. In the second chapter, we dealt with the computer and its emergence in education and its development. Furthermore, we provided its benefits as well as the drawbacks. In that chapter, we made a comparison between handwriting and writing on the screen. The last chapter is the field work that is about the description and analyses of students' questionnaire. This latter is submitted to second year students in order to obtain and collect their attitudes, opinions towards the effectiveness of using the computer in improving EFL students' writing.

ملخص

تعتبر الكتابة من أهم المشاكل التي يعاني منها كل طلاب اللغات و في كل الأطوار تزداد هذه الصعوبة كلما كانت اللغة المدروسة أجنبية. كمثال حي عن هاته اللغات نجد اللغة الانجليزية و التي تدرس في الجزائر ابتداء من الطور المتوسط إلى غاية الجامعة. في العقود السابقة لم تكن اللغة الانجليزية تستقطب العديد من الطلاب، بل كانت مقتصرة على شريحة معينة. لكن مع مرور الوقت أصبحت تستهوى العديد من الأشخاص و هذا بسبب التطور التكنولوجي و الاختراعات. من أهم الاختراعات التي أصبحت ضرورية واهم وسيلة بيداغوجية داخل المدارس و معظم الجامعات الجزائرية جهاز الكمبيوتر. يعتبر هذا الأخير وسيلة محفزة للتعلم و آلة تساعد الطالب و تجعل نشاطه الكتابي سهل. في حقيقة الأمر للكمبيوتر منافع عديدة، لكن اهتمامنا ينصب على فوائده في تطوير مهارة الكتابة لدى طلاب اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة.

تتضمن أطروحتنا ثلاثة فصول: منها فصلين نظريين و فصل تطبيقي. في الفصل الأول تطرقنا للتحدث عن مهارة الكتابة حيث ذكرنا تطورها عبر العصور، طبيعتها و كذلك ماهيتها. فيما يخص الفصل الثاني فقد تكلمنا عن الكمبيوتر كيفية تطوره و دخوله الميدان التعليمي، كذلك أضفنا كيف يمكن لهذا الاختراع المذهل و الفريد من نوعه أن يكون سلاح ذو حدين. وقد قمنا أيضا بمقارنة بين الكتابة بالكمبيوتر و الكتابة بخط اليد. و في آخر الفصل تحدثنا عن مكانة مادة الإعلام الآلي و التي تعتبر مادة ثانوية في شعبة اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. أما الجانب التطبيقي فقد تم تناوله في الفصل الثالث حيث تضمن استبيان موجه لطلبة السنة الثانية قسم لغة انجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر- بسكرة - و كذلك تحليل النتائج المتوصل إليها. و قد نصت هذه النتائج على أن جهاز الكمبيوتر وسيلة جد هامة و مفيدة للتعلم خاصة في تعلم اللغات الأجنبية، كذلك أفضاله تعود إلى تحسين و تطوير مهارة الكتابة لدى الطلاب. بالرغم من كل هذه المزايا و المنافع إلى أن الكتابة باليد ما تزال الأهم و الأحسن. و في نهاية الفصل قمنا بإجراء مقابلة للأسئلة التي تم طرحها في بداية البحث و للنتائج المتوصل إليها. و للإضافة قمنا بطرح بعض الاقتراحات و النصائح للطلبة.

List of Abbreviations:

CAI : Computer-assisted Instruction.

CALL : Computer-assisted Language.

EFL : English as a Foreign Language.

ES : English as a Second Language.

ESP : English for Specific Purposes.

LMD : License, Master, Doctorate.

PC : Personal Computer.

PLATO: Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations.

TICCIT: Time-shared, Instruction, Computer-Controlled Information Television.

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General Introduction

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1- Background Information of the Study:

As viewed by many linguists the writing skill is the most difficult skill in English to be taught or learned. For many years writing has not enough interest unlike the other skills. Currently and with the spread of technologies English has become an international language and has played a crucial in education and communication of every country. Those technologies are accepted to be tools which can be used to facilitate learning of the four skills. The computer has entered and has strongly influenced English education in all levels. This technology has become a powerful tool to facilitate learning and also to communicate with people around the globe. It is faster, easier and more convenient to use. This is because the learners of language, with the use of the Internet, can learn and master the receptive skills (listening, speaking) and the productive skills (reading, writing) and simultaneously communicate with other learners or speakers of the target language. This communication has two purposes ; learning and entertaining.

My country, Algeria, is one of the countries in which English has been taught as a foreign language. In the past times, English did not have enough interest from the Algerian students, whereas these days it becomes more familiar and used so much. This is due to the various types of technologies especially the computer that has been integrated as a supporting didactic tool in the majority of the Algerian universities.

2- Statement of the Problem:

Over the last decades, the technology has added and opened up new approaches for designing courses in writing. The computer is a unique technology that has been witnessed in the field of education especially in teaching and learning English as a Second Language

(ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It has been experienced at almost all levels and forms in education over the world and played a significant role concerning writing. It has a great deal of benefits in facilitating and making it easier for both EFL teachers and students. This feature makes it gains a valuable grade within the education field.

Within the Algerian context, writing in English unlike speaking, listening, and reading, is rarely practiced outside the classroom, so what is learned inside the class is practiced inside and has little chance to be developed outside. Moreover, the complexity of the writing skill has led the majority of students to struggle when they need to write paragraphs and essays; this will result in a poor writing. The computer has played a role in enhancing the Algerian students' learning and developing their productive skills. Writing is one of them.

3- Significance of the Study:

So much has been taught by technologies as overhead projector, data show, and computer...etc. Today, the computer technology in schools is one of the most developments in education; and the need for the computer technology in the educational system has become growing more relevant. According to McCormick (1993), the computer can be used to diversify, develop and improve the pedagogical relation of teaching and learning. Specifically we choose to investigate about the effectiveness of using the computer in improving EFL students' writing.

The intent behind our research will be to provide some information on the extent to which the use of the computer in teaching and learning writing is achieved. In addition, the use of the computer serves EFL students of English department at Biskra University to develop their writing skill and make it easy as well as solve their problems that cause poor

writing. We also aim to give evidence that the use of the computer impacts students' writing.

4- The Aims:

Before speaking about our aims we have to indicate first to our reason for choosing this subject. As noticed, there is poverty in investigation about the effectiveness of the computer used for writing in our university. Our aim is to motivate the students at our university to use the computer in order to overcome the difficulties they face when they write. Throughout this research, we aim to make students know how the writing skill developed over ages and how this development involves more than the correct use of grammar and syntax and a good range of vocabulary. Additionally, students need to know how the computer can improve and make their writing acceptable. Our general aim is to show that the computer can help EFL students to develop their writing and solve their problems immediately. We also aim to show the students that the computer is a double-edged weapon. In other words, we aim to make them recognize its positive and negative impacts. Another objective is to make students recognize the differences between writing with pen on paper and writing with computer and the reflections of each one.

5- The Problematic (Main Questions): On the basis of what it is mentioned above many questions are raised.

1- How much is the use of the computer necessary?

2- How can the computer help EFL students in writing?

3- What is the difference between handwriting and writing with the computer? What is the best way you prefer to use for writing?

6- The Hypotheses:

Concerning writing by the computer we suppose the following hypotheses that shall be tested and verified.

1- We hypothesize that the computer is necessary for learning foreign languages in general and for learning English language in particular.

2- We do agree that the computer plays a significant role in helping EFL students and facilitating their writing task. It enables them to produce any piece of writing easily as paragraphs, essays, stories...etc.

3- We do advance that handwriting is completely different from writing with the computer. Each way is characterized by its own benefits.

7- The Methodology:

In our research we intend to follow the descriptive method that we believe it would be more appropriate to gather data and to attain our objectives. We plan to derive information from any material relevant to our field of interest. According to our topic nature which includes definitions and comparison, we see it is appropriate to utilize a questionnaire as a research instrument to collect information, attitudes, and opinions of students towards our subject. This questionnaire will be submitted to second year students in English department at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.

8- The Literature Review:

Over the two past decades using the computer to write by English language students has increased rapidly. This was as an aspiration for many authors to speak about and take it under investigation. One of the most significant reviews was under taken by Goldberg,

Russell, Cook (2002) in their book « Meta Analysis: Writing with Computers 1992-2002 ». They made a survey through which they aimed to how the word processing helps students to write, how the computer can motivate them to write. Another contribution is from Guy Chartrand (2002). Through his thesis, he gave important information about the history of the computer in learning languages, how Japan applied CALL in English education system. Harmer also discussed the topic of using the computer for writing. In his famous book « The Practice of English Language Teaching », he mentioned the important things concerning writing: writing conventions and the approaches to teach writing. Furthermore, he added the reasons behind using the computer to write and the advantages gained from that using. A further research is in the book entitled "Writing". In that book Weigle (2002) said that. Gordon Taylor has also interested in writing. He aims to help EL students through providing in his book « A Student's Writing Guide » in 2009 the main elements in academic writing, the dynamics of an essay, the conventions of academic writing, cohesion and texture. Many things have been provided in a book edited by Carter and Nunan (2001). That book is entitled as « Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages ». It contains the early history of the computer and the personal computer in language learning, and its relation with the four skills. Concerning the writing skill, it is said:

Computers can enhance all aspects of the writing process, allowing easy revision and multiple drafts, spell-checking; also, increasingly sophisticated translation suggestions and grammatical advice are available, which may be used with caution by advances writers.

A further research was done by Manal Mohammed Khodary Mohammed, a doctor in the Northern Borden University of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Manal investigated the effect of using kiwis to develop prospective English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers 'Writing Performance. She also talked about the role of technology in opening up new approaches for

designing courses in writing. Another conducted research is provided by Waleed A.Ghandoura, an assistant professor of TESOL, Umm Al-Qura. Saudi Arabia. His research is under the title « A Qualitative Study of ESL College Students' Attitudes about Computer-Assisted Writing Classes », 2012. Waleed examined a sample of 13 ESL students' attitudes about a computer-aided composition (Web CT) class. He gathered data from students' diaries that revealed that students enjoyed and valued the Web CT course and the course facilitated their acquisition of writing skills. He also used interviews with the students. Those interviews show that they thought the computer made the acquisition of writing skills easier and faster. Eldred and Toner (as cited in A.Ghandoura, 2012, p.44) believed that the computer technology is such an important feature of 21st-century culture: "Software already teaches. It's our job to teach with it and against it" (2003). Concerning learning about writing in English Linda Butler said: "Learning to write in English is like learning to play the game of baseball, or almost any sport. There are many rules that all players must follow, but no two games are over alike. Just as every game is different, so is every piece of writing _ and every writer". Butler in her book "Fundamentals of Academic Writing" talked about the writing process, its stages.

9- Research Limitations:

As common in all languages the writing skill is classified as the last one to be learned or taught because of its difficulty and complexity. In this research we are interested in writing in English language and the role of the computer in developing this skill. There are certain problems that have disturbed us during the investigation. The problem is that we could not make classroom observation to support our research hypotheses. In fact, in our department the computer is not integrated in the classroom. Although, the language laboratory exists, the

students rarely take courses in it. This happens only in the oral expression module not in written expression. Another obstacle facing our research is administrative problems which are the few hours specialized for reading in the library as well as the local situation specified for reading and taking notes. My work also is a problem in such a way that I have not enough time to investigate about the topic. In addition, the students did not collaborate enough with us. They may feel shy or uncomfortable, or do not want to show their weakness in writing or in using the computer.

10- Organization of the Dissertation:

The dissertation is divided into three chapters; two theoretical and one practical. In the first chapter we dealt with the important issues about writing. We discussed the history of writing, its development, its nature, its meaning, the approaches used in teaching it, the writing process and its stages, the reasons behind it and the different types of it.

The second chapter is devoted to speak about the computer and its entry in the education. It gives the different definitions of computer and how it has developed over years. It also contains a comparison between handwriting and writing with the computer as well as the advantages and disadvantages of computer.

The third chapter is completely practical. It shows the method we used to investigate about our topic, the most appropriate research tool (the questionnaire that is submitted to students), and the analysis of that questionnaire. We conclude this chapter with discussion and providing some suggestions and recommendations that may motivate English students to learn and practice more to master the writing skill and reach a good level.

Chapter One
The Writing Skill

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Introduction

Despite the difficulty and complexity of writing, it is considered as a basic and the most important skill comparing with the other skills: listening, speaking, and reading. This difficulty is a result of the considerable effort and practice of the learners to reach an acceptable level. To obtain this goal, it is necessary to understand the nature of the writing skill itself.

In this chapter we will present the important issues concerning writing skill. In the beginning, we will talk about its history, development, nature, meaning, and give details about the writing process and its stages. This chapter also provides the different approaches used to teach writing. These approaches are mentioned gradually. The chapter closes with the reasons behind writing and the various types of writing.

I.1. History of Writing:

As noticed by many linguists and authors the development of writing is a recent phenomenon. In that Harmer (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 11) said : “ human activity of writing is a fairly recent development in the evolution of men and women...some of the earliest writing found so far dates from about 5,500 years ago ” (2007). In line with that, Yule (2010) stated that: “human beings started to write some 20,000 to 25,000 years ago ” (p.212). From Yule’s point of view, this is the reason behind our little knowledge about early man’s life. He claimed that the early man did not write; but he was drawing paintings of animals and people in natural spaces as caves, this was the earliest form of writing. Early man was used pictures of animals to express their spirits after being hunted. While the pictures of people represent the human being in various physical positions. At that time was so obvious that those cultures (primitive cultures) were under the mercy of natural forces.

For Crystal (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 12), « petroglyphs » or « pictograms » are the names of paintings of those primitive cultures. To explain more, the picture ☀ used as a symbol representing the sun. These pictograms later on developed to become « ideograms » that are considered as a part of « hieroglyphs », this latter was known as a system of writing used by ancient Egyptians. On the other hand, the paintings of Native Americans in the desert South West are called « petroglyphs »/ « pictograms ». They are written on stone. Although Native American tribes did not speak each other’s languages, the petroglyphs are standard. Actually, petroglyphs are not as sophisticated as were hieroglyphs. Later, symbols used to represent words in language. They are described as «logograms » (1999, p. 18).

In talking about writing history, Yule (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, pp. 12-13) stated that in the Southern part of modern Iraq, there was a great civilization whose people were known

by Sumerians between 5,000 and 6,000 years ago. Those Sumerians used logographic writing that is described as cuneiform writing. This later means wedge-shaped writing. In about 3,500 years ago, the Phoenicians, the ancestors of the Lebanese, invented an alphabet from the Egyptian hieroglyphs. By about 1000 B.C. the Phoenicians had a fully developed syllabic writing system. Their alphabet spread into Northern Africa to become the writing system of the Arabs, and North West to Greece whose letters were further modified to become the Cyrillic alphabet of Russia and Balkans. After that the Romans modified the letters into the alphabet we recognize and use. Those alphabets are called the Roman alphabet which is different from other writing systems that represent pictures and ideas. Roman alphabets refer to sounds (2010, p. 214).

I.2. Development of Writing:

During ancient times writing was in form of graphic symbols drawn in caves and on stones. After that, it had developed and became more complicated; it involves producing meaningful segments. Those segments bear a certain message in the language. In line with that, O'Grady, Dabrowsky, and Katamla (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 14) summarized the historical development of writing in the following quotation:

The development of writing has been one of humanity's Greatest Intellectual achievements from pictograms and logograms, the graphic representation of language has developed through syllabic writing to the alphabet. This was achieved through the discovery that the sounds of language can be associated with arbitrary graphic symbols. Eventually, this was followed by another discovery that a fairly small number of symbols are sufficient to represent language in written form (1996).

In more explained words, writing started as pictograms (picture-writing) that represent animals' and people's images. Later pictograms became ideograms (idea-writing). This later

changed to logograms (word-writing). Sumerians' writing system is the best example used because it was a system word-based. More specifically, the alphabet replaced pictographs between 1700 and 1500B.C. in the Sinaitic word.

Later on, the Chinese philosopher, Tien-Lcheu (2697B.C.), invented the ink which became common by the year 1200 B.C. in parallel with the invention of paper.

I.3. Nature of Writing:

Writing, from linguists' points of view, is classified as a productive skill in addition to speaking, while listening and reading are receptive skills. Writing must be learned in formal situations as schools, institutions, centers, and universities.

As common in all languages, speaking was the earliest form of expression between human beings whatever their native language because all human beings grew up speaking their mother tongue or as called first language, after a long period of time writing has to be taught and learned. In line with that, Brookes and Grundy (as cited in Khaldoun, 2008, p. 10) reported :

The study of language in the twentieth century has tended to concentrate on spoken language, many linguists from de Saussure through to Chomsky, for what seemed like good reasons at that time, neglected the written mode in favor of the spoken. This, however, contributed to the fact that writing was for a long time a neglected area in language Teaching (2001, p. 01).

Writing is a difficult task whether at schools or in real life. Some of them argued that refers to writing is a recent form of expression in the development of human beings. In that Lyons and Heasley (2006) said: “writing as a complex process, and it is frequently accepted as being the last language skill to be acquired (for native speakers of the language as well as

for those learning a foreign or a second language) “(p. 13). Harmer (2004) claimed: “Spoken language, for a child, is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be learned”.

Harmer (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 19) pointed out that “there are a number of reasons why students find language production difficult”. Writing and learning to write has always been one of the most complex language skills (2007, p. 251). Nunan (as cited in Graoui, 2007, p. 15) agreed that «it is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language » (1989, p. 12). This complexity resides in the stages of the process we go through when writing, the lack of knowledge in the subject matter, etc. Moreover, it can be related to factors: psychological, linguistic, and cognitive; this applies to writing in L1, L2, and FL. Besides its complexity, its difficulty, and its importance, writing is a dynamic process which allows writers to work with words and ideas no matter if these are right or wrong. This idea (as cited in Graoui, 2007, p) is supported by Zamel (1992) who described writing as a “meaning-making, purposeful, evolving, recursive, dialogic, tentative, fluid, exploratory process “. More importantly, writing is a process of discovery, i.e., a way to help learners to learn or to discover how to compose a piece of writing. Grabe and Kaplan (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 19) think of writing as a “technology”, i.e., a set of skills which must be practiced and learned through practice (1996).

According to White and Arndt (1991), “writing is also a problem-solving activity developing in progress”. This means that writing doesn’t come naturally or automatically, but through cognitive efforts, training, instruction and practice. Even if it is a problem-solving, writing involves processes such as generating ideas, a voice to write, planning, goal-setting, monitoring and evaluating what is to be written and what has been written as well as

the right language used by the writer.

I.4. What Does Writing Mean?

Writing is considered a recent area for study because it was neglected for many years. Being an important skill like the other ones, many linguists have interested in writing and have taken it under investigation. Among them, White and Arndt (1991) see that: “Writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols: it is a thinking process in its own right. It demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable effort of time”. (as cited in Ouskourt, 2008, p.15). Allen and G.Mackenzie also defined writing as a complex process that is an essential skill for effective communication. It involves the refining of ideas and their expression, coupled with presentation and editing. Harmer (2007) claimed that the writing skill is important as the other skills (speaking, listening, and reading). It is needed for students to know how to reflect their knowledge, emotions, or ideas on a paper (how to write letters, how to reply to advertisements, how to summarize a text...). They need also to recognize writing’s conventions such as: punctuation, spelling...etc. for these days, it is so important to know how to write via electronic media. For Hayes (1996), (as cited in Price and Maier, 2007, p.280), writing is a social act that represents one of many forms of communication. This means that it enables the writer to share his information, his views, or his feelings with the others, and it can be done within different contexts, e.g. writing e-mails to friends or relatives, making a shopping list, or showing knowledge to what have been learned. In line with that (as cited in Nyggard, 2010, p. 38) Silva stated that is of the opinion that second language writing is “strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in important ways from first language writing” (1993).

In that, Weigle (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 19) also stated that the ability to write allows individuals from different cultures and back-grounds to communicate. She also added that:

Writing is a key skill in second language learning and all teachers need to evaluate their students' writing abilities. The issues surrounding the assessment of second language learners' writing abilities are becoming more and more relevant in the age of global communication (2002).

This idea is supported by Richards and Schmidt (2002) where it is stated: “writing is viewed as a result of complex process of planning, drafting, reviewing and revising “. That is to say, the final product is the result of various operations. While Hedge (2000) stated :“ Writing is the result of employing strategies to manage the composing process . . . it involves a number of activities: setting goals, generating information, selecting appropriate language, making a draft, reading and reviewing it, then revising and editing. It is a complex process “(p.302).

According to Lado (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p.17), writing in a foreign language is the ability to use language and its graphic representation productively in an ordinary writing situation. “. In that Lado said: “We mean by writing in a foreign language the ability to use structures, the lexical items, and their conventional representation in ordinary matter-of-fact writing” (2000). Furthermore, writing is a whole process which goes through different steps. It is not merely limited to express thoughts via written symbols, but also a tool of learning as it is reported by Kate and Guy (2003): « writing is a process of exploring one's thoughts and learning from the act of writing itself from what thoughts are ».

Col, Rycroft and Earnest in their book Writing Skills (as cited in Graoui, 2008, p.16) stated that writing is a complex cognitive activity in which the writer must respect content, format, sentence, structure, vocabulary, spelling, and letter formation, i.e. the writer must

control the sentence level. Besides, writing can be acceptable if it implies the existence of cohesion and coherence, two main intellectual linguistic abilities (1991). For supporting that idea, B.Kroll (1990) said: «writers must be able to structure and integrate information cohesively and coherently when writing paragraphs and texts ».

I.5.The Writing Process:

Before explaining what writing process means we have first to define the term of process. For Butler (2007), a process is a series of steps or actions. These steps enable us reach to our goals as well as to get wanted results (p.23). She added that the writing process can help us to write clear and correct paragraphs in English. Nunan (as cited in Benboulaid, 2008, p. 15) gave an explanation to writing process. He said it is as an often long and painful process in which the end products emerge through several drafts (1991). In addition to Nunan’s words, Hedge (as cited in Benboulaid, 2008, p. 9) stated that different activities involved in the writing process:

It involves a number of activities: setting goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language ,making a draft, reading and revising it, then revising and editing. It involves a complex process which is neither easy nor spontaneous for many second language writers (2000, p. 124).

Briefly, as stated by Hedge (2005), the writing process includes a set of activities which can be presented in Figure 1:

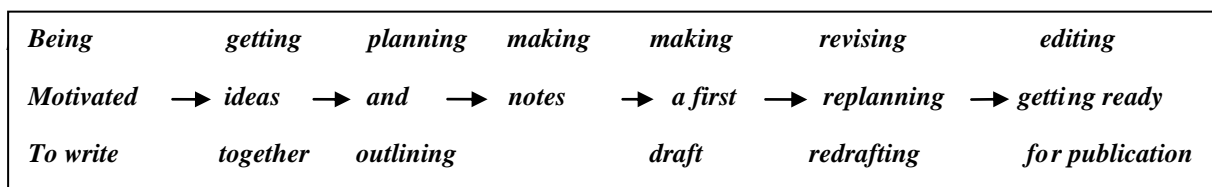


Figure01: The Activities Contained in the Writing Process (p. 51).

According to Butler (2007) there are four basic steps in the writing process. These stages come gradually. They are as follows:

I.5.1. Prewriting: this step is the starting point at which we think about ideas to our paragraph. This can be done by many ways like brainstorming, do free writing, take notes, question one another, and learn strategies for organizing ideas. As Butler (2007) advised, interaction with classmates is good for generating ideas, and peer review raises student's awareness of the audience for their writing. According to D'Aoust (as cited in Ouskourt, 2008, p. 94)):

Prewriting activities are the key to generating ideas and planning what to say: Prewriting activities generate ideas; they encourage a free flow of thoughts and help students to say it on paper. In other words prewriting activities facilitate the planning for both the product and the process (1986, p. 94).

In that Hedge (2005) said before putting pen on paper, the writer should take into consideration two important questions: what is the purpose of this piece of writing? and who are we writing this for (the audience)? (p. 52).

I.5.2. Writing: as it is mentioned by Butler (2007), the first time when we begin to write a paragraph is called first draft, i.e. our work is incomplete. When students write a first draft, they rely on their notes and refer back to the modals that have seen before. This can be done in class or for homework. White and Arndt (as cited in Lounis, 2009, p. 19) suggest that writing is the stage where “the writer passes from the ‘writer based’ writing to the ‘reader based’ writing in which the concerns of the reader should now begin to assume more significance” (1991, p. 99).

I.5.3. Editing: it, for Hedge (2005), makes the final readjustments and checks accuracy so

that the text maximally accessible to the reader. Editing also described as an important part in the writing process that means checking for mistakes and making corrections, or making change to the content the idea and information in our paragraph. Students must take responsibility for checking and improving their own work. For instance, we can add new information or move certain sentences. Editing can be done before showing our written work to our teacher or our classmates. She added that sometimes we do peer review; our classmates are our peers. We read and talk to each other's paragraphs. We think about these things:

- The content.
- The words and sentences.
- The format of the paper.

Then we give feedback to our partners. Honestly and kindly, we say what we think about their works. This leads to develop revision and edition skills. (Butler, 2007, p.46)

I.5.4. Write the Final Draft: the term final draft is used to mean a revised and edited draft handed in to the teacher, possibly for a grade. Often writers change their first drafts. They may need only small changes (Butler, 2007; p.45). White and Arndt (as cited in Ouskourt, 2008, p. 96) claimed that it is this moment when students/ writers check for formal inaccuracies. The ultimate objective in this phase is, besides further development of the students' techniques, to "enrich the repertoire of linguistic resources which are the essential tools for writing"(1991, p. 137).

Editing, (as mentioned by Ouskourt, 2008, p. 97), means the final step before the student submits the final draft to the teacher. It is the phase in which there is a great emphasis on language in terms of grammatical accuracy and correctness of form as well as focus on surface points such as spelling and punctuation. It is the stage in which the writer reshapes

content prior to publication. In the classroom, editing can be assigned as a pair work or group work to enhance self-correction by recognizing and pointing to the errors on the draft of the partner.

Concerning the writing process Brown and Hood (1993) stated it is so necessary to take into consideration the following points because the writing process depends on them:

- Who you are writing to or for (reader): this is a major issue in the writing activity because it plays a role and purpose in reading the text.
- Why you are writing (purpose).
- What you are writing about (content).
- Where you are, how much time you have, how you feel, etc (situation). (p. 6)

I.6. Approaches to Teach Writing:

I.6.1. The Product Approach:

Generally speaking, for Dudley and St John (1998), the product approach concentrates on the features of the actual text the end product_ that writers have to produce. It usually involves the presentation of a model text and forms the basis of an activity that leads to writing of a parallel text. Robinson (1991) summarizes the method

In the following diagram:

Model text → *Comprehension/Analysis/Manipulation* → *New input* → *Parallel Text*.

Diagram 01: Robinson's Summary of the Product Approach.

In early days the product approach concentrated on simplistic copying of the model text by changing certain words from the original text to produce a new text. This was a

mechanical task that has no real thought about the purpose of the writing, the readership or the expectations of the discourse. A particular feature of this approach is its attention to correctness. (p.116)

As it is reported by Nunan (1989) “the teacher who adopts a product-approach makes sure that the end product is grammatically correct”. In more explained words, the product approach pays attention to grammatical correctness of the final piece of writing (p. 36). In line with that Mc Donough and Shaw (1993) argued that it is a traditional way to teach writing whose focuses are on accuracy and consolidation of grammar.

Moreover, the teacher becomes a on accuracy and consolidation of grammar. Moreover, the teacher becomes a judge of the finished product (p.43). Tribble (1997) also said that “teachers see errors as something that they must correct and eliminate given the importance accurate language has”. In fact, for some teachers, the most important is a readable accurate piece of writing since language competence is the aim of this approach. Moreover, learners are given writing models to construct sentences, develop paragraphs, and sentences out of these models (pp.20-22). Nevertheless, Zamel (as cited in Harmer, 2001, p.32) stated that learning by imitating was thought to be appropriate at the sentence level, where the structure is somehow relevant. However, in a certain way, imitation does not match with the recent view of language and learning at the discourse level (1992). Thus, it is this mismatch between both levels that gives rise to the process of composing as well as the realization that the final product is not produced at the first attempt, but after a long process and some drafts Attempts to understand the process underlying the production of a piece of writing led to the process approach. This latter makes teaching writing more explicit given the stages writers go through which help them communicate their ideas more effectively. The Product approach

sees writing as strictly a solitary activity especially during exams. In this respect, (as cited in Harmer, 2001, p.74) Zamel claimed that “students get very few opportunities to write, and when they do so there is still a tendency to look at texts as final products for evaluation”. Therefore, this might make learners think that the purpose of writing is for evaluation rather than for communication. According to Richards (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, pp.46.47), “the product approach leads to practice in the structure organization of different kinds of paragraphs and texts” (1992). Accordingly, the main features of this approach are:

- Learners have specific writing needs, either for institutional writing or personal writing.
- The goals of a writing program are to teach students to be able to produce the kinds of written texts they will most frequently encounter in educational, institutional, and/or personal contexts. The writing program will focus on the patterns and forms used in different kinds of written text (e.g., differences between descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive writing, formats need to present information in an essay or report; different ways of organizing information in paragraphs).
- The grammatical patterns and grammatical rules used in different kinds of texts are presented in model composition, which are constructed to display the rules that learners should use in their own writing.
- Correct sentence structure is the main aspect of writing, grammatical skill receives considerable emphasis.
- Errors in writing are avoided by providing learners with models to follow by

guiding and controlling what learners write to prevent them from making errors. Thus the primary emphasis is on providing practice in different kinds of texts. Compared to the other approaches, Broughely (1997, as cited in Ghodbane, p. 47) concluded that the product approach is also known as a “prose model approach” when used for teaching the composition skill to native and non-native learners. This is based on the strategy of read, analyze, and write.

I.6.2. The Process Approach:

This approach (as cited in Ouskourt, 2008, p. 46) emphasizes on the process of writing. Students need to realize that the writing process has many stages. It begins with putting down on paper and ends with the final product. Between these steps, many changes happen. The main questions that have to be asked from the student before starting the writing activity are: How do I write? How do I get started?

Learning to write is a process which entails a series of steps the students go through to arrive at the final product. More specifically, the process approach has emerged as a reaction against the product approach where Silva (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 48) pointed out: “This approach calls for providing a positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which students, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing process” (1993).

Silva (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 48) added teachers’ role is to help students to develop viable strategies for getting started. Those strategies are “Finding the topics, generating ideas and information, focusing, and planning structure and procedure” (1993). This means that teachers should become facilitators rather than assessors helping students to develop those strategies mentioned above with easiness. For instance: drafting means writing

several multiple drafts, revising means adding, deleting, modifying and rearranging ideas, and editing means looking at vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. On the other hand, White and Arnld (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p. 49) by collaborative mean getting learners to interact with each other mainly for feedback as we stressed above so that writing is not seen as a solitary or isolated activity as it was usually thought of, but a more creative and dynamic one. In fact, the teacher's goal is to present writing as a stimulating process (1991). Hedge (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010, p.49) saw this approach as follows: The process view of writing sees it as thinking, as discovery. Writing is the result of employing strategies to manage the composing process, which is one of gradually developing a text. It involves a number of activities: setting goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language, making a draft, reading and process which are neither easy nor spontaneous for many L2 writers (2000). Among the characteristics of viewing writing as process, Grabe and Kaplan (1996, as cited in Ghodbane, p. 49) stated that the process approach encourages learners to:

- Write on relevant topics or topic learners find interesting rather than having the teacher who assigning the topic.
- Plan their writing in such a way that it has a purpose in mind and a context. The student writing should be planned and about something valuable not just writing anything.
- Be creative and imaginative using pre-writing activities, different drafts and feedback rather than immediately putting pen to paper without previous planning and revision.

- Get feedback from real audience either from peers, small groups or the teacher through formative evaluation.
- Focus on content and personal expression rather than the final copy, grammar and usage.
- Look at writing as recursive rather than a linear process since repetition of activities and steps are relevant and necessary.
- Be aware of the writing process and the issues relevant to it such as audience, planning, etc., rather than teach students to write without a suitable method.

What students and teachers need to know is to have a focus in mind, the product. Brown (as cited in Ouskourt, 2008, p. 46) points out that “the product is after all, the ultimate goal; it is the reason that we go through the process of pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing” (1994).

I.6.3. The Genre Approach:

As stated by Ouskourt (2008), the genre approach focuses on teaching particular genres that students need in particular settings. It pays attention to a language and discourse features of the text as well as the context in which the text is produced. These particular genres help students to fulfill certain functions and to achieve certain goals within particular social and cultural context. This approach views the language as functional, serves functional purposes (p.47). In that Painter (1989) notes: “Language is a functional resource in that the language system can be viewed as having the form it does because of what it is called upon to do. The needs of language learners have shaped the linguistic system itself”.

Harmer (2001, pp.258.259) claimed that in a genre approach if we want students to write business letters of various kinds, we let them look at typical modals of such letters before starting to compose their own. If we want them to write newspapers articles we have them study real examples to discover. A genre approach is especially appropriate for students of English for Specific Purposes, but it also highly useful for general English students. Students who are writing within a certain genre need to consider a number of different factors. They need to have knowledge of the topic, the conventions and style of the genre, and the context in which their writing will be read, and by whom. Asking students to imitate a given style could be seen as extremely prescriptive, encouraging them to see writing as a form of 'reproduction' rather than as a creative act. Imitation is only a first stage, however, designed as much to inform as to enforce adherence to strict genre rules. In the end it is up to them to decide what to do with the data they have collected (however this has been done).

Muncle (as cited in Graoui, 2007, p.37) claimed that the genre approach focuses on the writer, the creativity and individualism of writing and the process of writing as a whole (starting from the generation of ideas through the edition of work). It, on the other hand focuses more on the reader and on the conventions that a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership (2002).

According to Hyon (1996), current genre theories have developed in three research areas: ESP, North American New Rhetoric Studies and Australian Systematic Functional Linguistics. Generally (as cited in Graoui, 2007, p 38), the philosophy of the genre approach is that all texts conform to certain conventions and that if a student is to be successful in joining English discourse community, the student will need to be able to produce texts which fulfill the expectations of its regards to grammar, organization and content (Muncle, 2002).

Traditionally, genres were seen as fixed and classifiable into neat and mutually exclusive categories and sub-categories. For example, exposition, argument, description and narratives were treated as the large categories. With sub-types such as the business letter and the lab report. Thus, in the traditional view of genres, teaching genres means teaching textual regularities in form and context of each genre.

I.7. Reasons of Writing:

According to Hedge (2005), any piece of writing has its own purpose. In that she said that there is an interesting set of purposes for writing (p.9).

- **Pedagogic Purposes:** here writing helps students to learn the system of language. In other words, writing is an aid to consolidate the learning of how the syntactic level of language constructed.
- **Assessment Purposes:** this kind of writing aims to establishing a learner's progress or proficiency.
- **Real Purposes:** as a goal of learning, to meet students' needs. In this kind of writing, the teachers ask their students to write about something specific which its achievement make them master or do in a good way what they need.
- **Humanistic Purposes:** to allow students to show their strengths. In certain activities, the students have ordered by the teacher to write about humanistic, social, sensitive issues touching our feelings and emotions.
- **Creative Purposes:** to develop self-expression. In more explaining words, in this type the students write things about themselves, their opinions, feelings, wills, dreams.

- This sort of writing enriches their minds with more vocabulary and makes them more fluent in writing.
- **Classroom Management Purposes:** as a calm activity which settles students down.
- **Inquisitional Purposes:** as a careful mode of working with language which enables students to expose and reflect on language in a conscious way.
- **Educational Purposes:** to contribute to intellectual development and to develop self-esteem and confidence.

I.8. Types of Writing:

For Hedge (2005, pp.86-87), types of writing in English are categorized according to students' purposes. These purposes are follows:

- **Personal Writing:** is writing for academic and educational purposes and includes different types of aide-memoirs, as well as diaries and journals. These writing activities would normally be carried out in the first language but there may be good motivational reasons for using them in the English-language classroom.
- **Study Writing:** is writing for academic or educational purposes and includes all those tasks that students perform, either writing notes and summaries for themselves or writing essays, reports, reviews, etc, which are read and often assessed by teachers.
- **Public Writing:** is writing as a member of the general public to organizations or institutions. There are usually conventions to follow in the writing. It includes such activities as writing letters of enquiry, application, and complaint, letters to the editor, and form filling of various kinds.

- **Creative Writing:** it can include poems, stories, rhymes, drama, all of which can be for oneself or shared with others. It is often found in primary and lower secondary classrooms in first language education as it has the values of helping personal and social development, and building self-esteem. Some teachers report great success with creative writing in adult classes too, but care is needed about appropriateness with particular groups.
- **Social Writing:** is all the writing that establishes and maintains social relationships with family and friends, for example, personal letters, invitations, notes with congratulations, condolences, telephone text messages, and personal emails. There are will be relevant to EFL students who need to learn the correct formats and formulas.
- **Institutional Writing:** relates to professional roles. It may well be possible to draw up a core list of this type of writing, for example, agendas, minutes, reports, memos. However, each profession will have its own specialized texts such as legal contracts, advertising copy, or academic papers. Language students in more specialized group can usually draw up specifications of their own needs in writing English and provide authentic examples. When designing a writing program for a group of students, it is sensible to draw up a checklist of writing relevant to the group or even to have an elaborated list. Such as the one below, from which to select items.

Conclusion

It is so important for both teachers and learners to know and recognize the necessary information that serve the writing skill and make it easy and acceptable. This would be achieved if we follow exactly what is needed.

Through this chapter, we gave you an idea about how writing developed over years, its nature that is described as the most difficult and complex skill, how we can follow different steps to make a final piece of writing, and how by engaging in writing, each writer has his own reasons to do so; those reasons can be social, professional, or academic purposes. At the end, we conclude the chapter by talking about the situation of the written expression module in English department at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.

Chapter Two

The Computer and Education

Chapter Two: The Computer and Education.

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Introduction:

In this chapter we will talk about the computer and his role in learning foreign languages especially English language. Before doing this, it is preferable to define that unique discovery and show how it develops through years. Since our research investigates how the computer plays a role in developing EFL students' writing, we attempted to make a comparison between handwriting and writing with the aid of the computer for pick up the advantages and the drawbacks of using it.

At the end of the chapter, we made an evaluation to the situation of the computing module in our department. We also mentioned the important points included in its program. In the next chapter we are going to analyze students' attitudes and opinions about the writing skill and the role of the computer in enhancing it.

II.1.Definitions of Computer:

The Computer is one of the 21st century incredible inventions that have made a triumphal entry into education. This interesting technology has taken attention of many authors. From many points of view, it has defined as an electronic device that stores and processes data, according to a list of instructions. It allows a user to manipulate data very easily. Others said it is a programmable machine that has to principle characteristics: hardware and software. It has shown many developments from its appearance in both hardware and software.

The first teaching machine (as cited in Benboulaid, 2007, p. 11-12-13) was invented in 1934 by Sudney L.Pressey, but it was not until the 1950s that practical methods of programmed instruction developed. Programmed instruction was reintroduced in 1954 by B.F.Skinner Harvard University and much of the system is based on his theory of the nature of learning.

The word « hardware » refers to a set of electronic components that comprises a computer case with power supply, a motherboard, a processor with a heat sink and fan, a memory card, a mass storage device, a key board and mouse for input and of course a monitor for output. The mother board/ main board is the primary circuit board within a personal computer (PC) that is defined as a computer operated by an individual without any specific computer operator. A PC can be a desktop or a laptop computer, and can be used at home or at office. Many other components connect directly/ indirectly to the mother board. Mother boards usually contain one or more CPUs, supporting circuitry like the control processing unit (CPU), is the part of a computer which executes software program instructions temporarily.

APCs main memory or also called the primary store, is a fast storage that is directly

accessible by the CPUs and is used to store the currently executing program and immediately needed data whether mass storage device or hard drive stores programs and data permanently even when the power is off; they do require power to perform read/write functions during usage.

Software is a term for the different kinds of programs used to operate the computer and related devices. Technically, « software » stands for a set of applications and programs that run through « hardware » (an electronic computer), it is called as such because it has a virtual activity that needs an electronic container to perform a task.

Generally « software » is the binary language which consists of instructions that tell the computer what to do and how to behave through the already stored or pre-stored digital codes to finally have the possibility to use the computer technology for a general or a specific need. The domain of software is divided into two main fields, the operating systems and the programs/ applications (the terms " application " and " application program" are synonyms) (p.14).

" System Software " includes the operating system and all the utilities that enable the computer to function " application software " includes programs that allow users perform tasks like word processing, calculation and digital manipulation either for the sound or the image. As an example, Windows XP which is an operating system that its installation on a PC is crucial to use the rest of the programs like Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point... etc.

We can understand from the above definition that the field of software understands two distinct categories, a primary one that rules the secondary one, in other terms it is a program on a program (p.15).

According to Frei, Gammill, and Irons, (as cited in Benboulaid, 2008, p.22) software facilitates critical thinking and higher order thinking and works best with the teacher as coach, computer as tool model. Using these tools helps students to question, plan, gather, analyze, and report. Examples of these software programs include databases, word processors, spreadsheets, multimedia presentation programs, publishing programs, and graphic organizing programs.

II.2.Brief History:

The emergence of the computer in learning languages field (as cited in Guy Chartrand, 2002, pp. 6-12) has shown four episodes.

The first episode began in 1939 when the earliest electronic computer was produced at Iowa State University. John Vincont Atanasoff, the father of the computer, created with the first ideas of the binary system of arithmetic, parallel processing, regenerating memory and a separation of memory and computing functions. These ideas still apply to present day computer. A second electronic computer was designed and built by Alan Turing for the British military in 1943, which was called Colossus, and plays a role in breaking German codes used during World War II. The initial general-purpose programmable electronic computer was built at the University of Pennsylvania in 1945. It was funded by the Army, which needed a way to compute ballistics during World War II, and was used extensively for calculations during the design of the hydrogen bomb. It was also used for research on the design of wind tunnels, random number generators, and weather prediction (Computational Science Education Project 1991). Early computers were thus used by a select group of scientists and few people had access to them. Accordingly, the beginning days of computing were mainly a time for the development of computer science itself.

Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) and the technology for learning languages on computers began taking roots in the late 1950s. The principles behind technology-enhanced language learning were strongly influenced from the work of the behaviorist, B. F. Skinner. In 1954, Skinner advocated the use of teaching machines for individualized instruction which would be responsive to the preferred pace of the learner. According to Skinner (1954), language learning occurs by the formation of habits based on the notions of stimulus, response and reinforcement. Especially, complex learning requires a series of small steps and reinforcements to succeed at each step. He also accounts for the acquisition of syntax. He claims that the structure of a sentence consists of a chain of associations between the words in the sentence (1957). Skinner was an influential academic who inspired language educators to pursue technological means for learning languages.

The second episode began with the PLATO (Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations) Project, which was initiated at the University of Illinois in 1960. Warscharrer (1996) claimed at that time, the computer involved large-scale systems that required well-funded team efforts. This project was used to teach foreign languages as well other subjects. PLATO was designed specifically to provide interactive, self-paced instruction for large classes. This system had a number of innovative features such as “notes files,” which allowed the users to communicate among themselves (Levy 1997). This was a kind of restricted e-mail system, and it formed the basis for the future development of the e-mails that we use today on the Internet. The PLATO system included vocabulary drills, brief grammar explanations and drills, and translation tests at various intervals. Based on the behaviorist influence of the time, repeated exposure to the same material was deemed beneficial or even essential to learning. A computer was thought of being ideal for carrying out repeated drills since the machine did not get bored with presenting the material over and over again and

could also provide immediate and non-judgmental feedback. The material could be presented on an individualized basis, allowing students to proceed at their own pace (Warschauer 1996). PLATO was a sophisticated tutoring system with its own special hardware running on mainframe computers and terminals. Another notable mainframe computer CALL system was originated at Brigham Young University in 1971. This project was called Time-Shared, Interactive, Computer-Controlled Information Television (TICCIT). This system was different from the PLATO system in that it used a television as a monitor and allowed a combination of text, audio and video as a multimedia tool. TICCIT was designed around a specific theory of learning or teaching, and remains one of the few computer systems devised for this purpose (Levy 1997). These early projects enabled a creative base for professional expertise in CALL and the ensuing courseware to develop for those systems that eventually supported audio output, graphics and a flexible response analysis. Design limitations of the hardware and courseware, however, made further development on this platform difficult to continue beyond 1981.

The third episode began in the early 1980s with the development of the microcomputer or PC. A number of companies such as Apple, Commodore and Radio Shack began making PCs in the late 1970s and this enabled software programmers to develop completely new CALL programs and a new wave of educational software began to appear in the marketplace. Language teachers could also now become CALL programmers as the feasibility of writing such programs was made available to them by such tools as BASIC, *Storyboard* and *HyperCard*. Because a PC did not have to be connected to a mainframe computer, language teachers and learners did not have to be present at a university, company or classroom and users could install the software by floppy disks to explore the potentials for language learning at their own place and time. This newfound freedom was complemented with new language

learning methodology becoming popular at the time with Stephen Krashen's views of second language acquisition (1982). According to Krashen, language acquisition and language learning are separate processes. Language acquisition refers to the subconscious process that children use in acquiring their first language. Language learning refers to the conscious process that results in knowing about language. It can also be said that acquisition is the result of natural interaction with the language via meaningful communication and learning is the result of formal study in which the learner is made to focus on linguistic forms and rules (Mitchell 1998:35). This methodology was markedly different from behaviorist thinking because it replaced repetitive drilling exercises with interactive learning. One of the main advocates in that period was John Underwood who proposed a series of "Premises for 'Communicative' CALL." According to Underwood, Communicative CALL: Focuses more on using forms rather than on the forms themselves. Teaches grammar implicitly rather than explicitly. Allows and encourages students to neither generate judge and evaluate everything the students nor reward them with congratulatory messages, lights, or bells. Avoids telling students they are wrong and is flexible to a variety of student responses. Uses the target language exclusively and creates an environment in which using the target language feels natural, both on and off the screen; and will never try to do anything that a book can do just as well (Underwood 1984). The growth of the PC in the 1980s and 1990s was very significant. In the developed world, a growing number of people got access to a computer either at school or at home with access to the Internet and e-mail. The use of computers for CALL, however, had been somewhat disconnected. Communicative CALL had made significant advances over Behaviorist CALL, but because second language learning is enhanced when the four skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing—are used, some critics had pointed out that contributions to the learning process had been marginal rather than

substantial.

The fourth episode takes us to the present moment. Recent developments in computer technology have added greater speed to the processing power of PCs and this has allowed enhanced use of digital video, sound, graphics and animation in CALL courseware. As computer hardware improves, there is the potential for the software to improve also. Due to these advancements, language-learning software can now make use of speech recognition technology, which digitalizes the oral input of the learner and is interpreted by the courseware for analysis. Moreover, as the connection rate to the Internet gets faster, it now becomes possible to integrate language learning with video conferencing that allows learners to communicate with interested parties in other countries. This trend combined with more efficient use of multimedia, including the use of DVD media, leads to a more authentic learning environment. Combining the resources available to courseware developers will enable a more transparent integration of using an activity on the computer to let the learners listen to native language speech, read a text, write a response and express an oral statement. There could be a greater emphasis on content without sacrificing focus on language forms and meaning. Students can have greater control over their learning by accessing the pace of instruction, by choosing their appropriate language level, by selecting specific tasks that they might want to practice such as pronunciation or grammar exercises and by making use of artificial intelligence, the courseware can be programmed to encourage the learner to adopt an appropriate learning strategy. It will be interesting to see what can be done to complement the needs of the learner twenty years from now.

II.3.The Difference between Handwriting and Computer:

According to Harmer (2001), handwriting is a personal issue. Every student uses his own

style. Everyone is free to write what he wants according to his desire and trends. The writer's badly-formed piece of writing leave a bad impression in the reader who after a while from reading may be feels boring; something which is undesirable at all. For Harmer, whether the work is the product of some creative task (a poem, a story, a diary...) or, more seriously, work that is going to be assessed in a test or exam, it is necessary for teachers to encourage their students with problematic handwriting to improve it.

Concerning the distinction between handwriting and the computer, it is reported that:

- **Research:** you can make notes on your computer while you read. These can later be incorporated into your essay either in your own writing or as quotes. You can create a bibliography file while you are reading that can later be pasted into your essay. You can also use your computer as a research tool-either to find and order books or to read the many available internet sources.
- **Planning and Drafting:** You might lose important pieces of paper while traveling.

Any notes you make on paper will have to be re-writing or typed up at a later date. This is a very tedious task. You will inevitably use up lots of paper (i.e., trees). You can use your Word processor to develop your ideas freely through free writing and/or outlining. Once you have stored your early notes and/or drafts it is a simple process to manipulate them and incorporate them into your draft/redraft.

- **Redrafting:** When writing by hand you are to a large extent trapped in a linear approach. You can not insert any new information you may want to include in the most appropriate place. Nor can you re-order your text. it is extremely easy to: change anything; insert new information anywhere; or re-order your paragraphs on your

computer.

- **Editing/ Proofreading:** You would have to check the spelling of every word you are unsure of in a dictionary and any grammar problems in a reference book. You would also have to count the number of words. You would have to draw lines by hand in your references and type out any mistakes (every ugly). Knowing how to use your computer's spell checker and grammar checker functions will greatly reduce time and effort, as well as helping you to catch mistakes you might otherwise miss. (If you use these tools critically, you will also improve your grammar and spelling). You can change font appearance (bold, italic, underline) with a couple of keyboard strokes.
- **Presenting your Final Draft:** Teachers now days expect polished, word processed essays; a hand-written essay will probably suggest lack of motivation and may be judged more critically. If you become sick the night before your essay is due you may lose 5% or more of your mark by submitting it late. Word processing is not only about appearance. A legible, nicely formatted essay with few languages errors is easier to read and this means your teacher will be able to understand the content better. So, in turn this suggests you will get a better grade and/or more valuable comments on where your arguments are going wrong. If you can not make it into class you can send your essay to your teacher as a file attachment, thus avoiding losing marks unnecessarily. (www.4.caes.hku.hk/writing/.../default-answers)

As viewing by Nygaard (2010, p. 33), comparing writing with a pen on a piece of paper and writing on a computer implies getting familiar with writing on a keyboard, using a mouse, text viewing software and operating systems in the writing process. According to Kern (as cited in Nyggard, 2010, p.33), this makes reading and writing on the computer even

more complex in an already complex process. However, electronic texts are dynamic and flexible as spacing and typefaces are easily adjustable and the possibility to cut and paste words or paragraphs from one place to another, erasing or adding words and sentences, makes the editing job more comfortable (2000). Kern (2000) also refers to a study by Haas (1989) where students expressed the need to print their writing because they felt that they were not really seeing their text otherwise. Kern (2000) concludes that “there are significant limitations to using computers for writing that we are only beginning to understand, and that have not yet been incorporated into theories of writing”. He argues that the key area of difference between writing with pen and paper and writing with computers is procedural knowledge.

In addition, Harmer (2001) recommends that teachers to encourage their students to write emails in English to others around the world as he considers this “extremely motivating” and more exciting than other forms of letter writing. On the other hand, e-mail writing is immediate and a more informal way of communicating, and there is a danger that this will lead to not taking accuracy too seriously. However, as Harmer (2001) points out it, is possible to “encourage students to ‘sit back’ and consider the results of their efforts before clicking on the ‘send’ icon”.

II.4. The Advantages of Computer:

Because of the several computer advantages, it has become an important instrument used in different places. It can exist in office, at home, or at school. It has become an indispensable device for us.

According to Frei (2007), one of the elements of the computer is the word processor

which makes it has many advantages over handwriting and manual typewriters. The word processing is faster and easier than writing by hand and you can store documents on your computer, which you can not usually do on a type writer. This makes it easier to review and rewrite your documents. You have more formatting choices with a word processor and the spelling, grammar and language tools are useful, too. You can also print copies of your documents. Many language students use word processor to improve their writing skills and because they help them feel proud of their work.

According to Kern (2000), the use of word processing software improves the quality of the students' writing. However, this kind of software could have positive influences, such as the students' attitude toward writing and the decrease of surface errors.

In addition, Harmer (2001) recommends teachers to encourage their students to write emails in English to others around the world as he considers this "extremely motivating" and more exciting than other forms of letter writing.

Harmer (2001) claimed that the use of the computer in the writing skill is good for many reasons, from them:

- A word processing package removes the problems of poor handwriting that some students suffer from.
- A word processing package permits the user to edit his piece of writing in a great speed achievement and with great facility.
- Spelling checkers can alleviate the task of achieving correct spelling and dictionaries can provide grammar help.

- A computer screen can be sometimes more visible to the whole in a group work than a piece of paper might be.

Another important point (as cited in Hassina, 2005, p.77) is what we call « mouse-pals » instead of « pen-pals », which is the action of getting students write emails in English to others around the world something that can be extremely motivating. In that Harmer held: « E-mail represents a genre all of their own where linguistic accuracy is not so formally important. But despite this, we can still encourage students to ‘sit back’ and consider the results of their before checking on the ‘send’ icon ».

The computer allows the user to create documents, edit, print, and store them. Creation of documents takes less time because of the various tools like spelling, grammar checker, thesaurus, and dictionary that are installed in the computer. It is so easy to reorganize the sentences or paragraphs; we can cut and paste and make the necessary changes. If there is a mistake, the computer automatically gives the correct answer, so there is no need to open up a dictionary book to look for meanings of words. The most incredible feature of using the computer is one can remain connected to the world through the Internet. For ESL students, the wealth of communication options the computer provides allows for daily opportunities to practice interacting with others in English. ([http:// www.alison.com/English-Writing](http://www.alison.com/English-Writing).)

Using the computer as a tool provides students with the opportunity to develop and use their higher-level thinking skills to solve problems that are relevant to their daily lives.

(<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/advantages-of-computers.html>)

For ESL students, the wealth of communication options the computer provides allows for

daily opportunities to practice interacting with others in English

(<http://www.esl.yourdictionary.com>.)

II.5. The Disadvantages of Computer:

As mentioned by Nygaard (2010), some scholars argue that writing on the computer is not only beneficial. Beatty (2003) states that most word-processing programs are designed for business environments and not for school use as the programs offer spelling correction without providing any definition. Beatty claims that when learners frequently misspell a word they choose the first suggested correction without questioning other alternatives. Beatty also criticizes the lack of recording of misspellings in word-processing programs providing no feedback for learners who are interested in having another look at their errors. What Beatty considers even worse is that it is possible for the learner to add misspelled new words to standard dictionaries in the corrections programs.

Beatty (2003) also questions the worth of grammar support in word-processing programs. One reason for this is that the grammar checker in, for example Microsoft Word, is not in favour of the passive voice even where it is appropriate. (p.32)

In that Sandhyarani (2011) wrote that sitting for long hours in front of the computer or the PC will affect the eyes and decreases his activity level. He also added that despite the benefits gained from the internet, but the easy access to information via internet has made students lazy in terms of education; they do not try, search, and work hard by themselves. The internet gives them the ability to download information without exploring their topic of research. They also use the computer for mathematical tables and calculations without actually solving problems. This prevents their minds to think.

Certain aspects of the writing process may have negative effects from the use of computer. Selfe (as cited in Nyggard, 2010, p .34), refers to several studies that show that it is more difficult for people to get an overview of the text on the computer screen and people read more slowly and less accurately, which have important consequences for writing (1989).

Word processors have do disadvantages. First, it is not easy to read long documents on a computer screen. Second, sometimes the printer does not print an exact copy of what you see on the screen. Not all word processors can read each other's files, which is another disadvantage. Finally, word processors do not always work well with e-mail. If you paste a word-processed better into e-mail it may lose a lot of its formatting. Although the computer make editing changes easy, such as moving paragraphs and reorganizing the text, Haas' study also showed that the students found it difficult to get an overall structure and meaning when viewing the text on the screen.

Harmer (2001) stated that e-mail writing is immediate and a more informal way of communicating, and there is a danger that this will lead to not taking accuracy too seriously. Another drawback is represented in theft and virus threat. The computer viruses are harmful to the systems and can be transferred from one computer system to another (Sandhyarani, 2011).

Conclusion

We have discussed through this chapter the placement and the unique value of computer in the learning foreign languages. Concerning that, it is argued that the computer has taken a pedagogical value. This is because of its benefits from which and as most important ones, developing and facilitating the writing task.

To prove and support our hypotheses, we found ourselves obliged to make an examination and investigation on the students' attitudes and views in our department towards the writing skill and to what extent the computer can help them to learn and master that skill. All of this will be in details in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Field Work

Chapter Three: Field Work

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Section A: Methodology

The methodology that we follow in our thesis is the descriptive method. We saw that it is more appropriate and serves our study. Concerning that Selinger and Shohamy (as cited in Khaldoun, 2008, p. 85) reported: “Descriptive research is based on understanding a phenomenon within the interactive framework of the environment where it occurs, without isolating variables” (1989, p. 157). This approach is qualitative because we had case study.

1-Data Collection Tool (s):

To collect data there are three main tools which are an interview, a questionnaire, and a classroom observation. For our study, we saw it is necessary to use the questionnaire because of: it is more adequate to gather information; our research mainly based on definitions, descriptions, and comparisons; it is useful to provide clear views with a minimum of time and effort. According the importance of the questionnaire, it is said that: “the questionnaire was used as a main instrument to elicit data from the two omnipresent partners in the teaching/ learning process: students and teachers for the reason that it allows the analysis of a large number of informants in a relatively short period of time anonymously ” (Wallace, 1998).

2- Structure and Description of the Questionnaire:

The questionnaire is made up of 22 questions divided into three sections.

Section One: is about background information. It contains four questions (from Q1 to Q4). We aim through this section to define our sample. We want to identify their age, gender, BAC stream, and if they have chosen English personally or it was imposed on them.

Section Two: investigates issues concerning writing. It includes 12 questions (from Q5 to Q16). Our purpose behind it is to know to what extent the students know about writing skill.

Section Three: it consists of 6 questions (from Q17 to Q22). Through it we looked for our participants' familiarity with the computer. We investigated if they like using the computer; know how to use it; it is a good tool that has a positive contribution in improving their writing or makes it easy.

3- Population and Sampling:

The term population, according to Marczyk (as cited in Khaldoun, 2008, p.86) refers to individuals who are of interest to the researcher. In the present study, our population is second year students of English Department at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. It consists of 500 students divided into 10 groups.

As a sample, we choose at random a group of 40 students from the whole population because it is so difficult to conduct with the entire population. Concerning that Marczyk (as cited in Khaldoun, 2008, p.87) stated that it is not useful to work with every member of the population. So it is necessary to choose a representative group which displays the characteristics of the whole population (2005, p. 18).

4- Rational of Sampling:

Working with a sample has many reasons such as: time (to gather information in short period of time); money (the papers that specialized for a small group of students do not cost a lot of money); resources (it is easier to get information from a group of students rather than the entire population); energy (dealing with a sample of study does not take a big energy). In renormalizing the group Miller (as cited in Khaldoun, 2008, p. 87) said that the reasons behind it is to provide equal chances for every member in it to be chosen from the population. In addition, it helps to prove the fact that our sample is a non biased one (1975).

Our purpose behind choosing a sample of 40 students of English at English department at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra as follows: it is difficult to work with the whole population which is about 500 students; second year students engage more in productive skills; those students have already taken courses in written expression in the previous year (first year). They at least have an idea about writing conventions, punctuation, and how we can construct phrases, sentences, clauses ; while in their second year they will deal with paragraphs and their different types ; furthermore, this sample is expected to make a license dissertation in the third year (next year). So they may bear a huge responsibility of written texts. In addition, this group of students is also taken courses in computing.

5- The Pilot Study:

5.1. The Design and Implementation of the Pilot Study:

The pilot study takes the form of questionnaire. It consists of 23 questions. Each question needs a certain answer.

The main goal of the pilot study is to check that all items are relevant, appropriate, understood, and be interpreted in the right way. It was done two days before submitting the main study (the students' questionnaire) to a group of 10 students at English department. In fact, it was given to students at their classes and after about one hour we got the answers.

5.2 The Results of the Pilot Study:

In the pilot study we have dealt with 10 students. This group represents the quarter of the whole sample (40 students).

In the first section, all the items were clearly understood. Each item was answered. In the

second section the same thing; the students understood correctly our questions and responded immediately. The misunderstanding was in the third section where the students did not recognize what we mean by the question number 19. They did not understand the difference between the question number 19 that says: do you think that the computer positively contributes to improve your writing? and the question number 21 that is do you think that the computer facilitates the writing task? For the first reading, you think they are the same, but in fact they are different. Facilitating something does not mean improving it. So, we saw it is necessary to omit the question number 19.

Section B: Data Description and Analysis.

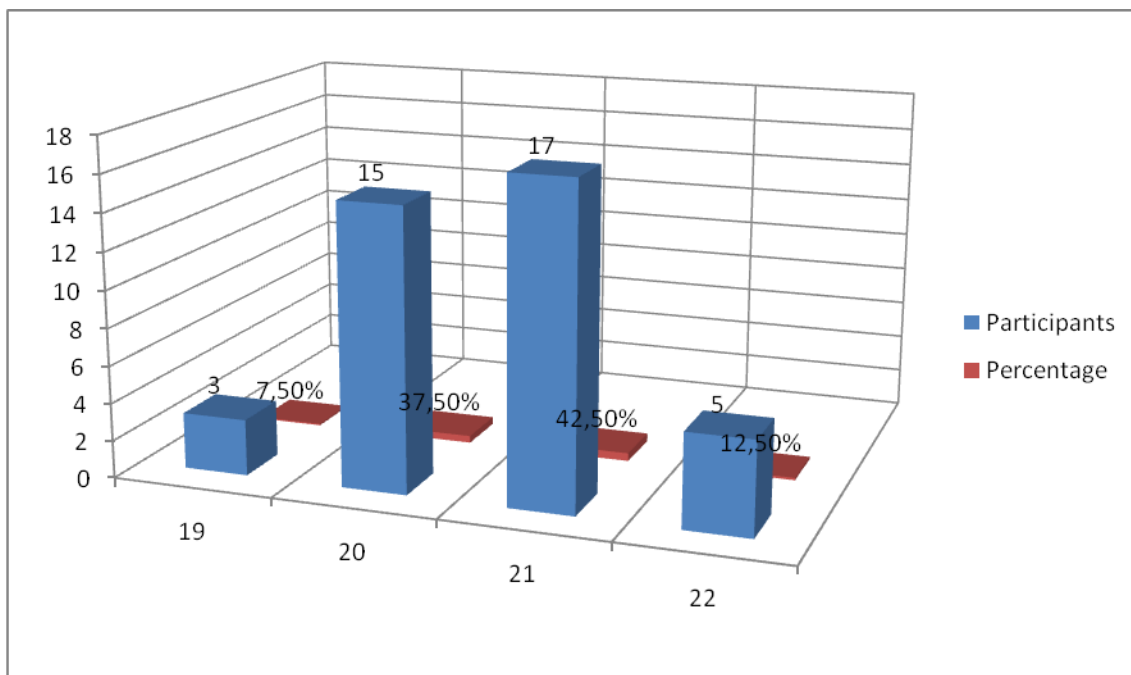
Section One: Background Information

Question 01: Age Distribution.

Response	19	20	21	22
Participants	3	15	17	5
Percentage	7.5%	37.5%	42.5%	12.5%

Table 01: Students' Age Distribution.

It is clearly noticed that our sample is young. The scope of them ranges between 19 (7.5%) and 22 (12.5%), while the category of 21 years old represent the highest rate (42.5%) then comes the category of 22 with a percentage of 37.5%. This result may express that our participants are able, active, and motivated to learn especially foreign languages especially if that learning is supported by technology.



Question 02: Gender Distribution.

Sex	Response	Percentage
Male	4	10%
Female	36	90%
Total	40	100%

Table 02: Students' Gender.

As shown in the table above, the over representation of females, out of 40 participants, 36 (90%) are females and only 4 (10%) are males. This leads us to think that females are more interested in English language more than males who may prefer to study the scientific branches, economy...etc.

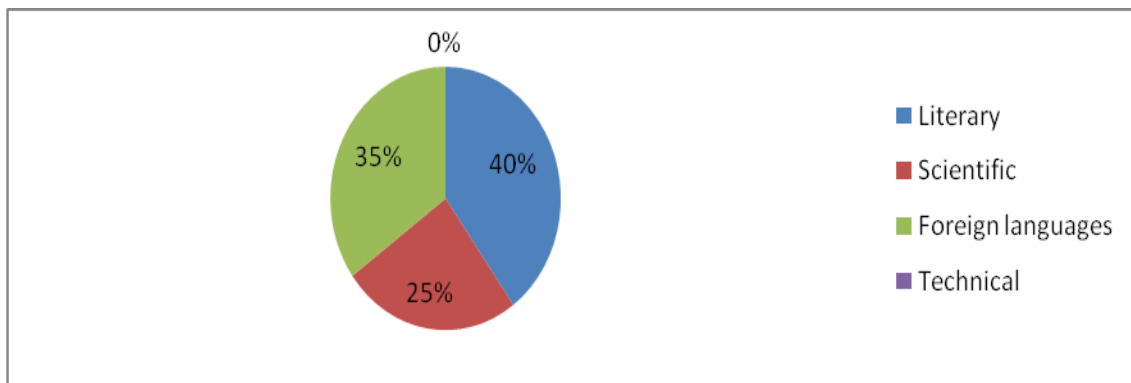
Question 03: BAC Stream.

Response	Participants	Percentage
a.Literary	16	40%
b.Scientific	10	25%
c.Foreign languages	14	35%
d.Technical	0	0%

Table 03: Students' Baccalauriate Stream.

According to the table, nearly our participants belong to literary and foreign languages. Only 10 of them (25%) belong to scientific branch. While there is no student comes from technical stream. This may interpret that now the students become more interested in English. They are familiar with it. Students with literary and foreign languages Baccalauriate have the

priority to choose English as a speciality at university.



Question 04: Students' English Choice.

Response	Participants	Percentage
Personnaly	28	70%
Imposed	8	20%
No answer	4	10%

Table 04: Students' English Choice.

28 of our correspondents who represent the highest rate (70%) claimed that they have chosen English personally. On the other hand 8 of them (20%) said the opposite. They were obliged to study English. It is not their choice or will. 4 of our participants did not answer.

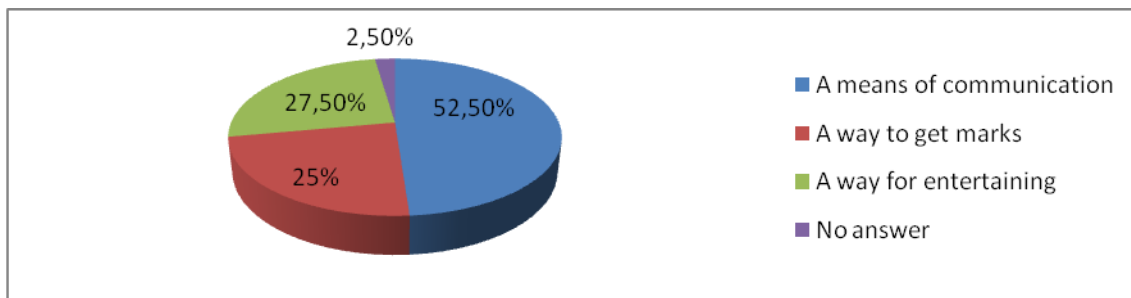
Section Two: Students' Attitudes towards the Writing Skill.

Question 05:

Response	Participants	Percentage
A.a means of communication.	21	52.5%
B.a way to get marks.	10	25%
C.a way for entertaining.	11	27.5%
D.No answer.	1	2.5%

Table 05: Students' Views about Writing Meaning.

It seems that the majority of our correspondents see that writing is a means of communication. Others 11 (27.5%) look to it as a way to get marks, while 10 of them consider it as a way for entertaining. Only one student did not answer.



This chart shows more.

Question 06:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Yes	38	95%
No	2	5%

Table 06: Students' Interest in Writing.

The highest rate represented in this table (95%) is of 38 students who stated that they like the written expression module. While the rest two students respond negatively. They said they do not like the written expression module.

Question 07:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Yes	23	57.5%
No	17	42.5%

Table 07: Students' Difficulties with Writing.

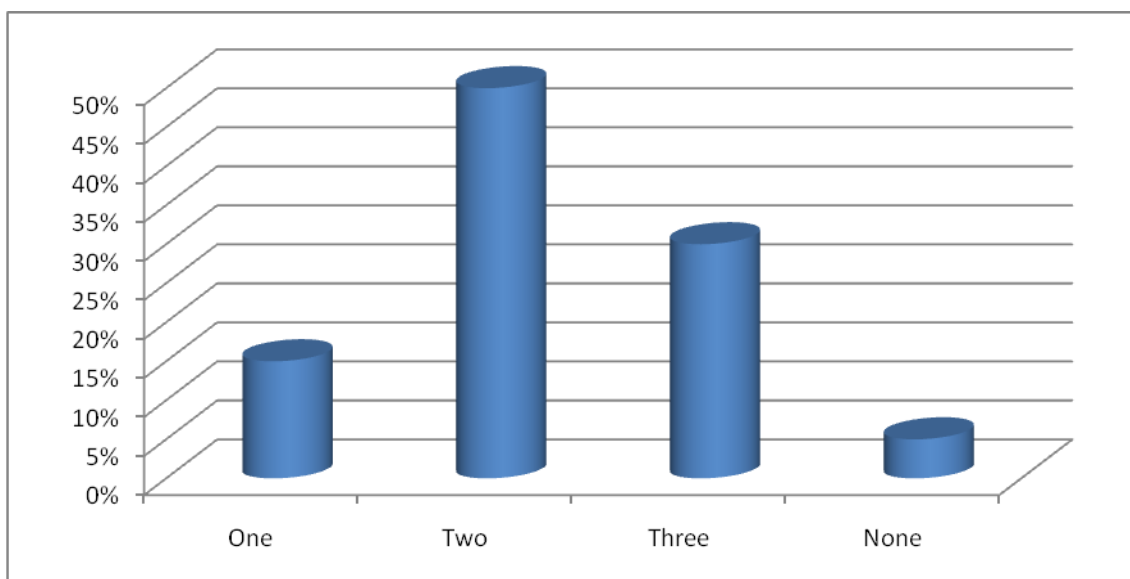
As we see in the table above 23 of our participants (57.5%) have difficulties in writing, while 17 students (42.5%) said the opposite.

Question 08:

Response	Participants	Percentage
One	6	15%
Two	20	50%
Three	12	30%
None	2	5%

Table 08: Students' Practicing Writing in the classroom.

Half of our population (20 students) claimed that they do write two times a week in the class. They represent 50%. 6 (15%) of them said that they practice writing within the classroom one time a week. 12 participants said that they write three times a week in the class. While 2 students gave no answer.



Question 09:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Yes	31	77.5%
No	8	20%
No answer	1	2.5%

Table 09: Teacher's Help in Writing Activity.

The majority of our correspondents (31 students 77.5%) said that their teachers help them to write. While 8 of them (20%) said no. only 1 student did no react at all. It is unacceptable that the teacher does not help his students during the writing activity because even few words or advices considered as help. The teacher may be tries to help his students indirectly; he gives instructions indirectly. This is a kind of help.

Question 10:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Yes	35	87.5%
No	3	7.5%
No answer	2	5%

Table 10: Consideration of the Teacher's Remarks.

Throughout this table, it is revealed that the majority of our students 35 (87.5%) claimed that they take their teachers' remarks into consideration. This means that those students are interested in the study. On the other hand, 3 of them (7.5%) react negatively. While 2 participants did not react at all.

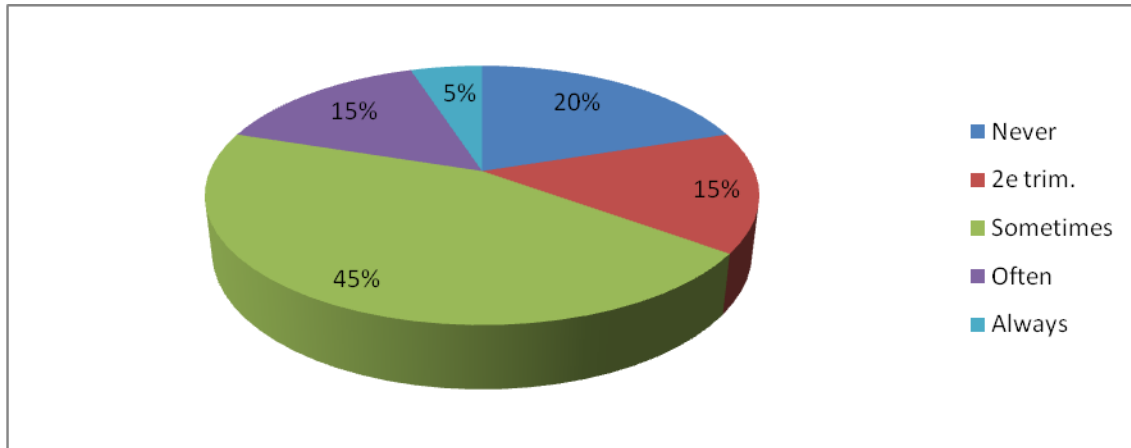
Question 11:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Never	8	20%
Rarely	6	15%
Sometimes	18	45%
Often	6	15%
Always	2	5%

Table 11: Students' Practicing Writing at Home.

As provided in this table, we noticed that 18 students (45%) declared that they sometimes practice writing at home, while 8 of them (20%) said that they never do that. 2 of our participants (5%) stated that they often do practice writing at their homes. Some of students stated that often practice writing at home, while the rest said that rarely happens. Only 2 (5%)

said they always do write at their homes. This makes us think that the last category of students is more interested in writing than the other categories. They do not give up to anything or obstacle that might disturb them to write.



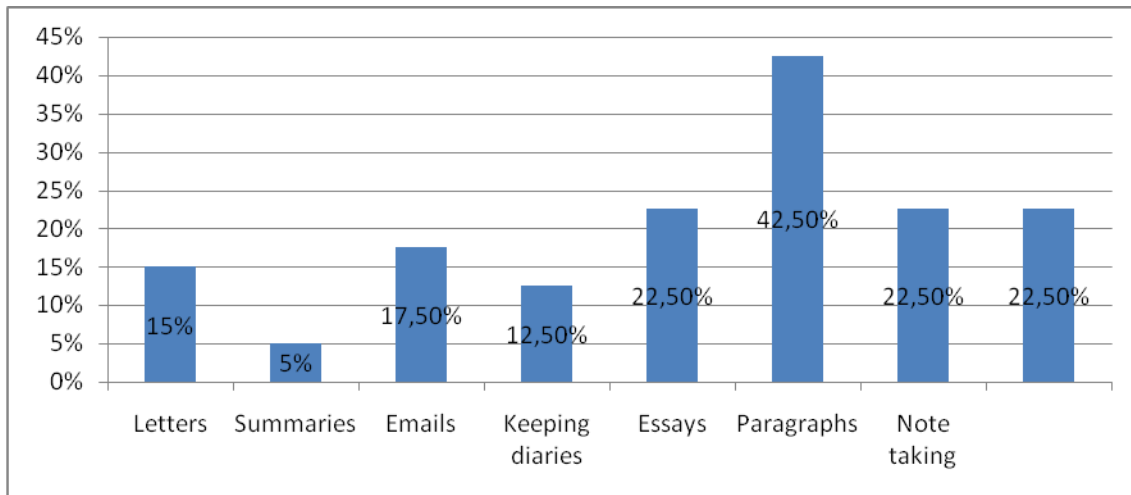
Question 12:

Responses	Participants	Percentage
Letters	6	15%
Summaries	2	5%
Emails	7	17.5%
Keeping diaries	5	12.5%
Essays	9	22.5%
Paragraphs	17	42.5%
Note taking	9	22.5%
Stories	9	22.5%

Table 12: Students' Preferable Type of Writing.

From this table, we noticed that the majority of our participants do prefer writing paragraphs, while essays, note taking, and stories have the same rate which is (22.5%). 7 of

the students (17.5%) claimed that they like to write emails. This makes us think that they prefer chatting with their friend, relatives, teachers, and may be the others outside their countries. Chatting is considered as a factor of motivation; it makes students write a big amount of texts.



Question 13:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Yes	30	75%
No	6	15%
No answer	4	10%

Tab cle 13: Students’ Satisfaction with their Teacher’s Role.

It is obvious that out of 30 students claimed that they are satisfied with their teacher's role during the writing activity; while 6 of them (6%) answer negatively. 4 students (10%) gave no answer.

The highest rate represented in the table 75% is of the learners who said that they are satisfied with their teachers’ roles during the writing activity. While 6 of them (15%) said the

opposite. 4 students gave no answer.

Question 14:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Good	17	42.5%
Average	18	45%
Bad	5	12.5%

Table 14: Students' Marks of Written Expression Module.

This table confirms that 18 of our correspondents (45%) have average marks in the written expression module. 17 of them (42.5%) said that they always have good marks, while 5 of them (12.5%) have bad marks.

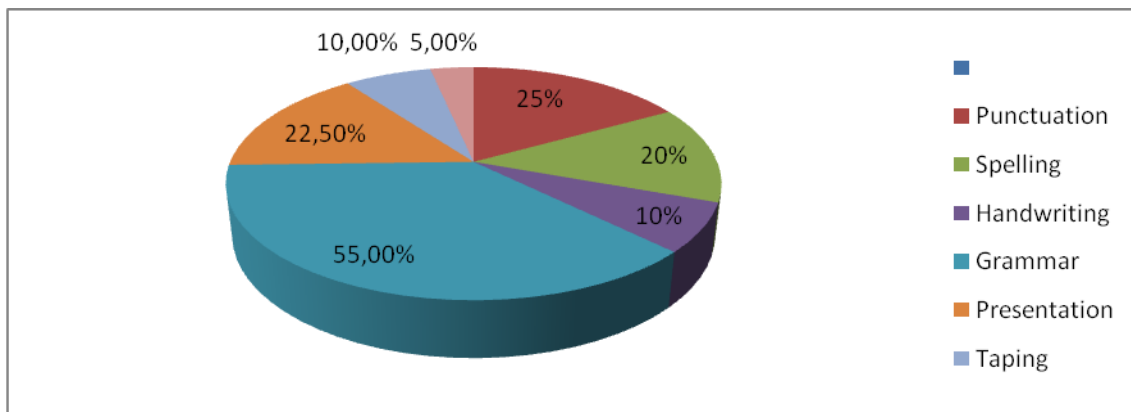
Question 15:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Punctuation	10	25%
Spelling	8	20%
Handwriting	4	10%
Grammar	22	55%
Presentation	9	22.5%
Taping	4	10%
None	2	5%

Table 15: Students' Difficulties.

This table shows that more than half of the students (22) have difficulties in grammar. 10

of the participants find punctuation difficult. 8 (20%) students have a problem with spelling, while 9 (22.5%) suffer from presentation. Both of handwriting and taping are considered as the most difficult activities for 8 students. Each one has chosen by 4 students (10%). Only 2 students gave no answer. Grammar always is the main problem for EFL students. They have difficulties in how sentences structured and the different types of tenses. In parallel to grammar, punctuation and spelling are also problems for some students.



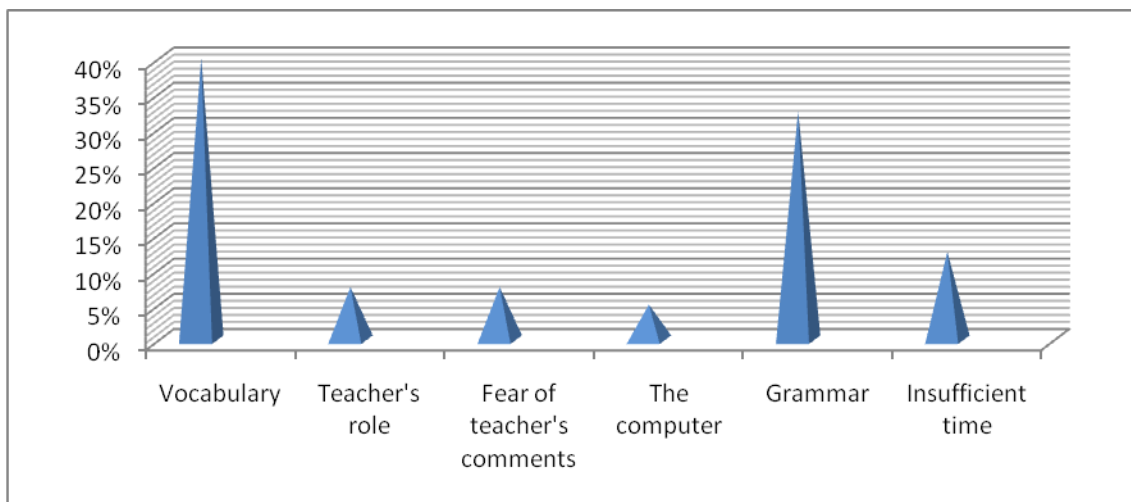
Question 16:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Vocabulary	16	40%
Teacher's role	3	7.5%
Fear of teacher's comments	3	7.5%
The computer	2	5%
Grammar	13	32.5%
Insufficient time	5	12.5%
Lack of motivation	11	27.5%

Table 16: Students' Writing Problems.

It is noticed that 16 of our participants said that their writing problems are because of vocabulary. This means that they have lack in vocabulary. 13 of them (32.5%) face problems with grammar. They may be do not know how the English sentence structured. 11 of our participation stated that their writing problems refer to lack of motivation. 5 students suffer from the insufficient time for writing. They have not enough time to practice more. 3 students see that the teacher’s role is their problem; while another 3 students fear from their teacher’ comments. 2 students said the computer is the responsible of their writing problem.

Lack of vocabulary and grammar may cause a problem in writing and bad marks in tests and exams. Here, the student who is the responsible of that problem. His job is to work and practice a lot to enrich his vocabulary and learn exactly how the grammatical rules of English should be applied. Concerning the teacher’s role and his comments that seem as blaming for some students may be become factors for failing in writing task. The computer can also disturb some students when they write their research or home works. This could happen if those students are obliged to do their works by computer and they do not know how to use it. Time is an important element in writing especially during the tests and exams. Insufficient time may cause a problem.



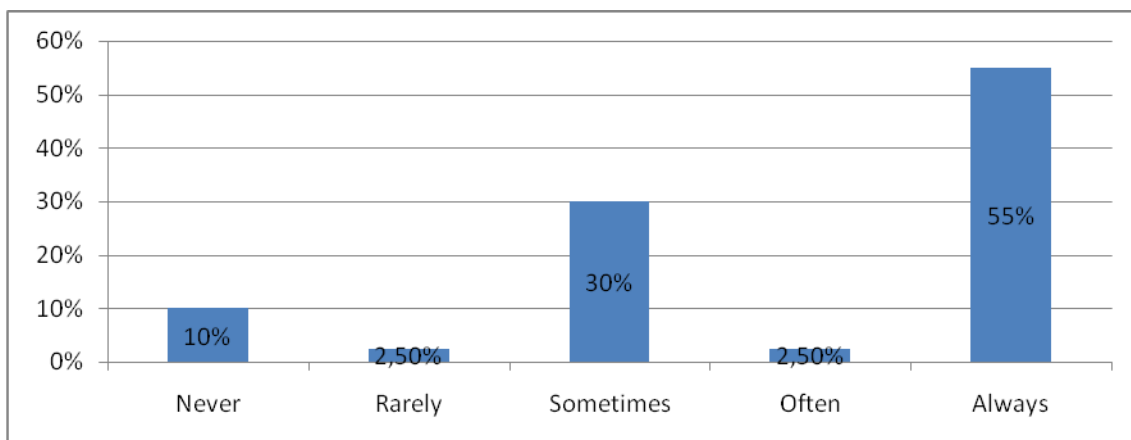
Section Three: Students' Thoughts about the Computer.

Question 17:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Never	4	10%
Sometimes	12	30%
Always	22	55%
Rarely	1	2.5%
Often	1	2.5%

Table 17: Students' Familiarity with the Computer.

We aim through this question to know how many students familiar with the computer. It is clearly viewed that the students' responses are various. 4 participants had never used the computer. 1 (2.5%) said he rarely uses the computer. 12 (30%) of them said that they sometimes use the computer. 1 (2.5%) student stated that he often uses the computer. The rest (22 students 55%) always use the computer. These results are for different reasons. Some students may be have not enough time for going to cyber café; others do not know to use it; others are not interested in it.



Question 18:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Yes	28	70%
No	12	30%

Table 18: Students' Experience with the Computer.

The highest rate is about 70% represent 28 students who stated that they had taken in computing before entering the university. While the rest students (12 students 30%) responded oppositively. This result leads us to think that those students are lucky

Question 19:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Yes	10	25%
No	30	75%

Table 19: The Value of Computer Concerning Time.

According to the results shown in the table, we find that 30 students (75%) saw that the computer is not a waste of time, while 10 of them saw the opposite. In fact, the most important benefit that we can gain from using the computer is its fastness in doing anything we want. For us, the response of the students who said that it is a waste of time is unreasonable and incorrect. This group of students may be has a difficulty with computer; perhaps they are not rapid in tapping.

Question 20:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Yes	29	72.5%
No	11	27.5%

Table 20: The Role of Computer in Facilitating the Writing Task.

This table confirms us that 29 students (72.5%) think that the computer facilitates the writing activity. 11 of them answered negatively. We can conclude that those students who said yes are more familiar with the computer than the others. They may be always use it whether for writing their works or researches, chatting, sending emails...etc.

Question 21:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
Yes	21	52.5%
No	19	47.5%

Table 21: Conducting an Academic Research with the Computer.

21 of the students declare that they have used the computer to conduct an academic research; while 19 of them (47.5) said no. They have never used it for that purpose.

In fact, every branch at the university needs and demands from its students to do researches. In past, students were doing that by their hands, but now days and with the availability of the technologies, it is preferable to conduct researches with the help of those technologies such as the computer, the data show etc...so, it is not logical that someone has the opportunity to do a research with the aid of the computer and does it by hands only if he or she does not has one; has no time; or does not know how to use it.

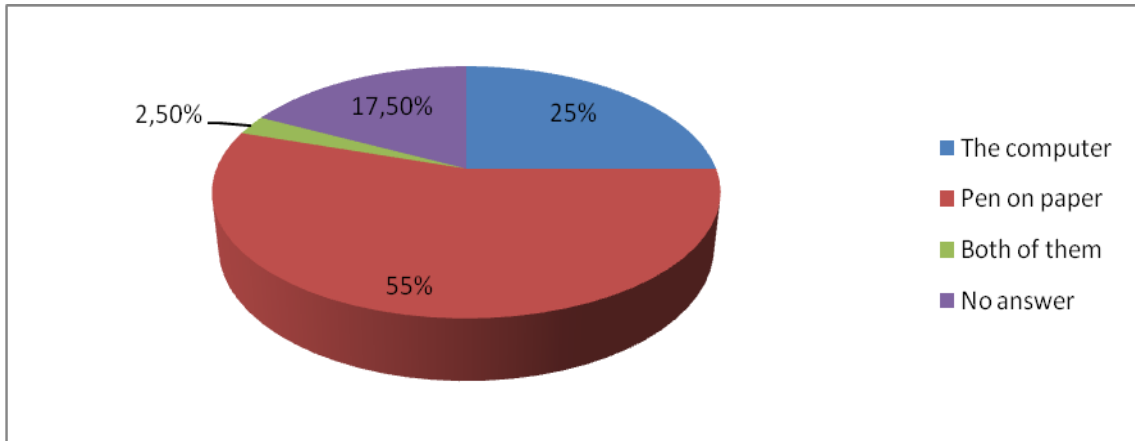
Question 22:

Responses	Participants	Percentages
On the screen	10	25%
Pen on paper	22	55%
Both of them	1	17.5%
No answer	7	2.5%

Table 22: Students' Preference (Screen/ Pen on Paper).

As it is shown in the table above, the majority of the participants 22 (55%) prefer to write by pen on paper rather than with computer. While 10 of them like using the computer to write. Only 1 student likes the two ways. 7 of our correspondents react negatively; they gave no answer. Those students may be are not interested in writing at all.

The students' justifications about their preference to write with pen on paper are as follows: one says that she is not good in using the computer; handwriting seems more lovely; it makes them feel that they alive; it reflects their spirits and personality; handwriting is a best way for concentrating, remembering, and revising; the computer is exposed to be damaged at any moment, in this case the writing would be lost; handwriting becomes as a habit, they grew up write since they were children. All of this seems right and make a sense. While the students who prefer to write by the computer said: it facilitates writing, they can easily add or omit words; it gives immediate corrections; it gives many options; it is faster and easier for erasing and organizing data; it can save the written pieces for a long time; it gains time and seems more interesting and skillful. Their reasons look convinced and reasonable.



Section C:

III.C.1.Discussion.

The purpose behind integrating second year students in our investigation is to obtain their attitudes and views that support and prove our hypotheses. After analyzing and interpreting their responses, we reached to the following points: most of our participants are familiar with the computer. They know how to use it for different reasons since they have taken courses in it before entering to the university. So, they at least know to write a short piece of writing and save it. For them, it is necessary nowadays to use the computer to learn and to write their works or for entertaining. Despite of students' using of the computer, they think it is preferable to use their hands instead of it to write. They see that the computer is completely different from handwriting. This distinction does not deny that each one has its own benefits and drawbacks on students' writing. From those advantages of using the computer are: it helps them and makes the task of writing more easy than the usual (by hands); it supplies immediate corrections in case of there is a mistake; it can save all the written information; it gains time. Actually those students mentioned the great things giving by the computer, but they see that handwriting is still the best solution that make them comfortable when write.

To conclude, after all what we have put as hypotheses and questions and after what we got like answers to our research questions we reach to a conclusion that everyone can not deny it. This conclusion is the computer is a magic and a unique discovery in human being' history. It really plays various roles in improving peoples' lives and their education in all the countries over the world. Although its many benefits, we can see that it is a double-edged weapon. It is really has a favor in facilitating and developing students' writing especially those who study foreign languages, but this does not make it the only way.

III.C.2. Suggestions and Recommendations:

After analyzing the results of students' questionnaire we would like to propose and provide students with some suggestions and recommendations. Our suggestions and recommendations are summarized as follows:

- Practicing writing activities inside or outside the classroom is beneficial.
- Writing should make sense.
- The connections between sentences and paragraphs should be clear.
- Choose suitable and appropriate words for your topic to convince your audience.
- Before giving the final draft, it is necessary to check that spelling and punctuation are correct and effective.
- Using the computer as an aid to write an academic research or any piece of writing is so useful and helpful.
- Training in the use of the computer or any technology that is needed is important and efficient.
- It is never late to learn how to use the computer in order to develop leaning and skills.

Finally, we hope that our suggestions and recommendations will be beneficial for you.

Conclusion

This chapter is devoted to present the results and analysis yielded by the research tool, the students' questionnaire that we used in the current study and administrated to second year students at department of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. Throughout the questionnaire, we spot the light on students' attitudes and overviews towards the effectiveness of using the computer to develop their writing skill.

The chapter starts with the methodology that we followed to gather the necessary information for our under investigation topic. We also talked about our population and sample that has been chosen randomly and the reasons behind this sample. We support our choice with some authors' words about the efficiency of the methodology. At the end, we finished the chapter with proposing some suggestions and recommendations provided to our colleagues.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

It is undoubtable that learning to write in English as a foreign language is difficult. This refers to the complexity of the writing process and the stages contained in it. In fact, the writing skill is classified in the last grade; it is the new form used for expression and the last skill that should be learned and taught within formal situations like schools, universities, institutions... etc. In past times, it has a little of interest unlike the other skills, while in these modern days it has been an interesting issue that has undertaken from a huge number community's members. All of this thanks to the emergence of new technological inventions that play different roles in motivating, enhancing, and developing EFL students learning. The computer, one of those technologies, has added a new type of literacy and culture. Really, the emergence of computer in education in general and in learning foreign languages as English in particular has increased people's desire to acquire and learn foreign languages.

This thesis is a whole of three chapters and has both theoretical and practical aspects. The theoretical part consists of two chapters, while the practical side is in one chapter. Its first chapter from the theoretical part provides and describes the most basic elements related to writing skill. The second chapter is devoted to the computer, its entry and role in the educational field, field of learning English language. The last chapter is entirely field work. It contains a questionnaire directed to second year students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra and the analysis of its results. Furthermore, it includes some suggestions and recommendations provided to the students.

Throughout the current research, we aimed to confirm our hypothesis that says that the

computer has an effective role in improving EFL students' writing. In order to prove that, we saw it is necessary to follow the descriptive method and work with a sample chosen at random to gain time and save energy. So, we adapted a questionnaire as a basic research instrument to collect and gather data. This questionnaire was administered to 40 students. The aim behind the students' questionnaire is to obtain their attitudes and opinions towards our under investigation subject.

After collecting students' responses and analyzing them, we found the following:

- Although second year students have facing difficulties in writing especially with grammar and vocabulary, they are interested and like the written expression module. They are aware of its importance.
- They are continuously practice writing at classroom and sometimes try to create things at their homes. They like to write different types of writing such as paragraphs, letters, e-mails, stories...
- They are concerned with their teachers' remarks within writing activities.
- The majority of students have experienced the computer. This is obvious because we are in the age of technology.
- They already have taken courses in computing before entering the university. So, they are familiar with the computer.
- For them, the computer gains time. In other words, they can write what they want in a short period of time.

- One of the benefits of the computer is that it facilitates students' writing task. For those students, it is a unique tool because it shows them their mistakes then gives appropriate corrections.
- Many students still rely on their hands to write their academic research, while others like to utilize the computer.
- According the students' views, despite the fact that the computer is a great instrument used to enhance and develop writing, handwriting is the best way because it has moral effects on students. As they said, it reflects their selves, soul, and feeling as well as it is good for remembering and revising.

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- <http://www.4.caes.hku.hk/writing/...default-answers>.

Appendix

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
ENGLISH DIVISION

Dear colleagues,

This dissertation is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master 2 in Sciences of Languages. It deals with the effectiveness of using the computer in improving EFL students' writing.

This questionnaire aims to support our research hypothesis.

Your contribution is useful and helpful; your responses are supported and confidential.

Please tick (X) in the box what you think it is appropriate and make full answers to express your attitudes and opinions.

Thank you for your corporation

H, Lallali

Section One: Background Information.

01/ How old are you?

Years old.

02/ Are you?

Male

Female

03/ Were your BAC stream?

a.Scientific

b.Literary

c.Technical

d.Foreign languages

04/ Have you chosen English personally or it was imposed on you?

.....

Section Two: Students' Attitudes about Writing.

05/ What does writing mean to you?

a. Means of communication.

b. A way to get marks.

c. A way for entertaining.

06/ Do you like the module of written expression?

Yes

No

07/ Do you have difficulties in writing?

Yes

No

08/ How many times a week do you write in class?

One

Three

Two

d. None

09/ Does your teacher help you to write?

Yes

No

10/ Do you take into consideration your teacher's remarks?

Yes

No

11/ Do you practice writing at home?

Never

Often

Rarely

Always

Sometimes

12/ Which type do you like to write?

Letters

Essays

Summaries

Paragraphs

Emails

Note taking

Keeping diaries

Stories

13/ Are you satisfied with your teacher's role during the writing activity?

Yes

No

If no why?

.....

14/ Are your marks is written expression?

Good

Average

Bad

15/ Which one of these activities is difficult for you?

Punctuation

Grammar

Spelling

Presentation

Handwriting

Taping

16 /Are your writing problems due to:

Vocabulary

Grammar

Teacher's role

Insufficient time

Fear of teacher's comments

Lack of motivatio

The computer

Section Three: Students' Thoughts about the Computer.

17/ Have you ever used the computer?

Never

Often

Rarely

Always

Sometimes

If not way?.....

.....

18/ Have you taken courses in computing before entering the university?

Yes

No

19/ Is using the computer a waste of time?

Yes

No

20/ Do you think that the computer facilitates the writing task?

Yes

No

If yes say how.....

.....

21/ Have you conducted an academic research with the aid of the computer?

Yes

No

22/ Do you prefer writing with pen on paper or with the computer?

Explain.....

I, H, thank you for your corporation